

Ibsen in Russia Revisited: The Ibsenian Legacy in the Symbolist World of Andrei Belyi

Lillian Jorunn Helle

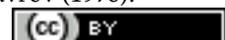
The intellectual atmosphere of Russian fin de siècle was characterized by a strong fascination for Norway, its nature, its culture and its literature. A good example is the Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen who was a significant source of inspiration for Russian dramatists, writers and poets.¹ The Russian symbolists in particular recognized him as a tutelary spirit and especially the “younger” symbolists, the so-called second generation of Symbolism, regarded his works and thoughts as a prefiguration of their own. Typically, the second generation developed their own interpretation of Ibsen which differed significantly from the dominant contemporary European attitude to his dramas: In the West, at the beginning of the last century, there was a tendency to underline the pessimistic, resigned sides of Ibsen.² The younger Russian symbolists however, read him in another light, as a fighter and rebel calling for ground-breaking renewals, although perceived in esoteric, spiritual terms (cf. Nilsson 1958, 194ff). This specific reading of Ibsen corresponded to and intensified their own dynamic attitude. In opposition to the older symbolists with their “l’art pour l’art”-programs, the task of the younger symbolists’ was a much more ambitious one; their strategies were to bring forth a new world, make life into art and art into life. As the poet Marina Tsvetaeva once contended, [с]имволизм меньше всего литературное течение (1994, 258),³ epitomizing that this movement was not merely an aesthetical revival, but first and foremost a *Weltanschauung* and a life building project (жизнетворчество).⁴ In this respect it was conceived as a unique possibility to overcome the cultural anxiety of the age and to realize the leap into a reconstructed reality, an

¹ For a general study of the influence of Ibsen in Russia, see Shaikevich (1974). On Ibsen and Russian Modernism, see Iuriev (1994).

² This attitude can be found for example in Max Nordau’s book *Entartung* (1892) that contains a sharp critique of Ibsen as a representative of a degenerative form of art. On this connection, see Odesskaia (2007). See also Durbach (1994).

³ “Symbolism is least of all a literary movement.” All translations from Russian throughout the article are mine.

⁴ There is an extensive amount of studies on the younger symbolists’ *жизнетворчество*-project (life-creating-project) and their mythopoetic world-view, see e.g. the seminal works of Mints (1979 and Lavrov (1978).



eschatological aspiration connected to the strong millennium climate of the time.⁵ The apocalyptic vision of a new existence was a dream commonly shared by the (younger) symbolists, all of them being obsessed by the expected *transitus* into the *Vita Nuova*. The concept of transition thus constituted a central frame of reference and the fluid notion of metamorphosis turned into a master trope of the epoch (cf. Helle 2011).

In this cultural environment Ibsen becomes crucial since his heroes were imagined as models for breaking out, showing the road to a radically reshaped future. In addition, his plays were identified with a protest towards the positivist rationality of a “disenchanted” (*entzaubert*) modernity – in the vocabulary of Max Weber, and as a resistance against the fragmented universe of the modern differentiated self. Consequently, Ibsen became an icon for the symbolists’ utopian longings for a new “organic” era, poignantly put in the current citation: Ибсен [...] суть деятель всенародного высвобождения невоплощенных энергий новой жизни (Ivanov 1971, 74).⁶ This new holistic, synthetic order was associated not least with the idea of the third Empire from Ibsen’s *Emperor and Galilean*, and the Ibsenian mood of expectation became an embodiment of the cataclysmic *Zeitgeist* of this period.⁷ The Norwegian dramatist was widely seen a preacher of new forms of being, a seer teaching new solutions to the contemporary crisis-ridden society, a notion eloquently expressed in the following saying: Творения Ибсена для нас не книга, или если и книга, то — великая книга жизни (Blok V, 309).⁸

All the major “younger” symbolists, like Aleksandr Blok and Viacheslav Ivanov, were influenced by Ibsen, developing in their works a net of intertextual relationships to his texts.⁹ Even at the last part of his career Blok, for instance, reworked the Ibsenian heritage, as in his enigmatic essay “Katilina” (“Catiline”) from 1918, in which he thematically explores Ibsen’s early play *Catilina* (1850). Blok here refigures Ibsen’s hero into a new setting, and the seditious senator becomes a “Roman Bolshevik” and a rather ambiguous champion for the new revolutionary regime (VI, 68).¹⁰ Blok’s treatment is particularly ambiguous because he ties Catiline through the Attis myth (as rendered in Catullus’ “Poem on Attis”) to castration and androgyny, thereby tying also Ibsen to an androgynous semantic field (cf. Barta 1995, 61). This connection, albeit, was suggested by Blok already in

⁵ Also the “older” symbolists regarded Ibsen as a central figure in their fight against the literary dominance of realism and naturalism and the first Ibsenites among the Russian Symbolists belonged to the “first generation”, like Nikolai Minskii, Konstantin Bal’mont and Dmitrii Merezhkovskii. These older symbolists, though, read Ibsen in a decadent and erotized light seeing him as a representative of an aesthetical and ethical theory of relativity and proclaiming him *inter alia* as a forerunner of a new and “free” relationship between the sexes and a call for lesbianism, see Gracheva (2005). In this sense their treatment of the Norwegian dramatist lacked the far-reaching apocalyptic visions and the longings for a transfigured world, so characteristic of the younger symbolists and their reception of Ibsen.

⁶ “Ibsen [...] is the agent of the universal liberation of the unrealized energy of the new life.” The “younger” symbolist Viacheslav Ivanov regarded Ibsen as a representative of a new “organic” epoch in line with the Saint-Simonian elaborations on this topic. See Ivanov (1974).

⁷ For an extensive discussion on Ibsen’s utopianism and his idea of the third Empire, see Johnston (1980).

⁸ “Ibsen’s authorship is no book for us, and if it were a book, then it is the great book of life.”

⁹ Interestingly, the Acmeist attitude to Ibsen strongly differed from the widespread idolisation he was met with from the symbolists, both older and younger. On the Acmeist reception of Ibsen, see Rusinko (1991).

¹⁰ The full title of the essay is “Katilina. Stranitsa iz mirovoi Revoliutsii” (“Catiline. A Page from the World Revolution”). For discussions on the connection between the Catiline-texts of Ibsen and Blok, see Barta (1995) and Kalb (2000).

