

FOREWORD



ВСТУПИТЕЛЬНОЕ СЛОВО

**RECURRING ENCOUNTERS
WITH DOSTOEVSKY'S CREATIVE SPIRIT:
BEGINNINGS AND ENDS AS CONTINUATION**

Let me begin this reflection by returning to the concluding words of the foreword to the last volume of *Dostoevsky Studies* (New Series, vol. 26, 2023) by Stefano Aloe, the President of the International Dostoevsky Society. He announced a necessary rearrangement of functions in the editorial management of our journal by his accepting, with Ljudmil Dimitrov, the position of Assistant Editor, after four years of productive and enthusiastic activity creating a rich online forum on Dostoevsky's extensive and wide-ranging oeuvre. I would like to express sincere gratitude to Stefano Aloe on behalf of the whole International Dostoevsky Society and the external readers for all his tireless inventive work and unwavering scholarly energy that he invested into his engagement as Managing Editor (2020-2023) to maintain high-level scholarship in our beloved *Dostoevsky Studies*. The adjective "beloved" might seem out of context in a scientific-oriented foreword, but it is nonetheless precise. For us, the members of the International Dostoevsky Society, this publication means not just creating and conveying knowledge on Dostoevsky, keeping up with new trends in research and scholarly ideas, as well as following projects, conferences, meetings concerning our shared professional life, but it is also an *emotional* matter contributing to our cohesion as a community. Through this journal, we can assess the value of *the cultural traditions* that the International Dostoevsky Society has developed and cherished for many years, linking the past academic achievements, through the works of the present, to the future, opening up new perspectives. We participate in recurring challenging encounters with our interpretation of Dostoevsky, being motivated to achieve a better understanding of his works on grounds of reading into his complex *creative cultural spirit*. I feel honoured to begin working, as Managing Editor, to contribute to keeping alive our common scholarly efforts and maintaining our *cultural memory* linked to research and professional human relationships through *Dostoevsky Studies*, supported by so many specialists from many countries and continents.

Tracing the continuity of Dostoevsky scholarship, looking back to earlier starting points, surely encourages us to remember with even greater esteem our respected colleague Professor Horst-Jürgen Gerigk, who died on 9 February, 2024. He was known not simply as a prominent President of the IDS (1998-2004), but also as an outstanding Managing Editor of *Dostoevsky Studies* in the fruitful period of 1998-2018. He was a person already present at the

founding symposium of the IDS in Bad Ems in Germany (September 1-5, 1971, with the organisation of Professors Nadine Natov, Dmitry S. Grishin, Rudolf Neuhäuser, and Reinhard Lauth). Throughout his life, he excelled with an intellect and human attitude inspiring the spirit of collectivity, attracting new persons and younger generations to the field of literary research within the scope of international scholarly communication. What Professor Gerigk began and pursued in many fields of research proves to be timeless, his ideas are referenced in new interpretations. Therefore, in this 2024 volume, our excellent colleague is commemorated not only in two remarkable obituaries written by William Mills Todd III and Christoph Garstka, both radiating reverence towards his oeuvre and personality. Beside these commemorative texts closing the volume, we can find Urs Heftrich's paper at the head of the first section: "Logos Sent Into a Headspin: Notes on the Conversation with the Devil in Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*". In this paper, on the basis of philosophical theory (Kant, Schopenhauer, Jaspers), in the poetic strategies of unmasking the nature of hallucination as related to reasoning and sensory impressions, the author examines the literary presentation of Ivan's dialogue with his devil (the encounter of a new Ivan figure with his past). For the discovery and explication of Dostoevsky's artistic conceptualisation of morality and the conditions for the coming about of evil, one component of the article's argument relies on a "discussion on the ideological intention behind Dostoevsky's design, with reference to Horst-Jürgen Gerigk's groundbreaking insights into the interaction between structure and ideology in *The Brothers Karamazov*". Heftrich enters both a supportive and polemical dialogue in relation to the interpretation elaborated by Gerigk (the paper is dedicated to his memory), brought to the fore as a really challenging set of ideas. It is developed further in the paper in a discussion of the shift from the *grandiose* "ways of behaving towards evil" to the idea of its *banality*. This transformation is inseparable from the reinterpretation of the devil in terms of the diabolical nature of evil, while providing the figure of Smerdyakov, in the context of the collective figure of the four Karamazov brothers, with a renewed sense.

