

Zeitschrift für Slavische Philologie

Band 78 · Heft 1 · 2022

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Universitätsverlag
WINTER
Heidelberg



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Belyi, Andrei: *Istoriia stanovleniia samosoznaiushchei dushi*. Ed. Mikhail Odesskii, Monika Spivak, and Khenrike Shtal'. Moskva: IMLI, RAN 2020. Vol. I, 640 pp. + color insert 64 pp.; vol. II, 800 pp. + color insert 64 pp. (Literaturnoe nasledstvo, 112).

Andrei Belyi's soul-searching and fundamental re-examination of the development of consciousness in the context of the Western tradition has finally appeared in a form worthy of its content. *Istoriia stanovleniia samosoznaiushchei dushi* [*History of the Formation of a Self-Conscious Soul*], the core of the voluminous two volumes, occupies center stage and consists of four sections tracing the history of thought and culture in the Greco-Roman-Christian tradition up through the first decades of the twentieth century. Belyi's study has sections in various stages of development: an edited and revised text, an unrevised text, and a partially edited and revised text. But this edition has so much more: a substantial scholarly apparatus, a rich set of color illustrations, and additional texts by Belyi and the compilers.

The first impression of the two tomes is their weightiness. The 640 pages of volume I and 800 of volume II attest to the depth and the breadth of the work itself. Belyi alternately calls it a "study" (issledovanie) and a "rough sketch" (eskiz), originally intended for himself (I, 419). The historical conditions of Stalin's Soviet Russia made impossible at the time any thought of publication. It is most fitting that the delay of almost 100 years has allowed for a thorough and accurate edition along with a commentary free of external non-literary interference.

Several of Belyi's writings unpublished in his lifetime have appeared over the past fifty years. The first major breakthrough was the Svetlana Geier translation *Verwandeln des Lebens* [*Transforming a Life*] (1977), before the ultimate publication of the work in Russian, *Vospominaniia o Shteinere* [*Memoirs of Steiner*] (1982). Another early contribution was *Pochemu ia stal simvolistom* [*Why I Became a Symbolist*] (1982). Some items from the archives have appeared in bits and pieces, many the work of John Malmstad including *Andrei Belyi i Antroposofia* [*Andrei Belyi and Anthroposophy*] (1988–1990) that was also translated in German as *Geheime Aufzeichnungen* [*Secret Notes*] by Christoph Hellmundt (2002). A valuable collection with annotations was published as *Avtobiograficheskie svody* [*Autobiographical Vaults*] (2016) containing the so-called *Intimate Biography* and *Rakurs k dnevniku* [*An Approach to a Diary*] that permit

scholars to follow month by month the life and work of this Russian genius. Most recently a series of letters was found in Dornach, Switzerland, at the Goetheanum where Belyi had spent the years 1914–1916 (Belyi, Pozzo 2019; Beyer, Spivak 2020).

All of these complement the multiple volumes of essays, criticism, memoirs of Aleksandr Blok, and Belyi's own three volumes of memoirs: *Na rubezhe dvukh stoletii* [*On the Border of Two Centuries*] (1930), *Nachalo veka* [*The Beginning of the Century*] (1933), *Mezhdu dvukh revoliutsii* [*Between Two Revolutions*] (1934). Belyi kept extensive, meticulous records, most provided to Soviet archives, that contained manuscripts, diaries, bibliographies, lists of public appearances, etc. Certain parts of Belyi's archives in the Soviet Union were not available to most scholars until the late 1980s. The discovery and deciphering of the *History* ranks as one of, if not the most, important find and addition to Belyi studies in the twenty-first century.

The history of the publication of this version of Belyi's *History* dates back to 2006 with the creation of a team of scholars in a joint Russian-German funded project under the direction of Monika Spivak and Henrieke Stahl who were provided access to the wealth of materials related to Belyi's unpublished work on his own *magnum opus*. Several conferences and seminars, one of the first and most important held at the Universität Trier in 2010, assembled these and other experts, with subsequent publication in collections and as individual articles. The editors of the current volumes identify the major contributions (I, 82–83), beginning with a special two volume issue of the journal *Russian Literature*, 70 (2011). The project is the result of close collaboration of an international team of experts, primarily Russian and German that bears testimony to the need for such inclusivity when examining the broad scope of the Western tradition viewed through the looking glass of Anthroposophy, the writings of Rudolf Steiner, and the unique contributions by Belyi that further enrich the tradition.