“Genrikh Ibsen” (“Henrik Ibsen”), an essay from 1908, demonstrating the free manner of the symbolists’ manipulations of the Ibsenian themes and motives, his “will and belief” (V, 309).¹¹

A similar refiguring of Ibsen, by situating him into new contexts, is no less conspicuous in the case of Andrey Belyi (or Boris Bugaev as was his real name), another symbolist of the younger generation; and the very intriguing manner in which Belyi reconsiders Ibsen within his own symbolist system will be the main subject of this article. Belyi’s reception of Ibsen has been commented on before, most notably in the classical study from 1958 by Nils Åke Nilsson, *Ibsen in Russland*.¹² Previous research though has not systematically analysed the continuing fascination with Ibsen that Belyi demonstrated through all the various phases of his creative and intellectual development, resulting in a chain of different interpretations of the Ibsenian dramas, a process I will investigate in the following. In this respect I shall from one point of view revisit an old theme, but at the same time bring new angles and new perspectives to the topic. In my investigation I will focus on the presence of the Ibsenian legacy in the critical, theoretical and autobiographical writings of Belyi.¹³ Typical of his hermeneutical approach is a tendency to transform everything he experiences to fit into his symbolist schemes, and Ibsen, as we shall see, is transformed in much the same way. To a certain degree Belyi is exploiting Ibsen to further his own Symbolist visions, making the Norwegian playwright into a fiery champion for a new order, a figure supporting his own life-creating project (жизнетворчество). This action-oriented reading of Ibsen’s works in its turn contributed to the distinctive active outlook of Belyi’s symbolist thoughts, establishing a dynamic interaction between legacy and transformation.

Ibsen was an influential force in Belyi’s life already from his early years. As he tells us in his memoirs *Nachalo veka* (*The Beginning of the Century*) from 1933, he already as a young student in Moscow lived under the Ibsenian signs, walking daily in the Alexander gardens under the Kremlin fortress, promising in Biblical words never to fall down into trivial ordinariness: Поднимая руку над кремлевской стеной, я клянусь Ибсеном [...] что от быта не останется камня на камне (1966, 19).¹⁴ Ibsen thus becomes part of Belyi’s first, so-

¹¹ Blok in this article clearly understands Ibsen in an androgynous light, as a (male) figure tending towards the feminine principle, in line with his own strong inclination towards androgyny (V, 309): Вера и воля Ибсена, как и всякого художника, покоится в «лоне вечно-женственного» (“Ibsen’s belief and will, as all artists’, are embedded in the bosom of ‘the eternal-feminine’”). On Blok and androgyny, cf. e.g. his ambivalent Christ in the poem “Dvenadtsat” (“The Twelve”) from 1918. For studies on Blok and androgyny/castration, see Etkind (1996), Matich (2005) and Presto (2008). On the role of androgyny in Russian fin-de-siècle culture, see also Masing-Delic (1992), Helle (2011).

¹² A more recent article by Laurence Senelick, “How Ibsen Fared in Russian Cultures and Politics” only briefly touches Belyi’s reception of the Ibsenian dramas (2014, 98–99).

¹³ Belyi wrote three essays on Ibsen, “Ibsen i Dostoevskii” (“Ibsen and Dostoevskii”) from 1905, “Teatr i sovremennaia drama” (“Theatre and Modern Drama”) from 1907, “Krizis soznaniia i Genrik Ibsen” (“The Crisis of Consciousness and Henrik Ibsen”) from 1910, and an obituary essay, “Genrik Ibsen” (“Henrik Ibsen”) from 1906, which were all collected in one of Belyi’s most important books on symbolism, *Arabeski* from 1911 (reprint 1969), thus forming an essential part of Belyi’s symbolist theory. These four texts are the main sources of my investigation — in addition to various other non-fictional writings by Belyi in which Ibsen is figuring as a topic. Naturally, a more comprehensive account of “Ibsen and Belyi” should take into consideration also (possible) traces of the Norwegian dramatist in the fictional works of the Russian symbolist. This is a challenging subject for further research.

¹⁴ “Lifting my hand over the Kremlin wall, I swear: to let not one stone of the trivialities of life to be left on another.”

called “theurgist” phase, and the essentially sober minded Norwegian dramatist is transfigured into a kind of “theurgist” himself.¹⁵

This early phase of Russian symbolism was a tremendously exalted one, coloured by Vladimir Solov'ev's Neo-Platonism and the esoteric principle of Sophia, the eternal female. It was a world filled with correspondences, a “fôret des symboles, as Charles Baudelaire would have it, in which all external phenomena were interpreted as symbols pointing to a transcendent reality; or in Belyi's own formulation: СИМВОЛАМИ СТАНОВЯТСЯ ОКРУЖАЮЩИЕ НАС ПРЕДМЕТЫ (1967, 230).¹⁶ Illustrative of this symbolic mentality is Belyi who in an effort to identify with Ibsen's master builder Solness in his dizzying ascent to the roof of his new building climbs up the steps of Ivan the Great Bell Tower (Ivan Velikii), metaphorically trying to recreate a progress into a higher metaphysical sphere (cf. Belyi 1966, 19). Moreover, one of Belyi's earliest works, the innovative *Severnaia simfoniia (1-ia, geroicheskaia)* (*The Northern Symphony or First – Heroic*), from 1903, is written partly under the influence of Ibsen's mountain imagery (and Edward Grieg's music) plus the Norwegian scenery of heights and holms (cf. Nilsson 1958, 200).

It is though only in the revolutionary year of 1905 that Ibsen achieves a real decisive function in Belyi's symbolist system. This development is primarily due to Belyi's disappointment with the evolution of symbolism (its so-called “third wave”) and what he regarded as a perverting of the Solovev'ian Platonic idea of agape into a sensuous and even pornographic concept of eros, found especially in the mystical anarchism of Georgii Chulkov.¹⁷ Increasingly Belyi came to consider this stage of symbolism as “pseudo magic” and as a “mysterious narcosis” (1969a, 321). In an effort to establish a different and *logical* fundament for his symbolist theory he therefore moves to Kant and eventually to neo-Kantianism and the stringent teachings of Heinrich Rickert and the Freiburg-school (a very influential philosophy of the day).¹⁸ As Belyi rhetorically expresses this shift: Мы призываем с пути безумий к холодной ясности искусства, к гистологии науки, к серьезной, как музыка Баха, строгости теории познания (1969a, 277).¹⁹ His project was, as he later phrased it, to забронировать проблемы моего символизма научной базой (1982, 34–35).²⁰ By implication he demands a rational and precise argumentation, looking for clarity, honesty and responsibility, and these are qualities he has recognized in Ibsen, who has now been brought into the centre of Belyi's symbolist universe, as we can see from his programmatic essay “Ibsen i Dostoevskii” (“Ibsen and Dostoevskii”) (1905). Belyi finds in Ibsen and his простые, холодные слова (“simple, cold words”) (1969a, 99) shelters against disintegration and “the path of madness” (путь безумий). These words are offering practical answers instead of misty and metaphysical hints, what he mockingly calls the

¹⁵ For studies covering Belyi's intellectual and creative development through its many shifts and changes, see e.g. the seminal works by Elsworth (1983) and Deppermann (1982). When talking about different phases in Belyi, it is however important to stress the element of continuity in his seeking, like the topic of life creation (жизнетворчество) that followed him throughout the whole of his life.

