The Poetic Imagination of Vyacheslav Ivanov

A Russian Symbolist's perception of Dante

Pamela Davidson

CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN RUSSIAN LITERATURE

The poetic imagination of Vyacheslav Ivanov

Vyacheslav Ivanov, poet, philosopher and critic, played a key role in the formation of early twentieth-century Russian literature as leader of the religious branch of the Symbolist movement, and his influence spread to Europe after his emigration to Italy in 1924. Pamela Davidson explores Ivanov's poetic method, relating his art to his central beliefs (in particular his interpretation of the ancient Greek religion of Dionysus and of the teachings of Vladimir Solovyov), and considering the ways in which he attempted to embody these ideas in his own life.

She focuses on Ivanov's interpretation of Dante, and in so doing opens up new perspectives on the wider question of Russia's relation to the Western cultural tradition and Catholicism. Detailed analyses of Ivanov's pre-revolutionary poetry and of his translations from Dante form the basis of the second part of the study, and extensive use is made of unpublished archival materials from the Soviet Union and Italy.

CAMBRIDGE STUDIES IN RUSSIAN LITERATURE

General editor MALCOLM JONES

In the same series

Novy Mir
EDITH ROGOVIN FRANKEL

Three Russian writers and the irrational
T. R. N. EDWARDS

The enigma of Gogol
RICHARD PEACE

Word and music in the novels of Andrey Bely
ADA STEINBERG

The Russian revolutionary novel
RICHARD FREEBORN

Poets of Modern Russia
PETER FRANCE

Andrey Bely
J. D. ELSWORTH

Nikolay Novikov
W. GARETH JONES

Vladimir Nabokov
DAVID RAMPTON

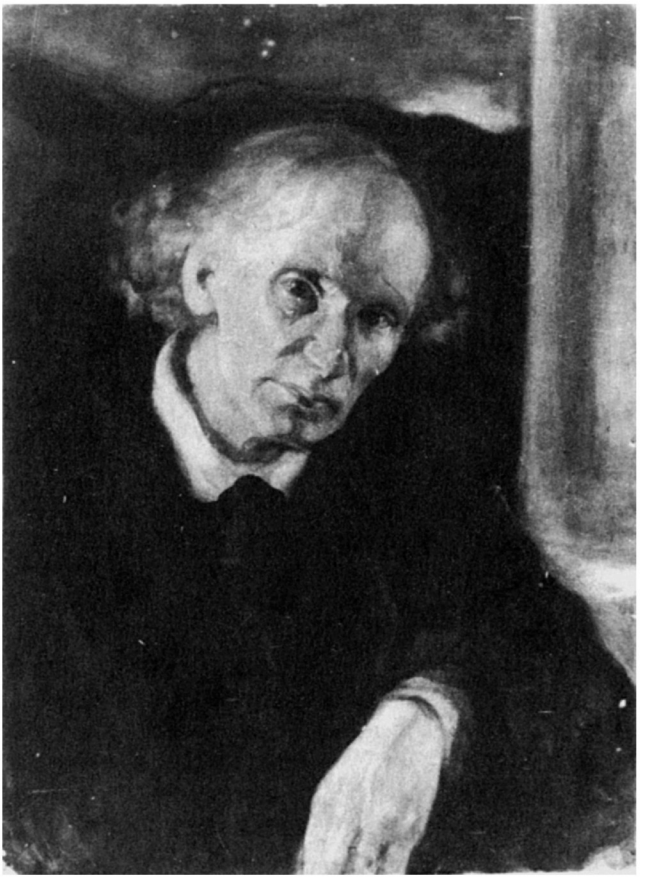
Portraits of early Russian liberals
DEREK OFFORD

Marina Tsvetaeva
SIMON KARLINSKY

Bulgakov's last decade
J. A. E. CURTIS

Velimir Khlebnikov
RAYMOND COOKE

Dostoyevsky and the process of literary creation
JACQUES CATTEAU
translated by Audrey Littlewood

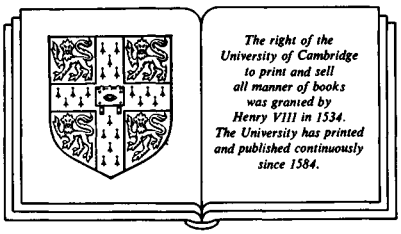


Vyacheslav Ivanov: portrait by A. S. Glagoleva-Ulyanova, 1915–16

The poetic imagination of Vyacheslav Ivanov

A Russian Symbolist's perception of Dante

PAMELA DAVIDSON



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
CAMBRIDGE
NEW YORK NEW ROCHELLE
MELBOURNE SYDNEY

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521114554

First published 1989
This digitally printed version 2009

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

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data
Davidson, Pamela.
The poetic imagination of Vyacheslav Ivanov: a Russian
symbolist's perception of Dante / Pamela Davidson.
p. cm. – (Cambridge studies in Russian literature)
Bibliography: p.
Includes index.
ISBN 0–521–36285–7
I. Ivanov, V. I. (Viacheslav Ivanovich), 1866–1949 – Criticism and
interpretation. 2. Dante Alighieri, 1265–1321 – Influence – Ivanov.
I. Title. II. Series.
PG3467.18Z64 1989
891.71'3–dc19 88–20319

ISBN 978-0-521-36285-6 hardback
ISBN 978-0-521-11455-4 paperback

For E.V.K.

Contents

6

Ivanov's translations of Dante

THE SYMBOLIST BACKGROUND

The activity of translation has played a particularly important role in the development of the Russian literary tradition from its very inception; it has served as one of the major channels of expression for the intensity of Russia's interest in the West and desire to overcome the barrier of cultural isolation from Europe. Through translation, a work of foreign literature would be incorporated into the Russian tradition, and come to be regarded as an original creation in its own right. When, for example, Gnedich's translation of Homer's *Iliad* appeared in 1829, Pushkin greeted it as a new *Russian Iliad* which would take its place within Russian literature as a major influence: 'At last the translation of the *Iliad* which we have been waiting for so impatiently and for so long has appeared! . . . A Russian *Iliad* is before us. We are embarking on a study of it so as to give our readers a report in due course on a book which is bound to have so important an influence on our native literature.'[1]

Translators in Russia have accordingly often enjoyed a particular reverence; their work is not regarded as secondary in status to original literary activity, but as equally important. Many of Russia's most gifted poets and writers have made substantial contributions to Russian literature through translations. Zhukovsky's translation of the *Odyssey* or Pasternak's translations of Shakespeare are classic examples.

A remarkable efflorescence of activity in the sphere of translating took place in Russia from the end of the nineteenth century onwards. This tendency became particularly pronounced during the Symbolist period. As a movement, Russian Symbolism was syncretic in its approach to other cultures, and one of the principal means which it adopted to assimilate the legacy of other cultures was translation. The Symbolists translated extensively, and it is symptomatic of the spirit of the times that a number of publishing

houses launched special series of world literature in translation at the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1901 the Brockhaus and Efron publishing house initiated their famous series 'The Library of Great Writers' under the editorship of S. A. Vengerov. The third publication of this series, the collected works of Byron, included new translations by Symbolist poets such as Bryusov, Blok, Yurgis Baltrushaitis and Vyacheslav Ivanov.[2] The Okto publishing company ran a series entitled 'The Library of European Classics', edited by A. E. Gruzinsky. In 1910 the publishers Mikhail and Sergei Sabashnikov founded a series called 'Monuments of World Literature';[3] several Symbolists did translations for this series which maintained an extremely high standard. The publishers formulated their aims in a set piece which was appended to many of their publications; this provides a clear expression of the general attitude of the period towards translation as the major channel through which the spiritual influence of a foreign culture can best be received and disseminated: 'So be it – a translation can never be a substitute for the original. But throughout the ages the spiritual life of cultured nations has only been really deeply influenced by those works of foreign genius which became accessible to them through translation.'[4]

The younger Symbolists' interest in Dante naturally led them to try their hand at translating the poet. All the publishing houses' series mentioned above were at some stage linked with these ventures. The fact that numerous translations of Dante were already available did not act as a deterrent. Since the end of the eighteenth century Dante's works had begun to appear in Russian translation, and by the middle of the nineteenth century D. E. Min had embarked on his monumental version of the *Commedia*, completed by the time of his death in 1885 but not published until the beginning of the twentieth century. This was a time of peak popularity for Dante in Russia, largely as a result of the spread of the cult of Dante and the Middle Ages initiated by the pre-Raphaelites in England. Among the Symbolists of the older generation, Merezhkovsky and Balmont translated excerpts from Dante, and during the decade from 1892 to 1902 new translations of the poet's works multiplied like mushrooms.[5]

The younger generation of Symbolists inherited this rich corpus of translations – altogether, nine of the *Inferno*, six of the *Purgatorio*, five of the *Paradiso*, and two of the *Vita Nuova*. However,

although they were naturally influenced by their predecessors' image of the Italian poet, their own approach developed along very different lines. Those who were inclined towards religion tended to regard Dante primarily as a spiritual teacher and possible source for an aesthetics of religious symbolism. As poets, they were more interested than most of their predecessors in Dante's language and versification. It was no longer enough simply to have a 'Russian Dante', as, for example, Min's translations provided; it was necessary to have a new Russian *Symbolist* Dante who would reflect all the characteristics with which the Symbolists invested their image of the poet. This could be achieved most effectively through a new translation which would establish the medieval poet firmly within the Russian Symbolist tradition.

Among the Symbolists of the second wave, Ellis, Sergei Solovyov, Bryusov and Ivanov were all engaged in translations of Dante's works at various stages of their literary careers. Their versions reflect the general mood of the times as well as each poet's individual approach. The example of Ellis (the pseudonym of L. L. Kobylinsky, 1879–1947) is extremely typical in this respect. He was the first of the younger Symbolists to translate Dante, and published his versions of substantial fragments of the *Commedia* and the *Vita Nuova* over a period of ten years, from 1904 to 1914. His first attempts appeared in *Immorteli*, a two-volume anthology of foreign poetry in translation which he produced in 1904.[6] This work clearly reflected the Symbolists' desire to appropriate other cultures through translation. It included a large section on Dante composed of translations and original poems written in a pseudo-Dantesque vein. The resulting image of Dante is decadent and heavily influenced by the author's enthusiasm for Baudelaire and the other late nineteenth-century poets of France and Belgium represented in the collection.

Two years later, however, this purely aesthetic image of Dante was replaced by a new one, tinged with religion and philosophy. In 1906 Ellis published an article entitled 'The Wreath of Dante' in the literary–philosophical almanach *Free Conscience (Svobodnaya sovest')*.[7] The same issue of the almanach carried part of Vladimir Solovyov's work on Russia and the universal church; not surprisingly, the image of Dante presented in Ellis's translations and accompanying commentary is strongly coloured by the Russian philosopher's teachings. Beatrice is portrayed as a figure of Divine

Wisdom or Sophia, capable of providing all the answers to the mystical searchings of the age.

In the following year, Ellis decided to translate the *Vita Nuova*.[8] The project was never completed, but part of it survives in the proofs of his first book of poetry, *Stigmata*, published in the same year as *Cor Ardens* (1911).[9] The translations from the *Vita Nuova* which appear in these proofs are of extremely poor quality and perhaps for this reason were discarded from the final version of the book.

Ellis's last major publication on Dante before he left Russia was an article entitled 'The Teacher of Faith' which appeared in 1914 in the newly formed Danteana section of the late Symbolist journal *Trudy i dni*.[10] It was written to counter the current vogue for erotic or theosophical readings of Dante, and insisted on the poet's primary role as a representative of traditional Christianity, quoting several passages from *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* in support of this view. It was published alongside a major article by Ivanov on Symbolist aesthetics which, like Ellis's piece, based its argument on a text from Dante quoted in the author's translation.

One can see from these examples that Ellis was constantly refashioning his image of Dante in the light of his current beliefs, whether these were decadent, Sophiological or more conventionally Christian. Translation was an important tool in this process; it enabled him to establish a text which supported the image of the poet which he was promoting at each stage.

The other Symbolists who translated Dante did not go through such extreme changes of world-view, but they did share with Ellis the tendency to interpret and present Dante in terms of their own beliefs. Sergei Solovyov, for example, followed the pattern set by his uncle Vladimir Solovyov, and developed his interest in Dante in close connection with his religious inclinations and growing attraction to Catholicism. For him, Dante was primarily the supreme representative of the Catholic tradition. In 1913 he declared that 'the entire spiritual force of Catholicism embodied itself in the majestic image of Dante'.[11] Typically, his contribution to the Dante celebrations held in 1921 took the form of a public lecture on Dante and Catholicism.[12] After the revolution he became a Russian Orthodox priest, and then converted to Catholicism of the Greco-Roman rite in 1923, taking up the post of vice-exarch of Catholics of this rite a few years later.[13] In this

respect his interest in Dante has much in common with that of Ivanov whose conversion to Catholicism around the same time was also the culmination of many years' fascination with Dante and the Middle Ages.

Sergei Solovyov's archive in Moscow contains various materials on Dante including translations of his works,[14] but these are inaccessible as the archive is still officially closed to researchers. There is evidence from other sources that Solovyov translated a sonnet from the *Vita Nuova* in 1903,[15] and that many years later, at the beginning of the 1930s, he was one of three translators commissioned by the Academia publishing house to prepare a new version of the *Commedia*. Mikhail Lozinsky was to translate the *Inferno*, Sergei Shervinsky the *Purgatorio*, and Solovyov the *Paradiso*.[16] However, in 1931 Solovyov was arrested in connection with his religious activities, and after his release he spent several periods in psychiatric care until his death in 1942 in a mental hospital in Kazan.[17] In 1934 Lozinsky was still not sure whether Solovyov was continuing to participate in the translation, but soon after this date it must have become clear that he had withdrawn from the project which was eventually completed singlehandedly by Lozinsky between 1936 and 1942.[18] This new translation superseded all previous ones and established itself as the standard Russian version of the *Commedia*.

Bryusov did not affiliate himself with the religious Symbolists, and is therefore in a quite different category from Ellis, Sergei Solovyov and Ivanov. However, over a period of sixteen years, from 1904 to 1920, he was also intermittently involved in translating Dante and, curiously enough, even cooperated with Ivanov in a projected translation of the *Commedia*. This plan originated with S. A. Vengerov who wished to include Dante in the 'Library of Great Writers' series which he edited for the Brockhaus and Efron publishing house.[19] In 1904 he inquired if Bryusov would like to take part in a new translation of the *Commedia*, and probably also approached Ivanov at the same time with a similar proposal. Bryusov's response was enthusiastic, and he began work on the *Inferno* immediately. However, at the end of 1905, the project was dropped by the publishers, and not taken up again until 1920 when Bryusov and Ivanov were once more commissioned by Vengerov to translate different parts of the *Commedia* for the same publishing house. Ivanov's involvement in the project will be discussed in greater detail below.