The Introduction

Belyi's *History* begins with a seventy-five-page introduction by Mikhail Odesskii, Monika Spivak, and Henrieke Stahl, supplemented by one hundred seventy-five notes. They outline and examine the constituent parts of the work, providing a context, and assembling a comprehensive overview of the numerous manuscripts, versions, notes, visual aids. The introduction explores and explains the origins of the work, its place in Belyi's thought, centering the *History* within his oeuvre, published as well as unpublished. It identifies the source of the major text as the manuscript deposited in the archives by Klavdiia Nikolaevna Vasil'eva-Bugaeva in 1970. The history of the work's composition, its evolution, the very genesis in Belyi's concept of the self-conscious soul and its relationship to the work of Rudolf Steiner are all covered in scholarly detail. In

describing and commenting on the early version of 1926 Belyi had written: “Only the author can make any sense of this chaos” (“vo vsem etom khaose razberetsia lish' avtor”) (I, 63). The editors, simultaneously the annotators, have tried their best to decipher and present in an orderly, scholarly fashion the text and accompanying materials.

The complexity of the *History* is compounded by a number of factors. Belyi's own working methodology called for constant re-examination and revision of earlier works. The writing process was highly dependent upon external biographical factors. Belyi when he moved with Klavdiia Nikolaevna to Kuchino in late 1925 finally found the peace and time to focus on the work itself. It emerged along with a series of private lectures offered to Anthroposophists in Moscow at the home of Mikhail Chekhov who at the time was preparing a dramatic presentation of Belyi's *Peterburg* at MKhAT II. The genesis of Belyi's *History* project goes back to the end of 1925 and first half of 1926 when Belyi was simultaneously offering those lectures. The handwritten manuscript was largely set aside until 1931, as Belyi engaged with more financially lucrative projects: his Moscow novels (*Moskva* [Moscow], 1926; *Maski* [Masks], 1932), his work on the poetic structure of Pushkin's *Mednyi vsadnik* [Bronze Horseman], (*Ritm kak dialektika i "Mednyi vsadnik"* [Rhythm as a Dialectic and “The Bronze Horseman”], 1929), his study of Gogol' (*Masterstvo Gogolia* [Gogol's Craft], 1934) and the abovementioned memoirs. In 1931 as Belyi was revising and essentially rewriting the work, a group of Anthroposophists was arrested in Moscow. Soon his closest companion and partner since 1923 Klavdiia Nikolaevna was detained and imprisoned in Moscow. Many of Belyi's papers were confiscated. In 1932 Belyi deposited with the archives in Moscow a set of unpublished manuscripts. Not everything, however, was surrendered. Some items, many revealing Belyi's continued adherence to Anthroposophy that had been outlawed in Russia since 1923, remained in the possession of Klavdiia Nikolaevna who after her release from detention in 1931 had become his legal wife. She lovingly and carefully oversaw and preserved his legacy. Over the years copies of many items have been found in the Russian State Archives of Literature (RGALI), The Russian State Library (RGB), both in Moscow, and Pushkinskii Dom and the Russian National Library (RNB) in St. Petersburg. An important set of materials made their way to Amherst College in the United States.

Keeping in mind that occult societies had been forbidden in Russia since 1923, thus driving the Anthroposophists underground, Belyi had little hope of publishing the work in his lifetime. This explains why the *History* in 1925–1926 was intended “for the desk drawer” (v pis'mennyi stol; I, 7). Interrupted by work on other projects, more likely to bring financial rewards that were sorely needed, Belyi returned to the project in 1931. That too was interrupted in April 1931 as noted above. The editors rely on this tormented biography to posit that some pre-dating of manuscripts provided to the text (previously accepted unquestionably by

scholars) was intended to avoid self-incrimination and possible prosecution. A noteworthy comment (I, 25) points out that Belyi's description of the repression enforced by the Catholic Church in the thirteenth century could find parallels in Stalin's own purges. Was the *History* a "spiritual reply" of the author to his times?