¹⁶ “The objects surrounding us become symbols.”

¹⁷ See e.g. Belyi's highly vituperative attacks on this movement in his article “Ivan Aleksandrovich Khlestakov” from 1907.

¹⁸ On Belyi and his deep involvement with German philosophy, see e.g. Zink (1998).

¹⁹ “We call you from the path of madness to the cold clarity of art, to the gistology of science, to, like Bach's music, the serious austerity of the theory of knowledge.”

²⁰ “to secure the problems of my symbolism with a scientific fundament.”

mumbling of the goddesses of destiny (парки бабье лепетанье) (1969a, 272).²¹ Hence a new line of sobriety is developing in Belyi's thinking, in which Solness, Rubek and Brand (amongst others) become ideals as суровые борцы освобождения ("severe fighters for freedom"), organizing, as he will have it, хаос души ("the chaos of the soul") (1969a, 100, 96). In Belyi's mind these heroes are not influenced by so-called апокалиптическая истерика ("apocalyptic hysterics") (1969a, 99), but quite the opposite, they are like mining engineers, prosaic people building инженерные мосты, там где видели лишь радужные арки из символов и афоризмов (1969a, 266).²² Ibsen's personages are thus the real "innovators": they are, as Belyi asserts, the true "theurgists" and not false ones (1969a, 99).

Besides, in this phase Ibsen is synonymous with a dynamic movement от черной ночи к [...] брежжущей заре (1969a, 284).²³ To Belyi, in accordance with his somewhat eclectic interpretation of neo-Kantianism, Ibsen is a call for *Tathandlung*, the extroverted *vita creativa* and a continuation of his own life-creating strategies. The chaotic inner disorder of contemporary mysticism should be won over, he insists, through a Kantian ethics of duty — *Pflichtethik* — in which the deed is more imperative than the word.²⁴ In this task he identifies with brave Dorians fighting against their rude adversaries: Мы должны идти в ночь дорической фалангой: И бить варваров (1969a, 16).²⁵ To Belyi it is therefore crucial to stand up in battle, taking example from Ibsen's heroic characters: Мы должны стать героями (1969a, 284), he programmatically states in an obituary written after Ibsen's death in 1906.²⁶

In Belyi's attempt to create an action-oriented basis for symbolism he clearly understands Ibsen as an ally and the (in many ways) prototypical Norwegian bourgeois is transformed into a virile Viking assisting in the war against our "inner chimeras" (1969a, 282, 283). Belyi's refiguring of Ibsen here into a fearsome Nordic warrior help strengthen the active, dynamic aspects of his symbolist theory in which Ibsen's plays become forceful models for a defence against ideological foes. As such, they become in Belyi's treatment even equivalent to a колоссальная крепость, построенная по всем правилам науки, защищающая нас против вторжения неприятеля, под каким бы видом он ни явился пред нами (1969a, 283).²⁷ And most importantly, Ibsen is supposed to show the direction to берега страны обетованной ("the shores of the promised land") (1969a, 284), his heroes being signs on the road to apocalypse: алгебраические знаки какого — то

²¹ With a reference to Aleksandr Pushkin, as it were, cf. Pushkin's poem "Stikhi, sochinennye noch'iu vo vremia bessonnitsy" ("Verses composed during a night of insomnia") from 1830.

²² "engineer bridges there where one only saw rainbows of symbols and aphorisms."

²³ "from the dark night to the shimmering break of dawn."

²⁴ Belyi's understanding of the Kantian system may seem somewhat idiosyncratic, but his turn to Kant and eventually to neo-Kantianism is not as dramatic as one could presume: he, in accordance with much of the Russian reception of this philosophy interpreted Kant with a focus not on the critique of the pure reason (*reine Vernunft*), but rather through an analysis of the practical reason (*praktische Vernunft*), seeing Kant as a moral teacher and a guide to the right living, as "Anweisung zum seligen Leben" (Stepun 1964, 293). In addition Belyi, following the tradition of Rickert's Freiburg-school, read Kant in the light of Fichte, as a call for the deed (*Tathandlung*), insisting on примат творчества над познанием ("the primacy of creativity over cognition") (1969b, 230), a reading that supported his own life-building aspirations (Stepun 1964, 292f.).

²⁵ "We must go into the night like a Doric phalanx: And beat the barbarians."

²⁶ "We must become heroes."

²⁷ "an enormous fortress, build in accordance with all the rules of science, defending us from the attacks of the enemy, in what ever form he will appear."

апокалиптического управления жизни (1969а, 32).²⁸ In this respect they prefigure, in Belyi's account, the spiritual reshaping of humanity:

[Ибсен] был первый, кто привил нашему времени пламенные чаяния о Третьем Царстве, о воскресении мертвых [...]. Само дерзновение [его героев] указывает на то, что Ибсеновская драма символами своими говорит нам о преобразении плоти душой. Апокалипсис человеческой плоти — вот символизм ибсеновской драмы (1969, 283, 33).²⁹

In this reshaping the Ibsenian (middle-class Norwegian) personages are transfigured into Greek titans, a transfiguration Belyi observes as especially striking in Ibsen's last work *When we dead awaken*: As he writes in the essay "Teatr i sovremennaja drama" ("Theatre and Modern Drama") in this play Rubek восставал над смертью, мгновенно превращаясь в титана. Тут мифический символизм превращается в символизм эсхатологический, тут Ибсен в стремлениях своих нам нужнее, чем десять Софоклов (1969а, 34).³⁰

In focus of Belyi's exalted Ibsen-cult we find the mountain metaphors: Творчество Ибсена [...] наука о горном пути [...] Творчество Ибсена — горный подъем [...] В ледниках свистит буря [...] А герои Ибсена всегда уходят в горы. Это значит — они стремятся к солнцу" (1969а, 100, 98).³¹ Belyi exploits this highly pathos-filled mountain rhetorics — combined with sun symbolism — also in a fierce critique of a former ideal, the writer Fedor Dostoevsky, and he systematically construes the Norwegian playwright as a binary opposition to the Russian novelist, a re-contextualising that illustrates Belyi's creative manipulation of the Ibsenian legacy.³² At this stage in his development Belyi considered the Apollonian dimension (which he recognized in Ibsen's "clear style") to be far more essential than the Dionysian spirit so dominant in the early years of symbolism, and his brutal attacks on Dostoevsky are simultaneously attacks on "decadent" Dionysianism in general.³³ For Belyi the Apollonian aspect, metaphorically speaking, is a hovering over the peaks in the clear and sunny mountain air while the Dionysian aspect is a crawling at the very bottom, a drowning in "apocalyptic" ecstasies, истерика и эпилепсия ("hysterics and

²⁸ "algebraic signs to an apocalyptic equation of life."

