

**FOREWORD**



**ВСТУПИТЕЛЬНОЕ СЛОВО**



**FROM NAGOYA TO BUENOS AIRES:  
DOSTOEVSKY IN THE WIDER WORLD  
(FOREWORD)<sup>1</sup>**

The fact that the long-awaited Symposium of the International Dostoevsky Society took place in Nagoya, at the very centre of Japan, this August, was not only an important event for our community, but also a significant, very important, and encouraging symbolic moment. In spite of all the obstacles caused by the troubling international situation of recent years, the Japanese organising committee managed to bring all its efforts to completion, everything was arranged with skilful precision, and through the symposium we were able to become participants in a real moment of collective purification. The Symposium allowed us to sober up from the passions, fears, feelings of shame, embarrassment, indignation, rage or discomfort that few of us have been able to do without for most of the last two years. That's not to say that we have lost these feelings – they remain relevant and important - but for now let them remain with us as our spectral 'doubles'; in Nagoya there was a sense that we were no longer prisoners of these feelings, that we could engage with them and in this way deal with our own weaknesses so as to approach a compromise between emotion and reason.

Once again the voice of dialogue resounded, we again learned to listen and reflect on what we heard: the Japanese Symposium became a kind of meditative gathering, and this is largely down not only to the excellent organisers, but also of the *genius loci*, the specific spirit of the Japanese way of life.

Ideal conditions were created for a polylogue about Dostoevsky. And once again the open, positive, trusting nature of the International Dostoevsky Society made itself felt; we are a Society which, from its very foundation, has not sought to impose a single canon of reading Dostoevsky on everyone, but, on the contrary, has always endeavoured to unite scholars from all over the world without prejudice and with a desire to welcome the most diverse views on the work and legacy of the great writer. This is worth emphasising especially today, since the international consensus leads many people to treat Russian literature in accordance with the completely inappropriate principle of 'nationality', as if different national traditions can be placed in cages, separated and even opposed to each other. But even if it were true that these traditions are the 'cages' that separate each 'nation' from the others, great works of literature and art would still continue to flow freely through the bars like air or like water – such is their nature. Thus, our Society has the not

1 English text revised by Kate Holland.

insignificant task of being an authoritative antidote to those who regard Dostoevsky solely as a 'Russian' writer, either in order to propagate some essentially extremely limited idea of Russianness and of a 'great Russian State' or, on the contrary, to insist on the wretched axiom that everything Russian is harmful or even insignificant... Whatever restrictive traits may be attributed to Dostoevsky, positive or negative, still Dostoevsky himself, with his immortal work, defies all labels and continues to walk at ease in the wide world, and people everywhere continue to read him, to study him, to research him, to stage him, to imitate him. And following Japan, our next Symposium will bring him to Argentina, with the consciousness of the profound mark the writer has left on all South American literatures over the last century and a half.

Here, the dynamism of our Society and the lively echoes of the Japanese Symposium are reflected in the present issue of *Dostoevsky Studies*, with an abundance of excellent and diverse articles and a rich appendix containing testimonies of the Symposium itself and unique documents related to its proceedings.

The key theme of the Symposium was the 150th anniversary of Fyodor Mikhailovich's most 'bloody' and political work, the novel *Demons*, whose relevance today can be agreed upon without reservation. A considerable number of papers were devoted to this highly problematic novel, and on the basis of two of them we publish articles by Ljudmil Dimitrov and Jonathan Paine, who examine two different aspects of *Demons*' genre syncretism: its nature as a 'theatrical' novel ("media novel") as defined by Dimitrov, and its relationship to the narrative techniques and aims of tabloid journalism as analysed by Paine. Two more articles in this issue are devoted to *Demons*; these authors conduct original comparative analyses between the characters of Dostoevsky's novel and famous characters of other Russian authors of the same era: Elena Dmitrievna Tolstaya argues for similarities in the details of the appearance and background biography of Nikolay Stavrogin and Anatol' Kuragin (Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*); Christo Manolakev studies the figure of Stepan Trofimovich Verkhovensky through the prism of Turgenev's *Rudin* and *Bazarov*.

Another anniversary, this time the 150th anniversary of the tale *Bobok* (1873), gave Boris Nikolaevich Tikhomirov the inspiration for a thorough comparative analysis of two possible ways of reading this most enigmatic work of Dostoevsky's, and at the same time for engaging with some ideas already expressed in *Demons* and in the writer's earlier novels. In her article Oksana Viktorovna Dreyfeld returns us to the topical theme of narratology: the narrative peculiarities of the novel *Crime and Punishment*, which, according to the researcher, consist primarily in the coexistence of highly subjective and objectifying points of view as an element that creates the specific chronotope of the novel.

*The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoevsky's last masterpiece, and in particular the ways of "hypostatizing eternity" in a certain episode of the novel, is the subject of a paper by Nikolay Neychev. The article is a fruitful attempt to establish the criteria of verbal depiction of eternity and its realisation by Dostoevsky in the novel.

The eighth and final article in this issue of the journal was prepared by Toyofusa Kinoshita, dean of Japanese Dostoevsky studies and founder of the Japanese Dostoevsky Society, based on a talk presented in Nagoya during the Symposium. Professor Kinoshita himself was unable to attend the Symposium, but he responded enthusiastically to a request to contribute a text for publication in our journal. And we will find much of interest in this brief article: the author puts forward an unexpected and counterintuitive hypothesis about the early origins of the Hesychast motifs of the works of Dostoevsky's maturity.

The second part of the journal is also worth attention. After the reviews section, we find the above-mentioned news about IDS life and the final report on the August Symposium. But the pearl of this section is the full text of the original speeches of three very famous Japanese writers – Fuminori Nakamura, Risa Wataya and Keiichiro Hirano. This is a Russian translation of their speeches given in Nagoya at the solemn conclusion of the Symposium and devoted to the relationship of these authors to the work of Fyodor Dostoevsky. For the permission to publish this historical document, we are extremely grateful to the main organiser of the Symposium, Professor Ikuo Kameyama, and to the authors themselves.

I must conclude with one more piece of news concerning our journal. This writer had the great honour in Nagoya of being elected the new President of the International Dostoevsky Society. Such an assignment is difficult to reconcile with the role of Managing Editor of the journal, for a number of rather obvious reasons. Therefore, starting in 2024, *Dostoevsky Studies* will have a new Managing Editor in the person of Katalin Kroó, a very well-known colleague in the world of Dostoevsky Studies, and an experienced, brilliant scholar. This is happy news for us. Ljudmil Dimitrov and I will continue our active co-operation with the journal as assistants to the Managing Editor. The editorial board will not change either: there will be no revolutions and *Dostoevsky Studies* will go out and spread scholarly work on Dostoevsky more and more widely and convincingly, continuing our trajectory of the past few years. After all, Dostoevsky is nobody's property; he walks freely in the wide world.

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

Stefano ALOE  
Managing Editor



*Ill. 1*

Geneva 2004, XII Symposium: A group portrait of six of the IDS early members. From left to right: Malcolm Jones, Irene Zohrab, Robert L. Jackson, Horst-Jürgen Gerigk, Rudolf Neuhäuser, and Wolf Schmid. All of them had participated at the first Symposium of the IDS in 1971.