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## From the Editor

Esteemed Colleagues, Dear Readers,

One of the most mournful events of Dostoevsky's anniversary year has been the death of Deborah Martinsen (1954–2021), our dear friend and colleague, member of our Editorial Council, brilliant researcher, and in my opinion the best, most dedicated, selfless, humble, and broad-minded president of International Dostoevsky Society, always capable of prioritizing common academic research and the concern for her colleagues. After the International Dostoevsky Society Symposium in Russia in 2013 during an interview for the journal *Kul'tura*, when asked, who would she define as an ideal Christian, she answered: "It is difficult for me to answer. I would say, the one who loves his neighbors. You think, that is easy. But there are not a lot of people who can actually do that". Liudmila Saraskina remembered these words as well. I think everyone who worked with Deborah can witness that she could do it. We lived in her light for years. And now we need somehow to make sure that her light will not fade and continue to shine through us.

In the section *In Memoriam*, we published memories of Deborah. All the authors titled their texts "*Pamiati Deborah Martinsen*". These words represent a lot more than a clichéd headline for the remembrances of a person who died: I decided not to unify the different memories under one heading, because I would like this sentence to be repeated as many times as possible.

The year 2021 was marked by the publication of a great number of books about Dostoevsky and his work. We will be glad to publish through the year reviews of them as well as insightful summaries of past conferences. The present issue contains an interesting and thorough summary of the International Conference "Dostoevsky's Legacy in National Cultures", dedicated to the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Fyodor Dostoevsky's birth and held in Kars, Turkey, 5–7 January 2022; and Olga Yurevna's review of the new book of the series *Dostoevsky's Works: Current State of Research* dedicated to Dostoevsky's novel *The Adolescent*. The reviewer was able to identify and show in a few paragraphs or even sentences the core meanings of each article. The third review presented in this issue is a profound analysis of the translation of the book by Lewis Bagby *First Words: On Dostoevsky's Introduction* carried out by Nikolay Podosokorsky. While fully agreeing with the reviewer's analysis and evaluation of the book, I would like to additionally stress (the reviewer also says so in the conclusion) that the value of the book should be found in its questioning, even if the answers are generally unsatisfactory. The question on the lack of prefaces and introductions in Dostoevsky's early works, for example, is worthy of consideration. My hypothesis is that at first Dostoevsky was naively convinced of his reader's understanding (as he was a brilliant reader, he judged by himself), and was surprised

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and disappointed to come across a lack of comprehension that started with the appearance of *Poor Folk* (which Belinsky happened to like for its rather peripheral social theme, the reason of his unbridled praise) and became obvious with the publication of *The Double*. After his imprisonment, he continued to rely on the readers and assign them their share of effort to understand (remember his famous sentence: “Let the readers themselves do the work”), but still, on several occasions, he tried to offer them entry points into the text in the introductions. Most obviously and persistently, all the key points for an understanding are outlined by Dostoevsky in the preface to *The Brothers Karamazov*. However, most of the readers, including the author of the reviewed book, looked at the crystal-clear preface as a vague enigma.

Dostoevsky’s anniversary year has passed, however, the projects that started three years before it in the museums are not completed, moreover, they are now beginning on a totally new level. Particular attention from scholars should be given to Darovoe, where the restorers refuse to understand a simple thing: it only makes sense to restore what they are restoring by virtue of its connection to Dostoevsky’s childhood years. Dostoevsky’s family house, the landscape, the Church of the Descent of the Holy Spirit in Monogorovo need to be restored as they were when Dostoevsky lived in Darovoe, and any other restoration does not make sense at all: otherwise, it would be better to restore the Church according to the current needs of the believers, leave the landscape as it is, and acknowledge the fact that the house has no value in itself, as the work of the restorers. Vladimir Viktorovich and Albina Bessonova describe emotionally as well as highly academically what is happening now in Darovoe and explain what should be done in order to organize the museum as a place really dedicated to Dostoevsky’s childhood: a pearl among literary museums and a landscape museum first of all. The searing relevance of the matter is the reason why the section *Museums* opens the issue, and it is marked by a little lightning. I quote from the article:

“Darovoe, as well as Monogorovo and Cheremoshnya is a place of memory that unites two identities: the visible location (natural and architectural) and the invisible presence of its genius, Fyodor Dostoevsky, his life and work. Our restorers, lamentably, proceed only from the first one. The Church is considered exclusively as an architectural monument, while the Linden Grove as a natural landmark of medium importance. An attitude that asks “what did Dostoevsky see” according to archive documents is dashing declared as “daydreaming”. This kind of stance annihilates the meaning of Darovoe as a place of memory. Will the Church in Monogorovo be restored single-headed and yellow, to echo the yellow house of the Estate, as Dostoevsky had never seen it, or will it be three-headed and white, with glass door inside, as it is recorded in the documents of “that” time? Will the tomb of the writer’s father be saved from a barbaric “upgrading”? Will the main place of memory in the Estate, the Linden Grove, be conserved? These are the questions we want to ask the Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation (Department for Construction, Reconstruction, and Restoration) and the Moscow Region. Waiting for their response”.

