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0521572789 - Christianity in Bakhtin: God and the Exiled Author

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The work of the great Russian theorist Mikhail Bakhtin has been examined from a wide variety of literary and theoretical perspectives. None of the many studies of Bakhtin begins to do justice, however, to the Christian dimension of his work. *Christianity in Bakhtin* for the first time fills this important gap. Having established the strong presence of a Christian framework in his early philosophical essays, Ruth Coates explores the way in which Christian motifs, though suppressed, continue to find expression in the work of Bakhtin's period of exile, and re-emerge in texts written during the time of his rehabilitation. Particular attention is paid to the themes of Creation, Fall, Incarnation and Christian love as they operate within metaphors of silence and exile, concepts which inform Bakhtin's world-view as profoundly as they influence his biography.

RUTH COATES lectures at the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London. She is editor of *The Emancipation of Russian Christianity* (1995).

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For my mother and father

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Abbreviations

WORKS BY M. M. BAKHTIN

‘Author and Hero’	‘Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity’ (c. 1920–4)
‘Changes to <i>Rabelais</i> ’	‘Additions and Changes to <i>Rabelais</i> ’ (1944)
‘Chronotope’	‘Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel’ (1937–8)
‘Content, Material and Form’	‘The Problem of Content, Material and Form in Creative Literature’ (1924)
<i>Dostoevsky’s Creative Work</i>	<i>Problems of Dostoevsky’s Creative Work</i> (1929)
<i>Dostoevsky’s Poetics</i>	<i>Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics</i> (1963)
‘Epic and Novel’	‘Epic and Novel (towards a methodology for the study of the novel)’ (1941)
‘Exercise Books’	‘From Draft Exercise Books’ (1943–61)
‘Methodology of the Human Sciences’	‘Towards a Methodology of the Human Sciences’ (1974)
‘Notes of 1970–71’	‘From Notes of 1970–71’
‘Philosophy of the Act’	‘Towards a Philosophy of the Act’ (c. 1920–4)
‘Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse’	‘From the Prehistory of Novelistic Discourse’ (1940)
‘Problem of the Text’	‘The Problem of the Text in Linguistics, Philology and other Human Sciences (an attempt at a philosophical analysis)’ (1959–61)
<i>Rabelais</i>	<i>The Work of François Rabelais and Popular Culture of the Middle Ages</i> (1965)
‘Reworking of Dostoevsky’	‘Towards a Reworking of the Book on Dostoevsky’ (1961)
‘Speech Genres’	‘The Problem of Speech Genres’ (1952–3)

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Abbreviations

WORKS BY P. N. MEDVEDEV

*Formal Method**The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship: A
Critical Introduction to Sociological Poetics (1928)*

WORKS BY V. N. VOLOSHINOV

*Marxism and the
Philosophy of Language**Marxism and the Philosophy of Language: Basic
Problems of the Sociological Method in the Science
of Language (1929)*

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[More information](#)*Note on translation and citation*

In deciding to render quotations from primary sources in translation, I have been faced with the dilemma of whether to use available translations or to do my own. As a result I have adopted a hybrid system: I use official translations where these exist except for ‘Philosophy of the Act’, ‘Author and Hero’, and ‘Content, Material and Form’ (because the chapters which deal with these essays were complete before the appearance of Vadim Liapunov’s translations), and also the late texts ‘Problem of the Text’, ‘Notes of 1970–71’, and ‘Methodology of the Human Sciences’ (because I have reservations about Vern McGee’s translation of them). This practice is reflected in the form of my references. Where two figures are given, it indicates that I have used an official translation. In such cases the first figure refers to the page in the Russian original, whilst the second figure, given in square brackets, refers to the page in the translation, thus: (‘Discourse in the Novel’, 112 [299]). Details of translations may be found in the Bibliography after their Russian originals. Where only one figure, that of the original, is given, it indicates that I have translated the text myself. Primary texts are referred to using the abbreviations listed on the previous two pages; secondary literature is referred to by the author–date system.

I have used the British system of Cyrillic transliteration, but rendered -iy as -y, as do *Oxford Slavonic Papers*, at the end of personal names. Quotations from the Bible are from the New International Version.

Finally, when translating from Bakhtin and when commenting on his texts, I frequently encountered the problem of masculine gender bias in his use of personal and possessive pronouns. Occasionally, in the absence of a stylistically appropriate alternative, I have found it necessary to reflect this bias in my own syntax.