During the intervening years Bryusov made several attempts to interest various other publishers in his translation of the *Inferno*. None of these approaches were successful, however, and his translation of the first canto of the *Inferno* – the only substantial fragment of his work to have survived – was not published until 1955.[20] His version is of remarkably high quality, clear and faithful to the original, without the sort of ideological distortion or woolliness of language which marred the attempts of Ellis.

It is clear from this brief survey that translating Dante was a fairly commonplace activity among the Symbolist poets: over a period of thirty years, from the beginning of the century through to the 1920s and 1930s, Ellis, Sergei Solovyov and Bryusov were all intermittently working on new versions of the Italian poet's works. This is the background against which Ivanov's translations must be considered. They are very much a phenomenon of their age, and yet at the same time they reflect the idiosyncratic views of their author. In translating Dante, Ivanov was not only seeking to bring him into the Russian Symbolist tradition, he was also trying to incorporate him into the framework of his own spiritual outlook as one of the corner-stones of his world-view. His translations, like any other, are necessarily an act of interpretation, and reveal the way in which he saw Dante and wished to present him to others.

Over a period of several years Ivanov worked on translations of parts of Dante's three major works, the *Vita Nuova, Convivio* and *Divina Commedia*, in the order of their composition. None of these translations was completed, and only a fragment from the *Vita Nuova* was published during his life-time. The rest of the evidence survives in the form of manuscripts and unpublished correspondence, scattered among the poet's archival papers in Moscow and Rome. In the following sections each of these translation projects will be considered in turn, starting with an outline of its background, and continuing with the text of the translation, followed by an analysis of its most characteristic features.[21]

VITA NUOVA

At one stage or another of their development, all of Ivanov's projected translations of Dante's works were linked with the Sabashnikov brothers' publishing house and the new series which they set up in 1910, 'Monuments of World Literature'. The original

plan for this series provides for five sections, covering classical antiquity, Russian literature, world classics and the European Renaissance. Dante's name figures twice in the plan as one of the main authors whose works were to be represented in the series.[22]

Ivanov first became involved with the series in 1911 as a translator of the Greek classics. On 6 April 1911, Mikhail Sabashnikov sent him a letter spelling out the conditions for his translation of Aeschylus's tragedies. He was to translate the trilogy of the *Oresteia* by 1 May 1912, and the remaining tragedies by 1 May 1913. Ivanov also undertook to translate poems by Alcaeus and Sappho for the series, and completed the first part of this task by the spring of 1912; in February 1913, Sabashnikov accepted his offer of further translations from Sappho.[23]

Having thus established himself as one of Sabashnikov's translators in the field of classical antiquity, Ivanov sought to widen his scope and turned to the translation of Dante's works. The reasons for this were partly economic; as he wrote to Sabashnikov from Rome on 20 January 1913, he found that he worked better in Italy than in Russia, and therefore wished to prolong his stay beyond the autumn, for longer than originally planned. This decision entailed sacrificing the income from a course of lectures which he would have read in St Petersburg, had he returned to Russia. He was therefore looking for more work as a translator to finance his extended stay. In his letter, he made the following suggestions:

> As for poetic translations, I am attracted and even inspired by a great deal which would fit into your programme quite naturally. I am not just speaking of poets of classical antiquity. I would be happy, for example, at some point to translate Dante's *Purgatory* and particularly his *Paradise*, his *New Life*, and in the field of classical antiquity to show that I can provide a faithful and harmonious rendering of Aristophanes.[24]

The preference which Ivanov expresses for the *Vita Nuova* and those parts of the *Commedia* dealing with purely transcendent, spiritual matters parallels the general development of his interest in Dante, as traced in the previous chapter through his poetry. Early poems such as 'La Selva Oscura', 'At the Coliseum', 'Mi fur le serpi amiche' or 'Golden Veils' tended to concentrate on images connected with sin and its punishment, drawn from the *Inferno*, whereas the later verse, written after the death of Lidiya Dimitrievna, reflects the influence of the *Vita Nuova, Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* much more strongly. It is not surprising, therefore, to find

that these were the particular works which Ivanov felt drawn to translating in 1913.

Although Sabashnikov did not take up Ivanov's offer of a translation of part of the *Commedia*, he did react positively to the idea of the *Vita Nuova*. On 10 March 1913 he sent off a definitive reply to Ivanov's proposal in the form of a letter and a contract which Ivanov signed and returned to him on 21 April.[25] The contract repeated the agreement which Ivanov had concluded two years previously with Sabashnikov to translate all of Aeschylus's tragedies, and added to this the translation of the *Vita Nuova* and of further poems by Sappho. According to the terms of the contract, Ivanov took it upon himself to complete all these translations in the order of his choice within the next two years, submitting his translations of Sappho at the earliest possible date for inclusion in the anthology *Alcaeus and Sappho* which was already being printed.

Ivanov sent his additional translations of Sappho to Sabashnikov from Italy in the spring of 1913,[26] and his translation of *Agamemnon*, the first part of the trilogy of the *Oresteia*, was completed on 1 June 1913 in Rome and received by Sabashnikov in Moscow at the end of the month.[27] However, he did not keep to the contract's deadline as far as Aeschylus's other tragedies and the *Vita Nuova* were concerned. The complete translation of the *Oresteia* was only ready for printing in 1916, and Ivanov's autobiographical letter, written in Sochi in January and February 1917, reveals that his main current occupation at that time was still working on his translations of Aeschylus and the *Vita Nuova* (*SS* II, 22). In 1917 the building of the Sabashnikov publishing house was severely damaged by fire; this caused the printing of the *Oresteia* to be abandoned, and the *Vita Nuova* project may well also have been dropped at this stage for the same reason. Although in 1926 Ivanov returned once more to the question of Sabashnikov publishing his translation of the *Oresteia*, he did not raise the topic of the *Vita Nuova* again in his correspondence with Sabashnikov.[28]

Ivanov's interest in translating the *Vita Nuova* continued in the years which he spent at the University of Baku (1920–4). During this period he introduced an Italian language course for beginners into the university curriculum.[29] One of his former students, the critic, Viktor Manuilov, attended this course and recalls that Ivanov used the *Vita Nuova* as his basic language-teaching text

during the second semester; the students would read aloud and translate from the *Vita Nuova* into Russian, and their teacher would correct their Italian pronunciation and improve their translation.[30] It is possible that the choice of the *Vita Nuova* for this purpose was linked with Ivanov's own interest in translating the work, and that he wished to use the class as a forum for discussing techniques of translation.

After this point, there is no more evidence of Ivanov working on his translation of the *Vita Nuova*. It is difficult to say whether or not he ever completed it, for only fragments of it have survived, and it is not clear whether these constitute the whole of his work on the translation or just a part of it. It seems likely, however, given the lack of coherence among the fragments, that they only represent a part of the work carried out.

The surviving passages come from six different chapters of the *Vita Nuova*. Only one of these (from chapter III) was ever published; it forms the basis of Ivanov's celebrated essay on the aesthetics of Symbolism, 'On the Limits of Art', first written and delivered as a lecture in 1913, and printed in the newly formed Danteana section of *Trudy i dni* in the following year.[31]

Apart from this passage, all the other surviving fragments of Ivanov's translation are in the Manuscripts Department of the Lenin Library in Moscow. In Ivanov's archive, there is a sheaf of eight foolscap sheets, boldly headed in the poet's handwriting 'Dante: *The New Life*'.[32] These sheets contain the draft of an introductory note on the significance of the *Vita Nuova*, and the text of Ivanov's translations of the following passages: chapter I, in which Dante announces his intention to recount the events which occurred after the beginning of his new life and their meaning; the first half of chapter V, which contains an account of the way in which, when Dante was sitting in church staring at Beatrice, the people present mistook the object of his gaze for another woman who was sitting in between him and Beatrice; the sonnet from chapter VII (of which Ivanov gives four different versions), describing the poet's distress at the departure of this lady (who had served as a cover for the object of his true love), and detailing the trials and torments of love; the whole of chapter XX, in which Dante tells how a friend of his requested him to write a sonnet treating of love, and then gives the text of the sonnet which he wrote and a prose

explanation of its meaning; and finally, the whole of chapter XXI, in which Dante describes how he wished to write more on the subject of love, and how Beatrice, by the effect of her eyes and gaze, was capable of evoking love not merely in people in whom love was dormant, but also in those from whom love was totally absent; a sonnet on this subject, followed by a prose explanation of its meaning, concludes the chapter.

The first three passages are pencilled in a rough draft, whereas the last two passages (chapters XX and XXI) are written out in ink in a much more polished final version. The text of the sonnets from these last two chapters is given below; since these translations are finished versions rather than rough drafts, they provide a useful basis for the analysis of Ivanov's manner of translation, studied in conjunction with the published fragment from chapter III.

The sonnet from chapter XX beginning 'Amore e 'l cor gentil sono una cosa . . .' ('Love and the noble heart are one thing . . .') is rendered as follows:

Любовь и сердце высшее - одно:
Был прав мудрец, сих слов провозвеститель -
С душой разумной разум разлучить иль?
Не разлучить и тех двоих равно.

Природою влюбленною дано
Царю-Амуру сердце, как обитель.
И долго ль, нет ли, спит в чертоге житель;
Настанет срок - подвигнется оно.

Женой смиренномудрою предстанет,
Взор мужеский пленяя, Красота.
Желание родится. Не устанет

Тревожить сердце нежная мечта,
Доколе не разбудит властелина.
Так и жене достойный лишь мужчина.

The next translation is of the sonnet from chapter XXI beginning 'Ne li occhi porta la mia donna Amore . . .' ('My lady bears Love in her eyes . . .'):

Любовь сама в очах мадонны светит;
И на кого воззрит, - преображен.
К идущей мимо каждый притяжен;
Но обомрет, кого она приветит.

Потупит взор, кто взор небесный встретит;
Укором тайным в сердпе пристыжен,
Поник гордец. Как чтить ее? Из жен
Участливых, какая мне ответит?

Кто слышал дивной тихие слова,
Так помыслов смиренномудрых сладость [;][33]
Блажен царицу видевший едва.

Кому ж цвета ее улыбки радость,
Любовь чудо знает, что ни изречь
Устами нельзя, ни памяти - сберечь.

A comparison of Ivanov's translations with the original text rapidly reveals a number of minor but significant distortions and inaccuracies. By 1913, the year in which the contract for the translation of the *Vita Nuova* was signed, Ivanov had already spent many years residing in Italy, and his knowledge of Italian was fluent. It was not therefore a question of his failing to catch the meaning of the original; it was much more a matter of deliberate adaptation, designed to bring Dante more firmly into the orbit of Symbolist attitudes by 'rewriting' the text of his works. The main tendency which emerges from the translations is one which is endemic to the nature of Symbolism, and derives from the movement's view of the role of the Symbolist artist in society and the nature of his art. Ivanov's ideas on this subject can be found in two essays which he wrote in 1904, 'The Poet and the Rabble' and 'Athena's Spear' (*SS* 1, 709–14 and 727–33). His spiritual and artistic golden age was the classical world of Ancient Greece when man had been in touch with the mystical essence of the universe and 'great art' (*bol'shoe iskusstvo*) had flourished in the form of universal myths. This ideal unity of man and the universe had, however, been broken, and in the present day 'great art' was no longer possible. Man could only strive to create 'lesser art' (*maloe iskusstvo*) of which one particular type would eventually lead him back to the ideal of universal art. This was 'art of the cell' (*keleinoe iskusstvo*), a form of art in which the artist acknowledged the fatal split between himself and the world, and retired to meditate in solitude in order to create an intuitive, personal, and mystical art whose symbols would be the seeds of future myths.

The present stage of Symbolist art was identified by Ivanov with 'art of the cell'. In this scheme Dante played an extremely impor-

tant role. On the one hand, he was held up as the last true representative of 'great art'; the Middle Ages were seen as the final period in history when a collective, unified spirit had informed a society and its culture (*SS* I, 710 and 730). On the other hand, his art was also seen to contain features of 'art of the cell', and as such was presented to the Symbolist as a model to imitate in order to travel the path back to ideal universal art. This is the reason why Ivanov chose the following lines from *Purgatorio* (XXVII, 88–90) as the epigraph to his first collection of poetry, *Pilot Stars*:

> Poco potea parer li del di fuori
> Ma par quel poco vedev'io le stelle
> Di lor solere e piu chiare e maggiori. (*SS* I, 513)
>
> Little of the outside could be seen there,
> but through that little I saw the stars
> brighter and larger than their wont.

For Ivanov these lines expressed the spiritual stance of the Symbolist artist, looking out from his isolation to the transcendent spiritual truths of the universe which for the moment might simply be private symbols, but would eventually become universal myths. In 'Athena's Spear' he cited these lines once more, referring to them as the 'symbol of the mystical soul' of 'art of the cell' (*SS* I, 729). Later, Blok took up the epigraph in his essay on the poetry and aesthetics of Ivanov, and used it to justify the isolation and obscurity of Symbolist verse which would eventually, in his and Ivanov's view, lead to a purer art of universal myth.[34]

While Symbolism was still at the stage of 'art of the cell', the process of artistic creation was naturally viewed as one in which the poet retired from the crowd to meditate on his own before producing a work of art which would be obscure and unintelligible to the masses. In 'The Poet and the Rabble', Ivanov linked this view of artistic creation to two poems by Pushkin, 'The Poet' ('*Poet*') and 'The Poet and the Crowd' ('*Poet i tolpa*') (originally entitled 'The Rabble' – '*Chern'*'):

> Tragic is the genius who has not yet discovered himself, and who has nothing to give the crowd, because for new revelations (and it is only granted to him to speak of new matters) his spirit moves him to retire first with his god. In deserted silence, in a secret sequence of visions and sounds which are useless and unintelligible to the crowd, he must wait for the 'blowing of a fine chill' and the 'epiphanies' of his god. He must take his

seat on an inaccessible tripod so that he can later, endowed with new clarity of vision, 'bring to the trembling people prayers from the lofty heights' . . . And the Poet withdraws – 'for sweet sounds and prayers'. The split has taken place.