Belyi alternately modified the title of the work from *History of a Self-Conscious Soul*, *History of Consciousness*, to the final *History of the Formation of a Self-Conscious Soul*, as well as his description of what it was intended to be. It was a "passing airplane flight" [a birds-eye view; TRB] (aeroplannyi probeg; I, 20), a "study" (issledovanie; I, 419), the "curve of history" (krivaia istorii) (I, 31), a "philosophy of our time" (filosofia nashogo vremeni; I, 48), and for Klavdiia Nikolaevna a "last testament" (zaveshchanie; II, 489). The editors are true literary detectives, tracking down across multiple sources, documented and undocumented, the ups and down's, rises and falls of Belyi's own "formation." This historiosophy, a culturosophy, or history of philosophy and cultures, an anthroposophical text is in fact not simply one, but all of the above, in Belyi's attempt to review and re-examine his one life and works against the background of all of those elements.

One of the significant contributions of the editors is their correction of the historical and scholarly record. This is particularly important for explaining the actual content of the 1999 version of the *History* that is not a complete text (cf. Belyi 1999). It was published under the larger all-encompassing title only one section of Belyi's *History* mistakenly identified as the whole, of what is included in Volume II in the current edition.

The introduction (I, 5–83) provides a valuable, and essential for many, discussion of the very evolution of the term of the "self-conscious soul." The editors point to Rudolf Steiner's identification of the "Empfindungsseele," "Verstandesseele," and "Bewusstseinsseele." These in Belyi's Russian are "dusha oshchushchaiushchaia," "dusha ratsional'naia," "dusha samosoznaiushchaia," and in English translation, the "sentient soul," the "intellectual /rational soul," and the "self-conscious soul." One of the major obstacles of Belyi's text is the assumption that his future readership would be conversant with the tenants of Anthroposophy, as well as familiar with historical events and personages in the Greco-Roman Christian tradition. The commentators recognize that for most readers in the twenty-first century much of this relies upon a fuller explication of passages, words, concepts. The editors conclude with their hope that the "complete edition of Belyi's *History of the Formation of a Self-Conscious Soul* will become an impulse for further study of this fundamental composition, the exceptional monument of thought, culture, and literature of the first third of the twentieth century" ("Надеемся, что полное издание "Истории становления самосознающей души" Андрея Белого станет импульсом к дальнейшему изучению этого фундаментального сочинения, выдающегося памятника мысли, культуры, литературы первой трети XX века"; I, 83).

The editors possess an enviable set of backgrounds and knowledge, ranging from an extraordinary grasp and overview of Belyi's own writings, an appreciation of Rudolf Steiner's thought as presented in his original German published works and lectures and existing translations into Russian, a broad understanding of Western history and civilization with special emphasis on Christian writings, thought, and historical figures from Peter and Paul to the Crusaders, Jesuits, Knights Templar, and Popes, and a knowledge of philosophy from Aristotle and Plato to Kant, Hegel, and Nietzsche. That multilingual, multi-cultural background helps ensure a comprehensive, encyclopedic analysis that rivals Belyi's own intellectual gifts.

The Text(s)

Volume I contains the 1926 text, revised in 1931. A modest assessment of those revisions concludes: "the chaos if it has been reduced then not by much" ("khaos esli i umen'shilsia, to nenamnogo"; I, 64). The text begins with Antiquity and progresses until the thirteenth century. Volume II, originally intended as the continuation, has two parts, covering the Renaissance up until Symbolism and the twentieth century. Belyi's study traces its origins back to a visit in 1906 to Munich's Pinakothek, and the author's wonderment at the richness of Western culture. A lifelong interest and examination of written sources was rejuvenated by Belyi's encounter with Rudolf Steiner in 1912, and an ongoing attempt to embrace Steiner's teachings within his own intellectual system. The author references his own works related to the ongoing search for the answer to the question of consciousness. They include his theoretical works *Simvolizm* [*Symbolism*] (1910), *Arabeski* [*Arabesques*] (1911), *Na perevale I: Krizis zhizni* [*At the Pass I: The Crisis of Life*] (1918), *Na perevale II: Krizis mysli* [*At the Pass II: The Crisis of Thought*] (1918), *Na perevale III: Krizis kul'tury* [*At the Pass III: The Crisis of Culture*] (1920), and his reply to Emil Medtner's attack on Steiner: *Rudolf Shteiner i Gete v mirovozzrenii sovremennosti* [*Rudolf Steiner and Goethe in the World View of the Present Day*] (1917). In addition, he points to his own prose, in particular *Kotik Letaev* (1922), where the awareness of self emerges already in the womb. Belyi would revisit in spiral fashion, recalling Yeats' "Turning and turning in the widening gyre" (1919), the progression from sentient, then intellectual, then self-conscious(ness) souls. Belyi's wide-ranging grasp of art, architecture, culture, history, and philosophy makes enormous demands upon his readers. In fact, one questions who can constitute the real readers, those who will comprehend all that Belyi offers. As with any text, the richness is revealed in direct proportion to the knowledge brought by the reader. The *History* assumes a working familiarity with the cornerstones of the Western traditions, Aristotle, Christ, Paul, Aquinas, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Steiner, and scores more. The editors point to Belyi's

long hours in libraries after the October Revolution and before his exit to Berlin in 1921.