The same novel remains the focus of Erica Drennan's paper "The Other Trial in *The Brothers Karamazov*", which presents a very interesting reading of the trial problematics, also included in Heftrich's interpretation – there within the question of the rightfulness of judicial punishment for the murder at the end of the novel. Drennan, on her part, calls our attention to the contrast between this trial, extensively analysed in critical literature, and another one, Miusov's "frivolous civil suit" over the monastery's boundaries, with significance at the very beginning of the plot. Based on Al Katz's boundary theory, the author sets

up a system of oppositions characterising two types of boundary evoked and semantically inherent within the relationship between the two – different but essentially analogous – trials and Zosima's conceptualisation of boundaries. The contrast is defined in such characteristic features as a boundary between sharp binaries and a porous boundary (boundary-breaking; with reference to Katz, see vacuum vs alive boundaries). These spatial concepts are projected upon the interpretation of the possibility of finding one's (and later the reader's) way to truth. In the analytical process porous boundaries are related to Bakhtin's dialogue theory. The paper explores the semantic system of the interpretability of boundary concepts through several plot elements and various main and side characters. As a result, Drennan grasps the complexity of a semantic invariant in its system-constructing mode, which leads to a kind of interrogation concerning the reader's reception attitude, including questioning the possibilities of separating interpretation suggestions arising from Dostoevsky the journalist from those emerging from Dostoevsky the writer.

On the track of the meaning of the porous boundary, opening up the perspective of inclusion and brotherhood, and at the same time burdened with complex thematic ramifications, we arrive at Andrey Faustov's article "The Figure of the 'Neighbour' in Fyodor Dostoevsky's short story *The Dream of a Ridiculous Man*". The two papers have one more common aspect, the inquiry into the methods and pertinence of reading Dostoevsky's fiction and non-fiction side by side – linking or differentiating certain semantic fields. In Faustov's article, this means researching the sense of poetic and geopolitical conceptualisations in Dostoevsky's fictional and non-fictional writings in *A Writer's Diary* (1877). The explanation of the subject begins through *The Brothers Karamazov*, positioning there the problem of the capability of loving close or distant persons. This implies the notion of (non-)neighbours, encompassing even aliens on a double of the globe as a result of the transplanetary journey made by the ridiculous man, the hero of the examined pivotal work in the paper. Apart from the vectors considered as semantic "clusters" of the dichotomies of 'close' vs 'distant', 'vertical' vs 'horizontal' (connoting 'equality' vs 'subordination'; 'inclusion in a multitude' vs 'excelling by a criterion of higher experience or status', etc.; 'mutuality in the initiation and acceptance of the offer of brotherhood' vs 'its one-sidedness'), the challenging approach interestingly brings together the poetic notions of brotherhood and childhood, integrating the whole range of issues into a complex of features characterising the possibility of living a life in mutual love with our fellow human beings. Shedding light on Dostoevsky's artistic and intellectual solution cannot be separated from his interpretation of the relationship between the concepts of the "one" (the individual, the "I" sub-

ject) and the “others” (plurality taken as a collective singularity), the means of their integration and separation both horizontally (with or without love, being at one hierarchical level) and vertically (supposedly problematically). The intimate sphere of love and brotherhood experience (or its lack or insufficiency) emerging in the fictitious works is projected onto an ideological explanation elaborated by Dostoevsky as linked to geopolitical issues and Russia’s (self-) definition that is oriented towards approaching nations as collective individuals in their singularity and interpreting the possibility of their inclusion into Russian collectivity.

