



Review of: E. Takho-Godi, A. Shishkin (Editors and compilers), *Vyacheslav Ivanov. Issledovanija i materialy. Vyp. 4 (Research and materials. Issue 4)*, Moscow, IWL RAS Publ., Vodoley Publ., 2024, 852 pp. (In Russian), ISBN 978-5-9208-0782-3, ISBN 978-5-91763-635-1, 2527 ₺

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In 2024, the A. M. Gorky Institute of World Literature of the Russian Academy of Sciences Publishing (IWL RAS Publ.), Vodoley Publishing, and the Vyacheslav Ivanov Research Center in Rome published the fourth volume in the series of books dedicated to the works of Vyacheslav Ivanovich Ivanov, one of the most enigmatic Russian poets of the early twentieth century and the most important theorist of Russian symbolism. This publication is undoubtedly a significant event in Ivanov studies, testifying to the enduring interest in the poet's legacy. The volume continues the thirty-year tradition of publishing materials on Ivanov studies.¹

The book opens with a reproduction of a lesser-known portrait of Vyacheslav Ivanov, created by the artists Nikolai Ulyanov and Anna Glagoleva.² The editors and compilers, Elena Takho-Godi and Andrey Shishkin, proposed the following structure for the book. It consists of three research sections: *Poetica*, *Biografica*, and a new section, *Maeutica*, which is particularly noteworthy in comparison with previous issues. Adjacent to these is a section containing previously unpublished materials, such as fiction, studies, and letters.

The *Poetica* section features philological articles by Maria Tsimborski-Leboda ("The Message of Medieval Philosophy and Aesthetics in the Writings of Vyach-

¹The first "Ivanov" collection was compiled by Nikolai V. Kotrelev and published as a special issue in the journal *Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie* in 1994 (Kotrelev 1994); after that, in 1996, a new collection was published under the title *Materials and Research* edited by Vsevolod A. Keldysh and Irina V. Koretskaya by the publishing house *Nasledie* (Keldysh and Koretskaya 1996); after that, in 1999, under the editorship of Lyudmila A. Gogotishvili and Alexander T. Kazaryan, the collection *Archival Materials and Research* was published by the publishing house *Russkie Slovarei* (Gogotishvili and Kazaryan 1999). Only some of "Ivanov" collections are listed, grouped under the heading *Research and materials*.

²The portrait was created in 1914–1915.

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eslav Ivanov: ‘Above the Palimpsest of Saint Augustine’s Words’”), Nina M. Segal-Rudnik (“Petrovskoye-na-Oke’ by Vyacheslav Ivanov: space and time”), Elena A. Andrushchenko (“... The bottom line, drawn publicly and accessibly...’: on Vyacheslav Ivanov’s article ‘Beside life’ (1916)”), Leonid G. Kayanidi (“‘Siloam of Blindness’: Valery Bryusov’s insights and delusions regarding the tragedy by Vyacheslav Ivanov ‘Prometheus’”), Olga L. Fetisenko (“‘Geschenks-Widmung’ an unknown poem by Vyacheslav Ivanov”), Liubov V. Mashtakova (“The luminary of the Muses during the storm: the context of Vyacheslav I. Ivanov the last epistle to Yuri N. Verkhovsky”). We would like to draw your attention to the article by Yuliya Yu. Anokhina, “Historiosophical aspects of Vyacheslav Ivanov’s interpretation of ‘The Legends of the Grand Inquisitor’”, in which the researcher suggests taking Ivanov’s literary approach into account against the perspective of Bakhtin’s concept of polyphony. The author shows that in Ivanov’s interpretation, the main “voice” in the narrative of “The Legend...” belongs not to Dostoevsky, but to Ivan Karamazov. This point of view in itself does not fit into the usual “moralizing” reading of the parable inserted into the novel, which is the quintessence of Dostoevsky’s views.³ However, the dialogical structure revealed by Ivanov, which Bakhtin would later theorize about, appears more philologically significant here.