Belyi's study explores the centrality of Jesus Christ (I, 129–132) as a historical figure and then through development of Christianity, mostly in its Western Greco-Roman version. Chapter I is entitled "Christianity as a Turning Point in History" (Khristianstvo kak svert istorii; I, 97–188). Belyi provides an exegesis of the Gospels and the Letters of Paul based on what was the prevailing biblical scholarship of his time (mostly German). The Gospel of John ("In the beginning was the word") is supplemented by the pivotal contributions of Paul, the non-Apostle, the one who believed without having seen the living Christ that made him the bridge from the intellectual to the self-conscious soul. The historical Christ is seen as connecting the Jewish concept of the Messiah with the incarnation of the Logos of the ancient world. Belyi becomes an apologete for the Virgin Birth, the concept that Jesus was conceived by Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit, a belief embedded in Roman Catholicism but not in Russian Orthodoxy (I, 166–167). His knowledge of the New Testament is impressive, and of course he assumed, much as had Dostoevskii and Tolstoi, that his readers were familiar with the outlines of the Christ narrative. Belyi additionally relies heavily on and cites frequently from the teachings of Rudolf Steiner, but through his own unique lens.

Christianity is viewed in chapter II as coinciding with the "Fall of Ancient Culture" (Upadok antichnoi kul'tury; I, 189–276). Neoplatonism, Gnosticism, Stoicism, Manichaeism, the teachings of Plotinus, Origenes, Augustine, all are described in terms of Belyi's "curve of history," the sense that human development is not linear but moves through periods of ascent and descent. This "curve" is central to Belyi's thought and is presented sometimes as a "spiral" and at other times as a rising and falling graph, not always smooth waves, but with the sharp turns at periods of crisis. Belyi populates his own text with copious notes, sketches, and references to French and German studies. These references are more for his own information and are often drawn from the one or two sources identified in the commentator's notes that Belyi was reading in Russian when available. Belyi relies, for example, upon a German text in Russian translation, Ludwig Friedländer's, *Darstellung aus der Sittengeschichte Roms* [*An Account of the Mores of Rome*] (Leipzig 1862–1864). A fascinating addition is Belyi's discussion of the role of women in Rome and for the spread of Christianity (I, 230–236) and notes #887–938 (I, 502–506). He recounts the fall of the Roman empire and the growing split between Western (Roman) and Eastern (Orthodox) Christianity culminating in 1054 in part due to the Western-Roman belief that the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father and the Son while Eastern Orthodoxy believed that the Holy Spirit emanated from the Father alone (cf. #933, I, 505). Belyi turns to geometric designs to address the concept of consubstantiality, three persons in one god (I, 241–252).

In chapter III, “Scholasticism” (Skholastika; I, 277–343), the course of history in volume I is separated into two halves, from the birth of Christ to 625 C.E. and the key year of 1250 C.E., the death of Frederick II. Always the mathematician, Belyi sees numbers 625 and 1250 in geometrical designs. Parallel to Scholasticism and the early Enlightenment temporarily brought about by the reign of Charlemagne he also explores in detail the contributions of the Arab world. His interest in Arab cultures is clearly outlined by reference to his sources and his trip with Asia Turgeneva to Northern Africa in 1910–1911 (#1124 ff., I, 521 ff.). A discussion of the architecture of Europe’s great cathedrals parallels the thought of Anselm and Roscelin and the increasing role of the Papacy. Aquinas, Abelard, Bernard, Guillaume de Champeaux all make their ways into Belyi’s text.

