Ha берегах Невы was published in 2,000 copies for Russian readers abroad, too few in view of its subject. The limited edition of the book evokes the thought that not only may the author's work be neglected but that a similar fate could await many worthy poets. Odoevtseva's memoirs are a document of and monument to the Petersburg pleiade. They also serve as a reminder of the Russian poet's precarious fame.

Although she is for the most part self-effacing, Irina Odoevtseva and her poetry have a place beside the figures she describes. Too little is said of Akhmatova because of the author's own close association with Gumilev. Such omissions detract from the document. However, the banks of the Neva belong no less to Odoevtseva and Akhmatova than to the "gods" of Apollo's host, and the author's rare impressions offer extensive new material for scholars.

Nicholas Galichenko


Symbolist aesthetic theory has long challenged the student of Russian modernist literature with its intricacies. Despite, or perhaps because they were so prolific, such writers as Andrei Belyi and Viacheslav Ivanov managed to obscure much of their thought behind an elaborate vocabulary of subjective terminology which confounded as frequently as it clarified. Yet the exploration of their ideas is a most worthy endeavor if only because they so dramatically disputed many of the values that successive generations of socially oriented critics had cultivated during the late nineteenth century. The vaguely formulated notions of a new aesthetic orientation provided by Dmitrii Merezhkovskii in his book On the Reasons for the Decline and on the New Directions in Contemporary Russian Literature gave rise to a host of other manifestoes, in which writers identified with the modernist movement sought to give more adequate expression to the particular ways in which their philosophy of art differed from that of the previous generation. Of such commentators, Ivanov merits particular attention because of the erudition and elaborateness of his analysis.

Having come this far, I must regretfully report that Carin Tschöpl's study, despite the promise of its title, fails to satisfy the need for a comprehensive survey of Ivanov's thought. Crippled by its capricious organization and dismayingly sketchy discussions, its chief virtue may well be that it will provoke readers into finding out what Ivanov really said. (Fortunately the problem has been considerably alleviated by the more recent publication of James West's competent monograph on Ivanov's aesthetic thought.)

A brief consideration of the table of contents reveals the organizational deficiencies of Tschöpl's work. The first three chapters, comprising almost a third of the book, are dissertation kitsch, which should have been eliminated before the author considered having her thesis published. In them, Ivanov's life as a leading member of the Symbolist movement is presented in some detail. Replete with reports of individuals' appearance and dress (Ivanov's wife favored tunics and gracefully draped togas), these chapters are completely extraneous to the author's declared intention of examining poetry and poetic theory. Moreover, Tschöpl virtually ignores the potential usefulness which an historical introduction of this sort can offer. A much more valuable perspective on Ivanov's relative contribution to Symbolist thought might have been gained had it been
prefaced by a brief survey of the diverse intellectual stances assumed by other leading figures in the movement. For example, some mention might well have been made of the distinction between Briusov's and Ivanov's attitudes toward the function of poetry and the poet.

Chapters iv and v, containing the substance of the analysis, draw respectively upon Ivanov's early articles and poetry, written in 1903-1904 and that written in 1909 or later. This chronological approach imposes a particular burden on the commentary relating to theory, for it necessitates interruption in the discussion of points that were of continuing concern to Ivanov and which form a relatively cohesive whole when viewed retrospectively. Tschöpfl's discussion of the importance of the Dionysian element in the creative impulse is especially unsatisfactory in this respect. While her understanding of the initial impulse as one which bears the artist beyond the confines of consciousness is correct, it is only a portion of what Ivanov felt to be involved in his creative process. Harnessing the raw power of this impulse was equally necessary, for the artist had the ultimate responsibility of translating his experience into a form comprehensible to others. Although Tschöpfl eventually recognizes the existence of the other half of this equation, some seventy pages of text intervene, and the unwary reader may well miss one of the most essential points of Ivanov's thought.

This organizational shortcoming is confounded by a seriously inadequate evaluation of one of Ivanov's primary articles dealing with the Symbolist movement in general, "Two Elements in Contemporary Symbolism." The comparison of "realistic" and "idealistic" tendencies within the Symbolist movement was intended by Ivanov to provide both a definition and a declaration of allegiance. It is abundantly evident from his discussion of "idealistic" Symbolism that he found its adherents to be an esoteric coterie who deliberately abused their aesthetic talents, employing symbols as "the poetic means for mutually infecting one another with subjective experience alone." Tschöpfl's bland translation of this important phrase leaves serious doubt as to her understanding of its implications: "ein dichterischen Mittel mit dem eine subjective Empfindung auf verschiedene Menschen übertragen wird." Failure to render any sense of the incestuous infectiousness of Ivanov's term «B3aMMHo 3apajKeHne» reduces the severe judgment of the original to a seemingly impartial discussion of one among several equally valid persuasions within the movement.

In the absence of any clear definition of preferences, other aspects of Ivanov's thought are deprived of their full significance. His effort to implicate the concept of co6opHOCTa in the truly creative act was closely related to his preference for "realistic" Symbolism, which he felt to be the alternative most concerned with linking all of mankind through the contemplation of a single, objective reality. While acknowledging the importance of this idea, Tschöpfl fails to demonstrate how it is related to other aspects of Ivanov's thought.

Consideration of particular poems occupies relatively little space and, in most instances, is intended to illustrate particular points of theory. As such, the discussions cannot be regarded as exhaustive. Of the sea imagery in Ivanov's poetry, for example, the author remarks: "Das Meer als das dionysische Element des Chaos versinnbildlicht die sowohl im Menschen als auch in der Natur schlummernden, zerstörischen und schöpferischen Kräfte." Nothing very startling, to be sure, and one is left wondering whether the space might not better have been devoted to a more careful and detailed analysis of the many troublesome points raised by the discussion of the aesthetic theory.

It is most unfortunate that the author did not have the benefit of the guidance