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BAXTIN AND THE BAXTIN SCHOOL

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree, Doctor of Philosophy, in the Graduate School of the Ohio State University

By

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* * * * *

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INTRODUCTION

An overview of a pivotal figure like Baxtin is very difficult to accomplish while he is still, so to speak, pivoting. Although Baxtin, who died over a decade ago, should now be a "safe" literary topic, he has not been dead figuratively: a veritable fountain of renewal, his works—including "new" works—have continued to be published in a fairly steady stream since his death. In addition to works believed to be written by Baxtin, found in his desk, published as his writings (although, of course, with heavy editing provided by others who have chosen themselves to complete Baxtin's unfinished thoughts for him now that he is unable to do so for himself), there has been a flood of works on Baxtin and Baxtin's (supposed) approaches and ideas on certain problems. The first problem, thus, governing the task set here before us in this work is to define the area of examination; to describe its limits, and then to defend the rationale for those limits.
At this point in literary history, it is perhaps necessary that we remind ourselves of what, to Baxtin, constituted Baxtin's work. In the excitement of the discovery (an excitement which is probably justified by the nature of the discoveries) of Baxtin's return from the grave, through his "post-mortem" writings, we have tended to ignore the very limited sphere of the Baxtinian canon. This attitude and the erroneous assumptions about Baxtin's production which result from it are encouraged by the desire of Baxtinian scholars to "beef up" their idol's contributions.

Evidence of this tendency can be found in many different sources; an easy indicator is in Baxtin bibliographies. Diverse purveyors have taken a similar attitude: in both the bibliography printed by the Bakhtin Newsletter/Le Bulletin Bakhtine (no. 2, 1986) and the bibliography at the close of Clark and Holquist's Mikhail Bakhtin (1984), for instance, works are often double listed. The bibliographies are presented in a chronological order. The works are first listed under the year in which they are presumed to have been dealt with by the master, though the development and actual writing of the theme may have occurred much later. They are then listed again under the year of publication, even though in many cases such publication did not take place during Baxtin's lifetime. In fact,
the bulk of the items in both bibliographies was published after Baxtin's death.

In the Clark/Holquist list of works by Baxtin, there are twenty-eight items, listed in order by date, which only a fairly close examination shows not to be the actual date of publication, from 1919 to 1979. Articles are listed both when "created" and then again when published—in this case, after the author's death. An even closer examination shows that: ten of the items were not published in Baxtin's lifetime; five items were reviews and introductions of little critical value; four items are separate listings which were actually included in Questions of Literature and Esthetics, published only the year of Baxtin's death; two items are different editions of the Dostoevskij book; three items are the Rabelais book, or chapters from it; one item is Baxtin's first published article; and the three remaining items are articles published in 1974 and 1975, in the two years preceding Baxtin's death. One of these articles had also been published in a local Saransk bulletin in 1967. The items listed by Clark/Holquist as "disputed" works by Medvedev and Vološinov are all dated between 1925 and 1930, the years of their actual publication.

In the more extensive bibliography published by the Bakhtin Newsletter, we find a similar magnification of Baxtin's contributions, only to a greater degree. Here,
the list runs to sixty-five items, but they are cross-referenced, unlike Clark/Holquist's list (that is, item two, for example, is identified as being published in item fifty-two).

Addressing this problem in another context, Di Girolamo points out:

"The writer is a professional of writing, and everything written by him is thus collected. Private notes to friends, lovingly edited, are published . . . and we are thus rather close to the famous grocery list. This tendency is certainly not new" (17).

A study of Baxtin, of Baxtinianism, of the "Baxtin circle," and what it meant to its members, would necessarily limit itself to those works in which the group participated. To continue dealing with the bibliography provided by Clark/Holquist, it seems fair to be able to discard those ten works not published during Baxtin's lifetime. These works seem to belong more to the ardor of Baxtin worshippers than to his circle. The five "specific reviews" also have little purpose in terms of Baxtinianism: although there are some interesting points in the introductions to the editions of Tolstoj, they do not stand as independent literary critical themes. The omission of any analysis of a "[f]inding based on a study of the requirements of collective farmers" does not require defense.
Certainly, this problem of multiplying texts is not exclusive to Baxtin and Baxtin studies. An observer of the works of Ugo Foscolo noted:

Paradoxically enough, the longer a writer has been dead, the longer his list of works seems to become. . . .

Literature would seem to be defined as anything which has been written by someone who has come to be commonly accepted as a "great writer." There is a residue of the romantic notion of the artist as Genius and Creator in this approach. The image of the writer/Creator becomes the real "text" for the scholars to attempt to recreate and interpret. All of his writings are seen as traces which lead back to Him and permit a reconstruction of His Image. (Matteo, 4, 5)

From the public brouhaha over the "disputed texts," it seems a fairly safe working hypothesis that one can at least extrapolate a "Baxtin school" of sorts, one which may or may not have included other critical writers besides Baxtin himself. Using this approach, one can avoid, for a time, the question of specific authorship and deal with the material for the purposes of discussion and analysis. And indeed, this may be the most fruitful approach of all, because it is in this body of work, this nucleus of Baxtinianism, that the most powerful and interesting theory is to be found. This approach is also perhaps the most useful. The arguments of the larger works, the only ones published during Baxtin's active lifetime, are the kernel, as it were, of the whole: they are the germ which sprouts and
gives fruit to many other formulations, by Baxtin, by his colleagues, and by later generations of literary critics and theorists.

In this work I am attempting to search not for the image of the "writer/Creator" but rather the "written" and "created." The heart of Baxtinianism seems to be located in the nexus of the five major works of the "Baxtin school": Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics, The Art of Francois Rabelais, Freudianism, Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, and The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship.

The two works that are indisputably Baxtin's, monographs on Dostoevskij and Rabelais, can be considered to be the foundation of the Baxtinian canon. Although the Rabelais book was not published until 1965, it was originally presented as Baxtin's doctoral dissertation in 1940. Though it was therefore not a part of Soviet circles in the 1930's, it was justifiably a part of Baxtin's circle during that time. Admittedly, there is something of a leap of faith to include it as an example of Baxtinianism, since there is little evidence that the other members of the "Baxtin circle" influenced it, or were influenced by it. But the work

1 The vicissitudes of this document, and other important biographical data, are given at greater length in the Kožinov/Konkin biography which is translated here in the appendix.
on Rabelais, as will be seen later, is very much a
development and expansion of the same themes found in
the other four works discussed here. This similarity of
theme is not found nearly as strongly, in my opinion, in
the much later works of the seventies, and the works
published posthumously.

The other three works included here are the major
works published under the names of Baxtin's associates
which are attributed by some critics to Baxtin himself.
If "Baxtinianism" can be considered to be formed by the
core that the five texts have in common, the branches,
so to speak, of Baxtinianism consist of the ways in
which the texts differ from each other, and from
Baxtin's signed texts. In some cases, the differing
emphases of the various texts have led to the different
perceptions of Baxtin in the secondary criticism devoted
to his theories. Making a distinction between the
different signatories helps to make sense of some of the
contrasts found by those who seek "a" Baxtin where there
may be several different people.

Because of the ways in which the three disputed
texts differ from Baxtin's, it is important that those
areas of difference be explored. To categorize them in
a very basic fashion, it seems that one way in which
these differences become apparent is the relationship
between any particular text and the Marxist-Leninist
line. These differences ultimately help to form the entire structure built by Baxtinianism. The works, in a sense, function together to build a larger, more complete system than is described in any one work of the Baxtin school. The disputed texts expand upon the basic structure, applied mostly to literature and perceptions from and about literature, which is created in the signed Baxtin books.

At the core of Baxtinianism, seen basically in all five texts, is an awareness of the "other". It is to this central characteristic of the Baxtinian works that Tzvetan Todorov gave the name "altérité." Included in this awareness of the other, coexistent with it, is the awareness of the "word" of the other. Indeed, one can become aware of the "other" only through the other's "word."

Baxtin's idea of the "word" (slovo) is one that has caused trouble for readers and translators (discussed in greater detail later) because the very simplicity of the term masks a complexity of uses and specific applications. Although as a single term in English, "discourse" might be considered to be the best translation available for Baxtin's slovo, I will use here the most direct translation of slovo--"word." Baxtin's use of this term in many situations refers to the idea of discourse, for example that which a literary
character expresses for himself in a monologue or dialogue. Related to this idea of "discourse," slovo also contains the sense of "speech, utterance, verbal intercourse" and even "conversation." But in addition to these uses, Baxtin occasionally makes clear that he intends the idea of slovo to be symbolic as well.

Baxtin uses slovo as a basic term of everyday speech, not the specific jargon of any particular discipline, and as a term which lends itself to symbolic or idiomatic use. Symbolic use is seen, for instance, in the Bible; it appears very frequently in the book of John: "In the beginning was the Word . . . " and "the Word became flesh" ("V načale bylo Slovo . . . " and "Slovo stalo plotiju"). Some of the idioms using slovo coincide in their use in Russian and English: "čelovek slova" is "a man of his word." Some idioms would appear to coincide, but actually do not: "glotat' slova" is "to mutter," not to eat one's words. Perhaps more importantly, there are other idioms and uses in Russian which go well beyond the English "word." In addition to the sense of "discourse," slovo in Russian, as used by Baxtin, often coincides with the sense expressed in the idiom "skazat' svoe veskoe slovo" (literally, "to tell

---

2 In the Tolkovyi slovar' russkogo jazyka of 1940 (Moscow), included in the lengthy definition of slovo is "razgovor, reč', vyskazyvanie, slovesnoe obščenie."
one's weighty word," more or less to give one's final opinion).

Generally, throughout the five texts, the justification of the word and its meaning exist only in relationship with the word of the other. Meaning, in the Baxtinian sense, can be generated only in a social/verbal matrix. This overwhelming emphasis on the social nature of communication is a constant in the works of the "Baxtin school."

But though the various books have this emphasis on the social nature of communication at their foundation, they explore different branches of it. The Baxtin school departs from this core to explore the role of the psyche in Freudianism, the role of Marxism for language and communication in Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, and the role of Formalism in The Formal Method. This last work is particularly interesting in view of the problematic relationship Baxtinianism is viewed as having with Formalism. In it, we see the most basic confrontation of the issue of the Formalists to be found in the Baxtinian school. The signed Baxtin works lack any direct, detailed discussion of the Formalists, but Baxtin is categorized as being Formalist by some, and as an anti-Formalist by others. His association with the Formalists to the modern reader is assured,
however, by his inclusion in several Formalist anthologies.

In this study, then, the goal will be to study the works of the Baxtin school, to examine the central core and basic premises of this entire body of work, as well as to explore some of the specific analyses offered in the various texts, to examine the values and limitations of each approach when it differs from another. Since the five works of the Baxtin school seem to provide the "heart of hearts" of Baxtinianism, it is in a close examination of these works that the search must begin.
CHAPTER I
BAXTIN AND BAXTINIANISM

Mixail Mixajlović Baxtin even now, a decade after his death, remains an enigma and a paradox; and this when he is "today one of the most popular, if not the most popular, figures in the domain of humanistic studies," to quote Krystyna Pomorska (PTL, 379). The work by Baxtin which is perhaps most popular and relevant today in the area of "modern" literary criticism is the one he first published—sixty years ago.

Baxtin is a literary scholar who can tempt a researcher to do a traditional "search and define mission," investigative research consisting largely of long hours in a library, rather than thoughtful approaches and analysis. This is the very sort of research that Baxtin avoided and occasionally deplored.¹

¹ "We have therefore eliminated from our work the superfluous ballast of citations and references. In general, they have no direct methodological significance in non-historical research, and in a concise, systematic work, they are completely unnecessary; they are not needed for the competent reader and are useless for the incompetent one" (Voprosv estetiki i literatury, 6-7). The translation is my own, as will be any other unidentified translations.
But, to a certain extent, this type of investigation, a methodological examination of biography and evaluation of worth, becomes a very necessary part of any research project on Baxtin. The need to define the topic and subject matter in a project on Baxtin takes the form, somewhat ironically, of the very serious issue of "voice" which must be dealt with in Baxtin's texts themselves. Works which were originally published under the names of others who were his associates are considered by many to be Baxtin's own work. Some of these works are now published, in languages other than Russian, under Baxtin's name, with little or no reference to the originally named author. The writings which were discovered in Baxtin's desk after his death, some of which have been published, seem to have been written only for himself, and not destined for publication. In them, for instance, there are no explanations or definitions of what is meant by his terminology.

A major problem in the study of Baxtin is that many scholars attracted to Baxtin cannot read him in the original. Furthermore, they have had to rely on translations, done by translators who for the most part have been unfamiliar with the whole of Baxtin's works and theories. These translations have often been inconsistent within themselves for certain key words,
and are especially inconsistent with other translations. For example, Baxtin's word "slovo" becomes in English "word" (in the Rotsel translation), "discourse" (the translation by Balthazar and Titunik in the anthology *Readings in Russian Poetics*, and also the new translation of *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* by Caryl Emerson), and "énoncé" (especially in journals catering to scholars of French). The same proliferation of terms occurs in translations to French: "mot," "discours," "énoncé." All of these are acceptable translations for Baxtin's sense in certain instances, but they create chaos when all are used interchangeably to convey Baxtin's single word. What Tzvetan Todorov has called the "cacophonie des traducteurs" has wreaked havoc with the reception and understanding of Baxtin's work in the West.

Still more has contributed to confusion for the reader of Baxtin. In 1973 Vjačeslav Ivanov, in a footnote to the bibliography of an article on Baxtin's ideas for semiotics, declared that the works of the other members of the so-called Baxtin circle had actually been written by Baxtin himself:

The basic texts of works 1-5 and 7 are by M. M. Bakhtin. His students V. N. Voloshinov and P. N. Medvedev, under whose names they were

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2 During the 1979 summer colloquium at Urbino, Italy, in a seminar on Baxtin.
published, made only small insertions and changes in particular parts (and in some cases, such as [5], in the titles) of these articles and books. That all the works belong to the same author, which is confirmed by the testimony of witnesses, is evident from their very texts, as one may easily convince oneself by the quotations presented. ("Significance," 242)³

Baxtin, who was still alive and intellectually active at this time (he was working on a third edition of the Dostoevskij book just before his death in 1975) neither confirmed nor denied Ivanov's claim.

Should these works, particularly the three full-length books—Voloshinov's Marxism and the Philosophy of Language and Freudianism and Medvedev's The Formal Method in Science and Literature—be included in a study of Baxtin's literary philosophy? The various critical readers of Baxtin have responded in different ways. Tzvetan Todorov, in his 1978 seminar on Baxtin in

Urbino, Italy, pointed out the enormous difference in style between the works signed by Baxtin, none of which are "polemical," and the others. He does, however, accept their use in the study of Baxtin's literary theory because the same literary theory and the same world-view dominate all of the works in question; the importance of the dialogue and of the reader is basic to all the texts.

Unfortunately, few critics have been as circumspect as Todorov. Michael Holquist repeatedly refers to all the disputed texts as those of Baxtin, usually only noting incidentally that they were published under the names of others. We should be cautious about accepting these works published by Vološinov and Medvedev as having been authored by Baxtin himself, but it is certainly reasonable to view the ideas expressed in them as corollaries or supplements to the literary philosophy of Baxtin: in many ways they parallel the ideas expressed in the texts which are indisputably Baxtin's. But even if it were proved that Baxtin was in no way involved in their authorship, it would remain that the three men formed a quite cohesive group or circle, and that Baxtin greatly influenced the other two. On the other hand, even if it were proved definitively that Baxtin himself actually wrote every word of the books in question, a certain caution should be observed when
dealing with them as evidence in an examination of Baxtin. The fact that they are published under other names is a factor which removes Baxtin from the ideas contained in them. An author who uses a name other than his own for publishing a work, even though it be only to make sure this book will not meet with undue censorship or pressure from the authorities, has set up a distance between himself and the work involved. There is a certain degree of consideration which means that the work under another name must be kept in a different category from those books published under his own name.

A study which would definitively determine which are Baxtin's original works and whose the authorship of the disputed books would considerably clarify the issue, but such a task probably would not be the most rewarding one. Baxtin's ideas, and those ideas which he may have developed in conjunction with others, or ideas that others may have had pertinent to these areas, even if falsely attributed to Baxtin, remain the most important subject. The understanding of this aspect of the critic, that is, an understanding of the ideas with which he was associated, is more important than the understanding of his personal biography. Previous writers have referred to the Baxtin "circle(s)." This formulation probably most accurately describes the dynamics of the situation. There were other members who
certainly contributed to the theorizing of the group, but it seems that Baxtin was always the leading light, the guiding theoretician. As will be discussed later, there are indications and evidence, which can be culled from the texts in question, that tend to demonstrate that the books published by Vološinov and Medvedev were probably developed and written by them largely as a result of their connection with Baxtin.

At any rate, a study of Baxtin's, and of the Baxtin school's, ideas and of their influence both on his contemporaries and on those who followed necessitates an almost sociological study of those works and of their dissemination. Since Baxtin's works were written in Russian, a language not generally accessible to most Western critics, the flow of information has been hampered by the linguistic distance involved. If Baxtin's concepts became especially important to the French structuralists and post-structuralists of the sixties and seventies, it was perhaps mostly due to the attention of Russian-speaking critics like Kristeva, and to the relatively early availability of reliable French translations. The quality of the translations was as important as their date of issue, for only the better translations managed to generate interest in Baxtin and his literary philosophy. As a result, readers of French were among the first Westerners to be interested in
Baxtin, largely because of the clarity and stimulating readability of the translations. For this, the French translators of Baxtin had the advantage of a better literary glossary already in place which could be utilized.

A certain amount of distortion of Baxtin's theories has taken place with their reception in the West. It is true that Soviet scholars, Baxtin included, have faced very real problems because of censorship and varying forms of pressure. But their scholarship has suffered further degradation in the West, where so many critics feel they must view as "tacked on" (in order to pass the censor) any Marxist statements or conclusions found in the works of those whom they admire. This deplorable tendency takes place even where that Marxism is essential to a basic understanding of the most important elements of a work. And so it is with Baxtin. His notions of communication seem to be founded on a basis of social phenomenon rather than individual phenomenon. In what are arguably Baxtin's major theories, his notion of polyphony and the idea of the carnivalesque, it is precisely the social context, the idea of the crowd and the marketplace, which provides the very foundation of his thought.

Yet Western scholars occasionally seem to go out of their way to emphasize those elements which suggest, or
are used to suggest, a non-Marxist matrix. Most recently, there has been a spate of articles and discussions relating to Baxtin's "religiosity." Many Western scholars have now convinced themselves of Baxtin's religiosity, which seems to them to preclude any chance that his Marxist views were sincere. Detailed examination shows that, on the contrary, the Marxist and socialist ideological statements made in many of the "authentic" as well as in the "disputed" texts seem to form the nucleus of Baxtin's pronouncements. The sociological nature of communication and literariness are the fundamental germ within the works of Baxtin.

Jonathan Culler, for one, has pointed out the dangers inherent in the new tendencies toward the overlapping of religion and literary criticism. This tendency is something that many critics are loathe to combat, feeling it is somehow beneath them. The problem with this stance is that the lack of any argued rebuttal lends a certain legitimacy or credence to that sort of religious propaganda. There is no direct evidence of religious attitudes in Baxtin's literary philosophy. To extract interpolations of such beliefs from his literary writings on the basis of what some of his acquaintances may have considered to be the personal opinion of Baxtin is a pernicious undertaking. Clark's and Holquist's
decision to explore Baxtin's religiosity on the basis of his acquaintance with some people who belonged to some religious groups and the fact that he received Easter greetings from his mother is unconvincing or at best inadequately explained.

In the last few years, the study of Baxtinian concepts has soared. This popularity, as is perhaps the case with any such phenomenon, has led to problems of understanding even as understanding has become more widespread. The problem of translation, mentioned earlier, again comes to the fore. Erroneous assertions about the theories of Baxtin have developed from the use of faulty or weak translations. In other cases, articles have been written or papers delivered on the basis of an acquaintance with the critical literature on Baxtin rather than from any familiarity with the literary theory written by Baxtin. An example that comes most readily to mind is the preoccupation (both defensive and antagonistic) with "Baxtin's" theory of altérité, which is merely the designation provided by Tzvetan Todorov as a way of describing an attitude that he finds repeatedly throughout Baxtin's writings, i.e. the attitude of reflecting the other, or constant awareness of the other. Baxtin himself did not formulate, per se, any theory of altérité. The discussions concerning this particular subject are
therefore more properly to be considered as addressing Tzvetan Todorov, rather than Mixail Baxtin.