The fourth and final chapter of the edited manuscript, “The Epoch of Scholasticism: XII–XIII Centuries” (Epokha skholastiki: 12 i 13 vek) (I, 344–423), offers an overview of historical figures, events, thought, literature and art. Belyi is as familiar with traditional philosophers as with the mystics. The chapter ends with a characterization of the work itself: “The theme of my study is the characterization of the history of the formation of a self-conscious soul” (“Tema moego issledovaniia est' kharakteristika istorii stanovleniia samosoznaiushchei dushi”; I, 419). In another place he offers an explanation of his own approach that arises as “a half-conscious impulse, which I sense not from the study of historical documents of this time, as much as from their aroma, their style” (“poluosoznannyi impul's, kotoryi mne vniaten ne stol'ko iz obsledovaniia istoricheskikh dokumentov ètogo vremeni, skol'ko iz aromata ikh, stilia ikh”; I, 306). “History is not a line, not a circle, but a spiral [...]” (Istoria est' ne liniia, ne krug, a spiral'; I, 341).

In closing his first volume, Belyi admits this “formation of consciousness” is but a study of its embryonic stage (*in utero*), to be followed, he promises, by further study of its birth, childhood, and development in the twentieth century (I, 419). He highlights the sense of self-consciousness not as simply “consciousness” but rather the self, the individual coming to awareness in *samo-so-znanie* (I, 422). “Self-consciousness is the introduction of the creative will into consciousness and cognition” (“Samosoznanie est' vnesenie tvorcheskoi voli v soznanie i poznanie”; I, 423). He concludes his edited text (volume I) with a partial quote from Mathew 6:34: “*Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof*” (“Dovleet dnevi zloba ego”; I, 423). The unexpected quote without foundation is attributed by the editors to a sense that Belyi could put his edited text behind him (cf. I, 26–27).

Volume I closes with several appendices, the most striking is an informative note offered by Klavdiia Nikolaevna in which she underscores that the document was written “*for himself*” (*dlia sebia*; I, 615, emphasis in the original). Her own comments are explained by the editors as to their origin, their location in the archives, and their significance in understanding Belyi’s text. It makes clear why time and distance were required for a

fuller presentation and appreciation of Belyi's work. Equally fascinating is the deliberate path Klavdiia Nikolaevna followed in her written remarks to minimize the role of Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophy, and instead highlight the influence of the more politically correct figure of Herzen.

Volume II of the current work contains what was intended by Belyi to be the second volume of his *History*. It has two major parts and a smaller addendum. The first is described as "unrevised" with some 200 pages continuing where the first volume leaves off. The second section is a "revised" document of 100+ pages. The final addition has three chapters: "Symbolism" (Simvolizm), "Anthroposophy" (Antroposofia), and "Spiritual Science" (Dukhovnaia nauka).

The unrevised text opens with the thirteenth century and a review of the Arab contributions to Western Civilization (largely through the Crusades) and moves to the Renaissance, the birth of the new "soul," and the emergence of the individual in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Belyi incorporates Steiner's teachings on the Ahrimanic and Luciferic, the astral and etheric elements in human history. A background in Spiritual Science is useful if not essential to follow some of his thought. The sixteenth century is passed over fleetingly as well as the seventeenth until Belyi reaches the crucial eighteenth century, the French Third Estate, and the nineteenth century. Then the author retraces his steps for summarizations of the thought of Hegel, Goethe, Kant, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche. A section on "Theosophy" leads to Wagner and the Realism of Gogol' and Dostoevskii, Tolstoi, and Russian poetry. There are also sections devoted to Sociology and Mathematics, Transformism, and the Self-Conscious Soul.

The second half of volume II, the so-called "revised" work, provides a "theoretical" or "synthesizing" (II, 473) section beginning with a cursory review of the progression from the sentient to rational soul, and the ultimate emergence of the self-conscious soul. Belyi assigns humanity to the fourth phase of consciousness development. He outlines the ascents and descents of the concept into the twentieth century proceeding through a review of the historical background and concluding with Anthroposophy as the ultimate development to date of the consciousness, itself more fully realized in Symbolism. He concentrates on "themes and variations" in music and in the rhythm of poetry, a return to his own metrical work in *Symbolism* and his studies of *Rhythm as a Dialectic*. The concepts of "rhythm" and not just "meter," of "themes in variation," are explored via music, poetry, physical principles, and then as a "type." All this leads to "transformism" as exhibited in biology and its relationship to philosophy, with the final emergence of symbolism.

"Symbolism" embodies Belyi's own statement of his path parallel to that of Rudolf Steiner. Belyi reviews his own writings as all culminating in his personal journey within history and as a recognition of the "problem" of Symbolism as the "problem of the self-conscious soul." He ultimately concludes that his previous attempts, so-called "flights," had fallen short,

but that now in this work “My flight that had fallen short had arrived.” (“Moi nedolet stal doletom,” II, 349).

