Editorial

200 Years since the Birth of Dostoevsky 1821–1881

*21 Years of The Dostoevsky Journal: A Comparative Literature
Review 2000–2021*

71 Years of Dostoevsky Studies in Australia

The Dostoevsky Journal: A Comparative Literature Review was first published in 2000 by the American publisher Charles Schlecks Jr., under the name *The Dostoevsky Journal: An Independent Review*. Schlacks entrusted the role of chief editor to me and 21 years on, I am still in the role. In that time the journal supported and kept alive Dostoevsky studies in Australia,¹ publishing the research work of many promising young national and international scholars who went on to successful careers in Slavic Studies in the USA, Canada, Europe, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand. In 2014, Schlacks retired and transferred this journal to Brill. He had already agreed to a change of subtitle suggested by me, so when Brill took over, the journal was already known as *The Dostoevsky Journal: A Comparative Literature Review*.

Over the years, the journal has published a range of ground-breaking research by Irene Zohrab, on masculinities in *Demons* and *The Adolescent* and on Dostoevsky's editorship of the journal *Citizen*; Michael Mosley on Dostoevsky and Heidegger; Stefano Aloe on Dostoevsky's influence on Umberto Eco; new

¹ For an overview of Dostoevsky Studies in Australia and major publications, see [Slobodanka Vladiv-Glover] Владив-Гловер С., "Достоевский в Австралии", *Достоевский: Материалы и Исследования* (Институт русской литературы – Пушкинский Дом – РАН, Санкт-Петербург), vol. 20, 2013, pp. 167–180.

Bakhtin research by Géza Horváth and his team at the 2015 “Bakhtin 120” Veszprem conference; Željka Matijašvić with a Freudian analysis of *Crime and Punishment*, Dennis Zhernokleyev with an analysis of psychoanalytic desire in *The Idiot*; finally, recent contributions by RAN Institute of Russian Literature (Pushkin House)scholars, Konstantin Barsht on Christopher Columbus and the genesis of *Crime and Punishment*, N. A Tarasova on the textology of Dostoevsky’s calligraphy and drawings and Igor Kravchuk on Napoleon III in *Demons*.

With such wide-ranging offerings to Dostoevsky scholarship, *The Dostoevsky Journal*, together with the current issue, represents a fitting tribute to the great Russian writer on the occasion of the commemoration of the 200th Jubilee of his birth in 1821. The Russian writer is, after all, the *raison d’être* of the journal and of 70-plus years of Dostoevsky scholarship in Australia. The inspiration provided to world thought by Dostoevsky’s works, both his fiction and publicist writings, is ongoing. His aesthetics is still inviting wide-ranging interpretations, some contradicting others, but always provoking dialogue and communication, which is a meta-theme in all of Dostoevsky’s major novels.

I owe my connection to *The Dostoevsky Journal* to my interest in the life and works of F M Dostoevsky which became serious and professional when I entered a PhD candidature at the University of Melbourne (the second oldest university in Australia), under the supervision of Dr Dmitry Vladimirovich Grishin, who introduced Dostoevsky studies into Australian academia when he emigrated from the USSR in 1949. Counting from 1950 onwards, the discipline of Dostoevsky studies is now in its 71st year on the fifth continent. Through Grishin’s role as a co-founder of the International Dostoevsky Society, Australian Dostoevsky studies was drawn into the orbit of international scholarship. After Grishin’s untimely death in 1975, I have carried the flame as the Australian Representative of the IDS.

My connection with Charles Schlacks Jr dates back to 1978, when he was the first international publisher to bring out my paper on *Crime and Punishment* in his *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*.² I first met Charles Schlacks in person at the ASEES (then AAASS) Annual Convention in Washington DC in 1980. Our paths kept crossing at various ASEES Conventions and IDS Symposiums at which we developed a rapport, probably in large part due to our joint ‘outsider’ status in the world of Slavic scholarship: he as a prolific but small boutique academic press and I as an emissary of a prosperous but far-flung

2 Slobodanka Vladiv, “The Use of Circumstantial Evidence in Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*”, *Canadian-American Slavic Studies*, Vol 12, Issue 3 (1978), pp. 353–370.

region of the Antipodes, with a very small national institutional base in Slavic and Russian studies. I was fortunate to be able to gather an excellent team of philosophically-oriented postgraduates for the commencement issue (Peter Mathews and Bryan Cooke) and to have a young Australian web designer (Fiona Dalwood) produce the somewhat surreal portrait of Dostoevsky as an unexposed negative for the journal cover. My first editorial board included Alexandra Smith (Canterbury, NZ and St Andrews, UK), Roman Katzman (Bar Ilan, Israel) and Nicholas Rzhevsky (SUNY, US), who are still active members and responsible for both the reviewing process and contributions. The board was international from the beginning, with the addition, in 2002, of Irene Zohrab (VUW), the New Zealand Representative of the International Dostoevsky Society, as Associate Editor, and Tetsuo Mochizuki (Hokkaido) from the Japanese Dostoevsky Society. Subsequently, James Phillips (Monash and UNSW), whose Comparative Literature MA on Kleist I supervised, added to the philosophical dimension to the EB, serving as an Associate Editor for a time. The EB's theoretical expertise was expanded with the addition of the Hungarian Bakhtin specialist, Géza Horváth, who also became an Associate Editor; more recent members include the Hamburg specialist in narratology, Wolf Schmid, who became an Associate Editor, and a contingent from the Russian Federation, which includes Konstantin Barsht, Senior Research Fellow at RAN (Pushkin House), Olga Shalygina (Gorky Institute of World Literature, RAN) and Alexander Vlaskin (Magnitogorsk). Twenty years on, *The Dostoevsky Journal* has made it into the Scopus index and has thus become a more valuable outlet for scholars of all ages. It is attracting contributions from more diverse international scholars since it has gone back to its erstwhile policy of publishing articles in Russian as well as English. Nothing is lost in translation in this way. The review process is rigorous and requires the support of a large network of scholars willing to do the work pro bono: we are continuing to fill our data base and will be contacting colleagues with expertise in Dostoevsky research.

Editing *The Dostoevsky Journal: An Independent Review* has been an honour and a privilege for me. It has allowed me not only to give significant support to the research of my postgraduates at Monash University, where I had a long teaching and research career in Slavic and Comparative Literature, but also to offer a platform and editorial assistance to scholars from all parts of the world and to promote their research ideas. Dissemination of ideas is for me the most gratifying of all human endeavours. I have been lucky, thanks to the journal, to be in a hub of ideas which centre on the Russian writer but which go far beyond him, into the sphere of philosophy, sociology, theory and history of

literature and the intricate intertextuality of culture, across the spectrum of the world literary canons.

The present volume offers a range of approaches to Dostoevsky's works, from a meticulous pursuit of the meaning of drawings to be found in his Notebooks to innovative comparisons of his works with contemporary Russian writers.

With the Editorial Board, I wish all our readers continued pleasure and intellectual profit from reading the journal and thank you for your support wherever you may be.

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