The development of Baxtin's esthetics is primarily rooted in post-Formalism. The revived interest in Baxtin is due not only to the posthumous discovery of some of his writings, but also to this "post-Formalism": the reemergence of Formalism in the sixties brought a second reaction against Formalism, and with it, a fresh examination of Baxtin.

Rather than formalistic concerns, of major importance for Baxtin is the social context: the enunciation can never be individual, but is always determined by the social context. An individual voice is never heard except with other voices of the society. This process of reasoning leads Baxtin to the study of the novel, which he considers to be a dialogue of different voices, and the place where dialogism can be best observed. At times, Baxtin's descriptions of the social significations of communication lean towards psychology. In the indisputed texts Baxtin does not directly address the issue of, for example, Freudianism versus Marxism. There is, however, a sense of a psychological model of the individual in Baxtin's descriptions of the social context. Thus, it would be hypothetically possible to describe human nature by extrapolating an analysis of human behavior from
Baxtin's notions. This would involve proceeding from Baxtin's formulations, not using them as they exist. But unlike the Freudian model, it must be noted, there is always in Baxtin an emphasis on social interaction that determines the individual in the context of the social, in terms of society.

Baxtin notes two conflicting tendencies of language in his study of the novel: the first towards the unification of the voices in the novel, and the second towards diversity. He sees the culmination of the latter tendency in what Baxtin terms the polyphonic novel of Dostoevskij. In *Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics* (abbreviated PDP), he compares the complexity of this polyphony of Dostoevskij's world to the "complex unity of an Einsteinian universe" (PDP, Rotsel trans., 92). Baxtin explains elsewhere that the discovery of more than one "center" in the case of Einstein invalidated the monocentric Newtonian system, and in the case of Dostoevskij invalidated the precept of the unifying authorial voice (such as that of Tolstoj).

Though there was no place for the reader in the theories of the Formalists, for Baxtin the reader was the focus, the point of view of the text. The reader was not any individual, any empirical entity, nor was he a

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"super-reader," that is, a reader endowed with an ideal competence to understand and process every element in the text, or a reader so envisioned by the author, but rather a reader who existed within the text, formed from the very structure of the text itself. Baxtin describes a "horizon of the reader" and claims that a text directs itself towards this horizon. One doesn't "know" a text, but rather "understands" it; this understanding must necessarily result from dialogue. One must enter into a dialogical relationship with a text in order to understand it: all comprehension is therefore dialogical.

Baxtin concerns himself primarily with genre; for him, poetics, the study of how a text is constructed and of the formal aspects of a text, must proceed primarily from genre. This prominence is not restricted only to literary genre: there are also the genres of quotidian verbal relationships and discourse. Baxtin makes frequent use of a Greek term xronotop or "chronotope":

We will give the name chronotope (literally, "time-space") to the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature. This term [space-time] is employed in mathematics, and was introduced as part of Einstein's Theory of Relativity. The special meaning it has in relativity theory is not important for our purposes; we are borrowing it for literary criticism almost as a metaphor (almost, but not entirely). What counts for us is the fact that it expresses the inseparability of space and time (time as the fourth dimension of
space). We understand the chronotope as a formally constitutive category of literature; we will not deal with the chronotope in other areas of culture. ("Chronotope," 84, in Dialogic Imagination. Brackets around "space-time" are those of Emerson and Holquist)

According to Todorov, Baxtin's use of the term "chronotope" becomes practically synonymous with "genre."  

The two opposing forces that Baxtin distinguishes in language, centrifugal and centripetal, can be best and most easily observed in the novel. One must, however, be careful in assessing Baxtin's terminology. It soon becomes apparent that Baxtin, when writing of the novel, does not make use of any of the usually accepted definitions of the novel, or of those works usually accepted as novels. For Baxtin, the novel began with late antiquity: Apuleius, Petronius, the Menippean satire. According to Todorov, Baxtin's ideas on the novel are not original, but are taken directly from the romantic esthetic, Hegel and Friedrich Schlegel. The novel is a poem of poems: all the forms and all the preceding genres, Boccaccio and Cervantes, mixed together. Baxtin basically agrees with Schlegel's claim that novels are the Socratic dialogues of our times. However, Baxtin reverses the emphasis, stating that Socratic dialogues were the novels of antiquity.

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5 At the seminar in Urbino, Italy.
A view that Baxtin developed over the years was that almost any discourse could be seen as dialogical—even the monologue. In 1934, for example, he said that the writing of Lev Tolstoj was that of monological discourse. He had amended this opinion, however, by 1975 when he wrote that there is a "distinct internal dialogism" in Tolstoj. This dialogism can be seen as manifested either in the reader, or in references ("sideways glances") to others: other writers, famous people, acquaintances, and so on. In this modified definition, the exceptional place of Dostoevskij in the history of literature is nevertheless preserved, because of the entirely different threshold of dialogicity surpassed in his writings: the achievement of polyphony.

The concept of dialogism, introduced in Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics in 1929, is one of the most important of the many ideas formulated by Baxtin. Dialogism is, ultimately, the evocation of other discourses; it is omnipresent and results in intertextuality. This is just a development of the idea that the juxtaposition of énoncés results in dialogism. Baxtin's ideas on dialogism can be seen as a vital part of the later development of the theories of voice of the sixties by much later critics, most notably Gérard Genette. The inter-connectedness of the theories of Baxtin and Genette have only recently begun to be
explored. The similarity of their ideas and theories is becoming more generally recognized as the work of both scholars becomes better known and understood.  

The predominance of dialogicity serves to illuminate the role that the concept of social relations had in Baxtin's theories: that any utterance, even literary, must exist in a social context is fundamental for everything that Baxtin wrote. This prominence remains whether one brings into consideration the books of disputed authorship or not.

In this investigation of "the Baxtin school," the fact that Baxtin's name serves as the name of the group underscores his central and primary position in that group. In this light, the importance of the rest of the group consists precisely of the way in which they participated in Baxtin's thought, added to it, or helped to expound upon it and build the entire structure. If Baxtin is taken as the central figure of the group, it is justifiably important to identify and examine his

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6 At the conference on Baxtin: His Circle, His Influence in Kingston, Canada, October 1983, at least three speakers dealt with this connection. André Belleau of the University of Québec at Montréal mentioned the need to reformulate the narratology of Gérard Genette on a different basis, using the Baxtinian concept of the narrator as the regulator and répartiteur of language. Hendrik Van Gorp of the Katholieke Universiteit of Leuven compared and contrasted the theories of novelistic polyphony of Baxtin, Stanzel, Genette and Booth. Hans-George Ruprecht of Carleton University used some points of both Genette and Baxtin to examine a work of José Lezama Lima.
work as the foundation of the work of the group, and of
the total Baxtinian structure. Baxtin's work, that is,
the work that is clearly and indisputably Baxtin's,
becomes the fundamental texts on which such an
investigation should be based. The works published
under the names of Vološinov and Medvedev can then be
examined in light of the foundation laid by the
indisputed Baxtinian texts. It is the interplay and
totality of the major works published by these three
that really constitutes the nucleus of the fascination
the name of Baxtin presently exercises on the literary
critical public: generally speaking, the lesser works of
Baxtin, and those fragments discovered in his desk which
have been posthumously published have been propagated
because of the interest in Baxtin created by the major
works.

This is an examination of this school, and the
interrelations of the major works and thoughts. The
works published after the main period of activity,
finished by the forties, really can have had no effect
on the "Baxtin school." It is important to discover
what Baxtin had in common with the others, and where he
may have differed. The differences between the writings
of the three members of the circle examined in this
investigation are also pertinent. The issues of
polyphony, voice and carnivalization are not at odds
with the tenets of Marxism, but rather go hand in hand with them. If Baxtin stood accused by Marxism, it was that his ahistoricism troubled his Marxist critics. Baxtin's failure to credit ideas to the vicissitudes of history is something he occasionally tried to correct in later editions of his work (as in the additions to the work on Dostoevskij).

In Marxism and the Philosophy of Language and Freudianism, published by Vološinov, and in The Formal Method, published by Medvedev, Marxism is integral to the texts and the thought behind them. In the works published by Vološinov, and perhaps even more strongly in that published by Medvedev, we are presented with a theory that is not exclusively abstract literary criticism, but with socio-political documents as well as philosophical thought. But it must be noted that both Vološinov and Medvedev exhibit a practical social concern that is absent from the texts that are indisputably Baxtin's.

The relationship between the various works is also a matter that needs to be explored in greater depth. The different texts have quite different slants and directions, and the texts published by Vološinov and Medvedev do not deserve the scorn which is sometimes cast on them because of the ways in which they differ from those published under Baxtin's name. Although
those areas which seem to differ from Baxtin's pronouncements are often dismissed with a version of the phrase quoted by Wehrle, "and not always for the better," they do not deserve such denigration. The texts are integral, self-supporting documents which deserve attention on their own merits, and not merely because of their disputed authorship.

All in all, the five works which serve as the basis of this examination will be seen as documents which, in their separate and unique ways, all strive towards a theory of social behavior and human understanding. In Baxtin, the evidence, the data, used for an examination of the nature of consciousness is sought above all in literature; in the works published by Vološinov the material examined is sociological and psychological; in the book published by Medvedev the basis of criticism is found in criticism itself. Together, these very different approaches and methods contribute to an understanding of the world, to a "poetics of culture."

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7 In his introduction to his translation of The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship, Wehrle says: "V. N. Turbin . . . quotes Bakhtin as saying, with regard to The Formal Method: 'Pavel Nikolaevich [Medvedev] added to it, and not always for the better'" (x).
CHAPTER II

DOSTOEVSKIJ'S POETICS

Baxtin's first published work, a book on Dostoevskij, appeared in 1929 with the title Problemy tvorchestva Dostoevskogo (Problems of Dostoevskij's Art). The revolutionary theories set forth by Baxtin in this work were recognized by only a few contemporary scholars, mostly Soviet, among whom the most notable was Lunacharskij. In general it did not at that time generate the excitement, both domestic and international, that it would on its reissue in 1963.

From the first, Baxtin's theories and articles had been directed against some of the excesses of Formalism, but the importance of these theories had been obscured by various circumstances. There were several problems with publication: some small articles which were scheduled to appear never actually did, or at least did not appear until much later, when an interest in Baxtin

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1 It was long believed that articles by Baxtin, though previously scheduled for publication, through various circumstances never actually appeared. Only in the last few years have researchers discovered a previous two-page publication, "Iskusstvo i otvetstvennost'," ("Art and Responsibility"), published in 1919 in Den' iskusstva in Nevel'.
began in the West. Other circumstances were problems in Baxtin's life and career: he left Leningrad, apparently in exile, for the small town of Kustanai in Kazaxstan (Holquist, 1978, 53). In 1963 the second edition of the Dostoevskij book, Problemy poëtiki Dostoevskogo (Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics), met with greater attention from abroad only after the appearance of the various translations.

Baxtin's ideas and theories, while remaining essentially the same, had nonetheless evolved and matured in the thirty-four years that intervened between the two editions of this work. This evolution can be seen in some of the revisions in the later edition. The original edition of 1929 was a study of Dostoevskij, a monograph on the great writer. In the later edition of 1963, the focus is slightly shifted. The inclusion of additional material shows that Dostoevskij occupies a special place in the history of novelistic discourse. The basic import of the concept of polyphony and the treatment of the carnival and the carnivalesque remain essentially unchanged, although the role that Baxtin assigned to Dostoevskij in the history of the novel was somewhat altered. In the earlier edition, Dostoevskij is perceived as the original and unique developer of "dialogism," that particular writing style which gives each character his own individual "word." For Baxtin,
the "word" of each character is that voice or consciousness that is expressed to represent that character's point of view. For Baxtin, then, Dostoevskij's characters have independent voices and words because they are able to express themselves fully without their words being reduced in status in relationship to the author's word. In the edition of 1963, although the original claims that Dostoevskij is the creator of the polyphonic novel are left untouched, there are additions to the text which depict Dostoevskij rather as the culmination, the apex, of a certain tendency in literature.

In our opinion, Lunacharsky is correct in the sense that certain elements, embryonic rudiments, early buddings of polyphony can indeed be detected in the dramas of Shakespeare. Shakespeare, along with Rabelais, Cervantes, Grimmelshausen and others, belongs to that line of development in European literature in which the early buds of polyphony ripened, and whose great culminator, in this respect, Dostoevsky was to become... In our opinion Dostoevsky alone can be considered the creator of genuine polyphony. (Emerson, 33, 34)

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2 Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics, translated Caryl Emerson; University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1984, 33, 34. Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, translated R.W. Rotsel; Ardis: U.S.A., 1973, 28, 29. Problemy poëtiki Dostoevskogo, (fourth ed.); "Sov. Rossija": Moscow, 1979, 40, 41. These will be hereafter in this chapter referred to as "Emerson," "Rotsel" and "Russian," respectively. The translation utilized will be identified in the text; the better translation is sometimes to be found in the one, at other times in the second, of the two choices. The guiding light at all times, of course, is Baxtin, and
Later, certain parts of Voprosy èstetiki i literatury (Questions of Esthetics and Literature) further delineate these concepts. For instance, in "Iz predistorii romannogo slova" ("From the Prehistory of the Novelistic Word"), Baxtin discusses what he calls "zones of dialogic contact" in Evgenij Onegin. We find, then, in Baxtin's ideas, that "Dostoevsky alone can be considered the creator" (Rotsel, 29) of this unique dialogic style, though others have nevertheless managed to achieve something in the direction of dialogism.

Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics, though the work first published by Baxtin, remains probably the most important both in its usefulness as a critical tool to others (semioticians and structuralists), and as an indicator of the essentials of Baxtin's literary theories. This is not to say that it is the most important of Baxtin's works, or that it is the one to most clearly delineate the scope of his theories. For reasons of their own specific interests, the French critics seem to consider the monograph on Rabelais to be the most valuable of Baxtin's contributions to literary criticism. Nevertheless, there seem to be more reasons to grant that position to Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics. The primary of these reasons is that in this the goal is the proper transmission of his "word."
work, Baxtin treats most of the major themes that he also develops (perhaps more fully) elsewhere. It is perhaps also the work that best encompasses within itself the idea of the "Baxtin school," because of the richness of the ideas in it. Although it (the Dostoevskij book) is a relatively brief work, one which really requires further elucidation, it serves well as an introduction to the dominant of Baxtin and "Baxtianism," the ideas of the Baxtin school. In that light, a fairly detailed examination of the work and the ideas expressed in it is in order.

In Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics Baxtin introduces the revolutionary description of polyphony and the accompanying idea of dialogism in the novel. The monumental nature of this work is found in the radically different assessment of the fundamentals of Dostoevskij. The "personalities" noticed by Askoldov, the "poetics" of "diverse narrative elements" observed by Grossman, the "multileveledness" described by Kaus were all nonetheless reduced, according to Baxtin, to matters of the author's values, his Weltanschauung, and capitalism. Baxtin recognized in these diverse elements important principles of coexistence and interaction: the simultaneous functioning of counterposed, contradictory elements. The characters are not seen as acting out a demonstration of the Weltanschauung or values of the
author, but rather their own, which are fully and individually valid, though often mutually contradictory.

In the book on Dostoevskij Baxtin introduces as well his first treatment of the problem of the carnival and that of the carnivalization of literature, with a survey of different forms of literature which had led to the development of the latter: the Socratic dialogue and the Menippean satire. Baxtin also describes, delineates and defines the "types of the prose word" (tipy prozaičeskogo slova) in the novel, which is an important building block in his general theory of the novel, and the "word in Dostoevskij" (slovo u Dostoevskogo). The entire book figures as a major part of Baxtin's general theory of the novel, which was a constant objective throughout his critical career.

In the first chapter of Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics, "Dostoevskij's Polyphonic Novel and its Elucidation in the Critical Literature," we find Baxtin's single most important contribution to literary analysis: the development of the concept of "polyphony." According to Baxtin, "the plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses and the genuine polyphony of full-valued voices are in fact characteristics of Dostoevsky's novels. . . . Dostoevsky's principle [sic] heroes are indeed not only
objects of the author's word, but subjects of their own
directly significant word . . . as well" (Rotsel, 4;
Russian, 7). For Baxtin, polyphony consists precisely
of this independence of the separate and equal voices of
the individual characters. Baxtin's point derives from
the diversity of the various critical discussions of the
works of Dostoevskij:

An acquaintance with the voluminous literature
on Dostoevsky creates the impression that the
subject under discussion is not a single
author-artist who wrote novels and novellas
(povesti), but a whole series of philosophical
statements made by several author-thinkers-
-Raskolnikov, Myshkin, Stavrogin, Ivan
Karamazov, the Grand Inquisitor, and others.
(Rotsel, 3: the opening line of the book)

Baxtin goes on to show that in Dostoevskij's
novels, each character has his own "word," obeying the
order, "Buđ ličnost'ju" ("Be a personality") (Rotsel,
8; Russian, 13). For Baxtin, the "word" of each
character is that voice or consciousness that is
expressed for him by the author to represent the
character's Weltanschauung. Dostoevskij's characters
have independent voices and words because they are able
to express themselves fully without being reduced by a
more authoritative word from the author. This
independence can be contrasted with the voices of the
characters in the novels of Lev Tolstoj, for example,
where they are forced to share the same Weltanschauung
as the author/narrator, who controls them with a "unifying authorial force":

Tolstoy's world is monolithically monological; the hero's word is contained in the firm framework of the author's words about him. The hero's final word is given as an external (authorial) word: the hero's self-consciousness is merely an aspect of his firm image and is in essence predetermined by that image even when thematically the consciousness undergoes crisis and radical upheaval ("Master and Man"). Self-awareness and spiritual rebirth remain in Tolstoy purely in the realm of content, assuming no form-determining significance; the ethical unfinalizedness of a character up until his death does not become structural unfinalizability of the hero. . . . The hero's self-consciousness and his word do not become the dominant of his construction, despite their thematic importance in Tolstoy's works. A second full-fledged voice (next to the author's voice) does not appear in his world, and therefore neither the problem of combination of voices, nor that of the particular formulation of the author's point of view arises. Tolstoy's monologically naive point of view and his word penetrate everywhere, to every corner of the world and of the spirit, subordinating everything to their unity. (Rotsel, 45-46; Russian, 65)

3 This reduction of Tolstoj is an aspect of Baxtin which is being frequently challenged in recent years. Baxtin's attitude is contested in a very interesting reappraisal by Caryl Emerson in "The Tolstoy Connection in Bakhtin," a paper presented at the Bakhtin Conference in Kingston, Canada, October 8, 1983. Though she poses the question, "In what way . . . is Bakhtin serving Tolstoy, . . . . and Tolstoy serving Bakhtin?" (prepublished program notes for the conference 33), she also accepts the polarity Baxtin stresses for his own purposes, noting that, historically, many critics have done so. But she does accuse Baxtin of ignoring the "multiplicity" in Tolstoj. She says that Dostoevskij's multiplicity is spatial and coexistent, while that of Tolstoj is more linear and temporal. Levin is "saved" because his personality can accommodate a multiplicity
Baxtin elaborated his views on the protagonist and the author's position in relation to the protagonist in two separate chapters of Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics. In the book's second chapter, "The Hero and the Author's Position in Relation to the Hero in Dostoevsky's Work,"\(^4\) are introduced three aspects of the development of this idea: 1) "the relative freedom and independence of the hero and his voice in the framework of the polyphonically conceived novel"; 2) "the special means of stating ideas in the polyphonic novel"; and 3) "the new principles of connection (sviaz') which bind together the whole of the novel" (Rotsel, 38).

Baxtin states that Dostoevskij's protagonist is not finalized because he (the protagonist) has the final word about himself. Other authors, such as, presumably, Tolstoj, "finalize" their characters by relegating them to a function, creating them as a function, which they serve within the narrative structure of the text. As such, they serve to develop the word of the author and to forward the author's overall narrative schema. It is of ideas.