Belyi’s texts end with a section, also unrevised (II, 351–374), mostly devoted to a discussion of Anthroposophy. An addendum written by Belyi is a so-called “Synthesizing section” beginning with the concept of “transformism” and culminating with the central role of “Symbolism.”

Of considerable note for the content is the complete absence of Russian names, influences, contributions in volume I, a recognition of the isolation of Russia from Europe, from the Western tradition, a country and culture that had no Scholasticism and failed to experience the Renaissance. Stylistically the defining feature of Belyi’s writing is the paragraph. Each constitutes a single train of thought, and each paragraph, whether a few lines or multiple pages, is a single sentence, separated by the semicolon. One sentence/paragraph summarizes the works of Dostoevskii in light of the conscious soul and runs for six unbroken pages (II, 162–167).

Volume II contains several addenda. There is an exchange of correspondence between Petr P. Pertsov, author, editor, philosopher, and Belyi related to their conversations on philosophy and in particular the contributions of Kant to Western thought. The persona of Pertsov is covered by Odesskii and Spivak in some detail (II, 666–688). The article concluding the work also by the two is intended to chart the course of development of the “Curve of History”—“The Theme of My Book” (II, 688–717). It explains the relationship of the illustrations to Belyi’s thought and process in developing his *History*.

The Commentaries

Belyi has his own copious citations to the *History* provided as footnotes on the pages of his texts. The annotations and commentary provided by the editors run to over two thousand in volume 1 and more than eighteen hundred in volume II, plus hundreds more to individual documents and articles in volume II. Spivak, Odesskii, and Stahl with help from others bring together a detailed, intimate knowledge of minute details of Western and Russian primary sources and translations, the life and work of Rudolf Steiner, and of Belyi’s own voluminous writings, published and unpublished. The level of detail will spare future researchers hours of effort as well as serve as stepping stones to additional studies. A good example is note #85 (I, 432), where the commentators identify not only the source of Belyi’s thoughts on Gnosticism, but upon further examination they reveal that the author Iu. Nikolaev is actually Iuliia Nikolaevna Danzas, whose own fate is described in greater detail.

Whereas Belyi could assume among his educated readers a familiarity with the Western Greco-Roman-Christian tradition, including more than a cursory acquaintance with the New Testament, the annotations one hundred years later address an audience in which few are as well versed

in those subjects in Soviet and post-Soviet times. In addition, both when the work was conceived and today the numerous anthroposophical elements in the text require substantial explanations. All are delivered with sufficient detail and references to open up further exploration.

The notes help us to distinguish where the work of Rudolf Steiner ends and where Belyi begins. For example, there is Belyi's opposition to the Aristotelian basis for the works of Thomas Aquinas. This is in contrast to Steiner's own high opinion of Aquinas, all of which is carefully documented (#1970, I, 593). They also help the reader follow the reliance of Belyi on Steiner and his teachings still unpublished, but circulating in Dornach after 1923. How Belyi continued to benefit from the Dornach community after 1923 is a revelation previously unexplored in Belyi studies (#1273, I, 537–538).

The commentators have meticulously followed, and where necessary, corrected Belyi's omissions or additions. As they annotate, correct titles, dates, misspellings, inaccurate quotations, they frequently revert to hunting down the true source of information. Such is the note where Belyi's own footnote to his text is corrected as to the name and date of a publication (#1059, I, 516). Belyi refers to Paul's 2 Corinthians 12:7 citing a "scorpion sting." In Paul both references in the standard *Russian Synodal Bible* are simply a "sting" (жалo) (#378, I, 456–457). In English it is "thorn" and in German "Pfahl." Belyi's misquote of Nietzsche is ascribed to Dmitrii Merezhkovskii's own mistaken quotation in his book on Tolstoi and Dostoevskii, where he himself was misled by a quote from Stanisław Przybyszewski (#487, II, 421).

