

FOREWORD

The current issue of *Dostoevsky Studies* – the 24th of the New Series, and the second since it became an electronic open access journal – appears just as a genuine Dostoevskian year is coming to an end. Yes, 2021 has been an incredibly Dostoevskian year indeed! This is not only because of the marking of the two centuries since Fyodor Mikhaylovich's birth; celebrations of this kind don't always lead to significant steps forward in the fields of scientific studies and social engagement, since the threat of empty official rhetoric and superficial media interest is always around the corner.

The bicentennial could have been a parade of platitudes, of repeatedly misunderstood 'Beauties', for some strange reasons called upon 'to save the World'... but this was fortunately not the case. Of course, we have heard a lot about these 'Beauties' and similar commonplaces in the last months, but, – and this was a pleasant surprise for me, – no more frequently than usual. Dostoevsky's work outlives any cliché; it is always contemporary, it offers different ideas to each person. Young people continue to read Dostoevsky's novels despite the fact that reading the classics seems to be considered an old-fashioned activity for many of them. Dostoevsky and his characters keep inspiring people all over the world: philosophers, scientists, artists, lawyers, and many other different specialists keep citing them in their own spheres as well as in their personal lives.

So, this bicentennial has been welcomed by an impressive number of different organizations and it eventually helped to create a groundswell of new attention towards the writer and his place in modern cultures. As with previous large celebrations in honor of Dostoevsky, in 1921, 1971, 1981, and 1996, this one has also served as proof that the 'Dostoevsky-phenomenon' grows and transforms at different moments as a compelling element of our cultural history. Each time it takes on the form of something topical and new.

In this context, the current issue of *Dostoevsky Studies* appears as part of a rich harvest. There are many reasons to consider it an outstanding historical issue: it marks not only the bicentennial of FMD, but also another special anniversary, 50 years since the foundation of the International Dostoevsky Society (1971-2021). The IDS was established in September 1971 in the little spa town of Bad Ems, in Germany, as a result of an international 'brainstorming' which began at the sixth Congress of Slavists, held in Prague in the famous summer of 1968: a glimmer of hope for a peaceful and democratic world in the years of the Iron Curtain. Dostoevsky was a powerful symbol of a new hu-

manitarianism capable of overcoming ideological oppositions. A scholar from Australia – Russian émigré Dmitry Grishin – along with Czech intellectual František Kautman and other eminent specialists in the field of Russian literature paved the way for the formation of an international association devoted to the work and heritage of Fyodor Dostoevsky. The main preliminary activity was carried out by D. Grishin and American slavist Nadine Natov, and in 1971 it resulted in the first Dostoevsky Symposium in Bad Ems, where the IDS was founded. In the same year the Dostoevsky Museum in Leningrad (St Petersburg) was opened: these were signs of convergence from both sides of the Iron Curtain. Only many years later would this willingness to converge bear fruit, but this after all only proves the foresight of such a project. The International Dostoevsky Society remains a successful example of scholarly, democratic, and inclusive exchange between people from every culture and country. We can understand Dostoevsky's heritage in many very different ways, but dialogue and mutual interest always allow our research to grow and become disseminated. This is the task of the International Dostoevsky Society and its journal *Dostoevsky Studies*.

This anniversary edition of the journal offers a rich section dedicated to the 50-year history of the IDS. Here the reader will find many unknown and little-known documents and archival finds concerning the Society since its very beginnings. Most of the contributions are memoirs: by IDS founders Irene Zohrab and Malcolm V. Jones (one of the former IDS Presidents), and by long-standing prominent IDS members such as Toyofusa Kinoshita (President of the Japanese Dostoevsky Society), Rosanna Casari and Tatiana Nicolescu. Historical glimpses of the roles of František Kautman and Dmitry Grishin in the foundation of the IDS are provided by their disciples, Miluša Bubeníková and Slobodanka Vladiv-Glover respectively. Boris Tikhomirov outlines the history of Soviet scholars' participation in the life of the IDS. Many of the above-mentioned contributions are accompanied by rich appendices, including unreleased photos from IDS Symposia, a letter from Nadine Natov and an unpublished speech by Robert Louis Jackson.

The history of the IDS reveals the riches of its 50 years of history, but we don't forget the present and the future of Dostoevsky studies: in the opening section of the issue you will find five stimulating new essays on different aspects of Fyodor Mikhailovich's work and its reception. Chloe Papadopoulos' article, "Speaking Silently and Overnarrating in Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Krotkaia*" provides a deep analysis of the poetics of this tale. Daria Farafonova re-establishes the intertextual and thematic connections between Dostoevsky and the philosophy of Blaise Pascal with some original observations; Gabriel Nussbaum inter-

rogates the *Diary of a Writer* in search of ‘the ghost of Gogol’, linking the *Diary* in this way to other works of Dostoevsky where the presence of his predecessor is clearer and better known. In his article Benjamin M. Sutcliffe relates Yuri Trifonov’s recapitulation of Dostoevsky and his time with precise textological references. Tadeusz Sucharski offers an exhaustive overview of Dostoevsky studies in Post-War Poland, accompanied by an almost complete bibliography.

The reader will also find a rich Book Reviews section: five newly released books are here described and analyzed.

The Dostoevsky year is ending, but 2022 is expected to be another rich one in our field of studies and in the life of the International Dostoevsky Society: first of all because it will be focused on the XVIIIth Symposium to be held in Nagoya (Japan) on 22-27 August 2022. Some information about the activity and projects of different scholarly groups is given in the ‘News’ section. Anyway, this historical issue of *Dostoevsky Studies* could not be completed without a moving farewell to IDS officers who have been crucial in the life of our Society. As the last issue of the journal went to print, we received the news that Rudolf Neuhäuser, one of the first IDS members, a former President and the founder of this journal, had passed away. His friend and longterm collaborator Horst-Jürgen Gerigk remembers him in an obituary in German which we publish here along with another, collective, obituary, dedicated to another of the most prominent figures in the history of our community – the former President of the IDS (and the first woman to serve as IDS President) Deborah A. Martinsen, who passed away in this Dostoevskian year and month on Sunday, November 28. Just few days ago... Deborah Martinsen played a fundamental role in the life of *Dostoevsky Studies* as well as in its transition to an electronic journal. She generously helped us from the beginning up until a few months ago, when her health conditions were already severe.

In accordance with the whole Editorial Board, I would like to dedicate this special issue of *Dostoevsky Studies*, to our dear Deborah Martinsen with deep gratitude.

On behalf of the editorial board of *Dostoevsky Studies*,

Stefano ALOE
Managing Editor



*III. 1 - Stefano Aloe with Deborah Martinsen, Moscow 2013
(Archive of S. Aloe)*