

CURRICULUM VITAE: DR RUTH COATES

Contact details

Department of Russian Studies, School of Modern Languages, 17 Woodland Road,
Bristol, BS8 1TE

Tel: 0117 954 6891; e-mail: Ruth.Coates@bris.ac.uk

Present appointment

2021-present. Associate Professor in Russian Religious Thought, Department of Russian Studies, University of Bristol.

Previous appointments

2007–2021. Senior Lecturer, Department of Russian Studies, University of Bristol.

1999–2007. Lecturer, Department of Russian Studies, University of Bristol.

1997–1999. Temporary lecturer, Department of Russian, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London.

1995–1997. Temporary lecturer, Department of Russian Studies, University of Manchester.

1992–1994. Laming Junior Fellow, The Queen's College, Oxford.

Academic qualifications

1994. DPhil, University of Oxford.

Thesis title: 'Falling into silence: Christian motifs as organising discourse in the work of M. M. Bakhtin.'

1986. BA Modern Languages (German and Russian), first class honours, University of Bristol.

Special awards, honours, and distinctions

2021. BASEES Women's Forum Annual Book Prize for *Deification in Russian Thought: Between the Revolutions, 1905-1917* (OUP, 2019), cited as 'a discriminating and distinguished study of the place of religious ideas in the culture of Russia's Silver Age'.

1999. Annual Book-of-the-Year Award from the US Conference on Christianity and Literature for *Christianity in Bakhtin: God and the Exiled Author* (CUP, 1998), cited as 'the book that has made the most distinguished scholarly contribution to the dialogue between literature and the Christian faith during the year 1999'.

RESEARCH AND RELATED ADMINISTRATION

I am an intellectual historian with a particular interest in the interrelationship between the Russian philosophical tradition and Russian Orthodox theology and spirituality. I have become a senior member of a global community of scholars working in this field, and one of few Britons. My primary achievements as a scholar are my first monograph, *Christianity in Bakhtin* (CUP, 1998), my edited volume

Landmarks Revisited (Academic Studies Press, 2013), and now my second monograph, *Deification in Russian Religious Thought* (OUP, 2019). My prize-winning *Christianity in Bakhtin* opened up a new dimension in Bakhtin scholarship to complement, but also challenge, the then predominantly Marxist and liberal humanist readings of him. Two chapters have been translated in the Russian journal *Slovo i obraz* (2019, 2021). *Landmarks Revisited*, 'more than just another academic symposium' (*SEER*), arose out of my BIRTHA-sponsored international conference, held at Bristol, to mark the centenary of the publication of the infamous *Landmarks* (*Vekhi*) symposium, a scandal-causing critique of the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia by prominent religious intellectuals. *Deification in Russian Religious Thought* is a pioneering history and intellectual analysis of the reception of the doctrine of deification in Russia, with a focus on four seminal works of the inter-revolutionary period. It is set to redefine our understanding of Russian modernism and Russian religious thought. It won the BASEES Women's Forum Prize in 2021. I have been involved in several significant projects that have stretched the boundaries of the discipline or have re-shaped it. As a Laming Junior Fellow, resident in St Petersburg, I co-edited the essay collection *The Emancipation of Christianity* (Edwin Mellen, 1996), which introduced to an English-speaking readership the pioneering work of religious philosophers at the St Petersburg Higher School of Religions and Philosophy after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. *Bakhtin and Religion: A Feeling for Faith* (2001) remains the only English-language symposium of essays on the religious dimension of Bakhtin's work. I have also collaborated by invitation in *A History of Russian Thought* (2010), *Thinking Orthodox in Modern Russia* (2014), and *The Oxford Handbook of Russian Religious Thought* (2020), among others. I was pleased to become a research scholar at the new Russian Philosophy and Religious Thought Research Initiative, Northwestern University, USA (2022). I am currently pursuing a new project on transnational Orthodoxy, with a focus on the cultural mediation and religious reception of Orthodox spirituality in the UK through the agency of key female figures connected to the post-revolutionary Russian diaspora (see also 'Future Plans', at the end of this cv).

Publications

Authored books

1. *Deification in Russian Religious Thought: Between the Revolutions, 1905–1917* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, **2019**), 232pp.
2. *Christianity in Bakhtin: God and the Exiled Author* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, **1998**), xii + 201pp.