> He runs, wild and austere,
> Full of sounds and confusion,
> To the shores of deserted seas,
> Into wide rustling forests.

This is the source of the artist's isolation – a fundamental feature of the recent history of the spirit, – and of the consequences of this feature: the attraction of art to esoteric exclusiveness, the subtlety and refinement of the 'sweet sounds', and the estrangement and introspectiveness of the solitary 'prayers'. (*SS* I, 771)

It is natural, given this view of the creative process, that when Ivanov came to start work on his translation of the *Vita Nuova*, he should have been struck by the analogy between his own views and Dante's account of the way he used to write poetry. In particular, chapter III of the *Vita Nuova* provided a strong parallel. In this chapter, Dante describes his encounter with Beatrice when out on a walk; her greeting made him so happy that he retired to his room to reflect in solitude upon the experience. Here he has a dream in which he sees a vision of Amor holding a figure wrapped in a crimson sheet whom he recognizes as Beatrice; Amor wakes the sleeping Beatrice and makes her eat Dante's glowing heart which he holds in his hand. Amor's happiness then changes to sorrow, and he departs. Dante awakens in anguish from his dream, reflects upon it, and then composes a sonnet in which he describes his vision and asks other poets to interpret it for him.

The clear sequence of events recorded in this passage – moving from an initial experience to withdrawal for solitary meditation, followed by a vision which culminates in the artistic creation of a poem which is not comprehensible to all – was seen by Ivanov as the perfect illustration of his own theory of artistic creation. He had experienced similar visions, such as the one recorded in his diary entry of 15 June 1908 (discussed in the previous chapter) and had also written poetry as a result. He therefore decided to incorporate Dante's passage into his essay of 1913 on the creative process, 'On the Limits of Art' (*SS* II, 628–51). Here he argues that artistic creation is a two-fold process, involving an initial stage of ascent (*voskhozhdenie*), requiring the poet's isolation and culmi-

nating in a moment of spiritual revelation, followed by the poet's descent (*niskhozhdenie*) from these heights to impart his vision to the people through an intelligible artistic form.

The essay begins with almost the whole of chapter III of the *Vita Nuova*, quoted in Ivanov's own translation (*SS* II, 628–9). Ostensibly this text is presented as an objective source from which the argument is then derived. In reality, however, the situation is rather more complex. Ivanov first selected the text because it overlapped in some respects with his own ideas. He then adapted it in such a way as to make it fit more closely with his aesthetic theories, using translation as a technique for remodelling the text to prepare the ground for the argument developed in the second part of the essay.

To illustrate this 'remodelling' process, one can take the sentence in which Dante describes how he retired to his room after experiencing the joy of Beatrice's greeting. The original text reads: 'presi tanta dolcezza, che come inebriato mi partio da le genti, e ricorsi a lo solingo luogo d'una mia camera, e puosimi a pensare di questa cortesissima' ('I was filled with such sweetness that, as if intoxicated, I went away from the people, and withdrew to the solitude of one of my rooms, and began to think about this gracious lady.' Ivanov has translated this as follows: *ya ispytal takuyu sladost', chto, kak p'yanyi, ushel iz tolpy. Ubezhav v uedinenie svoei gornitsy, predalsya ya dumam o milostivoi* ('I experienced such a feeling of sweetness that, as if intoxicated, I went away from the crowd. After running away to the solitude of my chamber, I gave myself up to thoughts of the gracious one'). There are a number of significant alterations in this translation which derive directly from Ivanov's view of the creative process. First, instead of 'da le genti' ('from the people'), he writes *iz tolpy* ('from the crowd'). This change has no foundation in Dante's text; Beatrice is accompanied by two other women, and no other people are mentioned in the chapter. Ivanov has clearly introduced the idea of the crowd to make the text more consonant with his interpretation of Pushkin's poems (the word 'crowd' (*tolpa*) occurs twice in the passage quoted above from 'The Poet and the Rabble'). Secondly, he has translated 'ricorsi' ('I withdrew') as *ubezhav* ('after running away'); as well as changing the form of the verb, he has also changed its meaning – from simply withdrawing to running. This again is clearly to bring Dante's text closer to Pushkin's poem 'The

Poet' from which Ivanov had quoted the line 'He *runs*, wild and austere' (Bezhit *on, dikii i surovyi*) in support of his argument. Finally, instead of the straightforward Italian word 'camera' ('room'), which in Russian would be *komnata*, we have the unusual and archaic term *gornitsa*, a chamber. The added emphasis which this word places on seclusion is evidently designed to evoke an association with the idea of the cell (*kel'ya*) to which the Symbolist poet repairs to create 'art of the cell' (*keleinoe iskusstvo*).

By dint of introducing these small changes of emphasis, Ivanov succeeds in making a passage from Dante's *Vita Nuova* read like a manifesto for his own brand of Symbolist aesthetics.

At the end of the passage quoted above from 'The Poet and the Rabble', Ivanov defended the right of contemporary Symbolist art to be esoteric and veiled. This characteristic of Symbolist art was directly linked by both Ivanov and Blok to Dante as a representative of 'art of the cell'. The Symbolists' desire to view Dante as a precursor of their own spiritual outlook caused them to regard him as a Symbolist in their own understanding of the term: as an obscure, inaccessible artist. This led to some considerable distortion of Dante. To the medieval mind, the transcendent world was a reality which could be experienced in a direct way; the mysteries of life after death could be described by Dante in terms of a real journey, conveyed through lucid, visual images. For the Symbolists, however, the transcendent world was something much more distant and abstract, to be recovered through an act of the imagination and intellect, rather than simply apprehended as a reality; its mysteries could only be intuited from a distance and hinted at through vague images whose very obscurity was designed to safeguard their esoteric nature.

Because of this approach, the Symbolists tended to invest Dante with an uncharacteristic aura of otherworldliness and obscurity. It is for this reason that Ivanov made so much of Dante's plea to the reader to note 'la dottrina che s'asconde / sotto 'l velame de li versi strani' ('the doctrine that is hidden under the veil of the strange verses' – *Inf.* IX, 62–3). Around 1890 he appended these lines as an epigraph to his long and highly obscure poem written in terzinas, 'The Sphinx' (*SS* I, 643). Many years later, in an essay of 1936 on symbolism, he quoted them again as an example of the conviction held by all poets of true, 'eternal' symbolism, such as Dante and Goethe, that the divine never manifests

itself without a veil, but always appears in a shrouded, inaccessible form (*SS* III, 655).

These views led Ivanov to endow his translations of Dante with an obscurity and complexity which are characteristic of his own language, but not of the original. This tendency is to some extent a feature of all Russian translations of Dante; it derives from the attempt to match medieval Italian by creating a deliberately archaic form of Russian, full of church Slavonicisms and obsolete expressions, which ignores the fact that Dante's language is very much lighter in tone and closer to the modern idiom. In the case of the Symbolists this tendency became even more marked. Throughout Ivanov's translations the simple and straightforward is replaced by the complicated; archaic or obsolete terms are used in place of normal, everyday words, and simple sentence structure gives way to more involved syntax. The overall effect of these changes is to present Dante as a difficult writer with a heavy, rhetorical style – whereas Dante was the first to insist, in his famous letter to Can Grande, that the *Commedia* is written in a 'humble' rather than elevated style.[35]

Ivanov's translation of some of the terms referring to speech in the *Vita Nuova* seems to be designed to make the function of language appear more obscure than it is in reality. In chapter III, the 'parole' ('words') spoken by the lordly figure who represents Love become *glagoly*, an obsolete term for *slova*, 'words'; a straightforward Italian word becomes archaic and ponderous in the Russian translation. The simple phrase 'lo dir presente' ('these present words') which occurs in the sonnet of this chapter becomes *svitok sei* ('this scroll') in Ivanov's rendering, introducing classical and esoteric connotations which are entirely foreign to the original. In the same way, in the sonnet from chapter XX quoted above, the rhetorical *sikh slov provozvestitel'* ('the proclaimer of these words') replaces the straightforward 'in suo dittare pone' ('tells in his rhyme').

The general language of the original is also changed for the same purpose. In chapter III, Dante uses the verb 'apparve' ('appeared') for the appearance of Beatrice; Ivanov translates this as *predstala* which has a much more ceremonial majestic resonance to it. The simple 'in mezzo a' ('between') becomes *promezh*, an unusual version of *mezhdu* ('between') which would have been a more obvious translation. When Dante seems to see a cloud in his room,

he writes factually: 'me parea vedere ne la mia camera una nebula di colore di fuoco' ('I seemed to see in my room a cloud the colour of fire'); this becomes *budto zastlalo gornitsu ognetsvetnoe oblako* ('as if a fire-coloured cloud had obscured the chamber'); the verb *zastlalo* ('obscured') is entirely absent from the original, and reveals Ivanov's typical desire to add extra connotations of veiled obscurity to Dante's text. In the same way, when Amor departs, Dante writes at the end of the sonnet in the same chapter: 'appresso gir lo ne vedea piangendo' ('then I saw him depart, weeping'); this is rendered by Ivanov as *I s plachem vzmyl v nadzvezdnye kraya* ('And, weeping, he flew up to the celestial regions'), which introduces an unusual verb generally reserved for birds (*vzmyt'*) in place of the simple Italian verb, and gratuitously adds a typically Symbolist abstract reference to the celestial regions.

Ivanov's translation of the sonnet from chapter XX contains similar features. The simple Italian conjunction 'tanto . . . che' ('for so long that') is rendered by the archaic Russian *dokole* ('until'). Dante's 'spirito d'Amore' ('spirit of Love') – which has a quite precise meaning for the medieval mind – becomes a vague reference to a 'master' (*vlastelin*).

Two further details are equally revealing of Ivanov's approach to Dante. Both are linked to his interpretation of Beatrice. First, there is the tendency to present her as a sensual rather than purely spiritual figure. This follows on naturally from the view that the Dionysian cult of Eros is the essence of all religious experience and has been absorbed into the Christian concept of love. Dante's Amor accordingly acquires the features of Dionysian Eros, and the portrayal of Beatrice, as the object of these feelings, is correspondingly affected. In chapter III of the *Vita Nuova* Dante has a vision of Amor bearing Beatrice on his arms, and feeding her Dante's heart. The original text reads: 'Ne le sue braccia mi parea vedere una persona dormire nuda, salvo che involta mi parea in uno drappo sanguigno leggeramente' ('In his arms I seemed to see a person sleeping naked, apart from seeming to be lightly wrapped in a crimson cloth'); Ivanov renders this as *I budto na rukakh ego spyashcheyu vizhu zhenu naguyu, edva prikrytuyu tkan'yu krovavo-aloyu* ('And I seemed to see a naked woman sleeping in his arms, barely covered by a blood-red cloth'). The difference between these two passages is small but significant; whereas Dante

has Beatrice fully but lightly covered, Ivanov presents her as *scarcely* covered. Similarly, in the sonnet, the Italian reads 'e ne le bracchia avea / madonna involta in un drappo dormendo' ('and in his arms he held / my lady wrapped in a cloth and sleeping'), while the Russian becomes *I Gospozhu, pod legkim pokryvalom, / V ob''yatiyakh vladyki vizhu ya* ('And I see my Lady, under a light covering, / In the embraces of the master'). Again, the same added emphasis on the lightness of the covering recurs, and Beatrice is found in the *embraces* of a ruler, rather than simply carried in the arms of Amor.

The sensual touch conferred upon Beatrice through these details of the translation prepares for the analysis of the passage which Ivanov develops in the rest of the essay. He argues that the process of artistic creation originates in a moment of erotic enjoyment which leads to a stormy wave of Dionysiac feeling; this in turn gives rise to the Dionysiac epiphany or vision. The flash of mystic insight which inspires all true art therefore arises from the experience of Eros (*SS* II, 630). He then attempts to illustrate this in terms of Dante's passage. Beatrice's appearance and her greeting to the poet provide the initial moment of erotic enjoyment, and provoke the intense feeling of blissful sweetness which constitutes the stage of the Dionysiac epiphany. The sensual features previously associated with Beatrice in the translation make this interpretation of the passage more plausible.

The second detail concerns the association of Beatrice with Sophia. One can sense the influence of Solovyovian ideas on the language which Ivanov has used in his translations of the sonnets from chapters XX and XXI. In the first sonnet, 'Amore e 'l cor gentil sono una cosa . . .', Dante describes the way in which the potentiality of love, always dormant in the heart, is made actual by the sight of the beauty of a wise woman ('saggia donna'). Ivanov had already set the opening line of this sonnet in a Sophiological context in his poem 'Crux Amoris', composed some three years earlier. Here he extends this interpretation to the rest of the sonnet by subtly altering the text of the original through his translation. He renders the line about a beautiful and wise woman appearing before the eyes of a man with the words *Zhenoi smirennomudroyu predstanet, / Vzor muzheskii plenyaya, Krasota* ('In the guise of a wise and humble woman, Beauty / Will appear, captivating man's gaze'). Beauty here is not the physical beauty of a wise woman, as in

Dante's text, but an abstract, personified Beauty which will manifest itself to man in the guise of a 'wise woman'. The use of the poetic *zhena* rather than *zhenshchina* for 'donna' ('woman') suggests a link between this 'wise woman' and Sophia. Solovyov used the term *zhena* to refer to Sophia whom he identified with the 'woman clothed in the sun' (*zhena, oblechennaya v solntse*) of Revelation; this link subsequently became a commonplace among the Symbolists, including Ivanov, who refers to it in his essay on Solovyov (*SS* III, 302).

Ivanov loses the subtle transition from visual perception to the feeling of love which is so important in the original. Instead of describing this process on a simple, literal level, he takes us into a symbolic, abstract realm in which Beauty appears to man as a wise woman evocative of Sophia. In this respect his translation is very reminiscent of his earlier poem, 'Beauty', in which the figure of Beauty is also clearly identified with Sophia and appears to man in the guise of a woman.

The next sonnet from chapter XXI deals directly with Beatrice, and in his translation Ivanov describes her with a term usually applied to Sophia. To express the idea that the person who sees Beatrice is blessed, Dante writes 'è laudato chi prima la vide' ('blessed is he who first sees her'); Ivanov translates this as *Blazhen tsaritsu videvshii edva* ('Blessed is he who has barely glimpsed the queen'), substituting for the simple pronoun 'la' ('her') the word 'queen' (*tsaritsa*). For the Symbolist poets, this term had special connotations, deriving from its use in Solovyov's Sophiological poems as a way of referring to Sophia. It would be quite out of character for Dante to describe Beatrice by any such term. In the *Commedia* he refers to her as his 'donna', and reserves the term 'regina' ('queen') for the Virgin Mary.