²⁹ "Ibsen was the first to inject our time with a fiery longing for the Third Empire, for the resurrection of the dead.... The sheer boldness of his heroes shows that the Ibsenian drama through its symbols tells us about the spiritual transformation of the flesh. The apocalypse of the human flesh, that is the symbolism of the Ibsenian drama."

³⁰ "rose above death, to instantly become a titan. Here mythical symbolism turns into eschatological symbolism, here in his aspirations Ibsen is more essential to us than ten Sophocles."

³¹ "Ibsen's works are the science of the mountain road ... Ibsen's works are a climbing into the mountains. Among the glaciers the storm is howling ... But Ibsen's heroes always go up into the mountains. That means — they are striving towards the sun."

³² Belyi's highly complex reception of Dostoevsky, from passionate enthusiasm to vehement repudiation, is discussed in Basker (2013). This article though, does not analyse the crucial role of Ibsen in Belyi's repudiation of the Russian novelist.

³³ Belyi explicitly calls for the Apollonian principle to conquer the Dionysian element in his critique of so-called decadent literature, works he characterises as "злая саранча" ("angry locusts"): И струны лиры натянуть на лук тетивой, чтобы стрелами Аполлона — стрелами дня — разить саранчиную стаю издевающуюся над жизнью: вернуть искусству Аполлонов свет ("And pull the strings of the lyre on the bow, so the arrows of Apollo, the arrows of day, may strike the locust swarm that mocks our life: give back to art Apollo clarity" (1969а, 16).

epilepsy”) (1969a, 99).³⁴ And this is exactly, in Belyi’s view, what happens to Dostoevskii’s protagonists; they all go under, being described as трактирные болтуны, с незастегнутой замаранной душой (1969a, 97).³⁵ In Belyi’s caustic rendering they represent the most godless of forces, exuding a mental darkness without hopes of higher perspectives: Герои Достоевского [...] вместо Дома Божия, попадали в дом публичный (1969a, 95).³⁶

Ibsen’s ascent into the heights is thus fashioned as the counter-step to the Dostoevskian descent into suffocating shallowness: Ибсен впервые намечает в душе [...] горы, и тем дает воздушную перспективу безвоздушными плоскостями Достоевского (Belyi 1969a, 96).³⁷ To Belyi, горная ясность (“the clarity of the mountains”) is a concept similar to spiritual enlightenment, but this condition of inner illumination is not present, he argues, in the Russian author: Горная ясность требует восхождению, а высоты, величия, горного подъема не было у Достоевского (1969a, 94).³⁸ And he goes on in a damning characterisation constituting a conspicuous contrast to his reverent valorisation of Ibsen and his world: Мешанство, трусливость и нечистота, вот отличительные черты Достоевского (1969a, 91).³⁹

Belyi develops these acerbic assessments into a critique of all Russians for supposedly passivity and absence of will power, ironizing about the clichéd idea of the bottomless enigma of the Russian psyche, what he refers to as проклятая глубина русской натуры (1969a, 360).⁴⁰ He elaborates this topic with heavy sarcasm: Мы глубоки: часто мы так глубоки, что мы не можем воплотить действительную глубину нашей души ни в чем конкретном (1969a, 358).⁴¹ In addition he accuses his contemporaries among the intelligentsia of “verbal intoxication” (пьянство словесное), of turning all productive doings and serious deeds into empty talk: Глубина [их] действий превратилась в вавилонскую башню ненужных слов (1969a, 361).⁴²

Belyi’s alternative to this shortage of enterprising energy is again the dutiful and strong-minded heroes of Ibsen, like his somewhat idiosyncratic version of Borkman (from *John Gabriel Borkman*) who allegedly demonstrates his firmness by picking up his stick to go out into the winter’s night. To Belyi such acts become a source of un-compromising strength that he found lacking in Russian life and literature, but which could be found in abundance

³⁴ Incidentally, Belyi’s war against Dionysianism is not — as might be expected — an attack on Friedrich Nietzsche, earlier in Belyi’s mind so closely associated with the Dionysian element. Quite on the contrary, the German philosopher is now refigured to fit in into the Ibsenian universe (perhaps so he could still be an ideal), being described in an “Apollonian setting” in the midst of Ibsen’s illuminated mountains (1969, 100): Уже золотые мечи разрубали туманы, когда Ницше бросался в горы по хорошо проложенным путям Ибсеновских героев (“The golden swords were already slitting the fog when Nietzsche threw himself into the mountains on the well paved paths of Ibsen’s heroes”).

³⁵ “tavern talkers, with unbuttoned, soiled souls.”

³⁶ “The heroes of Dostoevskii ended up, in stead of in of the house of God, in the whore house.”

³⁷ “Ibsen is the first to outline in the soul ... the mountains, thus giving an airy perspective to the airless surfaces of Dostoevskii.”

³⁸ “The clarity of the mountains demands ascent, but the heights, the grandness, the mountain climbing was never present in Dostoevskii.”

³⁹ “Philistinism, cowardice and dirt, those are the distinctive features of Dostoevskii.”

⁴⁰ “the damned deepness of the Russian nature.”

⁴¹ “We are deep: we are often so deep that we are unable to embody the very deepness of our soul into anything concrete.”