Edited books

3. *Landmarks Revisited: The Vekhi Symposium 100 Years On* (Boston, MA: Academic Studies Press, **2013**), 322pp. (Co-edited with Robin Aizlewood. I was lead editor and translator of one essay from Russian. Co-written critical introduction.)
4. *The Emancipation of Russian Christianity* (New York: Edwin Mellen, **1996**), xiii + 119pp. (Co-edited with Natalya Pecherskaya. My co-editor commissioned the volume, identified a publisher, and co-wrote the introductory article with me. I translated about half the contributions from Russian into English and corrected the remainder, and carried out all the editing to produce camera-ready copy.)

Academic journal papers (refereed)

5. 'The Myth of the Sacred Ruler in *Tsar and Revolution* (1907)', *Solovyov Studies* 56.4, **2017**, pp. 72–84 (in Russian).
6. 'Russia's Two Enlightenments: The *Philokalia* and the Accommodation of Reason in Ivan Kireevskii and Pavel Florenskii', *Slavonic and East European Review*, vol. 91, no. 4 (October **2013**), pp. 675–702.
7. 'Bakhtin and Hesychasm', *Religion and Literature*, vol. 37.3 (**2005**), pp. 59–80.
8. 'The Slavophile Dimension in Pavel Florenskii's Religious Aesthetic', *The Journal of East Christian Studies*, Vol. 57 (**2005**), nos. 1–2, pp. 93–109.
9. 'The Early Intellectual Careers of Bakhtin and Herzen: Towards a Philosophy of the Act', *Studies in East European Thought*, 52, No. 4, **2000**, pp. 239–57.

Chapters in edited books

10. 'Theosis in Early Twentieth-Century Religious Thought', in *The Oxford Handbook of Russian Religious Thought*, ed. by Caryl Emerson, George Pattison, and Randall Poole (OUP, **2020**), pp. 240–254.
11. "'The Light of the Truth": Russia's Two Enlightenments, with Reference to Pavel Florenskii', in *Thinking Orthodox in Modern Russia: Culture, History, Context*, ed. Patrick Lally Michelson and Judith Deutsch Kornblatt (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, **2014**), pp. 151–73. Previously published in *SEER*, see above.
12. 'Introduction', in *Landmarks Revisited: The Vekhi Symposium 100 Years On*, ed. Robin Aizlewood and Ruth Coates (Boston, MA: Academic Studies Press, **2013**), pp. 10–48. (Co-written with Robin Aizlewood and Evert van der Zweerde.)
13. 'Feuerbach, Kant, Dostoevskii: The Evolution of "Heroism" and "Asceticism" in Bulgakov's work to 1909', in *Landmarks Revisited: The Vekhi Symposium 100 Years On*, ed. Robin Aizlewood and Ruth Coates (Boston, MA: Academic Studies Press, **2013**), pp. 287–307.
14. 'Religious Renaissance in the Silver Age' in *A History of Russian Thought*, ed. by William Leatherbarrow and Derek Offord (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, **2010**), pp. 169–193.
15. 'Mystical Union in the Philosophy of Vladimir Solovev' in *Turgenev and Russian Culture*, ed. Joe Andrew, Derek Offord, and Robert Reid (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, **2008**), pp. 135–156.
16. 'The Slavophile Dimension in Pavel Florenskii's Religious Aesthetic', *Aesthetics as a Religious Factor in Eastern and Western Christianity*, ed. Wil van den Bercken and Jonathan Sutton (Leuven: Peeters, **2005**), pp. 65–80. Previously published in *J ECS*, see above.
17. 'Religious Writing in post-Petrine Russia' in *The Routledge Companion to Russian Literature*, ed. Neil Cornwell (Routledge, **2001**), pp. 49–63.
18. 'The First and the Second Adam in Bakhtin's Early Thought' in *Bakhtin and Religion: A Feeling for Faith*, ed. Susan M. Felch and Paul J. Contino (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, **2001**), pp. 63–78.
19. 'Two of a small fraternity? Points of contact and departure in the work of M. M. Bakhtin and M. I. Kagan up to 1924', in *The Contexts of Bakhtin*, ed. David Shepherd (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, **1998**), pp. 17–28.