Furthermore, in the immediately preceding line, Ivanov introduces another word which is absent from the original. Dante's phrase 'Ogne dolcezza, ogne pensero umile' ('All sweetness, every humble thought'), referring to the thoughts and emotions which arise in the heart of a person who hears Beatrice speak, is translated as *pomyslov smirennomudrykh sladost'* ('the sweetness of wise and humble thoughts'). Ivanov has added to the quality of humility the idea of wisdom, the main attribute of Sophia and her seekers. These two additions lend a distinctly Solovyovian aura to the depiction of Beatrice in this sonnet.

In these translations, therefore, Dante is subtly redefined in terms of Ivanov's spiritual outlook and Symbolist aesthetics; he emerges as a writer who has retired from the crowd in order to compose obscure, archaic verse, devoted to a Beatrice who combines sensual features with Sophiological ones.

CONVIVIO

The next translation of a work by Dante in which Ivanov became involved was a joint project; in 1914 he cooperated with the philosopher Vladimir Frantsevich Ern (1881–1917) in a translation of the *Convivio* which the Sabashnikov publishing house was interested in printing. The project was never completed, and only survives in the form of a manuscript text of the translation of the first half of the work, located in the Sabashnikov archive of the Manuscripts Department of the Lenin Library in Moscow. Although the text is entirely in Ern's hand, only the prose part of the work is in his translation; the *canzone* which occurs at the beginning of the second book was translated by Ivanov.[36]

The friendship of Ivanov and Ern dates back to 1904 when the two writers first met each other while abroad, towards the end of Ivanov's period of residence in Switzerland. After Ivanov returned to Russia, Ern was one of the first guests to attend the regular Wednesday gatherings at the tower where he frequently stayed when visiting St Petersburg.[37] The idea of doing a joint translation of the *Convivio* probably first took form several years later when both writers found themselves living in Rome and became particularly close friends. In the late autumn of 1912 Ivanov and his family moved from France to Rome where they remained until their departure for Russia the following autumn. Ern had been living in Italy since 1911, based mainly in Rome. In December 1912 he moved back from his country retreat near Rome to the city, and stayed there until his return to Russia in May 1913.[38] He was therefore together with Ivanov in Rome throughout the period from January to May 1913 when Ivanov began his correspondence with Sabashnikov about the possibility of undertaking new translations of Dante's works and signed the contract for the translation of the *Vita Nuova*. Ern would certainly have followed these negotiations with interest, and it is quite possible that at this stage Ivanov may have suggested to Sabashnikov that he should also

consider publishing a translation of the *Convivio* which, unlike the *Vita Nuova* and the *Commedia*, had never previously been fully translated into Russian. It would have been natural for Ern, a professional philosopher, to take on the prose parts of the treatise, but to leave the verse to Ivanov with his reputation as a poet and experience of translating verse. A similar venture was undertaken by Ivanov for the same series with the literary critic and historian Mikhail Gershenzon (1869–1925). In 1914 they worked together on a translation of Petrarch's works, published in 1915. Ivanov translated the poetry, and Gershenzon did the prose.[39]

There are several reasons connected with Ivanov's and Ern's religious and philosophical interests which explain why they were attracted to Dante and the *Convivio* in particular. On a general level, there was the fervent, almost mystical love of Italy which they shared with a number of other Russians of their generation. When Ivanov first visited Rome in 1892, he was quite overwhelmed. He poured out all his impressions in a long poem entitled 'Laeta' which he sent from Rome to his friend A. M. Dmitrievsky in Russia. Unlike Ovid who lamented the bitterness of exile in *Tristia*, he wrote about the joy of discovering a second homeland:

Рим – всех богов жилищем клянусь! – мне по сèрдцу обитель:
Цели достигнув святой, здесь я, паломник, блажен.
.....
Родине верен, я Рим родиной новою чту. (*SS* I, 636, 638)

Rome – I swear by the home of all the gods! – is an abode to my liking:
Having reached my holy goal, here I, a pilgrim, have found bliss.
.....
Faithful to my homeland, I honour Rome as a new homeland.

Similar feelings were recorded by him over thirty years later when he returned to Rome after leaving Russia in 1924. The cycle of 'Roman Sonnets' ('*Rimskie sonety*') opens with the following lines:

Вновь арок древних верный пилигрим,
В мой поздний час вечерним 'Ave Roma'
Приветствую как свод родного дома,
Тебя, скитаний пристань, вечный Рим. (*SS* III, 578)

Once again a faithful pilgrim of the ancient arches,
In my late hour, with an evening 'Ave Roma'
I greet you like the roof of my own home,
You, the haven of my wanderings, eternal Rome.

Ern expressed his delight at being in Italy in a letter he wrote to his friend, the literary historian and critic Aleksandr Sergeevich Glinka (1878–1949), soon after settling in Italy in 1911:

It's nice to be in Italy – it is a kind of second homeland for us. I feel as if my soul has set off on a series of wanderings, and is travelling through unknown lands and sailing over unknown seas, and yet its path [*put'*] is clear. And from afar the homeland somehow seems particularly dear and glimmers with a kind of starry glory.

The next year, he echoed the same sentiments in another letter to his friend:

We have become terribly attached to Italy and even now it is already hard for us to think that we will soon be leaving – perhaps we will never return here again. It is a unique country, the noblest and most brilliant in Europe. It seems to me that for the Russian soul, Italy is a second homeland.[40]

This sense of Italy as a second homeland with a special spiritual meaning for Russians underlay both Ivanov's and Ern's fascination with Dante as Italy's chief poet. It was linked for both of them with a strong interest in the relationship between the religions of both nations, Russian Orthodoxy and Catholicism. Whereas Ivanov moved from a childhood upbringing firmly grounded in his native faith to an increasing interest in Catholicism, culminating in his conversion of 1926, Ern was much more strongly wedded to the Russian Orthodox tradition. He came from a family of German origin, and took up Russian Orthodoxy in a rather militant fashion, being particularly opposed to the rationalist elements of Catholicism. In his letters to Glinka from Italy he expresses constant criticisms about Catholics, and approves only of those who turn to the Russian Orthodox church for spiritual inspiration. In one letter, he contrasts the soberness of Greek and Russian saints with what he describes as the 'drunkenness' of their Catholic counterparts.[41] In another, he describes at length a meeting with a Catholic priest whom he had befriended on an earlier occasion in a train; he calls him a 'good, pure soul' because he was very interested in Russia, had started to learn Russian, and was planning to travel to Russia. Encouraged by this example, he continues with a report on

his recent meeting with the Italian theologian, A. Palmieri, renowned for his interest in Russian Orthodoxy:

> Generally speaking, among the Catholics one does come across some good people. They are sincerely amazed at the religiousness of Russians and of Slavs in general, which is undoubtedly greater than in the West, and some of them are beginning to look towards the distant, defamed and stigmatized East with hope and expectation. Recently I saw Palmieri; he knows Russian and has made a magnificent scholarly study of the whole of Russian theological and philosophical literature. He considers it to be *extremely rich* and most remarkable, and thinks that the official Roman Church's indifferent attitude to orthodoxy is stupid.[42]

In her memoirs of this period, Lidiya Ivanova recalls Ern's daily visits to her father in Rome; apparently, the main subject of their lengthy discussions was Catholicism – for which Ivanov offered an apologetic – and Orthodoxy – defended by Ern.[43] For both writers, translating the *Convivio* fitted in well with their general interest in promoting the dialogue between the two churches; it was a means of incorporating a work of Catholic philosophy into the Russian Orthodox tradition with a view to either Catholicizing the latter or Russianizing the former.

Ern also shared Ivanov's view of the metaphysical nature of true culture. In *The Struggle for Logos (Bor'ba za Logos)*, published in 1911, he took up Ivanov's ideas on the alienation of the modern artist from the world around him; like Ivanov, he saw classical antiquity and the Middle Ages as periods in history when the artist had still been at one with his environment. To recover this lost unity, he advocated a restoration of the ideal harmony between culture and the church which had prevailed in the Middle Ages.[44] In this attempt to restore culture to its religious Christian roots, Dante, as the chief representative of medieval art, was obviously an important model for Ern, in the same way as he was for Ivanov.

Within this general framework Ern's perception of Dante was strongly influenced by the ideas of two nineteenth-century Italian ontologist philosophers whose works he had been studying in Italy during the period before he began work on the *Convivio*. His interest in these philosophers was perhaps partly related to the fact that both, although ordained priests, had gone through periods of ill-favour with the Catholic church and had had their works put on the index. Significantly, Dante played an important role in both authors' systems. Antonio Rosmini-Serbati (1797–1855) turned to

medieval scholastic philosophy as a source for some of his ideas; his reference to Dante in this context was quoted by Ern in his book on Rosmini, published in 1914. Vincenzo Gioberti (1801–52) was the subject of Ern's next major work of 1916. He was a Dante scholar who regarded Dante as a great philosopher of the Platonic school of ontologism, and interpreted the *Convivio* as a masterful expression of this tradition. Ern discusses these views at length and quotes a passage from the *Convivio* which Gioberti cites as his motto for a universalistic approach in philosophy.[45]

All these factors contributed to Ern's and Ivanov's joint interest in translating the *Convivio*. Although the idea may well have originated in Rome in 1913, it seems unlikely that much work was done on it until the following year. After leaving Italy in May 1913, Ern returned to his home-town in the Caucasus, Tiflis, and settled down to work full-time on his dissertation which he was under great pressure to complete as soon as possible. In February 1914 he was nearing the end of his task and wrote to Glinka that he expected to be able to travel to Moscow and submit his thesis in another two months. His next letter was written in Moscow on 26 May, the day after handing in his dissertation. He was staying with Ivanov, and one of the highlights of his visit so far had been their trip to the Trinity Monastery of St Sergius at Sergiev Posad (the seat of the Theological Academy) to witness Florensky defending his dissertation. Ivanov and the priest Pavel Florensky (1882–1952) were close friends at this time, and a few days later Florensky came to stay with Ivanov for a couple of 'nights', as Ern put it in his letter, since the two friends apparently slept all day and talked through the night.[46]

The contact is significant because there is a letter of this period in Florensky's private archive which reveals that the question of whether or not a translation of the *Convivio* by Ivanov and Ern would be commissioned by the Sabashnikov publishing house for the 'Monuments of World Literature' series was still undecided by mid-May 1914.[47] Soon after this juncture, however, the matter must have been resolved, for there is clear evidence that Ern spent the following summer working on the translation.

During the summer of 1914 Ivanov and Ern both left Moscow for different destinations. Ivanov travelled to Petrovskoe, a small village on the river Oka, where he stayed with his Lithuanian friend, the Catholic poet Yurgis Baltrushaitis (1873–1944). Ern

returned to the Caucasus and rented a dacha in Anapa, a coastal resort not far from Novorossiisk. It was here that he evidently began work on his translation of the *Convivio*. On 8 July he wrote a letter to Ivanov, composed in a curious mock-Dantesque style which evidently had the status of a private language between the two writers:

I inform you that Anapa is an extremely nasty little town with a charming sea-scape which is most conducive to reflections on Aphrodite of the Heavens, to translating the *Convivio* and to writing the 'Letters about the Name of God' – just what is needed for my 'kidneys' and my sinful soul. Furthermore, I inform you that yesterday I sent off by registered post the *Convito* and the 25 roubles which a certain great gentleman slipped into my side-pocket with great consideration when I was leaving the home which had sheltered me with such unlimited hospitality in the days of my Moscow wanderings. It is necessary to say that my heart is filled to the brim with the deepest gratitude, and that all the details of my sweetest sojourn in that Arcadia of friendship are inscribed in the book of my memory in letters of gold.[48]

The general tone of this letter recalls Dante's effusive expressions of gratitude to Can Grande, the famous lord of Verona who provided him with generous hospitality and patronage during his exile, a fact which Dante acknowledged by dedicating the *Paradiso* to him. The last sentence of the passage quoted was originally written in Italian; its style ('nel libro della memoria mia siano scritti con lettere d'oro tutti dettagli del mio soavissimo soggiorno . . .') deliberately echoes the opening of the *Vita Nuova* in which Dante declares his intention to record the words which are written in the book of his memory.

The *Convito* which Ern mentions in his letter is most likely to be an Italian edition of the work (not his translation) – either Ivanov's copy which Ern had borrowed and is now returning, together with the 25 roubles, or Ern's own copy which he is lending Ivanov. In either case, the fact that he is taking the trouble to post it to Ivanov at his holiday retreat suggests that it was needed by his friend for work on his part of the translation over that summer.

A few days later Ern wrote to Glinka, outlining his current work projects. These included two sets of letters on religious topics (the dispute over the name of God and Ern's impressions of Christian Rome), destined for the periodical press, and the translation of the *Convivio*, about which he writes the following:

Thirdly, I am translating Dante's *Convivio* for the Sabashnikovs. This translation is my only source of income for the whole autumn. In all likelihood not one of those projects will be finished by the autumn. I am somewhat torn between them, but on the other hand all three projects are extremely close to my heart and I experience a feeling of bliss when translating Dante, and when delving into the debate over the name of God, and when recalling my impressions of Rome.