⁴² “The core of their actions changed into a Babylonian tower of unnecessary words.”

in the fictional universe of the Norwegian dramatist. As Belyi rhetorically asks his readers at the end of his essay on Ibsen and Dostoevskii: Не пора ли нам [...] идти по горному пути где стоит одинокий образ Генрика Ибсена? (1969a, 100).⁴³

Ibsen was not though, to occupy this lofty position for long, since a re-consideration of the Ibsenian characters is taken place in connection with a change in Belyi's symbolist thinking. From about 1908 Belyi is gradually giving up his effort to link symbolism to the stringent thought of neo-Kantianism, which he increasingly looked upon as a philosophy of сухая методология ("dry methodology"), poisoning existence with нашатырь логики ("the ammonia of logic") (1912, 61).⁴⁴ Belyi's extensive writings on this subject show his growing dissatisfaction with the Kantian classifications and dichotomies, like the doubling of the world between *das Ding für mich* and *das Ding an sich* (not a surprising reaction really, given his inherent tendency to syncretism).⁴⁵ In particular he understood this doubling as a fatal dualism between consciousness and feeling, a dualism in its turn reflecting the deep problems of the modern "fragmented" individual.⁴⁶ To overcome this, in his view, destructive differentiation he starts seeking within the occult and holistic spheres of theosophy and anthroposophy, aiming to establish a higher unity, in which ratio melts together with creation into a new spiritual totality.⁴⁷

Belyi's quest for this new totality implies as could be expected a repudiation of the Rickertian rationality schemes and the Kantian rational soul, a move resulting in a corresponding re-assessment of the Ibsenian drama, as we find this expressed in another programmatic essay, "Krizis soznaniia i Genrik Ibsen" ("The Crisis of Consciousness and Henrik Ibsen") from 1910. In this text Belyi no longer glorifies Ibsen's protagonists as ideals of a stern heroic will power, but sees them as synonyms for a sterile ethics of duty. As we remember, earlier he perceived Rubek as a brave freedom fighter, now he reads him quite differently as a dead and doomed *Verstandesseele*. As Belyi puts it, Рубек сознателен, но он мертв: совершеннейший мертвец, он только сознанием доходит до творчества, преобразить свою жизнь он не может: и он гибнет, поднимаясь к высотам своего оледенелого сознания (1969a, 207).⁴⁸ Likewise Brand, whom Belyi earlier elevated as a positive contrast to both passive contemplation and Dionysian mysticism, is now refigured into a figure of cold rational morality: Сознание долга без живо ощущаемой любви губит и Бранда (1969a, 207).⁴⁹ In this sense Brand exemplifies the tragedy of real compassion being replaced by abstract moral laws.

⁴³ "Is it not time to walk the mountain path, where the lonely image of Henrik Ibsen is waiting for us?"

⁴⁴ On neo-Kantianism as "dry methodology" and more, see Belyi's poem "Premudrost'" ("Wisdom") from 1908.

⁴⁵ Belyi's dissatisfaction with neo-Kantianism is elaborated in e.g. his essay "Krugovoe dvizhenie" ("Roundabout Circulation"). Here he accuses this philosophy of idiotism (1912, 56), using the word in the Greek sense (*ιδιώτης*) to characterize an individual split off from his fellow men, living, as he writes elsewhere, in his own sphere — of abstraction (1966, 260).

⁴⁶ Cf. Belyi (1969a, 161): Мы переживаем кризис. Никогда еще основные противоречия человеческого сознания не сталкивались в душе с такой остротой ("We are going through a crisis. Never before has the fundamental contradictions of the human mind collided in the soul with such intensity").

⁴⁷ On Belyi and theosophy, see Carlson (2005); on Belyi and anthroposophy, see the comprehensive study by Kozlik (1983). See also Spivak (2006).

⁴⁸ "Rubek is conscious, but he is dead; he is completely dead, he comes to creation only through cognition and is unable to transform his life, and so he perishes, while ascending to the heights of his frozen consciousness."

⁴⁹ "The cognition of duty without a lively felt love destroys also Brand."

But at the same time as Belyi in this period came to consider the Ibsenian “dramatis personae” from a less heroic (and may be a more “realistic”) perspective, they now obtain a new importance since they incarnated as it were the crisis of contemporaneity and the multiple splittings of the modern psyche.⁵⁰ As he categorically claims: Все драмы [Ибсена] построены на противоречиях (1969a, 207).⁵¹ And precisely because of Ibsen’s ability — as Belyi holds it — to lay bare these contradictions, the Norwegian playwright remains ambivalently valuable as the first dramatist to mirror our existence in all its complexity. In Belyi’s words, революционная деятельность [Ибсена] заключается в том, что он срывает с нас методологические очки (1969a, 186, 187),⁵² forcing us to recognize the destructive differentialism that must be overcome through a new unified reality.⁵³ The fragmented inner world of Ibsen’s divided personalities, as Belyi sees it, therefore becomes a call for a new integration.

Indeed, a new kind of integration was achieved by Belyi, and this implies also a certain re-evaluation of the Ibsenian’ characters. This re-evaluation was a process connected to Belyi’s journey in October 1913, when he went by train (in the company of Rudolf Steiner and his followers) from the Norwegian capital Christiania (Oslo) through the massive mountain plateau of Hardangervidda to the west coast city of Bergen.⁵⁴ His itinerary thus takes him from one to another of two topographical sites that had played a decisive role in Ibsen’s life, a fact of great implications to Belyi’s interpretative mind. In this respect the train-trip becomes, to re-use a term from the cultural semiotician Iurii Lotman, a meaning-generating (смыслопорождающий) experience,⁵⁵ and Belyi’s meeting with the Norwegian landscape, the beauty and grandness of its highland sceneries, turns into a meeting also with Ibsen.

But not, albeit, a meeting with the Ibsen of a rigid and religious “maximalism.” What Belyi now brings to the foreground is no longer the uncompromising demands of Brand, but quite on the contrary, the “deus caritatis” message of that play, the call for an all-embracing, compassionate kind of love combined with a vision of the sun: Бранд — неправ.

⁵⁰ Cf. Belyi’s reflections on these dichotomies (1969a, 161): Никогда еще дуализм между сознанием и чувством, созерцанием и волей, личностью и обществом, наукой и религией, нравственностью и красотой не был так отчетливо выражен (“Never before has the dualism between consciousness and feeling, perception and will, the individual and society, science and religion, morality and beauty been so clearly pronounced”).

⁵¹ “All [Ibsen’s] dramas are construed on contradictions.”

⁵² “The revolutionary activity [of Ibsen] means a tearing off of our methodological glasses.”

⁵³ Obviously Ibsen in Belyi’s mind helps us to escape from the restrictions of the (neo)-Kantian conceptual categories through which we organize the world. The new integrated reality that will eventually appear Belyi envisaged as a recapitulation of a forfeited, ideal condition, as expressed in his anti-neo-Kantian essay “Emblematika smysla” (“The Emblematics of Meaning”) from 1909 (1969b, 72): Родина наша: когда-то потерянный и возвращенный рай (“Our homeland: a paradise once lost and regained”).