Review articles

20. 'Image and Word.' *The Way: Religious Thinkers of the Russian Emigration in Paris and their Journal, 1925-1940*, by Antoine Arjakovsky (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013); *Georges Florovsky and the Russian Religious Renaissance*, by Paul Gavrilyuk (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), *Times Literary Supplement*, 5832 (9 January, **2015**), p. 9. Full-page spread.
21. *Language, Canonization and Holy Foolishness: Studies in Postsoviet Russian Culture and the Orthodox Tradition*, by Per-Arne Bodin (Stockholm: Stockholm University Press, 2009), *Scando-Slavica* 57.1 (**2011**), pp. 110–113.
22. *Pavel Florensky: A Quiet Genius*, by Avril Pyman (London: Continuum, 2010), *Times Literary Supplement*, 5605 (3 September **2010**), p. 5. Full-page spread.

Reviews of single academic books

23. *Lev Shestov: The Philosophy and Works of a Tragic Thinker*, by Andrea Oppo (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2020). *Slavic Review* 81.3 (Fall **2022**), pp. 814-5.
24. *Journey to Freedom*, by Sergei Ovsianikov, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (London: Bloomsbury, 2021), *Times Literary Supplement*, 6182 (24 September **2021**), pp. 24-5.
25. *Pavel Florensky, Early Religious Writings, 1903-09*, ed. and trans. by Boris Jakim (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017). *Modern Believing* 62.1, **2021**, pp. 84-5.
26. *Religious Freedom in Modern Russia*, ed. by Randall A. Poole and Paul W. Werth (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018). *Journal of Orthodox Christian Studies* 2.2, **2019**, pp. 227-8.
27. *The Image of Christ in Russian Literature: Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Bulgakov, Pasternak*, by John Givens (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2018), *The Russian Review* 78.3, **2018**, pp. 502–3.
28. *Russian Irrationalism from Pushkin to Brodsky: Seven Essays in Literature and Thought*, by Olga Tabachnikova (New York and London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), *MLR* 113.1, **2018**, pp. 282–3.
29. *Russian Bible Wars: Modern Scriptural Translation and Cultural Authority*, by Stephen K. Bataldan (Cambridge: CUP, 2013), *The European Legacy* 22.6, **2017**, pp. 744–6.
30. *Religion in the Thought of Mikhail Bakhtin: Faith and Reason*, by Hilary Bagshaw (Farnham, and Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), *Slavonic and East European Review* 93.3, July **2015**, pp. 546–8.
31. *Vasilii Rozanov and the Creation: The Edenic Vision and the Rejection of Eschatology*, by Adam Ure (London and New York: Continuum, 2011); *Vasily Rozanov and the Body of Russian Literature*, by Henrietta Mondry (Bloomington: Slavica, 2010), *Slavonic and East European Review* 92.2, April **2014**, pp. 315–18.
32. *Religion and Enlightenment in Catherinian Russia: The Teachings of Metropolitan Platon*, by Elise Kimerling Wirtshafter (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2013), *Times Literary Supplement*, 5767 (11 October **2013**), p. 31.
33. *Spiritual Elders: Charisma and Tradition in Russian Orthodoxy*, by Irina Paert (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2010), *Times Literary Supplement*, 5667 (11 November **2011**), p. 24.
34. *What the God-seekers Found in Nietzsche: The Reception of Nietzsche's Übermensch by the Philosophers of the Russian Religious Renaissance*, by Nel

Grillaert (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2008), *MLR* 106.2 (April) **2011**, pp. 616–17.

35. *Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent: Faith and Power in the New Russia*, by John Garrard and Carol Garrard (Princeton University Press, 2008), *The European Legacy* 15.7, **2010**, pp. 909–10.

36. *The Brothers Karamazov: Worlds of the Novel*, by Robin Feuer Miller (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008) and *Dostoevsky's Unfinished Journey*, by Robin Feuer Miller (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007), *MLR* 105.4 (October) **2010**, pp. 1198–1200.

37. *Bakhtin between East and West: Cross-Cultural Transmission*, by Karine Zbinden (London: Legenda, 2006), *Slavonic and East European Review* 87.2, April **2009**, pp. 344–6.

38. *Slavophile Thought and the Politics of Cultural Nationalism*, by Susanna Rabow-Edling (State University of New York Press: New York, 2006), *European History Quarterly* 39.1, **2009**, pp. 175–6.

39. *Dostoevsky and the Dynamics of Religious Experience*, by Malcolm Jones (Anthem Press, 2005), *MLR* 102.3, **2007**, pp. 922–3.