The *Biografica* section showcases research papers and publications on materials that have received limited study. These include:

- Alexander L. Sobolev’s reconstruction of Zoya D. Bukharova’s biography in the context of her communication with Vyacheslav I. Ivanov (“Vyacheslav Ivanov and Zoya Bukharova”);
- Elena A. Takho-Godi’s analysis of Vyacheslav Ivanov’s relationship with Yu. I. Aikhenvald – personal communication, correspondence (introduced into scientific circulation for the first time) and joint scientific work (“Yuly I. Aykhenwald and Vyacheslav Ivanov: setting the theme. Article one.” and the appendices: “Letters from Yuly. I. Aykhenwald to Vyach. Ivanov” and “Yuly. I. Aykhenwald. L. D. Zinovieva-Annibal. The Tragic Menagerie. Tales”);
- Vasily Rudich’s publication of a letter written in ancient Greek by Vyacheslav Ivanov to his former student Nina Aleksandrovna Gulyaeva and the analysis of this text (“Socrates in Baku: Prolegomena to the Pedagogic of Vyacheslav Ivanov”);
- The publication and study of the correspondence between Vyacheslav Ivanov and Giovanni Papini by Stefano Garzonio and Bianca Sulpasso (as well as the letter of Giovanni Papini to Dmitry Vyacheslavovich Ivanov);
- Natalia Gamalova’s publication of the poetic handwritten fragments and letters of Jean Shuzeville and her study of the relationship between Shuzeville and Ivanov (“Meeting between Vyacheslav Ivanov and Jean Chuzeville in Rome” with the appendix of the text by Jean Shuzeville “The First Dionysian in Russian Poetry”).

Of particular interest is the *Maeutica* section, which presents philosophical receptions of Ivanov’s work and a reconstruction of a possible dialog between Vyacheslav the Magnificent and Russian and foreign thinkers, such as Mikhail Bakhtin, Alexandre Benois, Ludmila Gogotishvili, and Rene Girard.

³For Berdyaev’s “serious” attitude toward this image, see, for example: (Antonov 2025).

Vladimir Rudich's article "The Sacrality of Sacrifice: Vyacheslav Ivanov and René Girard" examines Ivanov's studies of Dionysianism in the context of Girard's concept of the "sacrificial crisis", which has been popular in anthropology for the past thirty years. In this work, Rudich compares the theoretical paradigms of these two dissimilar thinkers (Takho-Godi and Shishkin 2024, pp. 396–398). He points to a number of similar judgments and intuitions, also revealing the main point of their difference, namely different ideas about sacrifice in religions and, in particular, different understandings of the sacrifice of Christ. For Ivanov, every sacrifice implies a purifying meaning and, therefore, it is a necessary element of religiosity. For Girard, sacrifice is the vicious cause of religiosity, and it is overcome by the exclusive sacrifice of Christ in Christianity (Takho-Godi and Shishkin 2024, p. 407).

Svetlana Fedotova's article "'Mysteries of the Linguistic Sphinx': Vyacheslav Ivanov and Mikhail Bakhtin in Ludmila A. Gogotishvili's interpretation" (from the *Maeutica* section) continues the cycle of her works devoted to L. Gogotishvili, one of the most interesting researchers of Russian symbolism. Fedotova addresses the problem of comparing the ideas of the two thinkers who are most important for Russian philology and philosophy, Ivanov and Bakhtin, and also focuses on Gogotishvili's research approach to this problem. This approach emphasizes the linguistic analysis of the ideas of the symbolism and dialogism theorists. Thus, Fedotova addresses Gogotishvili's predicative concept of symbolism and with its help analyzes the ideological connection of Ivanov's and Bakhtin's theoretical constructions. The most fascinating topics include the comparison of the "two views" in Ivanov's myth and Bakhtin's two-voiced word (Takho-Godi and Shishkin 2024, p. 438), both thinkers' ideas about reference (Takho-Godi and Shishkin 2024, p. 438), and the nondialogical nature of Ivanov's symbolism (Takho-Godi and Shishkin 2024, p. 434) in contrast to Bakhtin's. The article is accompanied by a publication of Gogotishvili's notes bearing the title "Symbolism", with the date of the last edit being November 12, 1999.