The outbreak of the First World War interrupted the letter which was only resumed after an interval of over a month on 21 August:

As was to be expected, I did not manage to complete any of the projects which we mentioned. I only translated half of Dante, and both sets of letters have ground to a halt because the advent of war has brought about an upheaval in the world of journals and I do not know which of them still exist and which have stopped existing.[49]

Shortly afterwards, in September 1914, Ern moved back to Moscow where he rented a room in Ivanov's flat on Zubovsky Boulevard. He remained in this flat until his death from tuberculosis in May 1917, and spent much time 'in great friendship and great spiritual closeness' with Ivanov and his family.[50] However, the two friends never returned to their translation of the *Convivio*. The manuscript which is in the Sabashnikov archive corresponds to the part of the work which Ern had completed by the end of August 1914; the fact that it is entirely in his handwriting suggests that he already had Ivanov's translation of the *canzone* with him at that time and incorporated it into his final manuscript. The project may have been abandoned for any one of several reasons – perhaps Sabashnikov backed out of the agreement as in the case of the *Vita Nuova*, or perhaps it was due to the pressure of other work or to Ern's poor state of health. After Ern's death, Ivanov wrote a number of poems dedicated to his memory. Not surprisingly, these draw extensively on Dantesque imagery, reflecting the deep interest which both friends shared in Dante.[51]

At the beginning of the *Convivio*, Dante describes the subject of his book; it will consist of fourteen *canzoni* and their exposition in prose; the *canzoni* themselves may be a little obscure, but each one will be followed by a detailed exposition in prose, designed to elucidate its literal and allegorical meaning (*Con.* I, i, 14–15). Dante did not in fact finish the *Convivio*, and out of the projected fourteen *canzoni*, only three were written. In its final form the

Convivio consists of four tractates. The first describes the general purpose of the work, and defends various aspects of it, such as the use of the Vulgate rather than Latin; each of the remaining three tractates consists of a *canzone* followed by an extensive commentary in prose. The part of the *Convivio* which Ern and Ivanov translated (the first half, i.e. tractates I and II) only contains one *canzone*, placed at the beginning of the second tractate, 'Voi che 'ntendendo il terzo ciel movete . . .' ('O you who move the third heaven by intellection . . .'), and this is the text which Ivanov translated.

It is worth noting at the outset that the *Convivio*, according to Dante's own definition of its subject, is based on a relationship which interested Ivanov greatly, and which he associated with Dante; this is the relationship between a profound spiritual experience, its expression in poetry, and the subsequent interpretation of this poetic record in prose. In his introductory note to his translation of the *Vita Nuova* Ivanov laid particular stress on this aspect of the work; his comments are entirely devoted to a discussion of the relationship between the poems of the *Vita Nuova* and the prose passages which describe the biographical origin of the poems and interpret their meaning. A few years earlier he had considered adapting this method for use in his own writing; after the death of Lidiya Dimitrievna, Kuzmin suggested to him that he should write a prose commentary to accompany the poems of 'Love and Death', following the model of the *Vita Nuova*.

Although Ivanov did not take up this suggestion, the way of thinking which is laid bare in the poetry–prose structure of the *Vita Nuova* and the *Convivio* was clearly one with which he felt a particular sense of affinity. It was in perfect harmony with the two sides of his nature – the mystical–poetic and the rational–philosophic. Sergei Bulgakov made a special point of comparing him to Dante in this respect, using the term 'poet-thinker' of both writers. Ivanov's friend, the poet Vladimir Pyast, recorded a similar comment; when he visited the tower in September 1905 with Ern, he observed: 'Vyacheslav was divided: with Ern he was a philosopher, with me a poet.'[52]

At the end of the *canzone* which Ivanov has translated, Dante draws a distinction between the rational sense of the poem, which may not be clear to all, and its poetic beauty. Ern has in some sense taken on the role of the rational philosopher, explaining the sense

of the poem in the prose commentary which he has translated; his translation is excellent, very close to the original and lucid in style. However, the *canzone* is by no means limited to the mystical, poetic side of reality; it explores the tension between the irrational and rational sides of man by describing the struggle which is taking place in Dante's heart between his love for Beatrice, who is no longer living, and his new love for another woman. The poet used to be consoled by thoughts of Beatrice in the heavens, but a new thought now comes to him and banishes these reflections by bidding him look at another woman. While Beatrice represents the contemplative, mystical way which leads through faith to truth, the second lady, as Dante explains in his prose commentary, represents Philosophy, the path which leads through rational understanding based on the evidence of the senses to truth (*Con.* II, XV, 3). These are two complementary aspects of wisdom, truth revealed to man from above, or truth searched out by man on earth, the mystic way and the philosophical way.

The *canzone* thus dramatizes, both through its explicit subject and through the tension in its form between poetic beauty and rational sense, an inner debate between the mystical and the rational aspects of man's soul. This theme held a place of special importance in Ivanov's world-view and is presented by him in a characteristic way in his translation.

The text of Ivanov's translation of 'Voi che 'ntendendo il terzo ciel movete . . .' is as follows:

О вы, чей разум движет сферу третью!
Услышьте тайный помысл мой сердечный!
Зане другим сказать бы я не мог
Столь новых дум. Свод неба быстротечный
Влекомый вами, жизнь мою, как сетью,
Своим круговращением увлек.
Итак сколь долу горестен мой рок,
Достойно вам поведаю, благие
И мудрые бесплотные! Молюсь
Внемлите вы, какой тоской томлюсь
И как душа стенает и какие
Ей прекословя, речи говорит
Тот дух, чей звездный лик меж вас горит.

Бывало сумрак сердца оживляла
Небесная мечта. Ее державе
Владыки вашего святил я в дань.

Жену я видел в лучезарной славе.
Столь сладко горний свет мечта являла [,]
Что дальнюю душа рвалася грань
Переступить. Но враг подъемлет брань.
Душа бежит гонителя. Владеет
Мной деспот новый, и волнует грудь.
Он на жену другую мне взглянуть
Велит. 'Кто зреть спасенье вожделеет', –
Так шепчет он – 'пусть в очи смотрит ей
Коль не страшится вздохов и скорбей ['].

Но с помыслом губительным враждует
Умильная мечта, что говорила
Мне о жене, увенчанной в раю.
Душа, чью боль она заворожила,
Осиротев[,] мятется и тоскует,
Утешную зовет мечту свою.
Корит глаза: 'Разлучницу мою
В который час [,] мятежные [,] узрели?
И вас она? О новой сей жене,
Ослушные [,] не верили вы мне!
Мечи для душ таких, как я, горели
В очах убийственных. Я не могла
Те очи скрыть от вас – и умерла!'

– 'Нет, ты не умерла, но ужаснулась
Внезапности, душа, и возроптала' –
Ей молвит некий друг, любви посол:
[–'] Прекрасную узрев, иной ты стала.
Преобратясь, почто же содрогнулась,
И малодушный страх в тебя вошел?
Смири мятеж и победи раскол!
Сколь мудрая приветно величава,
Сколь благочестна, кротости полна!
Отныне госпожа твоя – она.
Окресть ее чудес столь многих слава [,]
Что скажешь ты: "Вотще была борьба [,]
Господь любви, се аз, твоя раба!" ['.]

О песнь моя! согласным одобреньем
Принять могущих весть твою – немного[;]
Твой смысл доступен, ведаю, не всем.
Коль темная ведет тебя дорога
Ко встрече с равнодушьем и бореньем [,]
Утешься, и кому глагол твой нем [,]

Ответствуй на вопрос его: зачем?
Твое вещанье странно и неясно?
– 'Пусть весть темна, но я ль не сладкогласна?'

From the point of view of form, Ivanov's translation is faithful to the original. It keeps exactly to the number of lines of Dante's *canzone* – four parts of thirteen lines each, followed by an *envoi* or *tornata*, as Dante calls it, of nine lines. Ivanov has used iambic pentameters throughout, and has successfully reproduced Dante's rhyming scheme.

However, formal perfection in a translation can sometimes only be achieved at the expense of exactitude of meaning; there are instances in Ivanov's version where a line or phrase has been added in quite gratuitously, without any basis in the original, evidently to make up an extra line or to preserve the rhyming scheme. For similar reasons, there are some omissions.

As in the case of the *Vita Nuova* translation, these changes generally reflect features of Ivanov's own spiritual outlook. There is the same tendency to prefer the complicated to the simple. On the syntactical level, this takes the form of the introduction of *enjambements*. Although these do not occur in the original, Ivanov introduces them seven times in the course of his translation (at the end of ll. 4, 9, 15, 19, 21, 23 and 40), thereby creating considerably more tension in the text. He also introduces complicated inversions of natural word order; one can contrast, for example, the complexity of the first two lines of the *envoi* in the Russian version (nearly every word is put in a different order from the expected one) with the simplicity and straightforward sentence structure of the original:

Canzone, io credo che saranno radi
color che tua ragione intendan bene

My song, I think they will be few
who clearly understand your meaning

On the lexical level Ivanov introduces numerous archaisms; *zane* (l.3), an archaic word for 'since') is just one of several possible examples.

The most characteristic feature of the translation is the treatment of the theme of the relationship of man to the cosmos. This was one of the corner-stones of Ivanov's world-view. There is

some justification for introducing it into the translation, since the original *canzone* opens with an address to the angelic intelligences who move the third sphere (Venus, the planet of love) which is held responsible by the poet for the state in which he finds himself. Dante thus does link his own state to the activities of the cosmos. However, in the translation, this link acquires a quite different resonance.

For Ivanov, the essence of the mystical experience was the act of self-transcendence, the breaking of the soul's boundaries. In this way, man, the microcosm, could achieve a form of mystical union with the universe, the macrocosm. These ideas were influenced by Nietzsche, and frequently affected Ivanov's portrayal of Dante's universe. In 'The Spirit', for example, he projected his own Dionysiac vision of the universe on to Dante's. The melodramatic post-Romantic flavour of this poem's depiction of the individual's soul, scooped up and hurled into the cosmic wheeling of the planets, has little in common with Dante's measured ascent through the heavens of Paradise. A similar tendency is reflected in some of the distortions of Ivanov's translation of 'Voi che 'ntendendo . . .'. Lines 4–6 can be taken as an example. In Italian they read as follows:

> El ciel che segue lo vostro valore,
> gentili creature che voi sete,
> mi tragge ne lo stato ov'io mi trovo.
>
> The heaven that follows your power,
> noble creatures that you are,
> draws me into the state in which I find myself.

For the simple 'el ciel' ('the heaven') Ivanov has substituted *svod neba bystrotechnyi* ('the fast-flowing vault of the sky'), introducing the idea of vast cosmic spaces filled with movement; furthermore, *vlekomyi* ('moved') implies a stronger force than 'segue' ('follows'); *kak set'yu, / Svoim krugovrashcheniem* ('as if with a net, by its circular whirling') is a complete addition on the poet's part, contributing further to the idea of swirling, inevitable movement. These additions have been made at the expense of Dante's charming phrase 'gentili creature che voi sete' ('noble creatures that you are'), and of the important idea of the 'valore' ('power') of the angelic intelligences, as well as of the state in which Dante finds himself.

Whereas for Dante the starry spheres are a part of the real world, on which they exert a controlled influence, for Ivanov they are abstractions, *blagie / I mudrye besplotnye* ('blessed and wise incorporeal beings' – ll. 8–9). Ivanov's translation of 'un spirto . . . / che vien pe' raggi de la vostra stella' ('a spirit . . . that comes on the rays of your star' – ll. 12–13) as *Tot dukh, chei zvezdnyi lik mezh vas gorit* ('That spirit whose starry countenance burns among you') completely misses the point of the original; in medieval cosmology the rays of a planet were seen as the means by which its influence was transmitted to earth, as Dante explains in some detail in his prose commentary to the *canzone* (*Con.* II, vi, 9). Ivanov's translation substitutes for this precise concept a vague undefined image.

Similarly, in the second stanza, the soul's simple direct statement 'Io men vo' gire' ('I wish to go there too') is replaced by a lengthy paraphrase: *Stol' sladko gornii svet mechta yavlyala* [,] / *Chto dal'nyuyu dusha rvalasya gran'* / *Perestupit'* ('So sweetly did the heavenly light appear in the dream, That my soul longed to cross the distant limit'). This paraphrase introduces characteristic Ivanovian themes: the abstract concept of the 'heavenly light' (*gornii svet*) (its counterpart, the notion of the 'earthly world' (*dol'nii mir*) was also gratuitously introduced by Ivanov in l. 7) and the idea of the soul bursting to transcend its limitations ('longed' (*rvalasya*) and 'limit' (*gran'*) directly echo the title of the section of *Pilot Stars* entitled 'The Impulse and the Limits' ('*Poryv i grani*')).

The vision of the cosmos which Ivanov presents in his translation is quite different from that conveyed by the original; instead of a sense of real celestial bodies, we have abstractions; instead of an organized system of influences, we have a chaotic universe in perpetual Dionysiac motion. Typically, different forms of the word *myatezh* ('restlessness', 'storminess') are introduced by Ivanov at three points during the *canzone* (ll. 31, 34 and 46) although they do not occur in the original.

However, to Ivanov's credit, apart from distortions of this type which result directly from his own world-view, there are several points in his translation which show a close knowledge of the meaning which Dante intended his text to carry. It is clear from various details of the translation that Ivanov made extensive use of Dante's prose commentary as a guide to the best way of translating the *canzone*. As an example, one can take the second line of Dante's poem, 'udite il ragionar ch'è nel mio core' ('listen to the

speech in my heart'), rendered into Russian as *Uslysh'te tainyi pomysl moi serdechnyi!* ('Hear the secret thought of my heart'). At first glance, this may seem inaccurate – why has Ivanov replaced the precise indication of 'nel mio core' ('in my heart') with the vaguer adjective *serdechnyi* ('of the heart'), and why has he added the adjective *tainyi* ('secret'), implying a degree of mystery which does not appear to be in the original? The translation is, however, based on the interpretation which Dante gives to the line in his commentary: '*Udite il ragionar* lo quale *è nel mio core*: cioè dentro da me, chè ancora non è di fuori apparito. E da sapere è che in tutta questa canzone, secondo l'uno senso e l'altro, lo "core" si prende per lo secreto dentro, e non per altra spezial parte de l'anima e del corpo' ('*Listen to the speech* which is *in my heart*: that is to say inside me, which has not yet appeared on the outside. One should know that in this entire *canzone*, according to one meaning and the other, the "heart" is taken to be the secret within, and not any other special part of the spirit or body' – *Con.* II, vi, 2). In the light of Dante's explanation of the meaning of 'nel mio core' ('in my heart') as 'lo secreto dentro' ('the secret within'), Ivanov's translation seems well in character with the full meaning intended in the original.

These details of translation reflect a characteristic combination of scholarly knowledge and understanding of the original text, together with a generous measure of poetic license in the adaptation of this text to the author's spiritual outlook.

DIVINA COMMEDIA

According to the poet and literary historian Ilya Golenishchev-Kutuzov (1904–69), Ivanov was involved in a plan for a new translation of the *Commedia* at the beginning of the century. Bryusov was to translate the *Inferno* and Ivanov was responsible for the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*.[53] Golenishchev-Kutuzov recalls Ivanov telling him of this project when they met in Rome in the summer of 1928. Ivanov may have been referring to the translation of the *Commedia* which Vengerov wished to include in the 'Library of Great Writers' series published by Brockhaus and Efron. We have already seen that Bryusov worked on a translation of the *Inferno* for Vengerov from 1904 until the collapse of the project at the end of 1905. Ivanov was in close contact with Bryusov at this

time, and, like Bryusov, had already done some translations of Byron for the same series; he may well, therefore, have also been invited by Vengerov to take part in the Dante project.