\(^4\) Both Rotsel and Emerson use the word "hero" as translation for the Russian geroj, but "protagonist" is probably more accurate and more compatible with modern literary terminology.
thus the author's purpose which controls these characters.

In Dostoevskij, a character has the structural function of representing his own position or Weltanschauung in terms of interaction with the other characters and their positions. Dostoevskij does not construct a character or a type, nor a protagonist from the author's words, but rather from the protagonist's word about himself: "Dostoevsky's hero is not an objectified image, but rather an autonomous word, a pure voice" (Rotsel, 43). Dostoevskij's authorial word is opposed to the protagonist's word, which has its own completeness, but it does not subdue it. As Baxtin notes:

Consequently, the problem of the formulation of the author's word arises, i.e. the problem of its formal artistic position in relation to the hero's word. This problem lies deeper than the question of the superficial compositional authorial word and of its elimination by means of the Ichernzählung (first person narration). (Rotsel, 46)

Baxtin claims that "self-consciousness," as the artistic dominant, requires a new authorial position in relation to the protagonist. The issue in question is that of control: in Baxtin's assessment, the author's control of the characters has been radically altered in Dostoevskij. Baxtin develops his argument towards the dialogical relations in a novel: the author's word about
the protagonist, which is a word about a word, is addressed to the protagonist, rather than being about him. This involves a radical change in the position of the author, but it does not mean his absence. The "presence" of the author in a text is permanently assured by his choice of material, by his "orchestration" (Baxtin continues the musical metaphors introduced with the borrowing of the term "polyphony") of the words of the various characters. The framework and circumstances to which the characters are subjected remain fully in the control of Dostoevskij the author. The characters in Dostoevskij are often controlled, for example, by the coincidences which direct them to a particular course of action. It is Dostoevskij who "orchestrates" these polyphonics. Although Baxtin apparently desired to express a comparison with music by choosing to use the term "orchestration," the term is also one generally associated with poetry, referring to the general organization and coordination of rhyme, meter, and sound patterns in a poem. In this sense, the title of the second edition which refers to Dostoevskij's poetics is further highlighted. Baxtin sees the works of Dostoevskij as ones in which the systematic organization of disparate entities ultimately creates a multi-voiced, multi-faceted entirety.
The chapter ends with a discussion of the dialogized interior monologue as a micro-dialogue: each word is double-voiced (referring to the word of another as well as to the object of its own enunciation). In Dostoevskij's novels, the characters speak to themselves, remembering the word of others and reacting to it. Even their thoughts reflect dialogicity, because they represent dialogic contact with others.

The relationship of the protagonist to the author is further explored in the third chapter "The Idea in Dostoevskij's Works." This relationship is examined here because of the basic connection of the idea with the protagonists in Dostoevskij's novels:

The hero in Dostoevsky is not only a word about himself and about his immediate environment, but also a word about the world: he has not only a consciousness, but an ideology, too ["on ne toľ'ko soznajuʃčij,--on ideolog"]. . . .

The truth about the world, according to Dostoevsky, is inseparable from the truth of the personality. (Rotsel, 63; Russian, 89)

The idea in a monological novel represents an intellectual concept which is merely carried by the protagonist: it is not "lived" by him and thus is not genuinely represented. Ideas in monological literature are either confirmed or negated and thus represent the consciousness ("soznanie") of the author, who is the only "knower, understander and seer" (Rotsel, 66;
Russian, 94). The monological authorial idea serves the function of representing the world, giving a conclusion to the representation, and expresses the ideological position of the central hero: "The idea as a principle of representation becomes one with the form" (Rotsel, 67). The distance between the protagonist and the author could of course vary; the protagonist is "open-ended," i.e. unfinalized, like the author himself. This character who is not finalized is "typical of the Romanticists, of Byron and Chateaubriand; Lermontov's Pechorin is in some ways such a hero" (Rotsel, 68; Russian, 96).

Dostoevskij was exceptional in that he could genuinely depict the ideas of the other as though they were his own:

Dostoevsky was capable of representing someone else's idea, preserving its full capacity to signify as an idea, while at the same time also preserving a distance, neither confirming the idea nor merging it with his own expressed ideology. (Emerson, 85; Russian, 97)

This represents the paramount issue for the unfinalizability of the Dostoevskian character. The "idea," even while inseparably linked with an individual character, measurably results from "dialogical intercourse between consciousnesses" (Rotsel, 72):

... the idea is interindividual and intersubjective. The sphere of its existence
is not the individual consciousness, but the dialogical intercourse between consciousnesses. The idea is a living event which is played out in the point where two or more consciousnesses meet dialogically. In this respect the idea resembles the word, with which it forms a dialogical unity. Like the word, the idea wants to be heard, understood and "answered" by other voices from other positions. (Rotsel, 72; Russian, 100)

The ideology of Dostoevskij was not constructed on the individual separate thought, but rather on the integrated point of view and position of a personality. Baxtin makes a valuable observation about Dostoevskij's thought: since Dostoevskij's philosophy is exhibited by means of a dialogical mode, he as an author does not attempt to prove a point by abstractions or maxims. The propositions found in Dostoevskij's writing are more or less meaningless when taken out of the context in which they were constructed (something which has not prevented others from doing so). The idea in Dostoevskij is most of all an "orientation toward the voice and word of another person" (Rotsel, 81). The dominant idea is that idea which comes into existence through (dialogical) contact with the characters and their "words." The message in Dostoevskij is to be found in the situation, the interplay, the reaction and interaction of the different characters and their individual words, not in the maxims they utter.
Baxtin's fourth chapter, "Characteristics of Genre and Plot Composition in Dostoevskij's Works," begins by covering the more traditional ground of Dostoevskian scholarship. Baxtin finds that in Dostoevskij's novels, the "social localization" in which a character is found is used to describe not the character or his personality but only his situation. It is in this chapter that Baxtin also describes the carnivalesque in general, as well as the specific means of applying this genre to an examination of the novels of Dostoevskij.

The formation of the serio-comical carnivalesque vein in literature was the result and evolution of different "dialogical" literary varieties: the Socratic dialogue and the Menippean satire. Baxtin considers the Socratic dialogue, rather than being a rhetorical genre, to have developed from carnivalesque foundations. Its essential aspects were based on a perception of the dialogical nature of truth, which was to be sought in syncrisis, the juxtaposition of differing points of view, and anacrisis, the eliciting of the point of view of another person by the provocation of statements and questions. 

We find here the detailed description of Baxtin's use of the term "Menippean satire" which becomes the building block of much of Baxtin's later criticism. The term has apparently caused some confusion for those
Western readers who encountered it for the first time in the later Baxtinian writings where it is used without the explanation that is given in this chapter of the Dostoevskij book. The Menippean satire is classed by Baxtin as a sort of by-product of the disintegration (raspad) of the Socratic dialogue. With this "by-product" are combined other distinct elements of carnivalesque folklore.

The name of this genre is taken from that of the philosopher Menippos of Gadara, who lived in the third century B.C. However, Menippos was not, strictly speaking, the originator of the genre but rather an author who better defined its distinctive style after it had already appeared. The satires of Menippos himself have not survived to our time, but they are known and named through other authors. It was the Roman scholar Varro who first used the term "Menippean satire" when he described his own satires as "saturae menippeae" (Rotsel, 92; Russian, 129).

In Baxtin's account, the Menippean satire includes elements of the style of the Socratic dialogue, but in a more comic form. The genre is less restricted by historical forms and includes more fantasy. This fantasy is internally motivated; the adventurous quality of this fantastical element serves to test the idea of the philosophical truth or "word" of the "wise man"
(mudrec) who is seeking truth. Baxtin emphasizes that it is the truth of the idea which is to be tested, not the individual character. This emphasis on the truth of the ideas expressed in the work can be seen in that the genre is one that consists of posing the "ultimate questions," which are to be tested by the fantastical situations that occur.

The element of fantasy serves also to change the point of view, the point of observation of the idea in question. The net result is a sort of "moral-psychological experimentation." And it is this experimentation that contributes to the inclusion of so many "scandalous scenes," scenes of eccentric or incongruous behavior: the idea must be seen from every direction before it may be considered to have been "observed." To be sure, the use of these "scandalous scenes" in Dostoevskij does not arise solely from the need to fulfill the conditions of the Menippean satire. Nonetheless, Baxtin views the primary importance of these scenes as being precisely in the juxtaposition offered by them: conflicting views are introduced into a common setting to allow them to conflict.

Baxtin finds that the Menippean satire includes the use of varying genres, and that with the contrast of prose and verse there is often mixed a strong parodical element. The menippea, or the Menippean satires,
eventually absorbed genres such as the diatribe and soliloquy, which are dialogical in nature, and the symposium, which has many of the characteristics of the carnivalesque. The diatribe is internally dialogized with an absent interlocutor; the soliloquy is a genre where one exhibits a dialogical relationship with oneself. The symposium is a "banquet dialogue" which permits a great freedom of speech and the word. For Baxtin, the basic characteristics of the menippea were not only used, but renewed in the works of Dostoevskij.

Baxtin's explanation of the carnival and of the carnivalization of literature shows that he uses these terms as a metaphor for certain tendencies in literature. These tendencies are ones that can be readily depicted by means of the special relationships that exist during carnival. At that time, life is out of its usual rut; there is free and familiar contact among people, the "carnivalistic mésalliances" and mixing of high and low, free use of blasphemy and profanation. There are crownings and uncrownings; eccentric behavior is considered to be the norm; and in general that which is usually considered inappropriate becomes appropriate. Most important, everything about

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5 See the chapter on Rabelais for a more complete explanation of the relationship of food and the banquet with the carnivalesque word.
the carnival is ambivalent: there are no absolutes. In addition to this basic attitude that is summed up in the atmosphere of carnival, there are fairly specific rituals that may be considered to be attached to the theme of the carnival. These include parody and parodical doubles, life in the square and the banquet. The only absolute of the carnival is that there are no absolutes, and the mixed genre of the serio-comical is one that thoroughly accepts carnivalization.

Baxtin makes reference to the idea of carnival in the works of Rabelais in this chapter—hints of the opus to come. In a historical overview of the menippea, Baxtin mentions not only the "happy hell" of Rabelais but also the Christian Gospels. Baxtin notes that the principal narrative elements of the Gospels are dialogic, including the testing of an idea through events. The carnivalization of the "Christian narrative," for example, is to be seen in the crowning and uncrowning of Jesus.

Baxtin applies these theories of the carnival to the stories "Bobok" and "The Dream of a Ridiculous Man" and indeed finds that for the concept of carnivalization, "Bobok" can be considered almost a microcosm of the entire works of Dostoevskij. Baxtin draws attention to the "public square" behavior and attitudes seen even in indoor scenes in the works of
Dostoevskij. The behavior exhibited by Dostoevskian characters would be impossible in "for example, a novel of L. Tolstoy or Turgenev" (Rotsel, 121).

It is perhaps important to note that though many of the scenes in Dostoevskij seem to happen in drawing rooms as do the scenes in other writers such as Tolstoj, the difference that lends the air of the carnival to the scenes of Dostoevskij is the fact that no one is excluded from even these inside scenes; a private dwelling may be the location but the atmosphere is clearly that of the public square. For examples, one can take the scenes in Father Zosima's cell where the Karamazovs congregate, or Marmeladov's funeral--there is little privacy of emotion in Dostoevskij.

Important stock characters of the menippean satire are the "wise fool" and the "tragic clown": these, too, are found in most of Dostoevskij's works. To Baxtin, the importance of such figures in Dostoevskij is found in their "ambivalence," and the eccentricities which make them seem "multi-toned" to the reader. Prince Myškin is perhaps the best example of the type, but Baxtin claims that all of Dostoevskij's leading heroes have some element of this "ambivalence."

When making his assessment of "The Dream of a Ridiculous Man," Baxtin reviews the historical presence of the dream in other menippean literature. Other
essential carnivalesque elements of the works of Dostoevskij can also be seen in the frequency of diatribe, the confession, the sermon; action is often seen at crisis points and on the threshold, the public square or its equivalent. The use of the carnival in literature also permits symbolic generalization.

Dialogue in Dostoevskij is important to the point that it exists even where there is only one character presented in the story. As Baxtin notes, there is a strong core of interior dialogue in "The Dream of a Ridiculous Man" (as well as in other Dostoevskian works).

For Baxtin, it is the influence of genres and traditions in literature that are felt more clearly than the influences of individual specific authors. This tradition of genre has shown itself to be valuable to literary movements throughout history. When Baxtin traces the influence of Shakespeare and Cervantes, as well as that of Boccaccio, Balzac, Hugo and others on Dostoevskij, he does so not in terms of a direct relationship, but in terms of the influence of genre. As Baxtin says:

Our brief survey of the sources of carnivalization does not pretend to completeness. We sought only to trace the basic lines of the tradition. We emphasize again that we are not interested in the influence of individual authors, works, themes, ideas or images—we are interested
rather in the influence of the genre tradition itself, which was transmitted through the given authors. (Rotsel, 133; Russian, 185)

Baxtin continues to explore similar evidence of the carnivalesque in other of Dostoevskij's works.

"Reduced laughter" enters into Baxtin's schema in a way that now seems somewhat Derridian: reduced laughter is "as if we see laughter's footprints in the structure of represented reality, but we do not hear laughter itself" (Rotsel, 137). The Russian original uses the word sled, (Russian, 192), which can easily be taken as an equivalent of Derrida's "trace."6 The carnivallization of literature and the presence of reduced laughter in no way "exclude the possibility of somber colors" (Emerson, 166; Rotsel, 139) ("vozmožnosti mračnogo kolorita": Russian, 193) in works of literature. The buffoonery in scenes of the

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6 Ducrot and Todorov, in a discussion of Derrida in their Dictionnaire encyclopédique des sciences du langage, explain "trace" as follows:

an "imprint" which is preserved in a "space of inscription," which retains in the here and now pre-constituted differences, which by "a structure of [based on] recall," reveals the difference "as such." (As can be seen, the unmotivated nature of the sign, in requiring a trace, which is to say writing, implies spatial placement, temporalization, and a relation with the other, all at the same time. (436; my translation)

This quote seems to illustrate that one would find it more useful to use Baxtin to explain Derrida, than the reverse.
carnivalesque does not prevent there being tragedy or tragical elements. Indeed, it is this combination of differing tendencies that gives carnivalization and the works of Dostoevskij a certain uniqueness.

Important in the works of Dostoevskij are certain settings particularly conducive to the carnivalesque. According to Baxtin, the moment of uncompleted transition is such a setting, and it is not insignificant that St. Petersburg is the location for many of Dostoevskij's stories. St. Petersburg is a place of threshold, located on the border of existence and non-existence. It is an artificial location chosen by Peter the Great; it is often overcome by, or disappears into, fog; the season of the white nights regularly provides an irregular time, time that remains outside the ordinary course of life, like the carnival itself.

There are also recurring images in Dostoevskij's works that evince the attitudes and atmosphere of the carnival: we find the laughing dead (as with the old woman in Raskol'nikov's dream), scenes of both gambling halls and penal servitude that evince images of hell.

In concluding this seminal chapter, Baxtin alludes again to the social nature which is portrayed in the works of Dostoevskij:
Carnivalization made possible the creation of the open structure of the great dialog and allowed people's social interaction to be carried over into the sphere of the spirit and the intellect. . . . A single person, remaining alone with himself, cannot even tie the ends together in the deepest and most intimate spheres of his own spiritual life; he cannot manage without another consciousness. One person can never find complete fulness in himself alone. (Rotsel, 148-149; Russian, 207-208)

This idea of "the other" remains one of the fundamental laws of Baxtin: it is only through the consciousness of the other that we exist at all. The idea of dialogue obviously necessitates another; the idea of polyphony indicates that the role of "the other" must be allowed to be full and complete. And even the idea of the carnival shows the presence of "the other" as a plural: "the other" is society as a whole, the crowd of the carnival, all of whom are come to judge. It is essentially this idea of the other (the idea which Todorov has designated by the term "altérité") that pervades the entire body of the theory of Baxtin.

The fifth chapter of Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics, "The Word in Dostoevskij," gives the most thorough elucidation of Baxtin's suppositions and theories about the specifics of the "word." There are four sections to the chapter, of which the last two deal lengthily and specifically with the application of Baxtin's propositions to Dostoevskij's povesti and to
the full-length novels. The examination of dialogical relationships and of the "dialogical angles" which are juxtaposed within a work is a development of Baxtin's fascination with the speech of characters: "The more objectified a character is, the more sharply his verbal physiognomy stands out" (Rotsel, 150).

The first section of this final chapter is of major importance: in it are outlined "the types of the prose word" and "the word in Dostoevsky"; then they are put, as it were, into a concise and precise ordering. Two fundamental concepts in Baxtin's theories are "the position of the author" and the "dialogical angle" of styles and words in each text. These concepts essentially go toward an explanation of "voice," that is, the system of narrative relationships within a text.

The first type of word is direct and linear, completely object oriented; the second is the "represented," or objectified word (Rotsel uses "objectivized" as a translation for ob"ektnoe slovo), which may include a predominance of various characterological or socio-typical characteristics. This second type of word is often the represented speech of characters, which lies on a different level from that of the author's speech. Both the first and the second types of the prose word are considered to be "single-voiced."
It is with the third type of word that we enter the area that is most important to Baxtin for the development of dialogism in the works of Dostoevskij. It is here, also, that Baxtin launches into a description of skaz and its history. He notes that "skaz, i.e. the orientation toward spoken language, is necessarily inherent in every narrated story" (Rotsel, 158). This third type is divided into three major variations, each of which is further sub-divided into specific manifestations.

The third type of word is predicated on the use of the word of another person: it is a double-voiced word which is oriented towards another's word, but for its own purpose. The double-voiced word is an act of speech which makes use of something which has previously been said, but in a way different from the previous use.

The first variety of the double-voiced word is the "single-directed double voiced word" which consists of stylized narrative, the narrated story, the Ichierzählung, and the protagonist's speech when it is non-objectified (that is, it is not reduced to being an object of the author's word, though it may be a carrier of the author's intentions even in this non-objectified state).

The second variety of the third type of word is the "hetero-directed double-voiced word" which consists of
Baxtin's various delineations of parodistic words. These parodistic words are those words which carry a purpose different from that of the original word: the semantic direction is opposite that of the original. Baxtin states that the merging of voices in parody is impossible, since they are "hostilely counterposed" (Rotsel, 160). He lists among the manifestations parodistic narration, parodistic Ichenzählung, the parodistically represented word of the protagonist, and any word reproduced with a change of accent or different direction.

The final type of word is that in which the other person's word remains outside the speech of the author even though the author's speech takes this other word into account. This third variety of the third type of word develops the hidden polemic and is especially indicated in dialogic speech. Though there may be no clear distinction between hidden and open polemics, the general understanding of the basic difference implied by this is crucial for Baxtin. An open polemic refutes the word of another person; the hidden polemic attacks the other's word only obliquely:

The innerly polemical word—a word with a sideward glance (ogliadka) at another person's hostile word—is extremely widespread. . . . . But all self-deprecating, florid speeches which repudiate themselves in advance and have a thousand reservations, loopholes, etc. belong to this category, too. Such a speech
as it were cringes in the presence or in the anticipation of another person's word, answer, or objection. (Rotsel, 163; Russian, 228)

Skaz is a term of major importance in Russian criticism for which no concrete definition has ever been established. Indeed, there has not been much agreement on what it is or represents. For Baxtin, skaz is only one manifestation of the various types of words that may be expressed in Dostoevskij's works. Baxtin does give a brief description of his use of the term in comparison to its use by other critics. He writes that for Ejxenbaum skaz is exclusively "the orientation toward the oral form of narration, the orientation toward spoken language and the corresponding linguistic characteristics (oral intonation, the syntactic construction of spoken language, the corresponding vocabulary, etc.)" (Rotsel, 158). This description of Ejxenbaum's explanation of skaz, even if simplistically reduced here, is brief enough and accurate enough to facilitate Baxtin's response to it.