⁵⁴ Belyi actually made two trips to this city, in 1913 and in 1916. It was however the first stay that made the strongest impression on the Russian symbolist, eminently illustrated in the following passage (1922, I, 48): “Неописуемой важности дни пережили мы в Бергене; их коснусь через десять лишь лет: и — теперь я молчу, я был выхвачен из обычного тела” (“Days of indescribable importance we experienced in Bergen; I will touch them only in ten years — now I am silent, I was seized out of my ordinary body”). On Belyi’s journeys to Bergen, see Helle (1990).

⁵⁵ Cf. Lotman’s seminal work on the text as a meaning-generating mechanism (1996), see also English version (1990).

В горах — солнечность. Бранд — не понял: он — «Деус Каритатис» (1982, 339).⁵⁶ Belyi's new insight into the meaning of Ibsen's drama was a “пробуд” (a “revelation”)⁵⁷ that took place, significantly enough, at the highest point of the railway road to Bergen, and it was to no small amount influenced by his antroposophical seeking of these years.⁵⁸ The new insight melts together with impulses from Steiner's teaching and with a renewed emphasis on Ibsen's mountain metaphors as images of spiritual “inspiration,” to form a new wholeness.⁵⁹ In this new wholeness the Ibsenian presence seems to be tied to unambiguously positive values, being linked to experiences of internal illumination and the symbolism of the sun (to Belyi's hermeneutical approach it would thus be no mere coincidence that the master builder's name, Solness, means the sunny ness). Furthermore, Belyi came to see Bergen as a *civitas solis*, describing it as shining with a ослепительный (“dazzling”) force (1922 I, 57): Моя жизнь есть рассказ о [...] Бергене, где я увидел огромные молнии света (1920, 149),⁶⁰ he emphatically asserts, possibly associating the Norwegian town with (what he saw as) Ibsen's notion of the solar city of the new future, a notion so important to Belyi's utopian longings (1969a, 33).⁶¹

As mentioned, a persistent tendency of the Russian symbolists was to re-configure the surrounding reality to fit it into their own conceptual frames. By the same token we observe how Belyi during his Norwegian “pilgrimage” brought a somewhat revised Ibsen into the predominantly antroposophical atmosphere of the Bergen “mysteries,” according him (for a while) a vital function within this occult universe.⁶² Moreover, it is highly suggestive that these “mysteries” coincide with a stage in Belyi's life when he is completing his *opus magnum*, the novel *Peterburg* (*Petersburg*) from 1914. It has even been claimed that part of this novel is a reflection of his experiences in Bergen (Ljunggren 1982, 118ff). One could therefore speculate as to whether also the Ibsenian voice, however altered and transmuted, has somehow found its way into this most innovative prose work, often referred to as the acme of Russian literary avant-garde, thereby making a contribution to one of the most ground breaking fictional texts of the twentieth century.⁶³ This is a thought-provoking possibility that in a fascinating manner adds to the importance of Belyi's journey to Bergen.⁶⁴

⁵⁶ “Brand is not right. In the mountains there is sunniness. Brand did not understand: He [God] is — ‘Deus Caritatis.’”

⁵⁷ The word *probud* with which he describes this inner awakening or illumination, is incidentally one of Belyi's many neologisms.

⁵⁸ Belyi himself explicitly emphasises this connection (1982, 341): Все, что ни воспринималось в Бергене, — воспринималось в теме: «Рудольф Штейнер и Христос» (“All that was perceived in Bergen — was perceived within the theme: “Rudolf Steiner and Christ”).

⁵⁹ Cf. Belyi (1982, 340) about the intensity of his mountain experiences: Я понял впервые всем существом: инспирация в горах (“I understood for the first time with all my being: the inspiration is in the mountains”).

⁶⁰ “My life is the story of Bergen where I saw enormous flashes of light.”

⁶¹ Belyi seems to tie the idea of *civitas solis* to the dying Oswald's enigmatic utterings about the sun at the end of *Ghosts* (cf. 1969a, 32).

⁶² The condition of inspired fulfilment and inner “awakening” (пробуд) so characteristic of Belyi's Norwegian experience is highly a part of the Bergen “mysteries”, and this was a condition he tried to recapture in his writings in the years to come. See e.g. Belyi (1922, 1982).

⁶³ Cf. e.g. Vladimir Nabokov famously calling *Petersburg* one of the four greatest novels of the twentieth century (1990, 55).

⁶⁴ This possible connection of an Ibsenian voice in *Petersburg* is a relevant topic for research that could lead to new and interesting results.

After Belyi's days in the Norwegian city, so full of fresh impressions, he eventually falls into a deep depression. We learn however from his various writings and memoirs that this depression was followed by a new awakening, demonstrating the typical triadic pattern through which he construes his autobiographical narrative (and also his constantly shifting argumentation): from thesis through anti-thesis into a new synthesis or a new elevation.⁶⁵ This new elevation is spurred by the torrent of revolutionary events in Russia. Belyi conceived the chaotic turnabouts as an invigorating, regenerative storm, as the cleansing cataclysm he had envisaged as the solution to contemporaneity's decrepit civilization, notions expressed in the essay "Revolutsiia i kul'tura" ("Revolution and Culture") from 1917:⁶⁶

Как подземный удар, разбивающий все, предстает революция; предстает ураганом, сметающим формы [...]. Революция напоминает природу: грозу, наводнение, водопад; все в ней бьет "через край", все чрезмерно [...] Прометеев духовный огонь есть очаг революции. Революция [...] сияние скрытой красоты; революция — взрыв, обрывающий мертвую форму (1971, 5, 7, 11).⁶⁷

In Belyi's glorification of the revolution's разрушительные вихри ("destructive vortices") (1971, 12) Ibsen is once more figuring in the front, now as a premonitory wind and a harbinger of liberating explosions: Ибсен — величайший анархист предреволюционного времени; и оттого эти драмы гремят по Европе громами летящих лавин; и — потрясают паденьями, взлетами, песнью и сумасшедшими криками (1971, 15).⁶⁸ Belyi clearly reconstructs Ibsen as a proto-Bolshevik and a prophet, presaging the unavoidable disintegration of the old world as the initiation to the coming catharsis, as in the following exalted lines:⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Highly characteristic for the symbolists' *mythopoiesis* was a tendency to construe their autobiography through archetypal, archaic schemes well known from the regeneration pattern of the Christian tradition and also identical to the Bakhtinian concept of "the pregnant death" with its pathos of peripeteia and change (Bakhtin 1972, 212). The symbolists developed this pattern within chiliastic frames, as the (apocalyptic) crumbling of the old world followed by (spiritual) rebirth and revival. On the importance of the regeneration pattern in Russian literature and cultural thought, see e.g. Helle (1990, 1997). In Belyi's case, the construction of his life narrative through such schemes do not seldom threaten to obscure the high degree of continuity that existed in his thinking throughout all the different phases of his life.

