

malakhit and *lerigiia* for *religiia*, the equivalent of which Hingley presents contextually, rather than rendering the Russian malapropism which would make no sense. So for instance, “the pillars was done to look like malachite,” where the Russian has *malaftit* (8:52) seems not too happy a solution, but then this is a seemingly insoluble problem. The titles of Chekhov’s stories are often important, for they are most intricately connected with the substance of the stories. Some of them are puns, such as “Anna na shee,” which Hingley misses by the smoother-sounding, and semantically quite correct, “The Order of St. Anne.” His choice of “The Butterfly” for “Poprygunia,” seems more successful than the usual version “The Grasshopper” or “La Cigale.”

Although one cannot agree with all of Hingley’s solutions, there is no question that his translations surpass all earlier versions in accuracy and faithfulness to nuance. But, more than that, his translation is the first to be free from the terrible stiffness that has spoiled Chekhov’s wonderfully limpid style in earlier English renderings. We are grateful to Hingley for presenting so well one of Russia’s most elusive writers to a broad English-speaking public, and we look forward with pleasure to the appearance of the outstanding volumes.

THOMAS G. WINNER
Brown University

SOBRANIE SOCHINENII, vol. 1. By *Viacheslav Ivanov*. Edited by *D. V. Ivanov* and *O. Deshart* [*Olga Deschartes*]. Introduction and notes by *O. Deshart*. Brussels: Foyer Oriental Chrétien, 1971. 872 pp. \$29.00.

This first volume of *Viacheslav Ivanov’s Collected Works* contains three sections: a 220-page critical biography by *Olga Deschartes*, the text of *Ivanov’s* novel *Povest’ o Svetomire tsareviche*, published here for the first time (pp. 255–512), and *Ivanov’s* early poetry and essays (up to 1905). Inserted between sections 1 and 2 is the autobiographic cycle *Mladenchestvo* (1918).

Olga Deschartes is uniquely qualified to introduce us to *Ivanov’s* poetic and spiritual world. We have it on *Sergei Makovsky’s* authority that the poet felt he had “entrusted the whole truth about himself and his work to *O. Deschartes*” (see *Aleksis Rannit*, “*Vyacheslav Ivanov and his Vespertine Light*,” *Russian Literature Triquarterly*, no. 4 [1972], p. 267). Her biography of *Ivanov* must be viewed as a primary rather than a secondary source. Many of the facts which she reports are of invaluable importance for the interpretation of *Ivanov’s* poetry and for an understanding of his experience of the creative process (e.g., pp. 213–14, 223). In many instances she gives us the biographic context of poems and cycles of poems. Often she explains for us their philosophic and spiritual background. She is, however, content with the modest role of a disciple who deems it sufficient to reflect the master’s views faithfully. Her frame of reference is the spiritual world of *Viacheslav Ivanov*, rather than the historical panorama of the Silver Age, the European literary scene during the first third of this century, or universal Humanism in whose history *Ivanov* is a chapter of some interest. We learn some valuable specifics about *Ivanov’s* relations with other great spirits of the age, but are not always shown the meaning of these relations in a deeper historical perspective.

It is of course too early to say anything definite about *Povest’ o Svetomire tsareviche*. One thing is certain: *Olga Deschartes’s* labors which have produced the last four books of the novel on the basis of notes and drafts left by *Ivanov*—a task

undertaken with diffidence, to meet the poet's deathbed wish (pp. 222–23)—have been crowned with success. The novel is a torso, but one whose plan, and outline, and meaning have been salvaged. The portion written by Olga Deschartes at times fails to capture, in its syntax, rhythm, and vocabulary, the style of the first five books (see p. 407, last paragraph, for example), but it never leaves the spirit of the whole out of sight. The text contains occasional errors, probably owing to a misreading of Ivanov's manuscript (for example, p. 367, xiv, 4 s/b *priblizhashesia*; xiv, 5 s/b *ukazuia*; xiv, 7 s/b *resha*; p. 368, xiv, 11 s/b *glagoliushche*; p. 369, xvi, 4 s/b *spasetsia*). Ivanov's *Povest'* is written in the authentic manner of a Byzantine romance—relating to, say, the Russian version of *Digenis Akritas* as Lermontov's "Pesnia o kuptse Kalashnikove" relates to Kirsha Danilov's *byliny*. Only the poetry introduced in the text (many of these pieces are from Ivanov's published collections of poetry) is neither medieval nor popular in character. Ivanov's stylized prose has marvelous discipline and a fascinating rhythm, reaching sublime poetic beauty in some passages (for example, p. 433, end of xviii).

Ivanov's *Povest'* may be read on different levels: as a medieval romance; as a religious allegory (with Svetomir the Russian Galahad); as a recapitulation of Russian Symbolism—its imagery, its leitmotifs, its visions, its conceptual patterns; as a philosophical treatise; and, finally, as an account of Ivanov's own searchings, strivings, and ultimate arrival at a mature and secure faith. Such a wedding of Dostoevsky's "accursed questions" and Solovievian Neoplatonism to an Old Russian form and ample motifs from Russian folklore (for example, in an allegory linking Sophia to Mother Earth, pp. 478–79) creates aesthetic problems. This is true of any syncretistic work (compare the second part of Goethe's *Faust*, which Ivanov's *Povest'* resembles in many ways). The plot of Ivanov's *Povest'*, which takes the hero to the country of Presbyter John and to encounters with Philoctetes, Alexander of Macedon (seen as an incarnation of Dionysus), Sir Galahad, and Simon Magus, among others, is representative of the fusion of Neoplatonism, Hellenism, Byzantine, Catholic, and evangelic Christianity, Theosophy, Humanism, and Romanticism which we find in Russian Symbolism. Is this a posteriori synthesis an artistic success? Time will show.

The apparatus to the texts of Ivanov's poetry and prose gives not only variants but also notes and corrections made by the poet in his personal copies. The editor's comments are concise and somewhat sparse, but always useful. Typographically this is an excellent job. Thus the accurate rendition of non-Russian quotations (including Greek) contrasts favorably with the often disgraceful job done by Soviet editions. All in all, this is a volume for which we must be grateful.

VICTOR TERRAS
Brown University

THE THEME OF TIME IN THE POETRY OF ANNA AXMATOVA. By
Kees Verheul. The Hague: Mouton, 1971. viii, 233 pp. 42 Dglds.

What a pleasure it is to have Professor Verheul's book on Akhmatova. Not since the 1920s, with works like those of Eikhenbaum and Vinogradov, has there been such an original study in depth of some particular aspect of Akhmatova's poetry. There have been a number of books on Akhmatova in the last few years, but they