Baxtin first describes skaz as the "orientation toward spoken language" and then elaborates his view that skaz is introduced in a narrative "precisely for the sake of a foreign voice, a socially-defined voice which brings with it a whole series of points of view and values which are necessary to the author" (Rotsel, 159). Baxtin adds that the use of skaz in a literary
work brings with it the introduction of a narrator who is not a "man of letters" and who in most cases belongs to the lower social classes. Thus, for Baxtin, skaz is only one of a group of xudožestvennye-rečevye ("artistic-verbal") possibilities of "metalinguistic phenomena," which "by nature fall outside the bounds of linguistics" (Rotsel, 153). The most important quality of these "phenomena" is their "double-directedness": the word is directed "both toward the object of speech, like an ordinary word, and toward another word, toward another person's speech" (Rotsel, 153). Baxtin allows that this double-directedness may be less obvious in skaz and in dialogue than it is in stylization and parody, and that skaz, in fact, may occasionally be directed only singly towards its object: "[b]ut in the majority of cases both skaz and the speech in a dialogue are oriented toward another person's speech: skaz stylizes that speech . . ." (Rotsel, 153).

Baxtin's main concern in the works of Dostoevskij was dialogicity (the quality of being dialogical) and polyphony. Though dialogue portrayed in an artistic work very often has elements of spoken language, there also exists a great deal of dialogue which is obviously written, dialogue which utilizes written forms of language. Skaz may be a form of dialogue, between characters or from the narrator to the reader, but
dialogue is not necessarily an example of skaz. Baxtin points out a "collision of accents" as the artistic dominant of The Double; the role of a skaz voice is therefore reduced to one of the accents which are present in the book: as such it is merely one type of stylization available to the author.

Baxtin's observations about the two accents in The Double serve also to point out an important characteristic of skaz narration in any definition. Skaz, with its relation to oral speech and narrative forms, necessarily implies a break between the "folk" or otherwise socially defined narrator and the external author. The skaz narrator is typically of a lower social class than the implied "external" narrator (who is presumed to be the one responsible for having gotten the work to the printer), and indeed, of a social class generally inferior to the assumed reader of the text. The external author may be implied in the text (as with Puškin's literary voice which introduces the tales of Belkin) or may be completely absent within the text: the skaz-type narrator may be the only voice guiding the text. Even in the latter case, a break is still implied between the narrator and the author's voice, at least to the modern reader. We, as readers, sense that there is an external author (someone who knows how to speak or write correctly) who is choosing to use a skaz narration
in order to create a certain atmosphere or sense of character.

The second section of this final chapter is entitled "The hero's monological word and the narrational word in Dostoevskij's novellas (povesti)." Here, in a discussion of Poor Folk in particular, Baxtin relates the specific appearance of the types of the prose word. He notes that the use of the epistolary form in no way determines any certain variety of "word," though the fact of the awareness of the word of the other tends to direct the epistolary form towards the third variety of the third type.

In the early works of Dostoevskij, the dialogue is usually expressed directly rather than being portrayed as thought as is sometimes the case in the later works. In The Double, the use of dialogue shows how Goljadkin talks to himself in order to attempt to comfort himself and convince himself in a dialogical fashion. There is no other person for him to talk to, so he must make do with himself. Goljadkin carries this even one step further and creates not only his own second voice, but also a third voice: the voice of the other, which he both anticipates and answers.

Though Baxtin's examination is primarily of the earlier works, he notes that this tendency towards double-voiced characters continues in the later works:
In its externally formal plan Ivan Karamazov's dialog with the devil is analogous with the interior dialogs which Golyadkin carries on with himself and with his double . . . . (Rotsel, 180-181)

Baxtin finds The Double to be an interim stage of Dostoevskij's work: "this is not yet polyphony, it is no longer homophony" (Rotsel, 184). What develops in Dostoevskij is a "contrapuntal combination of hetero-directed words within the bounds of a single consciousness" (Rotsel, 186; Russian, 258). It is this "intersection" of different consciousnesses within one consciousness that best illustrates the dialogicity in Dostoevskij. And it is precisely this dialogicity that gives the possibility for polyphony.

An interim stage in this development can be found in Notes from Underground, a confession in which responses to the anticipated interlocutions of the other set the narrative pace. The simultaneous functioning of two distinct narrative actions--the anticipation of the word of the other and the desire of the narrator to retain for himself the final word--leads to the "vicious circle" (дурная бесконечность) seen in the Notes from Underground. But the two tendencies are, of course, ultimately incompatible. Just as the desire of the underground man to show independence and to have it recognized by the other exhibits a strong degree of
dependence on the opinion of the other, the narrative strategy of anticipation of the reply of another means the narrator can never believe himself to have given the final word. The word with a "loophole" (lazejka) is a further indication of this tendency in Dostoevskij, an attempt by the narrator to remain ambiguous and ultimately elusive or unfinalized. Finally, Baxtin notes the role of the slovo-obraščenie (Emerson: "discourse address"; Rotsel: "word-address") as a factor which eliminates any barrier between the protagonist/narrator and the reader by its narrative structure. The character in Dostoevskij speaks in order to address someone. Even when he apparently speaks to himself, it is with a sidewards glance toward a third party, who serves as listener, witness, judge. This requires a reaction on the part of the reader, who thus becomes intimately involved with the game of the narration.

The third section of this chapter, "The hero's word and the narrative word in Dostoevskij's novels," deals, as the heading indicates, with a brief exploration of the word varieties in the longer works of Dostoevskij. Raskol'nikov addresses himself as "ty," and seeks solutions for his own problems, which are embodied and symbolized in the other characters around him. Myškin fears the finalized nature and finalizability of the
word: he deals with himself and with others dialogically, but with a politeness and reluctance to pronounce any "decisive, ultimate word about another person" (Rotsel, 204) so as not to finalize them. Myškin does not in any way preach to the other characters in order to attempt to lead them to the good or right path, but rather attempts to appeal to one of their own voices to make them realize this for themselves. Within the characters there are different dialogical consciousnesses; Myškin tries to appeal to the better side of the characters of the people around him.

Stavrogin is similar to the underground man in that he confesses to the other even while he despises and refuses to accept the judgement of this other; he differs from the underground man because he does not use the word of the other to interrupt his own word.

The complexity of voices in The Brothers Karamazov is pointed out in a few basic indicative paragraphs. As Myškin appeals to the "good" voices of others, "Smerdyakov gradually gains control over that particular one of Ivan's voices which Ivan conceals from himself" (Rotsel, 209). Another variety of the word in Dostoevskij's novels is the hagiographic word, used particularly for the life of Zosima and with Prince Myškin. This type of word in Dostoevskij is special in
that it has no ogljadka: this word is adequate to itself. The central tenet of this section of the chapter is the illustration that "[u]nity of style in this monological sense does not exist in Dostoevsky's novels" (Rotsel, 212; Russian, 292).

In the last section, "Dialog in Dostoevskij," Baxtin demonstrates that in Dostoevskij, dialogue is not "a means, but . . . an end in itself. Dialog is . . . not the threshold to action, but the action itself" (Rotsel, 213). The basis of the dialogue is the simple opposition of "I" and "the other." Using a dialogue of Ivan and Aleša as illustration, Baxtin posits:

In Dostoevsky's dialogs it is not two integral monological voices which collide and conflict, but rather two cloven voices (one is in any case cloven). The overt speeches of the one answer the covert speeches of the other. (Rotsel, 217)

A further illustration of this dialogical action is in the grouping of three characters, as seen in The Idiot. In the group of Nastassja Fillipovna, Myškin and Rogožin, for example, Myškin represents to Nastassja Fillipovna that voice of hers that says to her "you are innocent," while Rogožin and his voice represent to her that voice which says "you are a fallen woman." The dialogic mode is also used by a character to convince himself. The confessional dialogue exhibits a dual attitude towards the other: "the inability to do without
his judgement and forgiveness, and the simultaneous hostility toward him and the opposition to his judgement and forgiveness." (Rotsel, 223) In concluding this chapter, Baxtin mentions the "fully significant word" (polnoznačnoe slovo) and observes:

Dostoevsky's works consist of a word about a word and addressed to a word. The represented word and the representational word meet on equal terms on a single level. (Rotsel, 226-227)

In conclusion to the entire book, Baxtin reiterates his fundamental propositions: that only the dialogical and polyphonic modes of discourse in literature are able to express with any sort of artistic genuineness the totality of human consciousness. Because of the new esthetic demands placed on the critic by such a radically new and complex point of view, however, there remains a strong tendency to monologize the novels of Dostoevskij. Calling for an end to "our old monological habits," Baxtin exhorts us to orient ourselves towards the new complexity possible with the polyphonic model.

This complexity urged on us by Baxtin is the crux of "Baxtinianism." As Baxtin himself seems to have spoken in many different "voices," using different "words," so he refuses to reduce the narratives of others to a simple monological mode. Dostoevskij, for Baxtin, was the culmination of this tendency in written
literature, but the striving toward this genre was the effort of centuries, if not millennia, of human artistic endeavors. The major lines of thought which he has developed here toward an explanation of Dostoevskij, those of polyphony and the carnival, both stand in opposition to the "authoritarian" nature that tends to "monologize" anything with which it comes into contact.
It was *Tvortestvo Fransua Rable* (*The Art of François Rabelais*), published in the Soviet Union in 1965, that first came to be generally known in the West. The English translation, entitled *Rabelais and His World*, appeared in 1968. A French version was published in 1970. The appearance of these translations, however, was secondary to the 1967 article by Julia Kristeva, "Bakhtine, le mot, le dialogue et le roman." This very important article by Kristeva examined aspects of both the Rabelais and the Dostoevskij books by Baxtin. Kristeva's article is considered by many to be the introduction of Baxtin to the Western audience; had Kristeva not commanded the respect and attention that she did, it might very well have been several more years before Baxtin's theories came to Western notice.

Certainly part of the interest for non-Russian speaking circles in the Rabelais book came from the simple fact that it dealt with a non-Russian subject. As Krystyna Pomorska observes in the introduction to the English translation: "It is an interesting sequence: a
Russian scholar writes a book on a French classic, and the book is offered to the English-speaking world in English translation" (v).

The primary importance of the work on Rabelais was found in the literary theory and methodology which Baxtin used to examine the primary topic, Rabelais. Although the literary theories being presented were of major importance in the book on Dostoevskij as well, in this work, Rabelais is less in the center of the focus of Baxtin's attention. The outstanding general theory proposed in this work, and the theory for which this work is best known, can be summed up in the term "carnivalization."

Baxtin uses the works of Rabelais to examine humor and comedy in a sociological light. In the first chapter, "Ráble v istorii smexa" ("Rabelais in the History of Laughter"), Baxtin defines Rabelais' placement in the history of laughter. We are told that Rabelais' contemporaries understood him and his humor in a way quite different from the manner in which he was perceived by those of later centuries.

For Baxtin, the concept of laughter during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance included the possibility of deep philosophical meaning, and he held that this philosophical laughter provided one of the "essential
forms of truth concerning the world as a whole."¹ Laughter was "as admissible in great literature, posing universal problems, as seriousness. Certain essential aspects of the world are accessible only to laughter" (Iswolsky, 66; Russian, 75).

In the centuries that followed, this perception of laughter was altered. Laughter was no longer considered a universal, philosophical form. "That which is important and essential cannot be comical. Neither can history and persons representing it--kings, generals, heroes--be shown in a comic aspect" (Iswolsky, 67; Russian, 75). This reassessment of the position and role of laughter relegated it, as a form of comedy, to the low genres of literature, where the lives of the lower classes and of non-historical individuals were depicted.

Baxtin devotes much attention to an examination of specific forms of Renaissance laughter. He tells of three popular historical sources for the philosophy of laughter held by Rabelais and his contemporaries. The first was a treatise, published in 1560 by Laurent

¹ Rabelais and His World, trans. Helene Iswolsky; M.I.T. Press 1968, 66; Tvorčestvo Fransua Rable, "Xud. lit.," 1965, 75. Hereafter, these works are referred to as "Iswolsky" and "Russian," respectively. Unfortunately, for reasons unexplained in the translator's introduction, significant portions of the original text are missing from the English translation. In such instances, I will provide the translations, which will be so identified.
Joubert, a well-known physician, in which was described the therapeutic power of laughter. The second source was the statement by Aristotle, "[o]f all living creatures, only man is endowed with laughter" (Iswolsky, 68; Russian, 77). According to Baxtin, this theory was given a wide interpretation: laughter was perceived as a spiritual privilege of man, one which was denied to other creatures. He notes that Rabelais uses this line to conclude the introductory poem to Gargantua:

Mieux est de rire que de larmes escrire.
Par ce que rire est le propre de l'homme.
(Iswolsky, 68; Russian, 77)²

The final source for Renaissance laughter named by Baxtin is Lucien, and in particular his image of Menippus who is laughing in the kingdom of the dead. The three main qualities/functions of Rabelais' laughter, therefore, seem to be that it is positive or healthy, unique to men, and ambivalent.

Baxtin seems to stress most emphatically the positive, regenerative and creative nature of this laughter, but he also alludes frequently to its ambivalence. The dual nature of laughter was, indeed, the very source of its "power." This power, being

² Iswolsky also provides an English translation in a footnote:

Better to write about laughter than tears
For laughter is inherent to man.
constituted by the "dialogic" nature of the different facets of its ambivalence, served to equalize men by injecting notes of joy or levity into undesirable situations, and notes of possible downfall into the situations of the wealthy or the powerful (this latter necessarily as perceived by those lower on the social scale).

The nature of this ambivalence is most readily depicted by the third source of the philosophy of laughter: Menippus laughing in the kingdom of the dead. Though Baxtin does not specify in what way or why this particular image best depicts his idea of ambivalent laughter, it seems that it is a combination of several sets of oppositions or incongruities. It is laughter in the face of what is normally the solemnity of death, or finding mirth in something that is not inherently funny; it is the regenerative force expressed in the face of death which would seem not to allow the possibility of regeneration. This reversal, this intolerance of strict solemnity, is precisely what makes this type of laughter a regenerative force. This laughter denies fear, religious awe, humility.

Because early Christianity had condemned laughter, and had taken the position of "intolerant seriousness" in its official ideology, it became a ready target of medieval laughter. Baxtin observes that "John
Chrysostom declared that jests and laughter are not from God but from the devil" (Iswolsky, 73; Russian, 82). Baxtin relates scores of rituals, celebrations, parodies and symbols to a "laughter of reversal." He holds that many of these rituals, such as that of the "feast of fools," were originally held in the churches, and it was only during the succeeding periods of official intolerance and sobriety/seriousness that they became semi-legitimate and were disassociated from the church itself:

Laughter was as universal as seriousness; it was directed at the whole world, at history, at all societies, at ideology. It was the world's second truth extended to everything and from which nothing is taken away. It was, as it were, the festive aspect of the whole world in all its elements, the second revelation of the world in play and laughter.

This is why medieval parody played a completely unbridled game with all that is most sacred and important from the point of view of official ideology. (Iswolsky, 84; Russian, 94)

It is vital to note that for Baxtin laughter in Rabelais had a universal character. Medieval laughter was directed at the same objects as medieval seriousness. Medieval seriousness, "infused with elements of fear, weakness, humility, submission, falsehood, hypocrisy, or on the other hand with violence, intimidation, threats, prohibitions . . . terrorized, demanded, and forbade" (Iswolsky, 94;
Russian, 105). For Rabelais and his contemporaries, therefore, laughter was a spontaneous freeing from the bonds of seriousness. Laughter "could not become authoritarian; it did not convey fear but a feeling of strength" (Iswolsky, 95; Russian, 107).

Baxtin stresses that the dual aspect of medieval life, the official and the "laughing," were integrated into a cohesive social consciousness. He cites examples from several different representations in thirteenth and fourteenth century art, in which fantastic, grotesque or carnivalesque figures are combined with pious and religious themes. But this fusion of diverse elements was destroyed before the time of the eighteenth century. Baxtin notes:

The seventeenth century was marked by the stabilization of the new order of the absolute monarchy. . . . Rationalism and classicism clearly reflect the fundamental traits of the new official culture . . . . New prevailing concepts were established which, according to Marx, the new ruling class inevitably presented as eternal truths.

In the new official culture there prevails a tendency toward the stability and completion of being, toward one single meaning, one single tone of seriousness. The ambivalence of the grotesque can no longer be admitted. The exalted genres of classicism are freed from the influence of the grotesque tradition of laughter. (Iswolsky, 101; Russian, 112-13)

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Baxtin relates, the "historic-allegorical method" came
to be seen as the correct manner of grasping the images of Rabelais. The heart of this method was the belief that the novels of Rabelais were systems of historical allusions, that behind each of his images could be found a specific character or event. Baxtin attributes this assessment of Rabelais to the process of "generalization, empirical abstraction, and typification" that began and came to prominence in that era (Iswolsky, 115). Baxtin observes that the "historic-allegorical method is at present completely rejected by Rabelais scholars." But then he adds in a wry appended footnote: "[b]ut of course, even in modern times, attempts are made to decipher Rabelais' novel as a kind of cryptogram" (Iswolsky, 114; Russian, 125).

Baxtin reviews the varying attitudes towards the works of Rabelais through the years, noting especially the contribution of Victor Hugo; Hugo had, according to Baxtin, the "most profound and full appreciation of Rabelais" (Iswolsky, 125; Russian, 137). Hugo's assessment of Rabelais included him as one on Hugo's list of fourteen geniuses, each of whom is "completely original and incarnates a definite aspect of being":

The center of Rabelais' topography, according to Hugo, was the belly. It is an artistic discovery, completely Rabelais'. The basic functions of the belly are paternity and maternity. In connection with this destructive and reproductive lower stratum, Hugo gives the grotesque image of a snake
inside a man—"it is his guts." (my translation. Iswolsky, 125-126; Russian, 138)

More detailed scholarly studies of Rabelais made an appearance toward the end of the nineteenth century. The historical-analytical approach to his works and biography became the standard. The Society for the Study of Rabelais, founded in 1903, sponsored the journal Revue des Etudes Rabelaisiennes, which was later replaced by the Revue du Seizième siècle. The goals of study for these enterprises were the problems of Rabelais' language, the discovery of sources and the establishment of a scholarly biography (Iswolsky, 129; Russian, 141).

Having noted the importance for Rabelaisian scholars of the work of the society because of the subsequent availability of collected material, Baxtin proceeds to destroy much of the Rabelaisian scholarly criticism of the twentieth century. His main grounds for contention are that "Febvre, like Lefranc, ignores the culture of folk humor of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance" (Iswolsky, 132; Russian, 145). Baxtin makes clear that for him, at least, the entire body of criticism characterized by this perception of the work of Rabelais as such a "serious plan of thought and culture" is invalid precisely because it refuses to
recognize the major importance of humor and folk culture in Rabelais.

Turning to Russian literary criticism, Baxtin notes that there was almost no prerevolutionary concern with Rabelais: "The entire Russian scholarly literature in this field is limited to a rather extensive article by A. N. Veselovsky, 'Rabelais and His Novel,' and a brochure by I. Focht (devoid of all scientific value)" (Iswolsky, 137; Russian, 149). For a while, Soviet critics as well continued to ignore Rabelais. This situation was to change after the second World War. The first Soviet monograph on Rabelais, by Evnina, published in 1948, met with some approbation on the part of Baxtin, who noted that Evnina found Rabelais to be essentially a comic writer. Baxtin lists several more post-war publications on Rabelais leading to "the most important event in Soviet Rabelaisiana": the publication of L. E. Pinsky's essay: "The Laughter of Rabelais" in his book Realism of the Renaissance (Iswolsky, 140; Russian, 152). The focus of Baxtin again is humor and the comic; he notes that Pinsky differs from other scholars who wrote on Rabelais in stressing laughter as the basic organizing principle in his novels: "[Laughter] is not the external but the inner form of his vision and understanding of the world" (Iswolsky, 140; Russian, 153).
But there are, as well, other characteristics of Pinsky's work that Baxtin finds "on the right track." One of these characteristics is "Pinsky's acknowledgement of the ambivalence of Rabelaisian laughter" (Iswolsky, 142). Pinsky sought the sources for Rabelaisian laughter, being interested "not in the exterior, formal methods of the comic" but discovering rather that laughter comes from life and the transformation of nature: "[Pinsky] thoroughly understands the ancient link of laughter with time, with time's successive changes" (Iswolsky, 143). After Baxtin's brief analysis of Pinsky, he concludes, "[s]uch is the present state of Soviet Rabelaisiana."