However, apart from Golenishchev-Kutuzov's recollections, there is no further evidence of Ivanov working on a translation of the *Commedia* at this stage. Several years later in 1913, he wrote to Sabashnikov with a proposal that he should translate the *Vita Nuova, Purgatorio* or *Paradiso* for the 'Monuments of World Literature' series. Sabashnikov took up the first part of the proposal, but did not respond to the second. Ivanov did not then return to the idea of translating the *Commedia* until 1920. The first indication of his plan occurs in a letter of 12 May 1920 which he addressed to the Society of Lovers of Russian Literature. After announcing his plan to travel abroad in order to work on three projects – the completion of his translation of Aeschylus's tragedies; a monograph on Aeschylus, and the translation of the *Commedia* – he appealed to the Society to lend him its official support in order to facilitate his access to foreign book collections and academic circles.[54]

Since the winter of 1919 to 1920, the health of Ivanov's wife had been very poor, and the family had made several attempts to secure permission to travel abroad. In early 1920 a travel permit was authorized by Lunacharsky, and the day of departure was fixed for May. This explain's Ivanov's reference to his imminent departure for abroad. The trip was cancelled, however, and Ivanov remained in Russia for another four years. According to several indications, he spent the summer of 1920 working on his translation of the *Commedia*.

Firstly, in Ivanov's Rome archive, there is a copy of a contract for the translation of the *Commedia*, drawn up on 14 May 1920 (exactly two days after the letter to the Society was written) between Ivanov and the Brockhaus and Efron publishing house.[55] The translation may have been commissioned at this particular time because of the impending six-hundred-year anniversary of Dante's death, due to fall in September 1921. The contract consists of nine clauses specifying the conditions under which the work is to be executed. Ivanov undertook to translate the *Commedia* into Russian in two versions, verse and prose, and to provide necessary notes and commentaries to his translation. He was to finish both versions within three years from the date of completion of con-

tract, and in any case not later than 31 December 1923, submitting one part of the translation each year. The document is stamped and signed by A. Perelman, a representative of the Brockhaus and Efron publishing house's management.

Two further sources reveal that Ivanov was working on his translation during the following month. The first comes from the record kept by Feiga Kogan (1891–1974) of the poetry classes given by Ivanov from late February to early August 1920 under the auspices of the Moscow State Institute of Declamation.[56] The classes were used by Ivanov as a forum for discussing poetry (his own as well as his students'), and for lecturing on the techniques of versification. At the fifteenth meeting of the circle (around 20 June) he read out four sonnets from his new cycle 'De Profundis Amavi'. Kogan commented that she could sense Dante's influence on the poems. Ivanov agreed, and added that he had in fact always felt a great sense of affinity with Dante and was currently working on him (a reference to his translation of the *Commedia*, as Kogan notes in her record). This is an interesting example of Ivanov acknowledging the close inter-relationship between his poetry and translations, and the importance of Dante in both spheres.

Further light on the translation is shed in the *Correspondence from Two Corners* (*Perepiska iz dvukh uglov*), first published in 1921. This book contains the letters which Vyacheslav Ivanov and his friend Mikhail Gershenzon wrote to each other from opposite corners of a room which they were sharing in a sanatorium near Moscow during the summer of 1920. In their letters they conducted an intense philosophical debate about the role of culture in civilization. The fourth letter of the exchange, written by Gershenzon between 19 and 30 June, reveals that Ivanov was then working on a translation of Dante's *Purgatorio*:

> Now I am writing in your presence, while, lost in quiet reflection, you try to smooth out through thought the stiff, age-old folds of Dante's terzinas, in order to then, with an eye on the model, fashion their likeness in Russian verse ... And after dinner we shall lie down, each on our own bed, you with a sheet of paper, I with a little leather-bound book, and you will begin to read to me your translation of 'Purgatory' – the fruits of your morning's work, and I will compare and argue. And now again, as on previous days, I will drink in the thick honey of your verse, but will also experience again the familiar aching sensation.
>
> Oh, my friend, swan of Apollo! Why is it that feeling was so strong, why was thought so fresh and the word so significant – then, in the fourteenth

century, and why are our thoughts and feelings so pale, our speech as if laced with cobwebs? (*SS* III, 387)

The two friends clearly have a well-established daily pattern which they have been following for some time. This was not the first occasion they were working together on a translation from the Italian classics; in 1914 Ivanov had translated various sonnets for the edition of Petrarch's works which Gershenzon was preparing for Sabashnikov's 'Monuments of World Literature' series.

Gershenzon accurately distinguishes two stages in Ivanov's translating method: first the complete intellectual understanding of the meaning of Dante's verses, and then the recreation of something new within the Russian tradition. His description of his friend's technique is not, however, just an introductory scene-setting piece of preamble; it is an integral part of his argument against the poet's tendency towards cultural obscurity and in favour of a return to an earlier simplicity of spirit. He sees in the relationship between the original text of Dante's work and Ivanov's translation a concentrated expression of the gulf between the clarity and directness of the medieval world-view and the obscurity of the modern mind, cluttered with the cultural heritage of many centuries. In Ivanov's translation, Dante's language becomes heavy and obscure; although Gershenzon may experience a feeling of intoxication from the 'thick honey' of his friend's verse, it nevertheless renews his feeling of painful oppression over the state of modern culture. In his desire to divest Dante of Symbolist obscurantism and return him to the direct simplicity of the medieval outlook, Gershenzon was anticipating the polemical, anti-Symbolist tendency of Mandelshtam's *Conversation about Dante* (*Razgovor o Dante*) (1933).[57] His comments reflect the characteristic importance which could be attached to a translation from Dante as the expression of an entire spiritual outlook, and the way in which such a translation could assume a central role in the crucial post-revolutionary polemics over the relation of man to his cultural heritage.

In the passage cited, it is no longer Ivanov's translation of the *Commedia* which is being referred to, but just the *Purgatorio*. The poet's commitment to a translation of the *Commedia* appears to have changed from one of total responsibility – as envisaged in the contract described above – to one of partial responsibility. This becomes clear from a letter which S. A. Vengerov wrote to

Bryusov on 5 July, about seven weeks after the contract between Ivanov and the Brockhaus and Efron company had been drawn up. The letter reveals that Bryusov was also working with Ivanov on the translation of the *Commedia* commissioned by Brockhaus and Efron. Vengerov has evidently known this for some time, but has only just learnt of Bryusov's further agreement to translate Goethe's *Faust* for the same publishers (he heard from A. F. Perelman, the member of the publishing house whose signature appears on the contract for Ivanov's translation of the *Commedia*). He expresses his pleasure at the news, and continues to inquire about Bryusov's progress:

> How is your work advancing? Are you working on both Goethe and Dante at the same time or concentrating on one of them? Could you let me know what state your translations are in? If you have something which is ready, this would give me grounds for reproaching Vyach. Ivanovich for his slowness. As I have written to both you and Vyach. Ivanovich, I have no doubt that his translation will be a major literary event, but it is difficult to believe in the real fulfilment of this event. Vyach. Ivanovich works extremely slowly and, while firmly relying on you, the publishers take a very gloomy view of the second part of the translation of the 'Divine Comedy'.[58]

This indicates a return to the cooperative type of translating venture originally envisaged by Vengerov for the same publishing house in 1905. It is not altogether surprising to find Bryusov joining forces with Ivanov again. Since the failure of the original project, Bryusov had shown remarkable persistence in his attempts to get his translation from the *Commedia* published, approaching Vengerov once more on the matter in 1915, and trying other publishers as well in 1913 and 1917. In 1920, he came into frequent contact with Ivanov as a result of the setting up of a Literary Department within the People's Commissariat for Education (Lito Narkomprosa). Lito began functioning in February 1920, with Lunacharsky at its head and Bryusov as its deputy director. It then founded a Literary Studio which, commencing on 24 May 1920, organized a series of lectures and seminars for about a hundred students. Bryusov and Ivanov both worked together at this time as regular lecturers for the Literary Studio. Bryusov was also the editor of Lito's official publication, *Khudozhestvennoe slovo*, and included in the journal's first issue Ivanov's 'Winter Sonnets' and his own favourable review of Ivanov's long poem *Infancy* (*Mladenchest-*

vo).[59] Against this background it is not difficult to see how the decision to work together on a joint translation of the *Commedia* could have arisen.

It is not stated in Vengerov's letter exactly which parts of the *Commedia* Bryusov and Ivanov were responsible for, but it seems reasonable to assume that Bryusov was translating the *Inferno* for which he had always expressed a clear preference in previous negotiations with the Brockhaus and Efron publishing house. The 'second part' referred to as Ivanov's responsibility could be either the *Purgatorio*, or the *Purgatorio* and the *Paradiso* together. Since no mention is made of the involvement of any other translator, the latter possibility seems most likely.

The references in the current periodical press confirm the general picture that Ivanov and Bryusov were engaged on translations of the *Commedia* at this time. In 1921, for example, *Kazanskii bibliofil* informed its readership that Ivanov and Bryusov were preparing new verse translations of the *Commedia* for the Dante Jubilee celebrations due to take place in September 1921. In Italy, the prominent Slavist Ettore Lo Gatto announced that Ivanov – described as one of the greatest of contemporary Russian poets – was about to publish a translation of the *Purgatorio*.[60]

Neither translation ever appeared however. Although the Brockhaus and Efron publishing house continued to function until 1929, after Vengerov's death in September 1920 its interests developed in a different direction, and it dropped its plans for new translations of Dante and Goethe. Both these projects appear to have passed into the hands of Vsemirnaya Literatura, founded in 1918 by Maksim Gorky and run by A. N. Tikhonov (whom Bryusov had previously approached in 1917 over the publication of his translation of *Inferno* 1). Bryusov and Ivanov were both close associates of the publishing house, and may well have put forward their own translation projects for possible publication.[61] This was certainly the case with Bryusov's translation of *Faust* which was brought out in 1928 by Gosizdat, the publishing house which absorbed Vsemirnaya Literatura in 1925.[62] There is also evidence that the question of the *Commedia* was considered by Vsemirnaya Literatura. It was raised – but unsuccessfully – at a meeting of the publishing house in 1923. K. I. Chukovsky, one of the principal editors, was present at the discussion and recorded it in his diary on 13 February:

Tikhonov gave a talk about the broadening of our aims. He wants to include Shakespeare, Swift, and Latin and Greek classics in the list of books planned for publication. But because we have to get this publication plan through the editorial section of Gosizdat, we had to attach suitable forms of recommendations to each author, for example:

Bocaccio – the struggle against the clergy.
Vasari – brings art closer to the masses.
Petronius – a satire of the Nepmen etc.

But for the Divine Comedy we just could not think up a suitable form of recommendation.[63]

Although Vsemirnaya Literatura had originally been conceived as an independent part of Gosizdat, founded in May 1919, relations between the two factions had already badly deteriorated by the end of 1920; at the end of 1924, Tikhonov was fired from his post as director, and by early January 1925 Vsemirnaya Literatura was officially liquidated and absorbed into Gosizdat. Many of the publishing house's plans moved with Tikhonov to Academia, of which Tikhonov eventually became director.[64] This appears to have been the case with the project to publish a translation of the *Commedia* which, as already noted in connection with Sergei Solovyov, next surfaced in Academia's 1930 plan. In 1938 Academia was absorbed into Goslitizdat which finally brought out Lozinsky's translation of the three parts of the *Commedia* between 1939 and 1945.[65] Lozinsky's translation was thus in a sense the culmination of a process which had been set in motion by Bryusov and Ivanov many years earlier. It is a fitting symbol of this chain of succession that Lozinsky's collection of books on Dante which he used when working on his translation should contain a copy of the *Commedia* which originally belonged to Ivanov; this copy was presented by Ivanov to his friend the historian I. M. Grevs in Rome in 1892, and Grevs later passed it on to Lozinsky.[66]

The project therefore survived, but what of Ivanov's translation? After Vera's death in August 1920, the poet left Moscow for the south, travelling first to Kislovodsk and then to Baku. During his first year at the University of Baku, he gave a course of lectures on Dante and Petrarch.[67] According to some sources, he also continued working on his translation of the *Commedia*. One of his students from this period, Moisei Semyonovich Altman, remembers hearing him speak of his translation of part of the *Commedia*. Another former pupil, Viktor Andronikovich Manuilov, accom-

panied the poet on his last trip from Baku to Moscow in 1924. He recalls Ivanov showing him the manuscript of his translation of various passages from the *Commedia* shortly before his departure for Italy.[68]

After Ivanov's emigration, there are only a few isolated references to his translation of the *Commedia*. Golenishchev-Kutuzov recalls him reading a canto of the *Paradiso* in his translation when they met in Rome in 1928. In 1929 Maksim Gorky tried to arrange for Ivanov's translation of the *Inferno* to be published in Russia. Ivanov had visited Gorky at his Sorrento home a few years earlier, and Gorky evidently had a vested political interest in supporting Ivanov as a Soviet citizen resident abroad.[69] Nothing came of the suggestion, however, and after this point references to the translation peter out.

Although the various references to Ivanov's translation of the *Commedia* which we have encountered suggest that he was working on translations on all three *cantiche* at different times, there is no textual evidence to support this. The only part of the translation which has survived is located in the poet's Rome archive, together with the Brockhaus and Efron contract for the translation of the *Commedia*. It consists of four sheets of manuscript in the poet's hand, headed 'Purgatory. First Canto', and comprising ll. 1–67 of the opening canto of *Purgatorio*. These are written out in ink with very few corrections added, and the impression is that of a final version. Although the manuscript is not dated, the translation is most likely to date from the summer of 1920, when Gershenzon records helping his friend with his translation of the *Purgatorio*. The final text (incorporating the poet's corrections and with his numbering of the lines) is given below.

1 Для плаванья на благостном просторе
Подъемлет вдохновенье паруса:
Жестокое мой челн покинул море.

4 Пою второго царства чудеса,
Где дух, от скверн очистившийся, станет
Достоин вознестись на небеса.