In the section *Hermeneutics. Slow Reading* I analyze a few passages from *Crime and Punishment* showing Dostoevsky’s techniques to create a deep text that allows discovering the presence of God in ordinary life and His actions through characters who are often ridiculous or

not inclined to do good *per se*. In the same section I included an article by Liudmila Saraskina, however, what she presents to the reader is something that cannot be described by any of the existing sections of the journal. She confronts us with the story of the suicide of her older friend, our colleague, an artist, and illustrator of Dostoevsky, and through all the questions raised from this story she goes deep into Dostoevsky's works, looking for answers on suicide in his texts, in the pages dedicated to characters that voluntarily parted with their life. She thoroughly connects literature and life and one becomes the tool for researching the other in order to find the answer to important problems. And this is a highly productive strategy both for academic research and life.

For the section *Poetic. Context* the German scholar Drik Huffelmann speaks of the old theme of the folly and Godlikeness of prince Myshkin in a new light, approaching it through the research of rhetorical devices and practices where the usually negative concepts of "humility" and "abasement" become positive. He shows that folly is in the highest degree an imitation of Christ, Who agreed to "degrade" His divine essence by entering into the human image. For this reason in Christian culture "humiliation" of one's own human being (close to the loss of human image) becomes the best way to gain and show Godlikeness — as Christ "lost" his Divinity, acquiring more and more humanity, so the foolish man who wants to imitate Him "loses" his humanity; following the path of Christ makes the imitator as figuratively and practically dissimilar to Him: the *likeness* is realized as a *dissimilarity*. This is why Myshkin's seemingly total "defeat" does not call into question the Christlikeness of the character but enhances it as much as possible.

In the same section Chinese researchers Zhang Biange and Ren Xiaoshun analyze "The Eternal Husband" and discuss the implicit narrative process constantly developing in parallel with the explicit plot, completely independent from the first, however, together they allow the development of the theme of the novel. This kind of process — in this case, they are two — should not be considered as merely parallel, as it exists thanks to details that from the point of view of the plot appear redundant to the reader and are often overlooked. However, if considered this process can describe the role and meaning of everything that seems unnecessary and extends the framework of the reader's perception, allowing the reader to see the spiritual content of the text.

The article by Olga Meerson presented in the section *Comparative Research* also does not altogether fit in it, as the work is dedicated not to a comparison, but to the question of the genesis of Tolstoy's *Pierre* (or at least of one of its main features) whose ancestor is, surprisingly, Ralskol'nikov, historically his offspring. However, I am sure this is the better way to carry out comparative research — when the comparison is 100% reasonable and gives the opportunity to see in both texts what would be very difficult to see outside the comparison.

For the section *Dostoevsky on Stage* Tatiana Magaril-Il'iaeva gives a subtle and heartfelt description of three theatrical productions of "The Dream of a Ridiculous Man", two in Russia and one in Italy. The paper is based on the actors' explanations of their choices and the author's analysis of them. The researcher manages to show in a small text the quite "non-literary", but deeply vital and awakening influence of "The Dream of a Ridiculous Man" both on the actors

and their audience, and to discover in the short story itself facets, which become obvious only when analyzing the theatrical reception of it.

The journal is on Facebook, Vkontakte, and Telegram (with already almost 5 100 followers). You can subscribe to our pages to follow news from both the Journal and Research Centre “Dostoevsky and World Culture.” Among other things, all the recordings from seminars and conferences organized by the Centre are published here. Books and articles dedicated to Dostoevsky are also available for download.

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We would like to thank the authors who sent their materials for our library, and we remind you once again that we intend to create a library containing works on Dostoevsky by contemporary scholars within the site of the Institute: you can send your previously published works to the address below in pdf format if you want them to be in the library. If your work was published in a miscellany or a journal, we kindly ask you to send only the pdf of your article and to indicate all the references of the publication if they are not in the file yet. We are going to publish all the already published articles that will be sent, without additional selection. While creating the library, works will be gradually posted on our pages on social networks. All the texts will be open access, and we will try to make them easy to find with Yandex search. We hope to create one of the most frequented online collections of contemporary works on Dostoevsky.

The journal is published in cooperation with the Commission for the Study of Fyodor Dostoevsky's Artistic Heritage at the Academic Council “History of World Culture” of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Our work is carried out in close contact with the Russian and International Dostoevsky Society.

All quotations from Fyodor Dostoevsky's works, if not specified otherwise, are cited according to the *Complete Works* in 30 vols. (Leningrad, Nauka, 1972–1990), and references follow the format of the Russian Science Citation Index. In the Soviet edition the capital letters contained in the names of God, the Virgin, as in other holy names and concepts, have been lowered because of censorship; the original spelling is restored here in accordance with the editions published during Dostoevsky's life, Dostoevsky's *Complete Works in the Author's Spelling and Punctuation* (Petrozavodsk, Petrozavodsk State University, 1995 – continuing publication), and Dostoevsky's *Complete Works and Letters* in 35 vols. (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, revised and amended) published by IRLI RAS (Pushkin House) (2013 – continuing publication). The author's original emphasis in quotations (where not specified otherwise) is indicated by italics; the emphasis of the author of the article is indicated by bold font.

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