In the second chapter, "The Language of the Marketplace in Rabelais," Baxtin undertakes an investigation of the elements of Rabelaisian language that were "a stumbling block for his admirers and readers" from the time of the seventeenth century. Baxtin undertakes an examination of the "marketplace" or "public square moments" in Rabelais, noting "[t]hese elements still prevent public reading of Rabelais, although in other respects no author is better suited for such reading" (Iswolsky, 145). 3

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3 Iswolsky somewhat inexactely translates Baxtin's Russian sentence "Nazovem eti momenty--poka uslovno i metaforiceski--ploshadnymi momentami romana Rable" as "Let us call these components conditionally and
Baxtin explains:

Even in our time the billingsgate [actually, "public square moments": "ploščadnye momenty"] in Rabelais makes him difficult for his readers and not merely for the average public. It is hard to weave these coarse words into the artistic texture of the novel. The specific meaning that many of these terms have acquired in modern time distorts a correct interpretation of Rabelais' writings; the terms were then universal and far removed from pornography. For this reason, connoisseurs and scholars have adopted an indulgent view concerning this inevitable heritage of the "naive and coarse sixteenth century," stressing the innocent character of these old-fashioned improprieties. (Iswolsky, 146)

Baxtin very accurately sums up the typical attitude toward the language of Rabelais in the statements just presented. There is, indeed, a certain "indulgence" towards Rabelais because of this language. The attitude continues to this day, when a significant number of scholars find Rabelais to be essentially a scatological writer.

metaphorically the marketplace and billingsgate elements of the novel" (Iswolsky, 145, Russian, 157). Here, rather than eliminating sentences from the original, she has added the term "billingsgate" where it is not at all suggested in the original. The introduction of a term of chiefly British usage, meaning "foul-mouthed abuse," in a book printed in the U.S., particularly when the term should not be used in the text at this point at all, is one of the confusing elements of this translation that led to the perception, popular in circles concerned with such matters, that it would be preferable to read, if possible, Baxtin's book on Rabelais in the French translation (the assumption being, of course, that no one reads Russian).
Baxtin draws examples from ancient texts to relate the comic grotesque images in Rabelais to a strong tradition of grotesque gestures. These gestures essentially use the "material bodily lower stratum, the zone of the genital organs" ("bukval'nyj telesnyj niz, zon[a] proizvoditel'nyx organov") (Iswolsky, 147; Russian, 159). This particular tradition of humor continued throughout the centuries; as Baxtin relates, there existed a strong folk culture of such humor. An important element of this humor, however, was that it was linked to other concepts as well as to the comic: for example, "the language of excrement was closely linked with fertility . . . Rabelais himself knew this link and made use of it in full awareness" (Iswolsky, 149; Russian, 161). It was also not sacrilegious to combine these gestures with religious figures. Baxtin cites an example from Rabelais, "If God had pissed here"\(^4\) ("Si Dieu y eust pissé": Russian, 160):

This is a popular expression in Paris and in all France among the simple folk who consider blessed the place where Our Lord urinated or performed some other act of nature, as for instance the one related by Saint John, 9:6, "... he spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle." (Iswolsky, 149)

\(^4\) My translation. Iswolsky used the inaccurate, if more refined, "urinated."
In Baxtin, the term "marketplace" or "public square speech" to characterize Rabelais' writing is chosen because the elements characterizing this "genre" are so inexorably tied up with the marketplace, the square: "[t]he marketplace was the center of all that is unofficial . . . it always remained "with the people" ("za narodom")" (Iswolsky, 153-4; Russian, 166). Though there existed an official aspect to all the ceremonies celebrated by Rabelais, it was the popular and unofficial side of life that most influenced his work.

As Baxtin notes, the prologue to Gargantua starts with a typical address: "Beuveurs très illustres et vou[s] Veroles tres precieux . . . [sic]" (Russian, 182). This address contains elements typical of marketplace advertising; the familiar tone seeks to find a level of conversation, that of speaking with the listeners. The style of this "literary" prologue is essentially that of oral speech. While the chronologically first prologue, to Pantagruel, ended with a series of curses, this second prologue, to Gargantua, has abuses that are presented "affectionately" ("v laskovom značenii") (Russian, 185). The same audience, for example, is addressed alternately as "my dears" and "donkey-piss." A frequent image is that of eating or of the banquet. Wine, (symbol of "gay and free truth") is more pleasing than
oil (symbol of sanctimonious wisdom). Thus the second prologue concludes with Rabelais' combination of these diverse elements:

And you, donkey-pizzles, hark! May a canker rot you! Remember to drink to me gallantly, and I will counter with a toast at once. (Iswolsky, 170)

The prologue to the third book has yet more rewarding complexity of imagery; Baxtin observes that it has the greatest wealth of themes. There are various particular linguistic devices, when, for example, denunciation is made by allusions rather than directly. As an example, Baxtin provides the sequence where the syllable cul is used in almost every conceivable way except alone and by itself in its fundamental and slightly obscene meaning of "buttocks":

Rabelais gives an interesting form to swearing. Some enemies came, in order to "culletans articuler mon vin . . . ." The word "articuler" means "to criticize," "to blame," but Rabelais hears in it the word "cul" (buttocks) as well, and gives it a demeaning, swearing character. In order to transform the word "articuler" into a swear word, he tunes everything towards "cul": for this reason he places before it the word "culletans" (wiggling the buttocks). In the last chapter of Pantagruel Rabelais changes this method of swearing into a more developed aspect. Here he speaks of hypocritical monks who spend their time reading "Pantagruel-type books," not for amusement, but for the purpose of denouncing and slandering them. He explains: "scavoir est articulant, monarticulant, torticulant, culletant, couilletant et diabliculant, c'est à dire
columniant." (my translation. Russian, 187; Iswolsky, 172-173, is missing many of the sentences.)

Baxtin covers the epithets and the characters used by Rabelais to convey an impression of the abusive elements of the marketplace. Many of the epithets derive from the cris that were used as to attract crowds and buyers in the marketplace culture. Swearing gestures and oaths were a very important part of the process of hawking one's goods or services. Many of these were based on what Baxtin calls the "profane culinary dismemberment of the sacred body" (Iswolsky, 195). An example of this can be seen in the ditty Baxtin offers from the "moralist" Eloi d'Amervalle:

Ils jurent Dieu, ses dens, sa testes,
Son corps, son ventre, barbe et yeulx,
Et le prennent par tant de lieux,
Qu'il est haché de tous costez
Comme chair à petits pasteiz. (Russian, 209)

The following four chapters of this book examine in greater detail the specifics of Rabelais' language and its imagery. The third chapter, "Popular-Festive Forms and Images in Rabelais," examines primarily the images of beating and abuse as popular forms of symbolic actions "directed at something on a higher level, at the

5 They swear by God, by his teeth and head,
His body, his stomach, beard and eyes,
So that he is entirely chopped up
Like minced meat for pies. (Iswolsky, 193)
king" (Iswolsky, 197). The carnivalesque actions relate to symbolic ceremonials: uncrowning of monarchs and transformed wedding rituals, the main function of which is to uproot seriousness, pomp and majesty. The seriousness and orthodoxy of the Sorbonne are attacked in the person of Janotus de Bragmardo, "[i]n Rabelais' conception . . . senior member of the Sorbonne" (Iswolsky, 215). Grotesque reversals occur with the theme of the feast, as well: there is the devouring of the dismembered body, which is transmuted into a generating womb (in the case of the scene of Gargantua's birth).

The ideas of carnival are presented as well in other popular-festive forms. The vendange (grape harvest), processions of Corpus Christi, games, fortune-telling, attitudes toward women: all these forms can be used to lead to "uncrowning" and reversals. But Baxtin also poses the question "what is the general world outlook expressed in the popular-festive carnival forms?" (Iswolsky, 244). In addition to the removal of piety and seriousness, there is an atmosphere of equality and freedom for the collective, for society as a whole.

Baxtin examines a play by Adam de la Halle, "Jeu de la Feuillée," written in the year 1262, roughly three centuries before Rabelais, as having most of the comic
elements used also by Rabelais. The "fool's truth" presents an unofficial view of the world; the reign of "diableries," similar to the carnival, provided not only a method of avoiding the prevailing medieval ecclesiastical censorship but also allowed the presentation of other philosophical functions. The open frankness of speech and truth of the marketplace could prevail:

Often enough words and thoughts were turned around in order to discover what they were actually hiding, what was on the other side. The aim was to find a position permitting a look at the other side of established values, so that new bearings could be taken. (Iswolsky, 272; Russian, 295)

The chapter ends with some notations concerning the carnivalesque attitudes taken by other writers: Boccaccio, Shakespeare, Cervantes. Baxtin maintains that though seriously reduced, this festive spirit is still preserved in human civilization. These "popular-festive forms" (subject of the third chapter of the Rabelais book) and the "language of the marketplace" (subject of the second chapter) are based on images that are further explored in chapters four through six.

In the fourth chapter, "Banquet Imagery in Rabelais," Baxtin shows that the theme of the banquet was most vital for Rabelais' comic presentation of the world. Indeed, as Baxtin asserts, "[n]ot a single comic
scene can do without it" (Iswolsky, 279). Even the exceptions to this contention seem to be of the variety that "prove the rule." In a footnote, Baxtin observes that "banquet imagery is almost entirely absent from the Abbey of Thélème episode." But this Abbey is a non-festive place; there is no kitchen because "there would be no space for it available in this building" (Iswolsky, 280; Russian, 304). In Rabelais, the popular feast is a "banquet for all the world." Its predominating characteristics are that "both labor and food were collective; the whole of society took part in them. Collective food as the conclusion of labor's collective process was not a biological, animal act but a social event" (Iswolsky, 281).

Images associated with the banquet thus are drawn from real life, for the banquet played a special role in the life of the Middle Ages:

No meal can be sad. Sadness and food are incompatible (while death and food are perfectly compatible). The banquet always celebrates a victory and this is part of its very nature. (Iswolsky, 283)

Baxtin observes that the triumph of the banquet is the universal triumph of life over death. A historical analysis of the banquet also demonstrates that the feast is also the occasion "for wise discourse, for the gay truth." The tradition of the connection between the
banquet and the spoken word dates to at least the ancient symposium:

The themes of table talk are always "sublime," filled with "profound wisdom," but these themes are uncrowned and renewed on the material bodily level. (Iswolsky, 285)⁶

The grotesque tradition of banquet imagery is considered to begin with the Coena Cypriani, "Cyprian's Supper," the history of which is discussed by Baxtin. In this work, various figures and themes from banquet and festive scenes in the Bible are combined with great freedom. The characters are seated and act according to their function in the scriptures: Eve is sitting on a fig leaf, Judas kisses the others, and so on. The elements of the saturnalia are quite strong. The universal character of the banquet is expressed by the presence of figures from different historical periods, all at one table. Near the end of this chapter, Baxtin emphasizes that "banquet images in the popular-festive

⁶ The association of feasting and the banquet with this "free and easy truth" described by Baxtin (that is, the type of conversation in which "the eulogy of Socrates permits the speaker to mention his ugliness" [286]) exists today in various forms. One of the most "public" forms in the U.S.A. today must be the "roasts" presented occasionally on television, a supposed banquet during which different acquaintances of the guest of honor "eulogize" him or her in insulting ways. It is particularly noteworthy that the format of a feast is retained, even though little actual eating probably takes place. It seems vital that there be at least the perception of the presence of food in order for this kind of "gay truth" to be viable.
tradition (and in Rabelais) differ sharply from the images of private eating or private gluttony and drunkenness in early bourgeois literature" (Iswolsky, 301).

The interconnection of banquet images with images of the grotesque body are quite complex, and Baxtin elects to devote a separate chapter to "The Grotesque Image of the Body and Its Sources." Baxtin says the fundamental attributes of the grotesque are generally considered to be exaggeration, hyperbolism and excessiveness. To critique this typical approach to the grotesque, Baxtin begins this chapter with an examination of the insufficiencies of The History of Grotesque Satire (Geschichte der Grotesken Satyre) by G. Schneegans.

Schneegans, as did many others, saw the grotesque as something that caricatures and exaggerates the negative and thereby as something distinct from the burlesque or clownish. Baxtin says the fundamental quality of the grotesque is rather an emphasis on the material bodily lower stratum. He uses three examples from Schneegans to show that his distinct categories (of the burlesque and the clownish) all ultimately enter the realm of the grotesque. When Harlequin butts a stutterer with his head, he helps "deliver" a word and the entire act resembles a scene of childbirth. Thus
language and thought are "transferred" from the realm of the head to that of the belly, and there is presented the contact of the upper and lower levels of the body in this drama of the "body giving birth to the word" (Iswolsky, 309; Russian, 335). Schneegans' example of the burlesque, which is Scarron's parody of the Aeneid, is shown by Baxtin to be again:

the uncrowning of the Aeneid's images by transferring them to the material bodily level, to the level of food, drink, sexual life, and the bodily phenomena linked with them. This sphere has a positive meaning. It is the generating lower stratum. Therefore, the Aeneid's images are not only uncrowned, they are renewed. (Iswolsky, 309)

"We find at the basis of grotesque imagery a special concept of the body as a whole and of the limits of this whole" (Iswolsky, 315). Baxtin's formulation points up the most widespread fundamental aspect of the grotesque. Though many different specifics of the grotesque have been observed elsewhere, the underlying function of the specific examples of large noses, mouths, and so forth, has been neglected. Referring to another work by Laurent Joubert (whose theory of laughter was earlier discussed), the nose as a symbolic phallus is shown to be a popular notion. Baxtin develops, from the importance of the nose and mouth as grotesque symbols, his notion that:
the essential role belongs to those parts of
the grotesque body in which it outgrows its
own self, transgressing its own body, in which
it conceives a new, second body: the bowels
and the phallus. . . . This is why the main
events in the life of the grotesque body, the
acts of the bodily drama, take place in this
sphere. Eating, drinking, defecation and
other elimination (sweating, blowing of the
nose, sneezing), as well as copulation,
pregnancy, dismemberment, swallowing up by
another body--all these acts are performed on
the confines of the body and the outer world,
or on the confines of the old and new body. In
all these events the beginning and end of life
are closely linked and interwoven. (Iswolsky,
317)

Supporting factors for Baxtin's theories came from
different areas of human culture: "the theme of mockery
and abuse is almost entirely bodily and grotesque"
(Iswolsky, 319). There are abusive expressions in
almost every language relating to the lower bodily
stratum: genitals, buttocks, belly, nose (the nose is
connected to the bodily lower stratum both
metaphorically and because of its function as a source
of excreted material).

The humor of Rabelais points out the older concept
of the body as universal: this ancient sense of the
continuity of the human body despite its incarnation in
different individuals was lost (at least as a popular
notion) when the "new canon" of the individual,
self-sufficient body became dominant. Baxtin notes as
well how this concept of the body influences the "new
canon of behavior": it is required in polite, educated
society to keep the mouth closed and elbows off the table, and so on, "in other words, to close up and limit the body's confines and to smooth the bulges" (Iswolsky, 322). The mouth, although technically of course on the upper part of the body, can be considered at least metaphorically part of the bodily lower stratum because it is the "open gate" leading to the underworld of the body: "The gaping mouth is related to the image of swallowing, this most ancient symbol of death and destruction" (Iswolsky, 325; Russian, 352).

The name and image of the character of Pantagruel were taken by Rabelais from existing literature of the diableries. "Pantagruel" in ordinary speech was a "colloquial term for hoarseness caused by excessive drinking" (Iswolsky, 325; Russian, 352). The image of Pantagruel as developed by Rabelais merely continued the existing image. The mystery-play devil who appeared in the diableries was one linked with the ideas of water, sea salt, and consequently the open mouth, thirst, and drunkenness. The scenes used by Rabelais to develop his character of Pantagruel were related most thoroughly to the themes of thirst, drinking and sea water which (because of its characteristic of being an undrinkable liquid) is also represented occasionally as urine.

The grotesque transformation of the mouth into a comic image is part of the method by which fear is
turned to laughter. The "gaping jaws" of a beast are replaced by Pantagruel's mouth which "contains an entire universe, a kind of buccal underworld" (Iswolsky, 338). There is no mistaking the primacy for Baxtin of this type of imagery in Rabelais:

Thus, from beginning to end this book of the novel presents as its main theme the images of the open mouth, the gullet, the teeth, and the tongue. The gaping jaws belong to the traditional nucleus of the devilkin Pantagruel in the mystery. (Iswolsky, 338)

The fears raised by the drought and related problems in France in 1532, when Pantagruel was being written, are thus given a comic response in Rabelais' book.

The character of Gargantua was taken ready-made by Rabelais from popular sources. Popular-festive giants, however, had a role in reality as well as in literature. Many towns had "town giants" as well as "town jesters" who were paid by the city and took part in all town festivities and pageantries. This function also influenced Rabelais' depiction of Gargantua.

An element helping in the understanding of the gaping mouth, according to Baxtin, is also to be found with the mystery stage, where a gaping mouth was a standard item of stage scenery, through which many grotesque characters entered and exited.

The "body topography" of folk humor has essentially related the three main life acts of the body: sexual
intercourse, childbirth and death throes are merged in
the comic presentation because of their depiction by
means of spasms, hanging tongues, popping eyes and
convulsions. Baxtin notes the influence of Hippocrates
on Rabelais' depiction of the world:

But of all the ancient authors, Hippocrates, or more correctly speaking, the
"Hippocratic anthology" exercised the greatest
influence on Rabelais, an influence that
extended not only to his philosophic and
medical views but even to his imagery and
style. . . .
The "Hippocratic anthology" is far from
homogeneous. It contains works representing
different schools . . . . But . . . all the
works contained in the anthology present a
grotesque image of the body; the confines
dividing it from the world are obscured, and
it is most frequently shown open and with its
interior exposed. Its exterior aspect is not
distinct from the inside, and the exchange
between the body and the world is constantly
emphasized. The organism's various
eliminations, which so often appear in the
grotesque, also acquire here a great
significance. (Iswolsky, 355; Russian, 385-86)

This assessment of the connection of Rabelais'
literary style with the depictions of the body by
Hippocrates is most accurate. Rabelais' medical and
literary contributions were founded in the Hippocratic
method and ideas. One of Rabelais' first notable
achievements was the commentary in Greek of the Greek
texts of Hippocrates and Galien, "an important
innovation, because to that point they had been studied
in a bad Latin translation" (my translation, Lagarde and
Michard, 35). Rabelais also established a reputation when he published a book on Hippocrates in 1532 in Lyon with his own commentaries: this led to his being named médecin de l'Hôtel-Dieu even though he did not yet possess the doctorate.

In summation of this chapter, Baxtin concludes that Rabelais was "consistently materialistic, and moreover approached matter only in its bodily aspect. In his mind the body was the most nearly perfect form of the organization of matter and was therefore the key to all matter" (Iswolsky, 366; Russian, 398). He also notes the Renaissance image of movement as horizontal, a change from the "medieval hierarchic vertical." This concept is better explained in the following chapter, "Images of the Material Bodily Lower Stratum."

In Pantagruel, Rabelais' intention is to depict the "mighty thrust downward into the bowels of the earth, into the depths of the human body . . . [A]ccording to Rabelais' initial plan, the novel's central topic was to be the search for the underworld and Pantagruel's descent into hell (Dante's topic presented on the comic level)" (Iswolsky, 370). This plan was "almost fulfilled." Baxtin examines various episodes to show this intent. The enumeration of the "swabs" (pritirki) shows the comic substitution of the face by the buttocks: the first five objects named are related to
the head (cap, hood, neckerchief, etc.). The conclusion is that the medieval "spiritual topography" is reversed: bliss, rather than beginning at a higher level, starts in the anal region and from there moves to the heart and brain.

Moreover, there is repeated parody of Gospel miracles and medieval sacraments. Baxtin notes that "Abel Lefranc has proved convincingly enough that this chapter [of Epistemon's resurrection and his visions in the underworld] is a travesty of the main Gospel miracles: the resurrection of Lazarus and of the daughter of Jairus" (Iswolsky, 381; Russian, 414). The higher level is substituted by the lower level: "It is not the breath of the mouth, but the flatus that appears as the symbol of life and the true sign of resurrection" (Iswolsky, 382-383; Russian, 415). But for Baxtin there is especial significance in the renewing principles of Rabelaisian laughter. In Lucien, for example, the use of the lower bodily stratum serves merely to "debase the higher images, to render them commonplace, with almost no ambivalence" (Iswolsky, 388). It is precisely this ambivalence that is fundamental for Rabelais.