40. *Bakhtin: Ethics and Mechanics*, ed. by Valerie Z. Nollan (Northwestern University Press, 2004), *MLR* 101.4, **2006**, pp. 1194–5.

41. *Bakhtin and the Classics*, ed. by R. Bracht Branham (Northwestern University Press, 2002), *The Russian Review* vol. 63/number 3 (July) **2004**, pp. 522–3.

42. *Dostoevsky and the Christian Tradition*, ed. by George Pattison and Diane Oenning Thompson (CUP, 2001), *MLR* 98.2 (April) **2003**, p. 642.

Forthcoming publications

43. Review of: *The Patristic Writings of Georges Florovsky: Essential Theological Writings*, ed. by Brandon Gallaher and Paul Ladouceur (London and New York: T&T Clark, 2019). *Modern Believing* (**2023**).

44. Review of: *Heretical Orthodoxy: Lev Tolstoy and the Russian Orthodox Church*, by Pål Kolstø (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022). *History of European Ideas* (**2023**).

Peer review

I have regularly acted as a peer-reviewer for the following journals and academic presses: Northwestern University Press; The Harvill Press; *The Slavonic and East European Review*; *The Russian Review*; *Zeitschrift für Slawistik*; *Modern Languages Review*; *Religion and Literature*; *Translation Studies*; *The Journal of Communication and Religion*; *Partial Answers: Journal of Literature and the History of Ideas*; *The Journal of Orthodox Christian Studies*; *Theological Studies*; *History of European Ideas*.

Examination of theses

2023. MPhil: Alina Fiorella, 'Unmasking the Imposters or a Tale of Two Doubles: A Revisionist Reading of Dostoevskii's Father Zosima and Bulgakov's Margarita' (internal examiner), University of Bristol.

2019. PhD: Kyle Hurley, 'Dostoevsky, Soloviev, and the Idea of Kenosis: the Augustinian Sub-texts in Ivan Karamazov's Journey in *The Brothers Karamazov*', University of Edinburgh.

2016. PhD: John Cartner, 'Dialogising Life: Etty Hillesum, Carnival and the Holocaust', Murdoch University, Australia.

2012. PhD: Helen Galbraith, 'Pushkin and Pushkin Celebrations in Russian and Soviet Song: Assessing the Development of a Musical Tradition' (internal examiner), University of Bristol.

2009. MA by research: Nick Record, 'Russian religious traditions – 18th, 19th, 20th centuries: Paisii Velichkovskii's influence on Russian Orthodox Christianity as seen through the life and work of Starets Amvrosy (Grenkov) of Optina', University of Leeds.

2006. PhD: Timothy Beasley-Murray, 'Mikhail Bakhtin and Walter Benjamin: Experience and Form', University College London.

2004. PhD: 'Reading Mark with a vulgar mind: applying Bakhtinian categories to Markan characterisation', Melbourne College of Divinity, Australia.

2001. PhD: 'Mikhail Bakhtin's Living Word: Neither First nor Final', Murdoch University, Perth, Australia.

Invited lectures

2020. 'Deification and Russian religious thought: the limits of the human.' Research Seminar (online), SSEES-UCL, London, October 2020.

2019. 'Deification and Russian religious thought: the limits of the human.' Center for Religion and the Human, Indiana University, USA.

2019. 'Mikhail Bakhtin and the Russian religious philosophical tradition: dialogue, polemic, or silence?' Symposium 'An Excess of Seeing: The Pasts, Presents, and Futures of Mikhail Bakhtin'. Center for Theoretical Enquiry in the Humanities, Indiana University, USA.

2017. 'Deification in Russian religious thought.' University of Exeter Orthodox Christian Society Seminar, December 2017.

2014. 'Nikolai Berdiaev and the Silver Age reception of the doctrine of deification.' 'Logos-Cosmos-Eros: Horizons and Limitations of Russian Religious Philosophy.' Institute of Orthodox Christian Studies International Summer Conference. Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge.

2011. 'The Light of the Truth: the accommodation of reason in Kireevskii and Florenskii'. Workshop on 'Rethinking Russian Religious Thought', University of Wisconsin, Madison, USA.