7 Здесь мертвая поэзия воспрянет:
Коль ваш, святые Музы, я пророк.
Во весь свой рост Каллиопея встанет

10 Со звоном, что̀ Пиерия сорòк
В отчаянье поверг: напела лира
Соперницам безумным горький рок.

13 Цвет сладостный восточного сафира,
По первый круг сгущаясь в вышине
Чистейшего, прозрачного эфира,

16 Опять целил и нежил очи мне,
Так долго мертвым воздухом, без света,
Дышавшему в исхоженной стране.

19 Любови благосклонная планета
Гасила Рыб-сопутниц, веселя,
Прекрасная, свой край лучом привета.

22 Направо свод сияньем убеля,
Меж звезд искрились ясные четыре;
Их знал Адам и первая земля.

25 Тех пламеней нет радостнее в мире.
О Север, вдовый, южный их узор
Не блещет на твоей ночной порфире.

28 Уж Колесницы не мерцал собор
На супротивном полюсе вселенной,
Куда нескоро перевел я взор.

31 Мне старец предстоял достопочтенный,
Маститой убоялся я красы,
Как пред отцом робеет сын смиренный.

34 Делились на две ровных полосы,
На грудь сбегая, с длинною брадою,
Ручьем черносеребряным власы.

37 Он осиян был силою святою
Звезд четырех, как будто бы в упор
Взирал на солнце прямо пред собою.

40 'Кто вы? Слепой реке наперекор,' –
Он рек, честно́е зыбля оперенье, –
'Как, узники, бежали на простор?

43 Кто в долах тьмы давал вам уверенье
Стези надежной? Из темницы вон
Лампады чьей вело вас озаренье?

Что ж? Преисподней попран ли закон
Иль отменен уставом свыше новым?
Запретен осужденным сей притон.'

Касаньем рук, бровей движеньем, словом
Наставник мой вложил мне в мысль совет
Склонить колени пред судьей суровым.

Сам речь держал: 'Моей тут мысли нет.
Сошедшая с небес в мои юдоли
Жена святая мне дала завет:

Сего путеводить. Но так как боле
Ты хочешь знать о путниках, – изволь:
Мой долг твоей послушествовать воле.

Он смерти не вкусил еще; но столь
Безумно жил он, что во тьме греховной
Блуждал на шаг от гибели, – доколь

Я не был послан благостью верховной
С ним разделить глубоких странствий труд:
Иной тропы нет в мир ему духовный.

Я показал ему проклятый люд;
Пусть узрит ныне, коих очищает,
К спасенью предназначенных, твой суд.

Повествовать мне время воспрещает [.]

From the formal point of view the translation is faultless; Ivanov has created an unbroken succession of iambic pentameters with alternating masculine and feminine rhymes. However, as before, there is a general tendency to complicate the original. *Enjambements* are introduced where there are none in the original (at the end of ll. 5, 9, 54, 58 and 60); in many cases these are particularly noticeable because they link the end of one tercet to the beginning of the next. Strangely enough, Ivanov is here acting in defiance of his own principles; at the poetry classes which he ran in 1920, he devoted some time to explaining the correct manner of construction of terzinas, and stipulated that each tercet should be a self-contained unit, not running over into the next one.[70]

Natural word order is also replaced by more complicated syntax; one can compare, for example, ll. 19–21 of Ivanov's translation with the same lines in the original:

Lo bel pianeto che d'amar conforta
faceva tutto rider l'orïente,
velando i Peschi ch'erano in sua scorta.

The fair planet that prompts to love
was making the whole East smile,
veiling the Fishes that were in her train.

Ivanov inverts the order of the last two lines of this tercet, and introduces additional interruptions of the natural flow of words (by removing 'bel' (*prekrasnaya*) from the subject which it qualifies in the first line to the third line, where it is awkwardly interposed between the verb and its object).

Unusual archaic words are substituted for simple ones; the expression *na suprotivnom polyuse* ('at the opposite pole') is used for 'a l'altro polo' ('to the other pole' – l. 29); when Cato is described, 'diss" ('said') becomes *rek* ('uttered'), and 'movendo quelle oneste piume' ('moving those venerable plumes') becomes *chestnoe zyblya operen'e* ('causing his venerable plumage to ripple' – l. 41); unusual verbs like *popran* ('flouted' – l. 46) for 'rotte' ('broken') or *poslushestvovat'* ('to do the bidding' – l. 57) create a sense of archaic obscurity which is absent from the original.

Ivanov also tends to replace vivid concrete images with abstract paraphrases which make the meaning of the original much harder to grasp. One need look no further than the first tercet of the canto for an example of this. Dante's text reads as follows:

Per correr miglior acque alza le vele
omai la navicella del mio ingegno,
che lascia dietro a sé mar sì crudele;

To course over better waters
the little bark of my genius now hoists her sails,
leaving behind her a sea so cruel;

Dante's picture of the little boat of his poetic genius preparing to traverse the calmer waters of Purgatory is one of the most celebrated images of the *Commedia*. Ivanov has made the point of the image extremely hard to grasp; he has replaced the literal phrase 'miglior acque' ('better waters') with the abstract paraphrase *na blagostnom prostore* ('on the blessed expanse'), and he has also dropped the image of 'la navicella del mio ingegno' ('the little bark of my genius') and reduced this to the single word *vdokhnoven'e* ('inspiration'). It is consequently much more difficult for the reader

to make the connection between the images of the two seas, one cruel, one better, and Dante's poetic genius as a boat which must traverse these two seas, although this connection is crystal clear in the original.

Apart from this move towards increased abstraction and complexity, there are further characteristic types of distortion in Ivanov's translation. One of these is the tendency to place additional emphasis on the darkness of sin, contrasted with the transcendent realm. Ivanov replaces the simple 'si purga' ('is purged') with the much stronger *ot skvern ochistivshiisya* ('after cleansing itself of all defilement' – l. 5), echoing the language of the Bible (Ezek. 36.25; 2 Cor. 7.1). In the same way, when Virgil is describing Dante's past life to Cato, Ivanov adds the words *vo t'me grekhovnoi / Bluzhdal* ('in sinful darkness he wandered' – ll. 59–60) to his speech, whereas in the original there is just a brief reference to Dante's past 'folly'. Similarly, in ll. 10–12 of his translation, Ivanov contracts an entire line of the original 'seguitando il mio canto con quel suono' ('accompanying my song with that strain') into two words *so zvonom* ('with the sound'), thus making his translation very difficult to follow, and then introduces one-and-a-half lines of purely gratuitous additional material: *napela lira / Sopernitsam bezumnym gor'kii rok* ('the song of the lyre brought a bitter fate to the mad rivals') – the themes of madness and of inevitable fate were close to Ivanov as a result of his interest in Greek myths and Dionysian passion, and they are here imposed on Dante's text.

Dante's vision becomes less natural and more fantastic in Ivanov's version; whereas Dante simply announces his intention to sing of the second realm, Ivanov adds a reference to its *chudesa* ('wonders' – l. 4). Cato's first appearance is unduly melodramatic in Ivanov's rendering; 'vidi presso di me un veglio solo' ('I saw close to me an old man alone') is replaced by the more archaic *Mne starets predstoyal dostopochtennyi* ('a venerable elder stood before me' – l. 31), 'degno di tanta reverenza in vista' ('worthy in his looks of so great reverence') becomes *Mastitoi uboyalsya ya krasy* ('I took fright at his venerable beauty' – l. 32) and the simple idea of the natural reverence a son owes his father is replaced by the image of a humble son quailing before his father (l. 33). The same additional aura of trembling fear and melodrama which accompanied the appearance of *Amor* in the third chapter of the *Vita Nuova* discussed above is here applied to Cato.

In the same *Vita Nuova* passage Ivanov introduced his concept of the poet as a Pushkinian, prophet-like figure, retiring from the crowd to have visions and write poetry. In his translation of *Purgatorio* I, he does this once more. Dante writes 'o sante Muse, poi che vostro sono' ('O holy Muses, since I am yours'); Ivanov adapts this to reflect his own Symbolist aesthetics: *Kol' vash, svyatye Muzy, ya prorok* ('As yours, holy Muses, I am a prophet' – l. 8).

The translations of Dante which Ivanov embarked on in the 1910s represent the culmination of a process of interpretation and adaptation which began in the late 1880s and can be traced through his understanding of the religion of Dionysus and of the concept of Sophia and through the Dantesque images in his poetry. In his translations the poet succeeded in creating a text which embodied many of the features with which he endowed the figure of Dante in his religious philosophy and aesthetics. Dante is advanced as the carrier of a syncretic form of mysticism, based on the Dionysian ideal of Eros and involving an ecstatic experience of self-transcendence, in which elements of sin could play a significant role. The image of Beatrice becomes part-erotic, part-Solovyovian in character. The transcendent realm is viewed as an esoteric domain which can only be hinted at in veiled terms, and Dante is presented in this context as an obscure, complex poet who anticipates in his verse the fundamental tenets of Symbolist aesthetics. In this sense Ivanov's translations more than bear out Dostoevsky's contention that a Western poet cannot fail to become a *Russian* poet when transplanted to Russia. In his versions Dante becomes a Russian *Symbolist* poet, a final vindication of his claim, cited as an epigraph to this book: 'And so – Dante is a Symbolist!'

66 See, for example, the images of the rose's fire and the winter grave in *Palomnitsa* and the last verse of *Zimnie sumerki* (*SS* II, 510–11).
67 See Dante's words to Guido Guinizelli in *Purg.* XXVI, 97–9 and his reference to Guinizelli's *canzone* in *Con.* IV, XX, 7.
68 For other examples of Ivanov's reference to this tradition in his poetry, see '*Pod drevom kiparisnym*' in *KZ*, *SS*, I, 555 and '*Materinstvo*' in *NT*, *SS* III, 26.
69 Anichkov, 55–7.

6 IVANOV'S TRANSLATIONS OF DANTE

1 Puskhin, VI, 29.
2 *Bairon*, ed. S. A. Vengerov, 3 vols. (St Petersburg, 1904).
3 See A. L. Panina, '*Arkhiv izdatel'stva M. i S. Sabashnikovykh*', Gosudarstvennaya biblioteka im. Lenina, *Zapiski Otdela rukopisei* (hereafter *ZOR*), 33 (1972), 81–139 (91).
4 *Alkei i Safo: Sobranie pesen i liricheskikh otryvkov*, tr. Vyacheslav Ivanov (Moscow, 1914), 219.
5 For bibliographical details of Russian translations of Dante, see Danchenko, 26–45.
6 Ellis, *Immorteli. Vypusk I-i. Sh. Bodler* (Moscow, 1904); Ellis, *'Immorteli'. Vypusk II-i. P. Verlen, Zh. Rodenbakh, M. Meterlink, S. Pryudomm, Dante Aligieri, L. Steketti, D. Leopardi, F. Nitsshe, i drugie inostrannye poety* (Moscow, 1904). The Dante section covers pp. 79–103.
7 Ellis, '*Venets Dante*', in *Svobodnaya sovest'. Literaturno-filosofskii sbornik. Kniga pervaya* (Moscow, 1906), 110–38.
8 See his letter to E. K. Metner [March 1907], GBL, *fond* 167, *k.* 7, *ed. khr.* 4, and the publisher's announcement in Sharl' Bodler, *Tsvety zla*, tr. Ellis (Moscow, 1908).
9 Ellis, *Stigmata: Kniga stikhov* (Moscow, 1911). *Stigmata* was published by Musaget, and its proofs are in the Musaget archive, GBL, *fond* 190, *k.* 37, *ed. khr.* 6.
10 Ellis, '*Uchitel' very*', *Trudy i dni*, 7 (1914), 63–78.
11 Sergei Solovyov, '*Ellinizm i tserkov'*', *Bogoslovskii vestnik*, 9 (1913), 50–76 (55).
12 G. I. Porshnev, '*Yubilei Dante*', *Pechat' i revolyutsiya*, 3 (1921), 297–9 (297).
13 See *LN*, vol. 92, book I: 320.
14 See the brief description of the archive's contents in *ZOR*, 38 (1977), 182–3.
15 See Blok's letter to S. Solovyov and the accompanying note in *LN*, vol. 92, book I: 345–6.
16 Academia first included a translation of the *Commedia* in its 1930 plan of publication for 1931 without, however, specifying the translators ('*Redaktsionno-izdatel'skii plan "Academia" na 1931 g.*' (1930) GBL,

fond 384, *k.* 9, *ed. khr.* 1). The translators are first mentioned in the publisher's plan of 1932 for the period from 1933 to 1935 ('*Perspektivnyi plan izdatel'stva "Academia" na 1933–35 gg.*' (1932), GBL, *fond* 384, *k.* 9, *ed. khr.* 6).

17 See '*Iz vospominanii sestry Marii*', in S. M. Solovyov, *Zhizn' i tvorcheskaya evolyutsiya Vladimira Solovyova* (Brussels, 1977), 13–15 (14). Sister Maria writes that Solovyov's arrest interrupted his work on a new translation of the *Commedia*. The exact date of Solovyov's death is given in *LN*, vol. 92, book 1: 320.

18 See M. L. Lozinsky's letter of 27 January 1934 to the editor of the translation, A. K. Dzhivelegov (TsGALI, *fond* 2032, *op.* 1, *ed. khr.* 227). The dates of Lozinsky's work on the *Commedia* are noted on the manuscript of his translation, and were shown to me in Leningrad by his son, S. M. Lozinsky, now in possession of his father's archive.

19 In 1901, in the first publication of the series, Dante was listed as one of the authors whose works would be represented in the forthcoming volumes. See *Sobranie sochinenii Shillera v perevode russkikh pisatelei*, ed. S. A. Vengerov, 4 vols. (St Petersburg, 1904), II, inside front cover.

20 For an account of Bryusov's plan to translate the *Inferno*, see N. Sokolov, '*V. Ya. Bryusov kak perevodchik (iz pisem poeta)*', in *Masterstvo perevoda: Sbornik statei* (Moscow, 1959), 368–88, and Svyatoslav Belza, '*Bryusov i Dante*', in *Dante i slavyane*, ed. I. Belza (Moscow, 1965), 69–94. The text of the translation was first published in Valery Bryusov, *Izbrannye sochineniya v dvukh tomakh*, 2 vols. (Moscow, 1955) II, 19–23, and later republished with Bryusov's accompanying preface and notes in Belza's article, 81–93.