Fedotova's article is also a significant contribution to the study of Gogotishvili's work, which is one of the most important and rapidly developing areas of humanities research.⁴

Elena Sozina's article "About the Symbols of Vyacheslav Ivanov: Ludmila A. Gogotishvili's Method" is an attempt to verify and empirically confirm Gogotishvili's predicative concept of symbolism and her conclusions regarding the work of Vyacheslav Ivanov. Sozina confirms Gogotishvili's most controversial position on the nonobjectified reference (and the absence of direct "access" to the symbolized object)⁵ in symbolism by a number of excerpts from Ivanov's poetry and theoretical works⁶ (Takho-Godi and Shishkin 2024, pp. 481–483). The researcher shows

⁴The substantial interest in Gogotishvili's work among Russian symbolism researchers is evident in the reports presented at the international conference, 'The Antinomy of Russian Modernist Poetics and Contemporary Humanities', which took place in November 2025: <https://imli.ru/images/Programma%20s%20izmen.%2019.11.25.pdf>.

⁵Gogotishvili presents her research concept most consistently in her work "Between the name and the predicate (symbolism of Vyach. Ivanov against the background of onomatodoxy)" [Gogotishvili 2006].

⁶This problem is also addressed by Fedotova in her article discussed above (Takho-Godi and Shishkin 2024, p. 425).

that Gogotishvili's approach correlates with Ivanov's nonsubstantial⁷ (in Humboldtian terms, energetic) understanding of the symbol (Takho-Godi and Shishkin 2024, p. 476) and offers the possibility of a phenomenological interpretation of Ivanov's ideas⁸ (Takho-Godi and Shishkin 2024, p. 479).

The *Maeutica* section ends with Yulia B. Demidenko's article "'Terror Antiquus' by Leon Bakst: towards the reconstruction of the idea", devoted to Leon Bakst's famous painting, its perception by Russian and European viewers, and the specifics of its criticism by Vyacheslav Ivanov (Takho-Godi and Shishkin 2024, p. 518).

The section containing publications presents new previously unpublished materials. Of particular significance is the publication of the mystery drama "The Great Bell" by Lydia D. Zinovieva-Annibal (prepared by Natalia I. Yakovleva and Andrey B. Shishkin, foreword by Andrey B. Shishkin), which is a reconstruction of the history of its creation and the meaning identification of the symbol the "great bell". This section also presents some prose and poetic messages from Yuri Verkhovsky to Vyacheslav Ivanov written between 1905 and 1924 (prepared by Alexander L. Soboleva); Iwan A. Kashkin's notes (prepared by Elena V. Glukhova and Olga L. Fetisenko) on the meetings of the Pushkin Seminary in Gunst's studio in Moscow in 1919, where Vyacheslav Ivanov, Nikolai Berdyaev, and others actively participated; letters from Olga Shor to Vyacheslav Ivanov (prepared by Olga L. Fetisenko), and a reconstruction of the publication history of the translations of "The Meaning of Love" and "The Drama of Plato's Life" by Vladimir Solovyov's, edited by Vyacheslav Ivanov in Mussolini's Italy (prepared by Kristina S. Landa).

The fourth issue of the series "Vyacheslav Ivanov. Research and materials" is an important milestone in the current studies of Russian symbolism. This issue brings together a variety of areas of Ivanov studies, ranging from archival research to theoretical and philosophical reconstructions. The second aspect emphasizes the conceptual development of different areas within Ivanov studies. This demonstrates the relevance and potential of future research into Ivanov's work.

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Data availability No datasets were generated or analysed during the current study.

Declarations

Competing interests The authors declare no competing interests.

⁷In Sozina's interpretation, the linguistic dimension of the symbol turns out to be based not on speech, but on silence (Takho-Godi and Shishkin 2024, p. 478).

⁸On Ivanov's attitude to the phenomenological tradition, see: (Obatnin 2018).

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