⁶⁶ The essay was written in May 1917, inspired by the February Revolution. Incidentally Belyi's highly strung hymn to the new order, "Khristos voskres" ("Christ is arisen") from 1918, shows the same revolutionary ecstasy as the essay, linking the October revolution to the resurrection mystery of Christ at Golgotha. Cf. Helle (1990, 17 ff.).

⁶⁷ "Like an earthquake, destroying all, revolution appears: it appears like a hurricane, that sweeps away all forms. Revolution resembles nature; the thunderstorm, the flooding, the waterfall, everything flows over the edge, everything is in excess. The Promethean spiritual fire is the hearth of revolution: Revolution is the splendour of a hidden beauty, revolution is the explosion that annihilates old forms."

⁶⁸ "Ibsen is the greatest anarchist of pre-revolutionary times; and therefore his dramas roar over Europe thundering like flowing avalanches; reverberating with falls and flights, song and frenzied shouts."

⁶⁹ Tying the maximalist theme of creative explosion to Ibsen's dramas was not, however, a new topic in Belyi, but elaborated earlier, as in this passage from 1910 (1969a, 174): Нам остается один путь: подложить динамит под самую историю во имя абсолютных ценностей, еще не раскрытых сознанием, вот страшный вывод из ... драмы Ибсена. ("We are left with only one path: to place dynamite under history itself in the name of absolute values, still undisclosed by our consciousness; this is the awful conclusion from ... the dramas of Ibsen"). With such statements in mind Fedor Stepun once wrote (1956, 286): Искусство Белого [...] было своеобразным «небесным прологом» столь же великой, как и страшной русской

Драмы Ибсена — это стрелка компаса: в них падение Сольнеса, Бранда и Рубека с высоты ледников есть падение стрелки компаса пред налетающей бурей; нам в лавинном грохоте всей драматургии Ибсена уже слышны иные далекие грохоты: грохоты пушек войны мировой, небывалой; и — гром революций (1971, 16).⁷⁰

Needless to say, it was barely such disruptive upheavals as those of October 1917 and the unforeseen excesses in the wake of the revolt that Ibsen had in mind with his utopian ideas.⁷¹ His (idealistic) hopes of a transformed society and his rather enigmatic visions of a third Empire do not seem to have much in common with the radical reshaping of the Bolsheviks, changes that while destroying hardened “dead forms” (in Belyi’s expression), also destroyed the very foundation of the cultural evolution and the civilization heritage that Ibsen himself was an integral part of. Belyi’s conspicuous re-contextualisation of Ibsen here, making him into a singer of the revolution, an artist hailing his own annihilation, is thus yet another example of Belyi’s extremely free manipulation of his master and mentor.⁷² Once again is illustrated how the Russian symbolist rewrites the Norwegian dramatist to make him fit into his own continuous search for new and meaningful perspectives and positions, but also how his specific activist reading of Ibsen contributes to strengthen Belyi’s own dynamic approach. Moreover and even still more remarkable, the re-actualization of Ibsen in Belyi’s pro-revolutionary panegyrics convincingly demonstrates how the Ibsenian legacy throughout the many different stages of Belyi’s creative and intellectual journey keeps it crucial place within his life cycle, thereby establishing a most intriguing thread in the complex web of Ibsen’s *Wirkungsgeschichte*.

References

- Bakhtin, Mikhail M. 1972, *Problemy poetiki Dostoevskogo*, Moscow.
- Barta, Peter 1995, “Re-Figuring the Revolutionary: Blok, Ibsen and Catiline,” *New Comparison* (19), 46–63.
- Basker, Michael 2013, “Andrei Belyi and Dostoevskii: From *Demons* to *The Silver Dove*,” *Studies in Slavic Literature and Poetics* (58), 149–204.

революции (“Belyi’s works were a peculiar ‘heavenly prologue’ to the great as well as terrible Russian revolution”).

⁷⁰ “Ibsen’s drama is a compass needle; the fall of Solness, Brand and Rubek from the heights of the glaciers is the fall of the compass needle before the coming storm; in the rumbling of the avalanches of the Ibsenian dramaturgy we can already hear a distant thunder, the thunder of the canons of war, — and the roar of revolution.”

⁷¹ For discussions on Ibsen’s utopianism, see especially the study of Johnston (1980), cf. note 7, see also Wærp (1994). Cf. also the following utterings by Ibsen from a speech in Stockholm in 1887: “I ... believe that the time in which we now live might be ... a conclusion, and that from it something new is about to be born. ...I believe that the time will soon come when political and social conceptions will cease to exist in their present form, and that from their coalescence there will come a new unity, which for the present, will contain the conditions for the happiness of mankind. I believe that poetry, philosophy and religion will be merged in a new category and become a vital force of which we who are living now can have no clear conception... Especially, to be more definite, I am of the opinion that the ideals of our time ... are tending towards what in my play *Emperor and Galilean* I indicated by the name of “the third kingdom”(Ibsen 2009, 56-57).

⁷² It should be added that Belyi not for long seems to have kept his unconditional, unequivocal faith in the revolution as a spiritual catharsis leading to humanity’s resurrection. No more than Ibsen’s Emperor Julian was he able to find his dreams about a new reality realized, gradually recognizing the futility as it were of the utopian belief in an immediate transfiguration of the world. See also Iuriev (1994, 211f.).