21 An abridged version of the following sections has been published as an article; see Pamela Davidson, 'Vyacheslav Ivanov's Translations of Dante', in *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, New Series, 15 (1982), 103–31.

22 M. V. Sabashnikov, ' *"Vechnye knigi" - pervonachal'nyi proekt serii "Pamyatniki mirovoi literatury"* ' (1910), GBL, *fond* 261, *k.* 9, *ed. khr.* 105.

23 M. V. Sabashnikov, Letters to V. I. Ivanov, 6 April 1911, 16 March 1912, 5 February 1913, GBL, *fond* 109.

24 V. I. Ivanov, Letter to M. V. Sabashnikov, 20 January 1913, GBL, *fond* 261, *k.* 4, *ed. khr.* 25.

25 M. V. Sabashnikov, Letter to V. I. Ivanov, 10 March 1913, GBL, *fond* 109. The contract is in the archive of the Sabashnikov publishing house, GBL, *fond* 261, *k.* 8, *ed. khr.* 7.

26 *Izdatel'stvo M. i S. Sabashnikovykh*, Letter to V. I. Ivanov, 8 November 1913. GBL, *fond* 109.

27 The date of completion of the translation of *Agamemnon* was marked by Ivanov on the manuscript of his translation, located in Ivanov's Rome archive, and kindly shown to me by D. V. Ivanov. M. V. Sabashnikov wrote to Ivanov that he had received this translation on 25 June 1913 (GBL, *fond* 109).

28 Ivanov summarizes the history of his translation of the *Oresteia* in his preface to the translation, written in Rome in October 1926, and located with the translation in TsGALI, *fond* 225, *op.* 1, *ed. khr.* 29. In August 1926 he wrote to M. V. Sabashnikov from Rome, requesting the latter either to publish his translation of the *Oresteia*, or to pass it on to the publishing division of Gosudarstvennaya Akademiya Khudozhestvennykh Nauk (V. I. Ivanov, Letter to M. V. Sabashnikov, 9 August 1926, GBL, *fond* 261, *k.* 4, *ed. khr.* 25). A Soviet edition of Ivanov's translation is currently being prepared by the Nauka publishing house.

29 Kotrelyov, 327.

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

31 In 1913, after his return from Italy to Moscow, Ivanov delivered '*O granitsakh iskusstva*' as a lecture to the Moscow Religious and Philosophical Society (see V. Ivanov, *Borozdy i mezhi*, 186). The lecture was first published in *Trudy i dni*, 7 (1914), 81–106 alongside Ellis's article on Dante '*Uchitel' very*'. The proofs of the article in the Musaget archive are dated 10 December 1913 (GBL, *fond* 190, *k.* 51, *ed. khr.* 20).

32 V. Ivanov, '*Perevod "Novoi zhizni" Dante*', GBL, *fond* 109.

33 Square brackets are used here and elsewhere to indicate punctuation or parts of words omitted from the original manuscript.

34 Blok, *SS* v, 10–11.

35 See *Epistole* XIII, 10, XXXI in *Epistole*, ed. Ermenegildo Pistelli, in *Le Opere di Dante. Testo critico della Società Dantesca Italiana* (Florence, 1921), 413–46 (439).

36 For the original manuscript, see Dante Alig'eri, '"*Pirshestvo". Perevod "Convivio", sdelannyi V. F. Ernom. Kantsona na str. 43–5 perevedena Vyach. I. Ivanovym*', GBL, *fond* 261, *k.* 10, *ed. khr.* 10. The actual manuscript is unsigned. The archive's catalogue and the description of the holdings of the Sabashnikov archive published in *ZOR* (Panina, 110) state that the *Convivio* is in Ern's translation, apart from the *canzone* which is translated by Ivanov. This information is based on the original *opis'* of the archive compiled by the daughter of M. V. Sabashnikov, Nina Mikhailovna Artyukhova, who handed over her father's papers to the Lenin Library.

37 In his '*Material k biografii*' (GLM, N-v 1282), Bely recorded the following entry for September 1904: '*Vskore Ern uezzhaet za granitsu, gde on vstrechaetsya s V. I. Ivanovym i tesno druzhit s nim*'. For Ern's visits to the tower, see Pyast, 49 and O. Deschartes's note in *SS* III, 833.

38 These dates can be worked out from Ern's letters to A. S. Glinka of 18 December 1911, 9 December 1912, 28 March 1913 and 20 May 1913, TsGALI, *fond* 142, *op.* 1, *ed. khr.* 313. Ern's meetings with Ivanov in Rome are described by Gertsyk (69).

39 Petrarka, *Avtobiografiya. Ispoved'. Sonety*, tr. M. Gershenzon and

Vyach. Ivanov (Moscow, 1915). Ivanov translated thirty-three sonnets. His Moscow archive contains the manuscript versions of some of his translations and a letter from M. V. Sabashnikov of 15 November 1914 with a final payment for additional sonnets translated (GBL, *fond* 109). For an excellent discussion of Ivanov's translations, see the article by Lowry Nelson, '*Translatio Lauri*: Ivanov's Translations of Petrarch', in *Vyacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, 162–81.

40 V. F. Ern, Letters to A. S. Glinka of 18 December 1911 and 14 July 1912, TsGALI, *fond* 142, *op.* 1, *ed. khr.* 313.

41 Ibid., Letter of 5 September 1912.

42 Ibid., Letter of 9 December 1912. The Italian theologian A. Palmieri was strongly in favour of the reunification of the churches, a subject which he also discussed with Ivanov in Rome (see Gertsyk, 68–9). For his views on Russian Orthodoxy, see his article, 'La religione dello Santo Spirito', in *Russia. Rivista di letteratura, storia e filosofia*, II, 2 (1923).

43 Lidiya Ivanova, '*Vospominaniya o Vyacheslave Ivanove*', *Novyi zhurnal*, 148 (1982), 136–60 (152).

44 Vladimir Ern, *Bor'ba za Logos* (Moscow, 1911), 351–2 and 357.

45 Vladimir Ern, *Rozmini i ego teoriya znaniya. Issledovanie po istorii ital'yanskoi filosofii XIX stoletiya* (Moscow, 1914), 100, and Vladimir Ern, *Filosofia Dzhoberti* (Moscow, 1916), 102, 104–5 and 280.

46 See Ern's letters to Glinka of 20 May 1913 (postmarked Rostov), 14 June 1913 (postmarked Tiflis), 18 February 1914 and 26 May – 1 June 1914 in TsGALI, *fond* 142, *op* 1, *ed.khr.* 313. Florensky defended his dissertation on 19 May 1914.

47 This information was provided by N. V. Kotrelyov who has had access to Florensky's private archive.

48 V. F. Ern, Letter to V. I. Ivanov, 8 July 1914, GBL, *fond* 109.

49 V. F. Ern, Letter to A. S. Glinka, 14 July – 21 July 1914, TsGALI, *fond* 142, *op.* 1, *ed.khr.* 313. Only the first of Ern's '*Pis'ma ob imyaslavii*' was published in *Itogi zhizni* (V. F. Ern, '*Okolo novogo dogmata (Pis'ma ob imyaslavii)*', *Itogi zhizni*, 19 July 1914, 4–9); after one subsequent issue on 21 August 1914, the journal stopped appearing. Ern's '*Pis'ma o khristianskom Rime*' appeared in *Bogoslovskii vestnik*, 11 (1912), 561–8; 12 (1912), 760–71; 1 (1913), 104–14; 9 (1913), 77–86.

50 V. F. Ern, Letter to A. S. Glinka, 18 May 1916, TsGALI, *fond* 142, *op.* 1, *ed.khr.* 313.

51 See '*Skorbnyi rasskaz*', '*Opravdannye*' and the last stanza of '*Derev'ya*' ('*Vladimir Ern, Frantsiska syn, – amin'*!') in *Svet vechernii*, *SS* III, 524–5 and 536.

52 See Bulgakov, *Tikhie dumy*, 138 and Pyast, 49–50.

53 See Golenishchev-Kutuzov, *Tvorchestvo Dante i mirovaya kul'tura*, 467–8 and 484. Golenishchev-Kutuzov lived outside Russia from the date of his father's emigration to Yugoslavia in 1920 until his return to

Moscow in 1955. He went to Italy from Yugoslavia during the summers of 1927 and 1928. According to Deschartes's note to '*Zemlya*', a poem written by Ivanov in August 1928 and dedicated to Golenishchev-Kutuzov, the latter frequently visited Ivanov in the summer of 1928 (*SS* III, 829). The two poets subsequently maintained regular contact. From 1929 to 1933 Golenishchev-Kutuzov studied at the Sorbonne in Paris. In 1930 he published an article on Ivanov, '*Lirika Vyacheslava Ivanova*' in *Sovremennye zapiski*, 43 (1930), 463–71, and in 1935 a collection of his verse entitled *Pamyat'* was published in Paris with a preface by Ivanov.

54 V. I. Ivanov, Letter to the *Obshchestvo lyubitelei rossiiskoi slovesnosti*, 12 May 1920, GBL, *fond* 207, *k.* 32, *ed.khr.* 12.

55 Copy of the contract by kind courtesy of D. V. Ivanov, Rome.

56 Kogan, '*Zapisi*', IMLI, *fond* 55, *op.* 1, *n.* 6.

57 See Osip Mandelshtam, *Razgovor o Dante* (Moscow, 1967), 21–2.

58 S. A. Vengerov, Letter to V. Ya Bryusov, 5 July 1920, GBL, *fond* 386, *k.* 79, *ed.khr.* 39. The earlier letter to Ivanov which Vengerov refers to is not among his letters to Ivanov in GBL, *fond* 109 (14, 21); these do not go beyond 1918.

59 The *khronika* section of *Khudozhestvennoe slovo. Vremennik literaturnogo otdela NKP*, ed. V. Ya. Bryusov, 1 (1920) contains a description of the Literary Studio on p. 62; the same issue published Ivanov's '*Zimnie sonety*' on pp. 10–12, and Bryusov's review of *Mladenchestvo* on p. 57.

60 M. Kovalevsky, '*Russkie perevody "Bozhestvennoi komedii"*', *Kazanskii bibliofil*, 2 (1921), 58–60 (60), and pp. 189, 192, 194 of the same issue. Lo Gatto's original article, 'La fortuna di Dante nel mondo: In Russia' (*L'Italia che scrive*, 4 April 1921, 66–70), is cited in *Russia. Rivista di letteratura, storia e filosofia*, 1, 4–5 (1921), 128 and republished as 'Sulla fortuna di Dante in Russia' in *Saggi sulla cultura russa* (Naples, 1923), 165–74 (169–70).

61 See the list headed '*Redaktsionnaya Kollegiya ekspertov*' in *Katalog izdatel'stva 'Vsemirnaya Literatura' pri narodnom komissariate po prosveshcheniyu*, with an introductory article by M. Gorky (St Petersburg, 1919), 167. Bryusov and Ivanov are also mentioned by A. N. Tikhonov in a report on the activities of the publishing house given in the following year; see A. N. Tikhonov, '*Doklad o deyatel'nosti izdatel'stva "Vsemirnaya Literatura"*', 5 April 1920, TsGALI, *fond* 2163, *op.* 1, *ed.khr.* 46.

62 Gete, *Faust*, tr. Valery Bryusov, ed. A. V. Lunacharsky and A. G. Gabrichesky (Moscow and Leningrad, 1928). In a note on p. 4, the editors state that Bryusov translated both parts of *Faust* in 1919 and 1920. They are only publishing the first part, but hope that the second part will soon appear (it was never published).

63 K. I. Chukovsky, '*Dnevnik*', 13 February [1923], K. I. Chukovsky's private archive, Moscow, Peredelkino, by kind courtesy of E.Ts. Chukovskaya.

64 I. A. Shomrakova, '*Knigoizdatel'stvo "Vsemirnaya literatura" (1918–1924)*' in *Kniga. Issledovaniya i materialy. Sbornik XIV* (Moscow, 1967), 175–93 (180–3 and 185).

65 Dante Alig'eri, *Bozhestvennaya komediya. Ad*, tr. M. Lozinsky (Leningrad, 1939); *Bozhestvennaya komediya. Chistilishche*, tr. M. Lozinsky (Moscow, 1944); *Bozhestvennaya komediya. Rai*, tr. M. Lozinsky (Moscow, 1945).

66 See chapter 4, note 4.

67 See Introduction, note 23.

68 Altman and Manuilov both spoke at an evening entitled '*Masterstvo poeticheskogo perevoda*', dedicated to Ivanov the translator, held at the Writers' Union in Leningrad on 19 January 1977. Altman referred to Ivanov's translation of the *Inferno*, but this may have been an error of memory. In a subsequent conversation with the present author Manuilov confirmed that he did not know which parts of the *Commedia* Ivanov had translated (Komarovo, Leningrad, 30 April 1978).

69 For Ivanov's meeting with Gorky in the late summer of 1925, see *Letopis' zhizni i tvorchestva A. M. Gorkogo*, 4 vols. (Moscow, 1958–60), III, *1917–1929*, 421 and Gorky's short memoir of 1925 in *Arkhiv A. M. Gorkogo*, VI (Moscow, 1957), 210–11. On 7 March 1929 Gorky wrote to P. S. Kogan, the president of Gosudarstvennaya Akademiya khudozhestvennykh nauk (of which he was an honorary member since 1927), requesting him to look into the question of Ivanov's Soviet pension; he also asked him if the Academy's publishing division could publish Ivanov's translation of the *Inferno* or his work on Aeschylus, and underlined the importance of supporting Ivanov as a Soviet citizen abroad (see *LN*, vol. 70, *Gorky i sovetskie pisateli. Neizdannaya perepiska* (Moscow, 1963), 213). Golenishchev-Kutuzov records that Gorky wrote to Kogan about Ivanov's translation of the *Paradiso*, the part of the *Commedia* from which he had heard the poet reading a canto in his translation (*Tvorchestvo Dante i mirovaya kul'tura*, 468). Lidiya Ivanova, on the other hand, recalls long discussions of a project which was extremely attractive to her father – the translation of the *whole Commedia* – but adds that nothing ever came of it (Lidiya Ivanova, '*Vospominaniya. Neizdannye pis'ma Vyacheslava Ivanova*', *Minuvshee. Istoricheskii al'manakh*, 3 (1987), 45–77 (57–8).

70 See the entry for the sixth meeting of the poetry circle, held on 26 March 1920, in Kogan, '*Zapisi*', IMLI, *fond* 55, *op.* 1, *n.* 6.