Rabelais' vision of the underworld draws consistently from preceding literary sources. There were a number of these, not the least of which is, of course, Dante. The images of feasting in the underworld
appeared in several sources, and in several this was linked to the story of Lazarus. This banquet imagery contributes to the second main feature of the Rabelaisian underworld: the consistently carnivalesque atmosphere. The topsy-turvy nature of this world was stressed: all that was higher in the world of the living was reversed to the lowest in the world of the dead. Thus, during the Renaissance, the underworld was "more and more filled with kings, popes, clerical and political leaders, not only the dead, but also those still living" (Iswolsky, 395-396). Baxtin also notes that though this remained uncompleted, Rabelais had signalled his intention to describe Pantagruel's journey into the underworld. The original plan of Pantagruel's journey to the underworld, via "the land of peace and abundance," was to follow the route of Jacques Cartier's "northwest passage." Baxtin notes that this combination of the literary with the reality of geographical exploration is typical of Rabelais.

There follows a description of the hierarchical nature of the medieval conception of the world: "The top and bottom, the higher and the lower, have an absolute meaning both in the sense of space and of values" (Iswolsky, 401). In medieval thought, the earth was based on a vertical model (though time was conceived as horizontal). The depiction provided by Dante in the
Divine Comedy illustrates this principle. The vertical model of the Middle Ages was being replaced by the new model coming into being with the Renaissance. The new model was based on a horizontal concept of the world, with the idea of forward progress now possible: "[m]an's improvement is attained not by the rise of the individual soul toward the hierarchical higher spheres but by man's historical development" (Iswolsky, 401; Russian, 443).

Also prevalent in carnivalesque humor is the theme of negation and opposition. Billingsgate and abusive frankness are the appropriate style between friends. "Praise and abuse are combined in [these free, familiar forms of speech] to form an indissoluble whole" (Iswolsky, 421). It is the use of oppositions within speech that helps convey the feeling of easy frankness. This language is usually strictly non-literary:

Only a small and polished portion of these unpublicized spheres of speech reaches the printed pages, usually in the form of "colorful dialogue" of the protagonists of a story, as removed as possible from the author's own direct and serious speech patterns. To form a strict ideological evaluation and a full artistic picture of these dialogues is impossible, not because they usually contain a great number of obscenities (not always the case) but because they appear alogical. They transgress all distances between objects, manifestations, and values . . . ." (Iswolsky, 421; Russian, 458)
The genre of "coq-à-l'âne" was a full development of the style of lack of logic. The actions of Gargantua were often constructed on just such a grotesque-carnivalesque model. Gargantua performed the opposite of the proverbs: "on, naprimer, sadilsja meždu dvux stul'ev, česalsja stakanom, koval, kogda ostynet, i t. p." (Russian, 462). Baxtin notes that these formulations are constructed in the jumbled spirit of the Russian saying "v ogorode buzina, a v Kieve djad'ka" ("the elder tree is in the garden, and uncle's in Kiev"). These constructions essentially represent the carnivalization of speech. The language of Rabelais has a tone of oppositions and contradictions, because such a duality emphasizes the unofficial nature of such speech. On the other hand, "[a] monotone character of thought and style almost always prevails in the official spheres of art and ideology" (Iswolsky, 433; Russian, 471).

It is this distinction, between official and unofficial speech, that most interests Baxtin. "Official speech" (which can be considered an equivalent of "boring speech") is monotone—and monotonous. The gay speech of Rabelais is the lively speech of self-contradictions and multiple tones. Baxtin is above all

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7 Iswolsky's equivalent is "he bit off more than he could chew, leapt before he looked, and struck the iron while it was cold" (424).
interested in duality, and in the ability to encompass contradictions and oppositions. As he starts to close up shop here, as it were, near the end of this massive monograph, he underlines most strongly those tenets which he has been exploring and elucidating for almost five hundred pages.

Baxtin concludes that the disintegration of the possibility of dual speech eventually led to the formation of paired images representing "top and bottom, front and back, life and death." The classic example of such a pair is that of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. Baxtin ends this chapter with a quote from Marx and Engels:

> History acts fundamentally and goes through many phases when it carries obsolete forms of life into the grave. The last phase of the universal historic form is its comedy. . . . Why such a march of history? This is necessary in order that mankind could say a gay farewell to its past. (Iswolsky, 436; Russian, 474)

Although it perhaps reduces Baxtin to say so, the purpose for including this quote seems to be a rather late and feeble attempt on Baxtin's part to locate his esthetic in a Marxist tradition. Although there is little, if anything, in the works on Dostoevskij and Rabelais that is actually at odds with Marxism, Baxtin has done little to align himself with Marxist esthetics.
In the final chapter of the Rabelais book, "Rabelais' Images and His Time," Baxtin notes that though his own main focus has been on the clash between the folk and official cultures of the Middle Ages, Rabelais' works were also a picture of the universe of that time. Also, though there has been too often an excessive degree of "biographism" as regards the works of Rabelais, there are undoubtedly a number of images that relate to the author's life and the actualities of the historical period in which he lived.

Baxtin's assessment of Rabelais reflects the traditional European and especially Russian-Soviet style of literary scholarship: the author chosen for examination is demonstrated to be extraordinarily competent, observant and clever. The superlatives applied to Rabelais by Baxtin are legion:

[Rabelais'] novel, like all the great works of that period, is widely encyclopedic. There is no branch of knowledge or practical life which is not represented in these pages. Modern Rabelaisiana, especially that inspired by Sainéan, [has shown] . . . Rabelais' extraordinary competence in all the fields he described. Thanks to special research it is possible to definitely prove our author's unerring experience, not only in medicine and various branches of natural science but also in law, architecture, military science, navigation, culinary art, falconry, games, sports and numismatics . . . .

Rabelais' encyclopedic knowledge and the extraordinary richness of his world present one peculiar trait that Rabelais scholars have not sufficiently appreciated: all that is new, fresh, or primary prevails in the novel. This
is the encyclopedia of a new world.  
(Iswolsky, 454-55; Russian, 494-95)

Baxtin considers Rabelais and Calvin to have been the creators of French literary prose. Although he makes no further comment on what Calvin's contributions were, the fact that Baxtin goes on to comment on Rabelais' use of the oral forms of language leads us to assume Calvin's influence to have been a "dialogically opposite" one, official and non-verbal. The use of words by Rabelais from the jargon of the oral vernacular in a literary context, according to Baxtin, was original. If the humor of the Renaissance represented a conflict between the official and the popular, this conflict was also represented by the interorientation of two languages, Latin and the vernacular. For Baxtin, the modern novel "was born on the boundaries of two languages" and the "Renaissance is the only period in the history of European literature which marked the end of a dual language and a linguistic transformation" (Iswolsky, 465). Moreover, there was during this period the influx of Italianisms into the French language as a direct result of the importation of Italian culture and technology. Baxtin insists that:

Languages are philosophies--not abstract but concrete, social philosophies, penetrated by a system of values inseparable from living practice and class struggle. (Iswolsky, 471, Russian, 513)
Baxtin notes that the largest error of Western studies of Rabelais is the insistence on trying to fit his work to official rather than popular culture. The folk culture of which Rabelais is a part has never merged with the official culture of the ruling classes.

The themes which can be extracted from the book on Rabelais are very similar to those in the Dostoevskij book. In Dostoevskij, Baxtin's interest is aroused by the author's ability to allow opposing and contradictory "voices" to have their full freedom and an independent existence; in Rabelais Baxtin is fascinated by a humor which in its barest essentials is constructed on a juxtaposition of opposite and contradictory forces. The idea of languages as philosophies is very closely connected with this. In Rabelais, Baxtin is concerned with the different levels of language representing different social and class levels. The equivalent of this in the Dostoevskij book is the concern with genre, with different genres taking a place in which they interact with each other as different languages do in Rabelais. This constant attention to the "social" is what causes many scholars to consider Baxtin a "Marxist" critic. Nonetheless, Baxtin's lack of attention to any historical matrix, to economic concerns, conditions or
laws has caused other critics, particularly Marxists, to classify him as a non-Marxist.

The dominant in Baxtin, and indeed, in Baxtinism, is the social interaction and the product of such interaction. Dostoevskij is the culmination of a tendency in literature that in itself has been constructed in a fashion no less dialogical than the result he achieved. That is to say, if Dostoevskij represents the pinnacle of dialogism and polyphony, it is because such a genre had already been in the formation for centuries, and Dostoevskij was able to build on the foundation that had been laid. Rabelais' genius for humor and the carnivalesque is also the result of centuries of precedents. No individual can exist outside the social development to which he, of necessity, belongs. Baxtin's focus on the nature of social interaction is something that he locates between genres, between languages (language as philosophy). Baxtin's failure to give any attention to the more material and economic issues of social interaction is supplemented, in a way, by the rest of the "Baxtin school."
Little is known of Vološinov's life. He was born in 1895 in St. Petersburg (Leningrad). In the 1930's he worked at the Herzen State Pedagogical Institute in Leningrad, but he, like Medvedev, was arrested sometime in the thirties, and was later rehabilitated in the 1960's.

As mentioned earlier, the problem of disputed texts arose in 1973 when Vjačeslav Ivanov declared that two books and three articles published by V. N. Vološinov, and one book published by P. N. Medvedev were actually written by Baxtin. Of all the "disputed texts," that is, those that were originally published under other names but are attributed by some scholars to Baxtin, the one that seems least to resemble the work of Baxtin is Freidizm: kritičeskij očerk, originally published in 1927. In the Russian edition published by Chalidze (New York, 1983) the authorship is given as "M. M. Baxtin-V. N. Vološinov." The English translation by I. R. Titunik, Freudianism: A Critical Sketch, published by the Academic Press (New York, 1976) lists only
V. N. Vološinov as author. Titunik is one of the now rare few who has withstood the tendency to attribute these "other" works to Baxtin.

Titunik, in his translator's introduction, notes several important factors which lead to the dismissal of the notion of attributing Freudianism to Baxtin. Titunik notes an inconsistency on the part of Vjačeslav Ivanov in his claims that the six works were written by Baxtin rather than by Vološinov or Medvedev. Ivanov declared that Freudianism was the work of Baxtin, but did not make the same claim for Vološinov's article "Po tu storonu social'nogo," which was inserted almost entirely into the text of Freudianism.¹ Titunik also comments in this introduction on certain peculiarities of style of Vološinov: "his peculiar paragraphing, his repetitions of terms with different 'tonality,' his frequent recourse to conative and phatic signals (of course, you see, to be sure, and the like)" (4). These features tend to point to an authorship that is not Baxtin's. Given these features of style, it is difficult to attribute the actual physical writing of the final draft of this book to Baxtin. Though the book appears to have been written by Vološinov, there is undoubtedly a great deal of Baxtin's influence on

¹ It is claimed by others, including Clark and Holquist.
Volosinov’s ideas and expression, even though not on his style. What remains to be determined, therefore, is the extent of Baxtin’s influence on the ideas of his "disciple" and what part he may have played in the composition of the work, if any.

There also remains to be examined the problem of the reader and the intended audience. The supposed nature of this work as a "popular" essay is belied by the sometimes sophisticated discussions. On the one hand, as noted by Titunik in his introduction, there is expected a familiarity on the part of the reader with the philosophies of Kant, Nietzsche, Spengler and J.-C. Tetens; but, on the other hand, all sexual terms such as "uterus, penis, bisexual" are provided with glosses. Not just sexuality is singled out, however; "amnesia," for instance, is also provided with a gloss (Freudianism, 4). This schismatic presentation produces a mixed perception of the intended reader. The "duality" of the authorship and readership gives the book a particular configuration, one that does not seem to match that of the "undisputed" texts. In this chapter both the Baxtinian ideas presented in these works, and those elements which indicate a non-Baxtinian authorship will be examined. Though any brief generalization is necessarily an oversimplification, in order to shed light on the controversy surrounding
Baxtin's or Vološinov's authorship of the disputed texts: certain criteria are useful: for example, stylistic features, such as Vološinov's tendency to be repetitive whereas Baxtin is not, or characteristic and ideological traits, such as Vološinov's penchant to be dominant and socialistic while Baxtin tends to be neither.

In the first part of the book, "Freudianism and Modern Trends in Philosophy and Psychology (Critical Orientation)" several ideas are presented which resemble those presented by Baxtin in works printed considerably later than this one. In the first chapter there is a brief discussion of the "leitmotif of crisis and decline" (11):

> It is almost as if people of such periods desire to leave the atmosphere of history, which has become too cold and comfortless, and take refuge in the organic warmth of the animal side of life.

> That is what happened during the period of the break-up of the Greek city states, during the decline of the Roman Empire, during the period of the disintegration of the feudal-aristocratic order before the French Revolution. (11; Russian, 15-16)

This idea seems to represent the germ of what later was elucidated in Baxtin's book on Rabelais. Indeed, the theme is basic to many of Baxtin's writings. But the expression here is poor, almost childish. Even with the

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2 All citations from *Freudianism* refer to the Titunik translation already identified unless noted as being from the Russian edition, which will be identified as "Russian."
allowance that Baxtin was quite young in 1926, when, it appears, *Freudianism* was written, and that this work was meant for popular consumption, it is difficult to reconcile this style with the style which characterizes the works written by Baxtin in later years. It is also important to note that though certain ideas such as this one appear very Baxtinian, they remain occasional examples which are fairly easily isolated from the surrounding text. The book itself does not seem to consolidate or build upon these ideas, but rather to include them as extra grist.

The second chapter of this first part of *Freudianism* also presents an idea familiar to students of Baxtin. The author informs us: "[w]e shall see that all of the mental phenomena and conflicts that psychoanalysis acquaints us with may be regarded as complex interrelations and conflicts between the verbal and the nonverbal reactions of humans" (23; Russian, 39). Though the expression is somewhat weak, the concept strikes close to the heart of Baxtin's ever-present concern of verbal conflict and dialogicity.

The second part of the book, "An Exposition of *Freudianism*," begins a point-by-point analysis of Freud's philosophy. But here, too, the exposition seems puerile:
Freud, by [1914-1915], had become an acknowledged "celebrity" for wide circles of the intelligentsia. And these circles had already endeavored to ferret out precisely philosophical, ideological themes, even from Freud's earliest works. They expected and demanded of psychoanalysis, a "revelation" in the domain of Weltanschauung. And so Freud bit by bit succumbed and began to cater to those demands and expectations. What took place is a common enough phenomenon: Success [sic] and recognition compromised and somewhat perverted a doctrine that had originally taken shape and flourished in an atmosphere of hostility and rejection. (31; Russian, 55)

With anything so imprecise as style, it is difficult to assert categorically that such sentences could never have been written by Baxtin. The lack of conclusive proof, however, only rarely prevents people from believing their impressions. In this case the impression is that such sentences could never have been written by Baxtin. The more slippery question of influence, however, remains.

Throughout this book there are ideas that are clearly related to the fundamental concerns of Baxtin, but it somehow seems that they are added hesitantly and somewhat defensively. Their appearance seems to be marked by a desire to cover possible bases for criticism; their tone is that of a student trying to make allowance for the personal prejudices of the professor, hoping thus to get a good grade. Such
instances of Baxtinian sentences could be the result of Vološinov's presence as a member of Baxtin's "circle," and could represent an attempt, whether deliberate or not, to use expressions and discuss concepts that seemed so very important in the context of that circle.

Some other examples of those characteristics which deny the presence of Baxtin can be found in the second part of the book. In the third chapter, Vološinov has already begun the habit of posing rhetorical questions, which he then answers. Though this is of course an extremely dialogical device, it is not typical of Baxtin, not even in the first book on Dostoevskij. Moreover, in *Freudianism* these rhetorical questions are almost always set apart in their own paragraph.

The peculiar mixing of ambivalent tendencies continues throughout the work. There is on the one hand an attempt to convey a message similar to that which Baxtin expounded over most of the course of his career; on the other hand, there is a remarkable inability to do so with Baxtin's usual finesse. The reader is faced, therefore, with juxtapositions of Baxtinian material and non-Baxtinian expression such as are found in the third chapter.

A discussion of the Catholic rite of confession leads to the observation that it is in the "verbal
expression and verbal outlet that the relief is obtained; "[t]herein lies the cleansing power of speech" (35). Soon after, we find the observation that the "conflict between the conscious and the unconscious is declared a constant and regular form of psychical life." But this groping towards important ideas is undermined by the discussion that follows. On the next page, the specific question and answer format gives the impression that we have somehow stumbled into a children's book: "What is repression?," set off in its own paragraph, is followed by five paragraphs of explanation, and then, set off in its own paragraph, follows the conclusion: "Such is the way the process of repression works." These little discursive questions, always set off in separate paragraphs, are perhaps irritating because they do not sound like Baxtin, and are particularly irritating because they do not suit the tenor of the book.

Near the beginning of the fifth chapter Vološinov poses the question, again in a separate paragraph, "How does one delve down to those latent thoughts, that is, how does one interpret dreams?" He then formulates an answer, again in five paragraphs, which is followed by another one-sentence paragraph: "Such is the technique for the formation of dream symbols" (50-51).
Further student-style inclusions appear throughout the text. In the sixth chapter, there is a brief discussion of elements of the unconscious:

Of particularly great importance for all forms of art are erotic symbols. Behind the most innocent-seeming and commonplace of artistic images some erotic object is always decipherable. An example from the field of Russian literature might be cited here. A certain Professor Ermakov of Moscow applied the psychoanalytical method to an interpretation of the famous story "Nose" by N.V. Gogol'. The nose in "Nose" turns out to be, according to Ermakov, a substitute symbol for the penis. Underlying the whole theme of the loss of one's nose and the particular motifs implementing that theme in the story is a complex closely associated with the Oedipus complex (in it's father's threat aspect) -- the castration complex: fear of the loss of one's penis or one's sexual potency. Further examples we believe would be superfluous.

Though this translation is quite accurate, there are two observations to be made about the Russian text; first, the word "penis" is written in Latin letters, followed by an apostrophe and then the Russian masculine declensional endings, and second, there is a gloss to this word as well: "(mužskogo polovogo organa)" (Russian, 120). Moreover, the final sentence is set off in a separate paragraph in the Russian.

The exposition here is rather peculiar, since it involves the use of the most commonly used and known example of such an occurrence in Russian literature. Further examples, rather than being superfluous, would
be most helpful. The use of the Latin is also rather puzzling, since the gloss is provided, and does not sound like the language of Baxtin of later books, particularly that on Rabelais, where such scabrous words and expressions are used rather freely. Though there is the possibility that the difference of the decades between the publication of Freudianism and the Rabelais monograph could account for a difference in freedom of expression, it seems more likely that there is an entirely different mentality, and mind, at work.

Present in this book to a degree worthy of consideration is a strong element of socialism and socialistic thought. This element, which will be seen as an even stronger factor in the book Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, helps create a consistent authorial personality for Vološinov. Although there is a Marxist approach in Baxtin as well, it is not materially based in the way seen with Vološinov.

The socioeconomic concern is demonstrated throughout the book on Freud. From the first chapter, the qualities which are presented as fundamental to the background of Freudianism are shown to cause problems in terms of socialism. One basic motif of "present day philosophy" is that an "attempt is made to replace all objective socioeconomic categories with subjective psychological or biological ones" (12), whereas the
author contends that not a single action of any person can be explained without reference to socioeconomic factors. The first chapter ends with a quote from Marx's Sixth Thesis on Feuerbach: "the essence of man is not an abstraction inherent in each separate individual. In its reality it is the aggregate of social relationships" (15). Of course, this social concern can be seen as overlapping with Baxtinian issues as well.

In the seventh chapter the social situation is described as the product of human discourse, and here the subject matter as well as the style of expression are such as could have been written by Baxtin himself:

Not a single instance of verbal utterance can be reckoned exclusively to its utterer's account. Every utterance is the product of the interaction between speakers and the product of the broader context of the whole complex social situation in which the utterance emerges. . . . [A]ny product of the activity of human discourse . . . derives shape and meaning . . . from the social situation in which the utterance appears. . . .