It is not simply the motif of the globe double, but also the semantic strategy of establishing double-aspectual definitions and doubled characterisations based on convergences and divergences at various levels in a complex semantic universe which gives inspiration to the reader to turn, in the next paper (Eva Faraghi), to Dostoevsky’s early novella, *The Double*. Approaching *The Double* from the perspective of *The Brothers Karamazov*, the novel that the three papers of the first thematic section all interpret, addressing different research tasks, offers a lot alongside the logic of progressing from the endpoint of Dostoevsky’s oeuvre to the understanding of the beginnings. Eva Faraghi’s interpretation sharpens the dilemma suggested by the title of her paper “Social Death or Social Resurrection? Dostoevsky’s *The Double* through the Looking Glass”. The author elaborates her interesting interpretation in a field of investigation that has significant critical pre-history and literature. The “psychologically sophisticated portrait” that Faraghi conveys to the reader is based on the examination of the relationship between the two Golyadkins in terms of identity-construction from two perspectives. One is linked to the interpretation of the characteristic features shared by the two figures as inherent in Golyadkin himself. In this way, “alternate identities” can be defined. In this light, from another perspective, the coherence of the seemingly incoherent differences can be explained as resulting in identity transformation. Deconstruction is reinterpreted in terms of personality redefinition and growth. The novelty of the interpretational process lies in linking processes in Dostoevsky’s novella to the cultural heritage of German *Naturphilosophie*: “While similar to notions such as the *ego* and the *id*, the Apollonian and the Dionysian, the conscious and the unconscious, the psychological binary that underlies *Naturphilosophie* is best summed up as the internal struggle between an individual and a collective orientation: the nervous system drives one towards material well-being, stability, status, and self-preservation, while the ganglionic aims at union with the cosmic cycles of creation and destruction, through dreams, hallucinations, intoxication, sexual indulgence, but also religious experience – a union which sur-

passes and may even destroy individual identity". With the opposition of the individual and the collective, we arrive back at the problematics mentioned by Faustov and engaging Dostoevsky throughout his whole life, from the beginning to the end: the possible modes of the harmonisation of the self as a single entity, an individual (dual or plural) personality aspiring to reach, at the same time, a collective personality to be included and attempting to include others into a wider whole.

The second thematic section in the volume is dedicated to the examination of various aspects of *Cultural and Textual Contexts*. The first approach is represented by Marco Caratozzolo's paper "About Nikolay Ugodnik and Kasyan Ugodnik by Dostoevsky (Based on materials from *Crime and Punishment*)". St. Nicholas, whose figure, as poetically referenced in Dostoevsky's oeuvre, has already been discovered and interpreted in several critical works, receives special attention in Caratozzolo's paper as linked to the two Mikolka figures in *Crime and Punishment*. The two Mikolkas make up another form of Dostoevskian doubles and character pairs, out of which some have already been addressed in earlier papers in the volume. All the more so as the author calls our attention to a legend in which St. Nicholas is portrayed against the background of his opponent, Kasyan, and it is convincingly shown how the adversaries become linked to Dostoevsky's two Mikolka figures. The source of the legend is "Николай угодник и Касьян угодник" published in *Летописи русской литературы и древности (Chronicles of Russian Literature and Antiquity, 1859)*. However, Caratozzolo presents a wider corpus of folklore variants and the kind of research he carries out explains the relationship between the two literary persons on the basis of the redistribution of semantic features arising from folklore pretextual materials.

Caratozzolo's presentation also makes us reflect further upon the poetics of spreading pretextual signals from various sources across a particular text, and think about cases when without direct reference only "allusions, echoes, and hints are recognizable" – quotes the author from Rosanna Casari (the statement concerns a mode of turning to myth). With Casari's paper "Echoes of Dante's 'Purgatory' in the 'Epilogue' of *Crime and Punishment*", we stay with the same novel by Dostoevsky in the privileged position when we can go on thinking about the nature of direct and covert intertextual references. This time the range of references concerns neither folklore nor myth elements which are systematically incorporated and dispersed in the novel. The author's intention is to show intertextual correlation between the Epilogue of *Crime and Punishment* and the Canti XVIII, XXX, XXXI in Dante's "Purgatorio". Casari's research orientation implies the differentiation of explicit intertextu-

al hints leading to Dante as the author of a literary oeuvre, which are not so frequent but nevertheless conspicuous in Dostoevsky in overt, thematised forms, and implicit poetic practice. The paper offers concrete details of space and time motifs, semantic attributes, leading the reader to discover their complex functionalisation in the literary text based on cultural tradition.

Stefano Aloe's work, closing the second thematic section in this volume, offers a special means and a new genre for explicating his object of study. It provides insights into an important topic, putting questions to several aspects of a many-sided poetic discourse mode related to the phenomenon of laughter as represented in Dostoevsky's oeuvre. At the same time, the exposition of conveying information and developing ideas is incorporated in an extensive overview of new research evaluated from an interpretative point of view. In this way, the paper "About Laughter in Dostoevsky: New Studies" emerges, in which the reader is offered a detailed description of writings published as the proceedings of the conference "Beyond Carnival: Funny Dostoevsky" (14-15 May, 2021, organised by Lynn Patyk [Dartmouth College] and Irina Erman [College of Charleston]). The subtitle of the book is *New Perspectives on the Dostoevskian Light Side* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2024).