2008. 'Theosis and the Russian intellectual tradition', Theology and Religious Studies Seminar, University of Bristol, December 2008

2001. 'Bakhtin, hesychasm, and apophatic theology', 2-day Bakhtin seminar, University of Bergen, Norway.

1999. 'Orthodoxy in Bakhtin.' Systematic Theology Seminar, University of Cambridge.

1998. 'Mikhail Bakhtin: personhood, dialogue, and the divine.' St. Theosevia Centre for Christian Spirituality, Oxford.

1997. Five-day Bakhtin seminar, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA (leading to the project *Bakhtin and Religion: A Feeling for Faith*).

Other conference papers

2023. 'Iulia de Beausobre (1893-1977): cultural mediator or Orthodox missionary?' BASEES Annual Convention, Glasgow, 31 March-2 April.

- 2023.** Roundtable: 'Disussing Pål Kolstø's new book *Heretical Orthodoxy: Lev Tolstoi and the Russian Orthodox Church* (CUP, 2022)'. BASEES Annual Convention, Glasgow, 31 March-2 April.
- 2023.** Roundtable: 'Shifting Priorities, Changing Perspectives: Researching Religion in Russia after the War'. Symposium of the Religion and Spirituality in Russia and Eastern Europe Study Group, SSEES-UCL, London, 29 March.
- 2023.** 'Iulia de Beausobre (1893-1977) and the English translation of Russian Orthodox spirituality.' International Orthodox Theological Association quadrennial conference (theme 'Mission and the Orthodox Church'), Volos, Greece, 11-15 January.
- 2022.** 'Iulia de Beausobre and the problem of cross-cultural translation: "Creative Suffering."' Anglo-Russian Research Network Conference, University of Exeter, 21-22 July.
- 2017.** 'Theosis in early 20th-century Russian religious thought.' Symposium for contributors to the *Oxford Handbook of Russian Religious Thought*, University of Glasgow.
- 2016.** 'The myth of the sacred ruler in *Tsar and Revolution* (1907).' Conference 'D. S. Merezhkovskii: Writer; Critic; Theologian', Institute of World Literature, Moscow.
- 2014.** 'Nikolai Berdiaev and the Silver Age reception of deification.' Conference in honour of Oliver Smith, St Andrews University.
- 2014.** 'Deification in Nikolai Berdiaev's *Smysl tvorchestva (The Meaning of Creativity, 1916)*' BASEES, Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge.
- 2011.** 'The Light of the Truth: the accommodation of reason in Kireevskii and Florenskii.' Russian departmental seminar, Bristol.
- 2010.** 'Rethinking Russian religious thought.' Roundtable. ASEES, Los Angeles, USA.
- 2009.** 'The ascetic principle in Bulgakov: evolution and influences', *Vekhi* Centenary Conference 1909-2009.
- 2008.** 'The deification concept in Bulgakov's reception of Dostoevsky', AAASS, Philadelphia, USA.
- 2008.** 'Heroism and Asceticism: the reception of Dostoevsky in the work of Sergeii Bulgakov up to 1909', 'Aspects of Dostoevsky' conference, Oxford.
- 2007.** 'Disentangling the roots of the Russian religious renaissance', BASEES 19th-century Study Group annual symposium, Bristol.
- 2004.** 'The Slavophile dimension in Pavel Florenskii's religious aesthetic.' 'Aesthetics as a religious factor in Eastern and Western Christianity' conference, Utrecht, Netherlands.
- 2002.** 'Bakhtin and the Russian religious-philosophical tradition.' 'Religious and Spiritual Themes in Russian Cultural History' conference, University of Surrey.

Future research plans

Over the next 5-7 years I plan to bring my incipient project on the 20th-century reception and cultural mediation of (Russian) Orthodox spirituality in the UK to fruition. Besides publishing articles and a monograph on the contribution of hitherto critically neglected Orthodox and Anglican women to this reception, I have plans for an international conference on the theme of 'writing the spiritual', and an associated edited volume. I also aspire to develop a public engagement and impact dimension

to the project. This will involve communicating the Orthodox spiritual tradition to public audiences and engaging with external partners such as monasteries, churches, and prayer/meditation communities to explore the historical origins and theological foundations of their respective spiritual practice, in both academic and non-academic fora. I aspire to master new research methodologies that will enable me to assess the impact of prayer practices on the lives of their practitioners and the communities with which they engage.

Ruth Coates

July 2023