The scope and depth of Belyi's own erudition and extensive readings across languages are matched by the annotators who effectively track down the volumes in the original English, French, German, Latin, and the available Russia translations. The notes contain the minutest of details related to Belyi's actual familiarity with a text, often dating when he had read a particular book based on his correspondence with others or his *Raccourci*. We learn the month in 1926 and the actual date in 1931 that Belyi consulted Picavet's *Esquisse d'une histoire générale et comparée des philosophies médiévales* [*An Outline of a General and Comparative History of Medieval Philosophies*] (Paris 1907) are identified (cf. #806, 810 I, 493). Belyi's encounter with Oswald Spengler's *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* [*Decline of the West*] (1918–1922), the first volume of which Belyi read in the original German in March of 1921, and then Belyi's own lectures and writing on Spengler as well as a fuller description of his opposition based in part on the work of Rudolf Steiner, are supported by references to contemporary studies of the subject (#827, I, 494–495).

One extensive note lists both original and Russian translations of over a dozen works that Belyi is aware of, consults and then summarizes (#878, I, 500). Belyi's footnotes often refer to seminal works, and their availability in Russian and his access to them are documented (I, 502–503).

Belyi's use of the legend of the Holy Grail is traced through the French and German traditions as well as Wagner's opera *Parsifal* (I, 510–511). The descriptions of architecture in Armenia and Europe experienced in part by Belyi in his travels are attributed to the author's familiarity with *Die Baukunst der Armenier und Europa*, by Josef Strzygowski (1918) (I, 511–512). Often a note is a mini-essay, such as the discussion of the parallels of Peter Abelard and Kant (#1639, I, 566). The notes to Belyi's thoughts on Gogol', Dostoevskii, and Tolstoi are in themselves a valuable review of Belyi's writings on those writers over the course of his entire career. One mini essay outlines Belyi's understanding of Kant in relationship to Scholasticism (#1639, I, 566). The commentators are aware of and inform the reader of the peculiar Soviet interpretations of concepts and labels. Such is their note concerning "fascism" in Belyi's usage and in Stalin's times (#1217, I, 532).

Such precise detail spares future researchers from trying to construct a composite analysis of Belyi's own thought progression and will prove invaluable to the biographers to come. These commentaries are so complete they seem at some point to be taken for granted, and the reader comes to expect this level of scholarly detail. The efforts and comprehensive nature of the work, however, cannot be overstated.

The Illustrations

The illustrations to both volumes offer a complete work in itself. A special section of the "Introduction" is devoted to "Diagrams and Drawings" (I, 76–80). Some of Belyi's drawings and watercolors have been reproduced before, by Taja Gut (1997), and the monumental *Liniia zhizni* [*Line of My Life*] (2010) with commentary by Monika Spivak. The text itself contains photos and reproductions of pages and segments of Belyi's manuscripts in black and white. But nothing approaches the wealth and quality of the color inserts accompanying both volumes. There are eight sixteen-page inserts, four in each volume, for a total of 128 pages of full color reproductions. Each is identified at the back of the volumes as to content, date and location (for the most part in previously unpublished archival holdings).

Insert I contains sketches, notes, and manuscript pages along with explanatory insertions by K. N. Bugaeva. The manuscript page reproductions provide insight into the enormity of the task for the editors to decipher and unravel Belyi's handwritten multi-lingual notes, abbreviations, etc.

Insert II has a set of well organized, clearly edited and revised pages with diagrams to accompany the first version of the *History*. Belyi documents in colored pencil, graphics and text, and provides a *Bibliography of Philosophical Works* "for his personal use." That sketch outlines the progression from Antiquity (460 BCE) via Aristotle, Plato, Socrates with references to dozens of volumes in German, French, and Latin.

Insert III has drawings and watercolors that include posters for lectures by Belyi. The colors employed enhance visually the connections of themes and the flow of history and culture. These extend from before the birth of Christ, the Greek empire into AD (CE) times and the Roman Empire. They continue through the Empire's decline, the emergence of Arabic cultures, the defining date of 1250 CE, then the Middle Ages up until the end of the nineteenth century. Belyi's concept of the rise and fall, the spiral or curve of history, is presented visually.

Insert IV depicts human development and is specifically marked as not intended for publication until after the author's death. The concern that his anthroposophical convictions could lead to arrest or worse for himself and those closest to him, K. N. Bugaeva, called for vigilance and restraint on Belyi's part.

Insert V in Volume II has what are described as historiosophical drawing and paintings. Overlaid on some of the pages are photographs of Belyi and his belongings, objects such as a leaf he collected for his own herbarium.

Insert VI is a complex of sketches, mostly in black and red, some green and blue, that outline his thought.

Insert VII has photos or reproductions belonging to Belyi gathered in his travels abroad.