- Belyi Andrei 1907, "Ivan Aleksandrovich Khlestakov," *Stolichnoe utro*, October 18, 117.
- Belyi, Andrei 1912, "Krugovoe dvizhenie", *Trudi i dni* 4-5.
- Belyi, Andrei 1920, *Na perevale. III. Krizis kul'tury*, Petrograd.
- Belyi, Andrei 1922, *Zapiski chudaka*. I-I. Moscow/Berlin.
- Belyi, Andrei 1966, *Nachalo veka* [1933], Chicago.
- Belyi, Andrei 1967, *Lug zelenyi: kniga statei* [1910], New York/London.
- Belyi, Andrei 1969a, *Arabeski* [1911], Munich.
- Belyi, Andrei 1969b, *Simvolizm* [1910], Munich.
- Belyi, Andrei 1971, *Revoliutsiia i kul'tura* [1917], Letchworth.
- Belyi, Andrei 1982, *Pochemu ia stal simvolistom i pochemu ia ne perestal im byt' vo vsexh fazakh moego ideinogo i khudozhestvennogo razvitiia* [1928], Ann Arbor.
- Belyi, Andrei 1982, *Vospominaniia o Shteinere*, Paris.
- Blok, Aleksandr 1960-63, *Sobranie sochinenii v 8 tomakh*, Moscow/Leningrad.
- Carlson, Maria 2005, "Theosophy and History in Andrei Bely's *Peterburg*, Life in the Astral City," *Russian Literature* (58), 29-45.
- Deppermann, Maria 1982, *Andrej Belyjs ästhetische Theorie des schöpferischen Bewußtseins: Symbolisierung und Krise der Kultur um die Jahrhundertwende*, Munich.
- Durbach, Errol 1994, "The Modernist Malaise; 'Nichts og Ingenting' at the Core of Ibsen's *Onion*," *Proceedings, VII International Ibsen conference*, 108-121.
- Elsworth, John 1983, *Andrej Bely: A Critical Study of the Novels*, New York.
- Etkind, Aleksandr 1996, "Revoliutsiia kak kastratsiia: mistika sekt i politika tela v pozdnei proze Bloka," *Sodom i Psikheia: Ocherki intellektual'noi istorii Serebrianogo Veka*, Moscow, 59-139.
- Gracheva, Alla 2005, "Henrik Ibsen and Russian Decadence", in *Ibsen and Russian Culture*, ed. Knut Brynhildsvoll, Oslo, 69-77.
- Helle, Lillian Jorunn 1990, "Bely's Bergen — or the New Jerusalem," *Scando-Slavica* 36, 5-19.
- Helle, Lillian Jorunn 1997, "Blok and Akhmatova: From Carnavalesque Resurrection to Symbolic Crucifixion," *Celebrating Creativity. Essays in Honour of Jostein Børtnes*, eds. Knut Andreas Grimstad and Ingunn Lunde, Bergen, 256-271.
- Helle, Lillian Jorunn 2011, "Androgyny and the Transformation of the Body in Russian *Fin de Siècle*," in *The Human and its Limits: Explorations in Science, Literature and the Visual Arts*, eds. Margareth Hagen, Randi Koppen, and Margery Vibe Skagen, Bergen, 41-57.
- Ibsen, Henrik 2009, *Speeches and New Letters* [1909], transl. Arne Kildal, intro. Lee Milton Hollander, Whitefish MT.
- Iuriev, Andrei 1994, "Henrik Ibsen and Andrey Bely: To the Point of Ibsen's Influence on Russian Modernism," in *Proceedings, VII International Ibsen conference*, Oslo, pp. 195-216.
- Ivanov, Vyacheslav I. 1971, "O veselom remesle i o umnom veselii," *Sobranie sochinenii v 4 tomakh*, vol. 3, Bruxelles, 61-77.
- Ivanov, Vyacheslav I. 1974, "Predchuvstviia i predvestiia: Novaia organicheskaia epokha i teatr budushego," *Sobranie sochinenii v 4 tomakh*, vol. 2, Bruxelles.
- Johnston, Brian 1980, *To The Third Empire: Ibsen's Early Drama*, Minneapolis.
- Kalb, Judith E. 2000, "A 'Roman Bolshevik': Aleksandr Blok's 'Catiline' and the Russian Revolution," *Slavic and East European Journal* 44 (3), 413-438.
- Kozlik, Frédéric.C. 1981, *L'influence de l'anthroposophie sur s'oeuvre d'Andréi Biélyi*, vols 1-3,

Frankfurt.

- Lavrov, Aleksandr V. 1978, "Mifotvorchestvo argonavtov," in *Mif Fol'klor Literatura*, ed. B. B. Bazanov, Leningrad, 137–171.
- Ljunggren, Magnus 1983, *The Dream of Rebirth*, Stockholm.
- Lotman, Iurii M. 1990, "The Text as a Meaning-generating Mechanism," in *Universe of the Mind. A Semiotic Theory of Culture*, London/New York, 11–123.
- Lotman, Iurii M. 1996, "Tekst kak smysloporozhdaiushchee ustroistvo," *Vnutri mysl'ashchikh mirov*. Moscow, 11–123.
- Masing-Delic, Irene 1992, *Abolishing Death: A Salvation Myth of Russian Twentieth-Century Literature*, Stanford, California.
- Match, Olga 2005, *Erotic Utopia: The Decadent Imagination in Russia's Fin de Siècle*. Madison, Wisc.
- Mints, Zara G. 1979, "O nekotorykh neomifologicheskikh tekstakh v tvorchestve russkikh simvolistov," *Uchenye zapiski Tartuskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta* 459, 76–120.
- Nabokov, Vladimir 1990, *Strong Opinions*, New York.
- Nilsson, Nils Åke 1958, *Ibsen in Russland*, Stockholm.
- Odesskaia, Margarita M. 2007, "Ibsen, Strinberg, Chekhov v svete kontseptsii vyrozhdienia Maksa Nordau," in *Ibsen, Strinberg, Chekhov*, ed. Margarita M. Odesskaia, Moscow, 211–226.
- Presto, Jennifer 2008, *Beyond the Flesh: Aleksander Blok, Zinaida Gippius, and the Symbolist Sublimation of Sex*, Madison, Wisc.
- Rusinko, Elaine 1991, "Rewriting Ibsen in Russia: Gumilyov's Dramatic Poem 'Gondla,'" in *The European Foundations of Russian Modernism*, ed. Peter I. Barta, Leviston, NY, 189–213.
- Senelick, Laurence 2014, "How Ibsen Fared in Russian Cultures and Politics," *Ibsen Studies* Vol 14, No 2, 89–90.
- Shaikevich, Boris A. 1974, *Ibsen i ruskaia kul'tura: Ocherki*, Kiev.
- Spivak, Monika L. 2006, *Andrei Belyi – mistik i sovetskii pisatel'*, Moscow.
- Stepun, Fedor A. 1956, *Byvshee i nesbyvsheesia*, vol. 1. New York.
- Stepun, Fedor 1964, *Mystische Weltchau: Fünf Gestalten des russischen Symbolismus*, Munich.
- Tsvetaeva, Marina I. 1994, "Plennii dukh," *Sobranie sochineii v 7 tomakh*, vol. 4, Moscow, 221–271.
- Wærp, Lisbeth P. 1994, "Henrik Ibsen's *Emperor and Galilean* (1873) and *When we Dead Awaken* (1899): Two Crucial Images: 'The Third Empire' and 'Resurrection Day'," in *Proceedings, VII International Ibsen conference*, Oslo, 347–355.
- Zink, Andrea 1998, *Andrej Belyjs Rezeption der Philosophie Kants, Nietzsches und der Neukantianer*, Munich.

author: Lillian Jorunn Helle
affiliation: University of Bergen
email: Lillian.Helle@uib.no