Nothing changes at all if, instead of outward speech, we are dealing with inner speech. Inner speech, too, assumes a listener and is oriented in its construction toward that listener. . . .

. . . What is reflected in these utterances is not the dynamics of the individual psyche but the social dynamics of the interrelations between doctor and patient. (79)

It becomes clear that any discussion of verbal discourse is to be seen in the context of both the social milieu
and socioeconomic surroundings. The basic error of Freudianism, therefore, is to have seen the evidence of verbal discourse against the background of the individual psyche only. As it is expressed in the eighth chapter, "[v]erbal discourse, not in its narrow linguistic sense, but in its broad and concrete sociological sense--that is the objective milieu in which the content of the psyche is presented" (83). This same preoccupation is reiterated and developed in the following chapter: "Therefore, nothing verbal in human behavior (inner and outward speech equally) can under any circumstances be reckoned to the account of the individual subject in isolation; the verbal is not his property but the property of his social group (his social milieu)" (86).

All consciousness and activity of the psyche are always determined by the social context and socioeconomic factors and "self-consciousness, in the final analysis, always leads us to class consciousness . . ." (87). One of the causes of the importance of the social factor is that "the human consciousness operates through words--that medium which is the most sensitive and at the same time the most complicated refraction of the socioeconomic governance" (87). The conclusion is then drawn that any conflicts existing between inner and outer speech are ideological rather
than psychical and cannot be understood "within the narrow confines of the individual organism and the individual psyche" (88).

It is somewhat unfortunate that Titunik elected to delete the tenth and final chapter of Frejdizm in his translation, "on the grounds that it has little relevance to the interest that Vološinov's Freudianism retains for the present day" (4). His charge of the lack of interest this chapter provides for the modern reader, however, is well founded. What the chapter does provide is a further look at a style of writing and a process of thinking, the progression of which seems distinctly non-Baxtinian.

There is a sprinkling of sentences that could have been written by Baxtin, that "sound like" Baxtin, mixed in with the rest. Such sentences, however, are fewer in number than those sentences that in no way resemble Baxtin's style. Similarly, there are ideas that are directly related to those of Baxtin, but these ideas do not contribute to the essence or structure of Frejdizm. They are, rather, additions, asides, which tend to elevate the tone of the work without influencing its basic purport or message. This work does little to advance "Baxtinianism." It has little to contribute towards the formation of the main tenets. Although there is an emphasis on the social, and a deemphasizing
of the individual, the idea of the "social" here does not seem to fit in with the Baxtinian dominant of self-contained contradiction. Naturally, a superficial idea of schizophrenia could be applied to this work. But the work does not seem to explore the concerns of the Baxtin school in the manner of the other works discussed in this investigation.

In this tenth chapter the author provides very brief descriptions of the "points of view" of B. Byxovskij, A. G. Lur'e, B. D. Fridman and A. B. Zalkind. It contains as well many of the irritating verbal devices mentioned above. There are the one sentence paragraphs ("Nakonec, o dialektike." "Takova točka zrenija Lurija." Russian, 199, 202) and a most startlingly un-Baxtinian exclamation (in response to a rhetorical question, in a new paragraph), "-Konečno, net!"

Many of these same rhetorical devices and stylistic elements are found in the subsequent book published by Vološinov, Marksizm i filosofija jazyka (Marxism and the

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3 In the table of contents at the beginning of the book and throughout the text of this tenth chapter, the name is used only in the genitive case and is always spelled "Lurija," in that case. However, in the subheading under the title of the chapter, p. 187, the spelling, again in the genitive, is "Lur'e." According to my native informant, the name "Lur'e" should not be declined and should, therefore, always be spelled "Lur'e." No publishing data references are given for the article in question.
Philosophy of Language). In his introduction (omitted in the English translation by Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik), Vološinov explains that this work is written as one of a popular nature, though he notes the necessity of an acquaintance with the basics of linguistics. This gives it a slightly more complex presentation than the book on Freudianism had; it is a step removed from the completely general reader implied in Freudianism.

In this book, it is the social that is most emphasized throughout the entire work. As is noted in the translators' introduction to the English edition, Vološinov held that utterance is "constructed between two socially organized persons and, in the absence of a real addressee, an addressee is presupposed in the representative of the social group to which the speaker belongs" (3). Vološinov, in his introduction noted that nothing had yet been done on this area in Marxist literature. In his description of the task at hand, he claimed that the "basic idea in all our work is the productive role and social nature of the utterance" (Marksizm, 11, my translation). Though this is of

4 Hereafter, where clarity requires, Marxism will be used in the text to refer to the English translation; Marksizm will be used in the text to refer to the Russian edition.
course what would be expected as the subject of a work on the Marxist philosophy of language, it is indeed almost relentlessly so. Though there is, indeed, again, much that relates to Baxtin's thought, the bulk of this work seems to move in a direction that is not in keeping with Baxtin's signed body of work.

Marxism does, however, show a strong relationship with the previous Freudianism. In the first chapter, the reader is again treated to a dose of pseudo-scientific language and arguments followed by aphoristic, simplistic summations:

However, any physical body may be perceived as an image; for instance, the image of natural inertia and necessity embodied in that particular thing. Any such artistic-symbolic image to which a particular physical object gives rise is already an ideological product. The physical object is converted into a sign. Without ceasing to be a part of material reality, such an object, to some degree, reflects and refracts another reality. (Marxism, 9)

Again we find that the explanations are too long to sound like Baxtin, the lists of comparisons too lengthy:

Every phenomenon functioning as an ideological sign has some kind of material embodiment, whether in sound, physical mass, color, movements of the body, or the like. In this sense, the reality of the sign is fully objective and lends itself to a unitary, monistic, objective method of study. (Marxism, 11)
The format of questions appearing as separate paragraphs is also frequently used, e.g. "What is a philologist?" (Marxism, 74; Marksizm, 75); "But what is expression?" (Marxism, 84; Marksizm, 85), the answer to which is followed by the summarizing: "That is how individualistic subjectivism understands expression."

It should be noted that this particular stylistic irritant represents the source of a difference between the Russian and English texts, since in the latter, the question is sometimes incorporated into the following paragraph, rather than remaining a separate one. These elements of style are found throughout this work, but rather than concentrating on their presence, it will be more useful to observe the emerging social theory which is being developed here.

In a style similar to that of Baxtin and of almost every other Soviet theoretical writer, Vološinov first provides a dissection of the related writings of others, showing the errors or incompleteness that necessitated another contribution. In this book, this "dialogizing" usually takes place in footnotes. Moreover, the specific writers mentioned by Vološinov are usually those who made some sort of contribution to the general extant theoretical atmosphere in which they wrote. Thus, if "the idealistic philosophy of culture and psychologistic cultural studies locate ideology in the
consciousness," Vološinov adds that "it should be noted that a change of outlook in this regard can be detected in modern neo-Kantianism. We have in mind the latest book by Ernst Cassirer . . . " (Marxism, 11). The basis of Vološinov's introductory material, however, is a reasoned development of certain assumed givens: that if ideology requires signs, and consciousness requires signs for embodiment, and if signs can exist only inter-individually, then "the individual consciousness is a social-ideological fact." His bias can be observed in one of his conclusions: "the study of ideologies does not depend on psychology to any extent and need not be grounded in it . . . it is rather the reverse: objective psychology must be grounded in the study of ideologies" (13).

Some of the points presented in Freudianism are repeated here, including that the role of the word is as the "semiotic material of inner life - of consciousness (inner speech)" (14). One of Vološinov's more interesting points is that no sign is totally replaceable by words, but every sign, including religious ritual and music, is accompanied by words, "just as is the case with singing and its musical accompaniment" (15). Though he is not completely convincing on this point, this forms part of Vološinov's arguments for the importance of the study of the
philosophy of language: everything revolves around signs, every "ideological refraction of existence . . . is accompanied by ideological refraction in word . . ." (15) and must therefore be defined and structured according to Marxist principles.

In the second chapter we are told that a typology of the forms of semiotic communication is one of the "urgent tasks" of Marxism. Signs are conditioned by the social relationships of a language group and must be connected with the socioeconomic concerns of that group in order to have entered into its sphere of interest. He asserts (Vološinov, unlike Baxtin, seems to have been inordinately fond of italic emphasis) "only that which has acquired social value can enter the world of ideology, take shape, and establish itself there" (22). Even accents must be interindividual, so the only type of communication without accent or social conditioning is the animal response, a cry of pure pain. Different social classes use a single system of signs, with the result that the sign then becomes the "arena" of class struggle.

Vološinov frequently draws forth interesting observations and notions, which are then all too often used as the basis of non-sequential, unexplained deductions. Here he notes that the sign has "two faces" ("[a]ny current curse word can become a word of praise")
but decides that this "inner dialectic quality of the sign comes out fully in the open only in times of social crises or revolutionary changes" (23). This conclusion remains unexplained, and seemingly, unnecessary, since no further points are predicated upon this deduction.

In the third chapter Vološinov substantiates his previous claim that "objective psychology must be grounded in the study of ideologies." The psyche is defined not by what goes on inside the individual organism, but by what is external to it; the psyche exists on the border between the individual organism and the outside world. William Dilthey is here established as the "most astute" of the author's contemporaries in this area, but is eventually attacked for not having recognized the social character of meaning. Vološinov repeatedly explains that meaning outside a sign is a fiction. In fact, he is so forceful and so repetitive that the reader is forced to recall that Baxtin never wrote like that. In the signed texts, Baxtin never condescends to the almost hysterical tone we sometimes see associated with Vološinov. This tone is also observed in his continued polemic with other theoreticians: "Such is the point of view of so-called functional psychology" gives rise to a footnote with specific names (Marxism, 28-29; Marksizm, 33). As will
be seen, Medvedev also sometimes indulges in name-calling.

It is somewhat ironic that Vološinov notes an alternation between periods of psychologism and "a sharply reacting antipsychologism, which deprives the psyche of all its content" (31). Vološinov himself claims, at least, to maintain that the ideological sign is common territory for both the psyche and ideology, and that there is no division between the two. From this, it may be supposed, the reader is to understand that he, Vološinov, does not deprive the psyche of content. Of course, at least part of the problem, and the reason he is misunderstood, is that we continue to presume falsely that the "social" is in some way opposed to the notion of the "individual." We should, instead, realize that "social" is a correlate of "natural" and that "individual" refers to the biological specimen, rather than to any specific person:

Therefore, the content of the "individual" psyche is by its very nature just as social as is ideology, and the very degree of consciousness of one's individuality and its inner rights and privileges is ideological, historical, and wholly conditioned by sociological factors. Every sign as sign is social . . . . (Marxism, 34)

For Vološinov, introspection focusses on the inner sign, with the goal of arriving at a full understanding, something which he must consider a possibility. It is at this point that Vološinov arrives at the most
interesting speculation of the entire work: that inner speech most closely resembles the "alternating lines of a dialogue" (Marxism, 38). But just as he starts to deal with the issue of inner speech as inner dialogue, he stops and begins his "[i]n conclusion."

In the second part, we again see that the continual insistence of this book is on the Marxist and social nature of communication: "In order to observe the phenomenon of language, both the producer and the receiver of sound and the sound itself must be placed into the social atmosphere" (46). But again, the tone is rarely Baxtinian. It is difficult to reconcile the following apology for inadequacy with the usually decisive assertions of Baxtin:

Neither term . . . fully covers the breadth and complexity of the trend denoted. As we shall see, the designation of the first trend is particularly inadequate. We were unable to devise better ones, however. (48, note)

This apology can be compared, for instance, to Baxtin's apologia (but not "apology") for the term and theory of the chronotope:

For our purposes the special sense which it has in the theory of relativity is not important; we shall transfer it here--to the study of literature--almost as a metaphor (almost, but not quite . . . ).

We make no claims for the completeness or exactitude of our theoretical formulations and definitions. Both in the Soviet Union and
abroad serious work on the study of the forms of time and space in art and literature has only recently begun. Further development of this work will complete and, possibly, substantially amend the descriptions of novelistic chronotopoi given by us here. ("Forms," 493, 494)

This latter, and considerably more dignified, approach to the issue of appropriate terms seems much more in keeping with Baxtin's general tone.

The main problem, however, is that so often the claims made by Vološinov simply make no sense:

There can be nothing in common between the logic governing the system of linguistic forms at any given moment in time and the logic (or rather "a-logic") of the historical change of these forms. The logic is of two different kinds; or rather, if we recognize only one of them as logic, the other will be a-logic, i.e. sheer violation of the logic accepted. (Marxism, 54)

A few pages later, Vološinov claims that two contradictory norms cannot be in place at the same time, but that there can be a change from one norm to another:

A norm can coexist only with its violation and not with another, contradictory norm (for which reason there can be no "tragedies" in language). If the violation does not make itself felt and consequently is not corrected, and if there is favorable ground for this particular violation to become a widespread fact . . . then such a violation will become the next linguistic norm. (56)

This attitude seems to assume, however, that there is never any period of transition, that one norm is
exchanged for another instantly, like champions of world boxing titles. Where, or rather when does a violation change from an "unfelt" violation to become a new norm? Perhaps a period of transition is allowed after all: "[t]he reality of language is, in fact, its generation" (56). Vološinov here launches into a discussion of Saussure.

Having dealt with a few other notable figures of linguistics in a short paragraph--Durkheim and Meillet--Vološinov allows that there are yet other schools of thought, but they are "devoid of any appreciable theoretical orientation" (62).

In the next chapter, Vološinov asserts that "[w]ords are always filled with content and meaning drawn from behavior and ideology" (70) and that the rupture of language from its ideological component was a fatal error of abstract objectivism. This is not particularly close to the signed Baxtin texts, but it does relate to a number of arguments in Medvedev. According to Vološinov, the greatest attention of linguistics has been erroneously focussed on dead and/or alien languages:

Formalism and systematicity are the typical distinguishing marks of any kind of thinking focused on a ready-made and, so to speak, arrested object. . . . Characteristically, what undergoes systematization is usually (if not exclusively) someone else's thought. True creators--the initiators of new ideological
trends— are never formalistic systematizers. (78)

This was, ironically, embedded in a most systematizing chapter of a very systematizing book, and eloquently draws attention to the fact that its author is not a "true creator." The message of this statement strongly helps evince that the authorship of Freudianism and Marxism and the Philosophy of Language is different from that of Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics and Rabelais and His World.

This is not to say that the book completely lacks insight. The utterance as a sociological phenomenon is a fairly constant objective. A very elegant definition of expression (vyraženie) is given:

something which, having in some way taken shape and definition in the psyche of an individual, is outwardly objectified for others with the help of external signs of some kind.

Thus there are two elements in expression: that inner something which is expressible, and its outward objectification for others (or possibly for oneself). (84)

Much of this particular chapter is repetitive, rehashing arguments and suppositions given in the earlier chapters. New information includes the distinction of the "I-experience" (ja-pereživanie) from the "we-experience" (my-pereživanie), the first being selfish. The author then decides that "consciousness is
a fiction" except in objectification or "embodiment in some particular material (the material of gesture, inner word, outcry)" (90). Consciousness can only exist socially: "even in the original, vague form of glimmering thought and experience, it had already constituted a social event on a small scale and was not an inner act on the part of the individual" (90). Moreover, in any period of history, a work must enter into a relationship with the changing behavioral ideology (žiznennaja ideologija) if it is to be viable as a work for that period of history. If not connected with the contemporary "behavioral ideology," it is not ideologically meaningful and therefore ceases to exist as a work.

According to Vološinov there are many different layers of behavioral ideology, the most basic beginning with "vague and undeveloped experiences, thoughts, and idle, accidental words that flash across our minds" (92). But in all cases, the "organizing center of any utterance . . . is not within but . . . in the social milieu surrounding the individual being" (93). A book is merely "a verbal performance in print" and any verbal communication can be understood and explained only in "connection with a concrete situation" (95). Just to make sure everything has been made perfectly clear, the
The structure of the utterance is a purely sociological structure. The utterance, as such, obtains between speakers. The individual speech act (in the strict sense of the word "individual") is contradictio in adjecto. (98)

Vološinov next derides the "one-sided monologism" typical of linguistics for ignoring the situational factors of communication, which are required for any understanding of its "theme." The "theme of an utterance is opposed to its "meaning," which is the completely reproducible aspect of an utterance. He considers the essential feature of a "word" to be, precisely, the presence of a multiplicity of meanings. Vološinov claims that if a word has only a "single, inert, and invariable meaning, then such a complex would not be a word, not a sign, but only a signal" (101). An all-meaning word is thus all theme, and has virtually no meaning. Meaning is only potential, "meaning, in essence, means nothing," and "only theme means something definite" (101). True understanding of a communication will always include at least "the germ of a response,"

5 It would seem more logical that such an all-meaning word with no meaning would be a signal, like the grunts of cave people as depicted, for instance, in the movie Quest for Fire, which, at least at certain times, obviously mean "look!" How can a word with a finite meaning be a signal, but a word with no meaning be a word?
and so understanding is never purely passive, but is always dialogic in nature. Evaluation is a creative process, and a "change in meaning is, essentially, always a reevaluation" (105). Language expands to include whatever is of interest to a social group, and the interests of any social group are "entirely determined" by its economic basis and the expansion thereof:

The prehistoric herdsman was virtually interested in nothing, and virtually nothing had any bearing on him. Man at the end of the epoch of capitalism is directly concerned about everything, his interests reaching the remotest corners of the earth and even the most distant stars. (106)

One cannot help but notice, along with the relentless Marxism of the proposed theories, the simplistic nature of the arguments. The book's determined emphasis on the Marxist concerns of the social nature of communication cannot be seen as secondary or incidental to the text; neither is it "tacked on" as a way of ensuring publication. The author seems totally convinced of his propositions, so much so that he inadequately protects them from criticism and attack. He neglects to notice that there might be a slightly different way of viewing the same "facts," data or assumptions to provide different conclusions; he remains blithely unaware that not everyone will accept his assumptions/givens and bases.
Baxtin was also concerned with the social nature of communication, particularly in the dialogue. This is an area where Vološinov and Baxtin share ideological perspectives. The difference between them is mainly in the expression.

In the third part of the book, Vološinov deals with units of utterance, and decides that a paragraph is a "weakened dialogue" (oslablenný dialóg, translated by Matejka and Titunik as "vitiated dialogue," which seems a bit too negative). In listing several "classic" varieties of paragraph, the first noted is one of "question and answer (where question is posed and answer given by the same author)" (111), which demonstrates that he meant his works to have classic paragraphing. Other types mentioned are paragraphs of supplementation and anticipation of possible objections. In a footnote we are told that mentioned here is "only one of the more important" types—that which takes into account the addressee.

On this same page, indeed, in the same paragraph, another statement invites comment:

If we could imagine speech that absolutely ignored the addressee (an impossible kind of speech, of course), we would have a case of speech with organic partition reduced to the minimum. (111)
This inevitably causes the reader of a later generation to wonder about Baxtin's own "reader-less" writings, those manuscripts which were found in his desk, not written intended for publication but which were published after his death. Here, surely, would be a case of speech with "organic partition reduced to the minimum."

The next issue is that of "reported speech": "speech within speech, utterance within utterance, and at the same time also speech about speech, utterance about utterance" (115). Vološinov claims that a reported utterance can enter into the speech of another and yet retain its own "constructional and semantic autonomy while leaving the speech texture of the context incorporating it perfectly intact" (115). This is particularly noteworthy because it does not accord with the statements made in Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics on this issue.

As presented in the Dostoevskij book, any type of reported speech falls into the third category of word--"the word oriented towards another person's word"--and hence is a "double-voiced word." Even with the first variety of this category, the "single-directed double-voiced word," there is objectification, albeit of a reduced nature, of the word of the other.
For Vološinov, the mechanism of reported speech, as all other elements of speech, is located "in society." But this differs from other types of speech in that the "transmission takes into account a third person—the person to whom the reported utterances are being transmitted" (117). This reckoning refuses to consider, then, the case where the reported speech is that of the "other" of the conversation ("What do you mean, I can't go? Just this morning you said I could go if I were home by seven o'clock.").