Insert VIII is devoted primarily to watercolors, sketches, and reproductions of pages of text from Belyi's letter to Pertsov. "Themes in variations" (Temy v variatsii) and "Form in motion" (Forma v dvizhenii) demonstrate visually Belyi's conviction that the flow of history is not linear but a spiral, or curve, or a series of repeating ups and downs, all depicted as one and the same.

The illustrations themselves, only part of the whole, will continue to invite study and careful scrutiny in the decades to come. What is presented here is a significant contribution for those unable to access the full archives. They represent an introduction to Belyi the artist, and can serve not only as building blocks for further research, but as places or stations to stop and pause and meditate on the meaning within.

Conclusion

Originally written for himself and at best for a limited audience of Russian Anthroposophists, Belyi's work takes on a new life in the twenty-first century. The century between its origins and now its definitive publication has provided a context and wealth of supplemental knowledge that make the *History of the Formation of a Self-Conscious Soul* as timely today as when it was conceived. For Russians this is an important work as the contribution to the documenting of Western Civilization by one of their own. It is a Russian rival to Spengler's *Decline of the West* that Belyi was familiar with. How Belyi's work measures up in comparison to other

Western sources remains to be investigated. The work is likely to join the novel *Peterburg* as one of Belyi's greatest contributions to Russian literature and thought.

For those who have studied Belyi, much of what is presented will come not as a surprise, but as a significant contribution, a valuable addition to previously published works. Belyi clearly has an enormous grasp of history, and as he summarizes, his selections as well as omissions will become the subject of future studies. His is a condensed history of the thought and development of Western civilization. This two-volume work belongs on the shelf of any center interested in Russian studies. It is the best and perhaps singular chance to bring together everything related to the seminal work under one cover. The limited edition under the aegis of *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* will, one can hope, become available in electronic form.

For Anthroposophists in Russia and abroad, Belyi's work will complement and add a uniquely Russian perspective to some of the major tenets in the teachings of Rudolf Steiner. The extent of Belyi's ongoing awareness and the influence of Anthroposophy on his thought even after his return to Russia from Berlin has nowhere been presented with such dramatic evidence. To fully appreciate Belyi's *History* one must appreciate Steiner's distinctions of Body, Spirit and Soul, and the seven stages of development: (1) Physical body; (2) Etheric body; (3) Astral body; (4) Ego or "I"; (5) Spirit Self—Manas; (6) Life Spirit—Buddhi; (7) Spirit Man—Atma. The first three constitute the Body, the final three elements belong to the Spirit. The fourth phase corresponds to the three stages of the Soul and its development from the sentient soul to the intellectual soul and finally the (self)-conscious soul. According to Belyi, Symbolism in the twentieth century places us at the beginning of entrance into the fifth stage. Belyi's vision of Symbolism is his own personal parallel to Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophy. "[T]his word *Symbolism*; this is my path alongside Doctor Steiner" ("Simvolizm"—eto slovo; moi put' vblizi doktora Shteinera) (II, 342). Belyi unites the elements of anthro-self-Geist(es)-{samo} + with [so] + wisdom-sophism-Wissenschaft [znanie] to combine into Anthroposophy, itself in essence self-consciousness: «д-р Штейнер оригинальнейший и философ и практик культуры, приподымающий проблему культуры над проблемой знания, как сознание, и над проблемой веры, как само-сознание, указанием на подлинную сферу "само" в нас, как сферу имманентную Духа. / Прежде всего остановимся на самом слове *Антропософия* и попытаемся прочесть его в свете нашего очерка, т.е. в аспекте души самосознающей: / Антропософ это тот, кто пытается в себе примирить проблему *антропоса* (человека) с проблемой *софизма* ... (II, 355–356).

In the final analysis, one cannot simply read Belyi's text, tracing the spiral of his own thought as it unfolds and expands. It must be savored, meditated upon, revisited, by literary scholars, philosophers, historians,

and culturologists. They will study, looking at the inclusions, but also the selection, the exclusion of some historical data for the sake of others. This condensed history aims at comprehensiveness. Some will appreciate and try to comprehend what has been presented. Others may wonder if the curve of history has continued as Belyi predicted on an upward spiral, or have we entered in the twenty-first century one of the cyclical declines that has characterized the formation of the self-conscious soul for the past two millennia?

The editors have demonstrated what a cooperative multinational, multilingual team of scholars can produce at its best. The work can stand as a model to those who come after, not only for Belyi studies, but for literary scholarship in general.

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