In the third section, book reviews, in an alternative manner, constitute a significant part of the presentation of particular research directions that outline some chapters (milestones) in the history of the development of Dostoevsky scholarship in its broadest sense. This unit of the volume focuses on *Dostoevsky in Greece: Reception and Translations*, where Markos Galounis and Zorka Šljivančanin's paper "Books on Dostoevsky in Greece: an Overview" scrupulously delivers on the promise of its title, supplying the reader with an extensive overview. This is just the third element of the body of scholarship, the first paper of which is Zorka Šljivančanin's writing "Dostoevsky in Greece. A Brief History of Reception (1877-1929)". It gives a really rich overall picture of the Greek reception of Dostoevsky in a broad cultural context, over more than half a century. The second writing of the Greek block, Christina Karakepeli's paper "Ares Alexandrou: The Balancing Act of Translating Dostoevsky in Greek" provides a focus on translation, which can be considered to be a specific sphere of cultural reception. This triple division in the very informative characterisation of the Greek interiorisation of Dostoevsky brings to the fore the significance of the versatility of approaches both in the various forms of Dostoevsky's cultural reception in works of art and science and also in the multi-faceted discourse on them, attempting to draw a general picture of artistic and scientific practices.

After this successful and qualitative orientation towards national cultural reception in the Greek papers, the following review section presents two remark-

able pieces (coming from other cultural backgrounds and opening up new research viewpoints). We can turn with pleasure to Daniel Schümann's review on Thomas Gaiton Marullo's book *Fyodor Dostoevsky – The Gathering Storm (1846-1847): A Life in Letters, Memoirs, and Criticism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2023) and Kåre Johan Mjør's writing on Tine Roesen's *Dostojevskij: En introduktion* (Aarhus: Aarhus universitetsforlag, 2021).

And finally, when we read Katherine Bowers' "News from the North American Dostoevsky Society", we are fascinated not only by seeing and experiencing the vivid and dense scholarly life around the figure of Fyodor Dostoevsky, but we can also experience in what sense he proves to be a major figure in world culture. Dostoevsky's power has the capacity to link past and future generations, the young to elderly professionals and readers, harmonising time, artistic and critical traditions, and forms of discourse.

The calls for conference participation give us an invitation to the future, with all of our beginnings, interpretive traditions initiated in the past and metamorphosing in continuous development. This journal volume again shows today's Dostoevsky scholarship as far transcending the mere study of Dostoevsky. We cannot do without immersing in cultural contexts, doing poetological research, taking various comparative perspectives, interpreting not only works but also discourses in them and about them, listening to philosophical debates, showing Dostoevsky's prominent cultural activity from many angles and approaches, even entering interdisciplinary studies and theories.

Let us then end by making a general call for future papers to be published in *Dostoevsky Studies*, adding a complementary perspective to the journal's content and structure also to be preserved and continued as a most valuable tradition. The editors wish to motivate the emergence of a new section entitled *ECHOES* that gives feedback and reflection upon topics, interpretations, theoretical issues, research orientations, any minor and major details published in previous numbers so as to inspire living dialogues, polilogues in subsequent journal issues. In this way, *Dostoevsky Studies* might enhance its intellectual vitalising force in the creative spirit of Dostoevsky. This call does not aim for the evaluation of any previous paper or its part from the position of a reviewer or a critic. The call aims to attract the variants of follow-up, to foster the continuation of the elaboration of the same topics (or part topics) by other scholars, opening, for the contents of the publications, new paths and ramifications, fresh associations, further theory-building capacity, adding supplementary approaches in any issues treated in the papers. Whether it is a reflection of a few lines or a few pages, or another paper on the same topic with a dialogical stance represented by complementary viewpoints (or ex-

tending critical literature on a topic), will depend on the choice of the author of the echo.

Echoes are meant to be voices emanating from the many continents where we are involved in our common Dostoevsky project. Echoes are expected to react with a preserving gesture towards past and present achievements to convey information richly, to compensate for possibly missed data, to make further progress on initiated and well-developed ideas, conceptualisations and interpretations, integrating them to the broader field of humanities (cultural history, literary studies, interdisciplinary methodologies, etc.). *ECHOES* can be us, an expanded forum to develop collective wisdom through individual voices – with constants and variables, convergences and divergences.¹

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Managing Editor

1 Thanks to Eva Faraghi for assuming the task of native speaker's revision.