The author defines two directions of reported speech: the first is "linear" and generally agrees with the idea of the single-directed double-voiced word in the Dostoevskij book, while the second is "pictorial," where the meaning of the utterance is neglected in favor of its "decorative" aspect. Exemplifying the second is the language of characters' speech as sometimes seen in Gogol', where almost all referential meaning is lost and the speech serves as decoration, similar to clothes or furniture. Occasionally, the speech reported takes on more strength than the speech of the framing context. Though the examples provided by Vološinov of this last variety are Dostoevskij, Belyj and "more recent Russian writers" (121), it seems that it should also be possible to include much hagiographic literature and some
biographies, such as the apocryphal accounts of Baxtin's "word."

In the final chapter of the work, the translators again "enter" the text by rearranging it. A number of fairly lengthy examples illustrating "quasi-direct discourse" in French and German literature are removed from the body of the text and relegated to footnotes. This is particularly irritating because the notes are lengthy enough to have to spill on to the following page, which necessitates a great deal of flipping back and forth to simultaneously follow the notes and the text. Since the examples are incorporated into the text in the original Russian, and therefore integral to the text, there is no "flipping" or concern with "dual" texts.

The discussion in this chapter of "quasi-direct discourse" follows the lead of several previous theorists, most notably Lorck, Gertraud Lerch, and Eugen Lerch. Many of the conclusions entered here are analogous to similar arguments of reported speech in the Dostoevskij book. But the differences are disturbing, and seem to show, rather than an enhancement or

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6 This is referred to as uneigentech direkte Rede (sic) (which is printed as uneigentliche direkte Rede in the English edition) and nesobstvennaja priamaja rec', which seems to me to be better translated as "borrowed" direct speech.
continuation of the other work, a lack of understanding of it.

Thus, according to Lorck, quasi-direct discourse is a form for the direct depiction of the experiencing of another's speech, a form for summoning up a living impression of that speech and, on that account, of little use for conveying that speech to a third person. Indeed, if quasi-direct discourse were used for that purpose, the reporting act would lose its communicative character and would make it appear as if the person were talking to himself or hallucinating. Hence, as one would expect, quasi-direct discourse is unusable in conversational language and meant only to serve aims of artistic depiction. (147-148)

Of course, the focus here is on language per se (or so is purported), whereas in the book on Dostoevskij we are dealing with the words of the character(s) and author. But it is Vološinov himself who invites the comparison, for he continually introduces references to "characters" and literary speech ("both author and character speaking . . ." [144]; most of all, the many illustrative examples, previously mentioned as being presented in the English edition in footnotes, are all literary texts).

Vološinov goes on to determine that personality is a theme of language, rather than the reverse: "a word is not an expression of inner personality; rather, inner personality is an expressed or inwardly impelled word" (153). It is at this point that Vološinov notes that
"quasi-direct discourse" differs from "substituted discourse" in that the quasi-direct is "interrupted" by the message of the other person, whereas in substituted discourse, "no new accents vis-à-vis the surrounding authorial context appear" (155).

With this further evidence, it becomes clear that a series of accordances with the specifications of reported speech as per the Dostoevskij book can indeed be elaborated. Vološinov's "substituted discourse" is roughly equivalent to the "single-directed double-voiced word" in Baxtin, and the "quasi-direct discourse" is similar to the second type of Baxtinian word, the "hetero-directed double-voiced word."

There are, as was mentioned above, a few areas of discrepancy between the book on Dostoevskij and this work on Marxism, but the categories on the whole are based on equivalent terms. But the hypotheses and conclusions of the Dostoevskij book are so much more detailed and precise, and provide such an incomparably more complete description of the issue, that it seems thoroughly incongruous to claim that both works were written by the same author, even given the few years that provide for the possibility of development in the period that intervened between the 1927 publication of Marxism and the Philosophy of Language and the 1929 publication of Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics.
Again, it seems impossible to claim that Baxtin wrote the books published under the name V. N. Vološinov.
Only rather scanty information is available about Pavel Nikolaevič Medvedev. He was born in 1891 and graduated from the University of Petrograd (Leningrad) with a degree in law, and in 1922 became the editor of a theater journal there. According to Wehrle, the formalists Tomaševskij and Žirmunskij were contributors to this journal (xviii). In 1933, he became a professor at the Leningrad historico-philological institute. Medvedev published a number of articles, starting in the very early twenties. The Formal Method was published in 1928, and was favorably reviewed in 1929; in 1933, Medvedev published In the Writer's Laboratory. In 1934 a significantly revised edition of The Formal Method, retitled Formalism and the Formalists, was issued; in this same year reviews pertaining to Medvedev were rather unfavorable. He died in 1938, having been "illegally repressed" (Wehrle, xvi).

If the issue of authorship of the books published under the name of Vološinov seems to be resolvable with the result that Vološinov did indeed write the two books
in question, the issue of the authorship of the book published by Medvedev is more problematic. Part of the problem arises from the basic limitations of the material. The claims made by Ivanov applied to six works, five of which (two books and three articles) were published by Vološinov.¹ The sixth work in question is Medvedev's The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship: A Critical Introduction to Sociological Poetics. Medvedev's other major publications, In the Writer's Laboratory and the revised edition of The Formal Method, retitled Formalism and the Formalists, do not provide a sure ground for comparison.

It is also about The Formal Method that the most popularized anecdote, one that seems to confirm Baxtin's authorship, is told. Supposedly, V. N. Turbin, in an attempt to learn more about the authorship of this work, put a copy of The Formal Method on the table while visiting the Baxtins. Baxtin remained silent, but his wife Elena Aleksandrovna exclaimed "How many times I copied that!"² V. V. Kožinov, in the short biography

¹ Holquist makes a claim for an even greater number of works. He includes an article by I. I. Kanaev, two articles and a review in addition to the book in question by Medvedev, and two additional articles by Vološinov, who thus has a total of five articles and two books thus questioned.

² This account is reported by both Wehrle and Todorov, but not, for some reason, by Holquist.
which he wrote with S. Konkin, says the book was written "on the basis of conversations with Mixail Mixailovich"

(6). Clark and Holquist report:

... Medvedev's son and daughter claim that their father did write the book on Formalism. As his son Yury Pavlovich Medvedev put it, "[M]y father wrote the book as such, although he consulted with Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin." (148)

Clark and Holquist then seem to dispute this claim by disparaging the children's knowledge and understanding of the situation.

Perhaps the most succinct and useful assessment of the problem is this offered by Wehrle in his introduction to his translation of the book:

The works of the Bakhtin school can be seen as the realization of dialogic interaction— from which it follows that to assign the texts to Bakhtin alone is to "monologize" them. To put it another way: we do not want to say that one side of the sign is all there is. (xii)

The problem remains, though, that one can discuss a Bakhtin school and still not know where to fit in the pieces. It seems that the works by Vološinov can be considered "Baxtin school" but not Baxtin; they are related, but form a cohesive and separate body of work. This work published under the name of Medvedev, a single book, seems, however, much more closely related to the works signed by Baxtin and may therefore need to be more closely associated to that group. But again, though the
critical thought may be that of Baxtin, the prose usually seems that of someone else, presumably Medvedev. As Wehrle observes:

The argument of Medvedev's book, on the other hand, makes no pretensions to art in moving deliberately through a stiff framework of categories. The metaphoric flashes which occasionally light up passages in theoretical works like "The Word in the Novel" are absent here. The style of The Formal Method has been referred to as, among other things, sharp and stabbing. It is also inter alia clumsy and repetitious. (xxii-xxiii)

In many ways, The Formal Method does seem to move through an outline, filling in details in a rigid, methodical way. Nothing seems to move outside the set path of the chapter headings, which also follow a strict logical order:

Part One: The Object and Tasks of Marxist Literary Scholarship

Chapter one: The Study of Ideologies and Its Immediate Tasks

Chapter two: The Immediate Tasks of Literary Scholarship

Part Two: A Contribution to the History of the Formal Method

Chapter three: The Formal Method in European Art Scholarship [Kunstwissenschaft]

Chapter four: The Formal Method in Russia

Part Three: The Formal Method in Poetics

Chapter five: Poetic Language as the Object of Poetics
Chapter six: Material and Device as Components of the Poetic Construction

Chapter seven: The Elements of the Artistic Construction

Part Four: The Formal Method in Literary History

Chapter eight: The Work of Art as a Datum External to Consciousness

Chapter nine: The Formalist Theory of the Historical Development of Literature

The format, as illustrated by these section and chapter headings, is that of an outline. Moreover, the author moves through the categories established with the unswerving regularity of machine production. In Baxtin’s books on Dostoevskij and Rabelais, there are chapters near the beginning of the work where the formalities involving the exploration of previous criticism and similar matters are observed. Those chapters do not, however, dominate the work: a glance at the chapter headings of Baxtin’s works shows that the

direction the book then takes is that indicated by the theory that the author has "discovered," and is choosing to follow.

Although there is much that is valuable in *The Formal Method*, it is mostly the lack of excitement and intellectual spark that makes it seem so dissimilar to the "signed" Baxtin books. Therefore, though it seems likely that Baxtin had a strong "dialogical" influence on this work, Medvedev is almost certainly the one who produced the "instance de l'écriture" ("writing event or process"). Medvedev, therefore, will be referred to here as the author of *The Formal Method*.

As an example of Baxtinianism, the emphasis in this work is still, of course, on the social nature of understanding. But here, in contrast to Baxtin's signed works, there is a heavy emphasis on Marxist esthetics and terminology. In the first chapter, Medvedev claims that Marxism cannot, except in certain cases such as paleography and manuscript methodology, accept the methods or principles of Western European scholarship. Marxism's different ideals require a different, specific sociological method (4). There are some standards set that are reminiscent of those established by Vološinov in his books, as might be expected:

All the products of ideological creation—works of art, scientific works, religious symbols and rites, etc.—are material things . . . .
It is true that these are things of a special nature, having significance, meaning, inner value. But these meanings and values are embodied in material things and actions. They cannot be realized outside of some developed material.

... Each individual act in the creation of ideology is an inseparable part of social intercourse, one of its dependent components, and therefore cannot be studied apart from the whole social process that gives it meaning. (7)

Medvedev begins a study of the "two sets of basic problems" of the Marxist study of ideology:

(1) problems of the characteristic features and forms of organized ideological material as meaningful material; (2) problems of the characteristics and forms of the social intercourse by which this meaning is realized. (9)

By the descriptions of these problems, we are led to what are, essentially, problems of form and content. The problems first examined are those of "organized ideological material." Included in this examination is an analysis that manages to be both specific and general: a number of critics are brought forth and then summarily discarded, in terms of their relation to the argument.

Medvedev claims that "artistic volition" (Kunstwollen) and the resistance of the material, utilitarian purpose and technique form the basis of contemporary West European formalist art scholarship, which must then hold that all changes and developments
in the arts are due to changes in "artistic volition," and must stand against any type of utilitarian positivism. Medvedev allows that the concept of artistic volition will be totally unacceptable to Marxism, but urges Marxism to accept the European prejudice against positivism in any form. He also condemns as widespread in "decadent bourgeois" criticism theories that equate ideological objects with consumer goods. (One could probably view the call in modern American society for "practical," training-oriented education in universities as the present-day equivalent.) The sociological aspects of any art are of primary importance:

It is not the individual, subjective psychic states it elicits that are important in art, but rather the social connections . . . . Everything that is realized within a closed-off, psychophysiological organism and does not go beyond its confines is equal to zero in terms of ideology. (11)

This particular attitude must be seen as a commentary on and justification of the state of Soviet literature in the first few decades of the Soviet period. Given this attitude, it is understandable that there could be, in the eyes of Marxist theory and the Marxist regime, no "innocent" literature. Anything, any work of art, if it participates in society at all, has an ideological content, and must therefore be viewed in ideological
terms. A work which is declared to exist apart from Marxist ideology, a story in and of itself, rebels against Marxist ideology by refusing to participate in it. This condemnation of "fellow traveler" literature is fairly well argued, sincere, and integral to the text. The consideration of this work, first printed in 1928, as being somehow "subversive" to the Soviet government, is one of the amazing impressions which has somehow developed in the past five years or so in this country.

This first chapter is, by nature of its self-assigned role of definitions and exposition of methodology, boring and uninspired material, and makes very slow going. This contrasts rather sharply with the signed Baxtin works, where, although there is of course a certain amount of establishment of terms and exposition of background, a part of the theme of the work, the idea that gives rise to the work and its reason for being, is also presented. The first chapters of the works signed by Baxtin are rarely boring.

Nonetheless, evidence of a "dialogism," so to speak, is present. Perhaps it is unfair to Medvedev to suggest that the occasional bursts of interesting material are due to Baxtin or a Baxtinian dialogic influence. At any rate, an interesting juxtaposition
can be found in the final pages of the first chapter. On one page, Medvedev states:

The ideological environment is the realized, materialized, externally expressed social consciousness of a given collective. It is determined by the collective's economic existence and, in turn, determines the individual consciousness of each member of the collective.

. . . But every act of [man's] consciousness and all the concrete forms of his conduct outside work (manners, ceremonies . . .) are immediately oriented in the ideological environment, are determined by it, and in turn determine it, while only obliquely reflecting and refracting socioeconomic and natural existence. (14)

On the next page, we find:

It is just as naive to think that separate works, which have been snatched out of the unity of the ideological world, are in their isolation directly determined by economic factors as it is to think that a poem's rhymes and stanzas are fitted together according to economic causality. (15)

In this critique of Formalism, produced on a foundation of Marxism, Medvedev is producing, simultaneously, a fairly heavy attack on Marxism. The somewhat daring statement above from the last page of the chapter perhaps explains the rather heavy-handed pedantic Marxism expressed in the penultimate and antepenultimate pages of the chapter.

In the second chapter, errors made by predecessors are examined in detail, a procedure which Baxtin also
followed. Here, literature is taken as a basic equivalent to language in general; at least, the Marxist theory of literature is seen here as being equivalent to the Marxist theory of language seen in Vološinov. Literary structure, like any ideological structure, refracts a socio-economic reality (16). The values expressed in a plot depend on their provenance; values belonging to a feudal lord will differ from those of a peasant or proletarian (Russian, 29).

But Medvedev makes some important statements, and expresses significant reservations about the dogmatism of Marxist criticism. He draws attention to what he calls the errors of Russian literary criticism and literary history, including that it (presumably, Russian literary criticism) dogmatized ideological points expressed in a work by the artist and turned "active and generating problems into ready theses, statements, and philosophical, ethical, political, religious, etc., conclusions" (19). Medvedev states that the artist has nothing to do with prepared theses, which show up in a work as tendentiousness. This, of course, is very strongly reminiscent of that part of the Dostoevskij book where Baxtin posited that to take literature for ideology is erroneous, just as it is incorrect to assume that Dostoevskij's philosophy could be taken to be that expressed by a single character. The complaint that
Medvedev is making here about this tendency to tendentiousness is similar to the negative position Baxtin assigns in the Dostoevskij work to Tolstoj, who, in his "monolithic monologism," was predisposed to the use of "prepared theses." "It is bad if the critic forgets that there is no philosophy in literature, only philosophizing . . . (20)."

Having expressed his dissatisfaction with the "finalization" of ideology in literary criticism, Medvedev proceeds to expound his own theory for the "reflection of the ideological horizon" in the literary work. To illustrate his point, he takes the example of Bazarov from Fathers and Sons. Bazarov is a raznochinets (Wehrle does not translate the term and uses this transliteration), and the "ideologeme" of a raznochinets is "an inseparable element of the unified ideological horizon" of the work and author (21). But Bazarov is not only raznochinets, or completely raznochinets. The social idea influences the work, and vice versa: the work has an influence on the ideological horizon of the social group. Plot determines the fate of Bazarov more than does his status as raznochinets. The hero is complex, and is "constructed at the point where the major structural lines of the work intersect" (22). All this explanation here by Medvedev is similar in idea to the mutual influences of the "word" as
expressed in the Dostoevskij book. In The Formal Method, we see the construction of a different sort of "chronotope." Here, rather than a chronotope of "space-time," we are presented rather with an idea of a chronotope of "character-personality."

Although Medvedev usually devotes his attention to the "unity of literature," he occasionally tries to place this into a larger context:

The work cannot be understood outside the unity of literature. But this whole unity and the individual works which are its elements cannot be understood outside the unity of ideological life. And this last unity, whether it is taken as a whole or as separate elements, cannot be studied outside the unified socioeconomic laws of development. (27)

But while Medvedev condemns the nonsociological nature of Formalism, he also seems to make excuses for those who do not practice what he preaches:

It is true that there are epochs when the artist and the ruling class do not understand one another. (36)

This chapter, and the first part, closes with a statement that the intentions of this work are to criticize formalist poetics, and to prove that the formalist defense of the nonsocial nature of the artistic structure is wrong, and therefore, the entire
theory and poetics of the Formalists must also be wrong.

The second part traces the history of Formalism. The first chapter, on the history of the Western European formal movement, is essentially a dogmatic dismissal. Perhaps the only contention worth noting is that Medvedev finds no specific relationship between the Western European formalist movement and that of Russia, although he admits that, in a "wide historical perspective," Russian Formalism is a branch of the European movement. "Our formalists generally rely on no one and cite no one other than one other" (41).

The chapter on the formalist movement in Russia is a rather perplexing one. The attitude expressed towards the subject wavers between attack and sympathy; the criticism directed towards Russian Formalism sometimes seems more a correction of errors than a refutation. Medvedev seems to indicate that Formalism in Russia was hurt by the lack of strong schools of idealism and positivism. He finds that Futurism was a tremendous influence on Russian Formalism, this being one of the main distinctions between it and the European variety.

The third part of the book would seem to enter the nucleus of the issue taken up by the work, but again, because of a wavering of purpose (or what appears to be such), no clear argument is presented. Medvedev
reiterates that he is agitating against Formalism ("It is at the formal method as a unified and consistent system that criticism must be directed" [76]). However, he examines Formalism, and quotes liberally from formalist methodologists in ways that are sympathetic rather than otherwise. Medvedev provides extensive quotes from Ejxenbaum, Šklovskij, Jakobson, Tynjanov, Tomaševskij and other leading Formalists, and thus allows them to have considerable, though not complete and independent, voices in his text.

Near the beginning of the chapter, Medvedev cites Ejxenbaum about methodology, admits that Ejxenbaum is right, and goes on to say that the formalist position in this is "generally correct. For them method is a dependent and secondary value" (77). What follows is a discussion of formalist positions where the disagreements have the air of a polite conversation with friends. In a sub-section entitled "Poetic Language as a Special Language System," Medvedev advances a convincing argument against the formalist concept of poetic language. He quotes Šklovskij, who refers to Aristotle's contention that poetic language must have "an alien, surprising nature; in practice this means it is often foreign: Sumerian among the Assyrians, Latin in medieval Europe" (80). Medvedev continues:
Here we find a continual naive confusion of the linguistic definition of language (Sumerian, Latin) with its poetic significance ("heightened language"). This is no less naive than the idea that the artistic characteristics of a painting could be determined by chemical analysis. The dialectological characteristics only acquire significance depending on the definite demands of the poetic construction. The very "foreignness" of this language acquires its functional significance in the artistic construction. Nevertheless, this foreign language will not be poetic language. (81-82; Russian, 114)

The pages of this sub-section and the next, "Poetic Language and the Construction of the Literary Work," are remarkably intelligent and convincing. They are perhaps unlike the first chapter, which tempts one to ask whether this may represent a different voice at work, one that has been inserted into the frame established by the first voice. But here, as in the first chapter, the arguments are subtle and studied. The manner of exposition is methodical, regulated—the outline is followed. There do not seem to be any of the "flights of genius" that light up passages of Baxtin's works on Dostoevskij and Rabelais. Whatever the reason, this section of the work is an interesting one and deserves attention.

The analysis of poetic language is summed up with the decision that there is "no such thing as a system of poetic language," that rather there are only "poetic functions of language" (86). (In the following section,
however, poetic language is resurrected: "poetic language became the converse and parasite of practical language.") The discussion then again turns to a discussion and dismissal of other Formalists. Ultimately, Formalism is incomplete because it does not provide all the answers to Medvedev's questions; moreover, there is "no place" for the answers in the "formalists' conceptions" (97).

Next, Medvedev approaches the problem of sound in poetry, which is "not only an element of the word . . . of language in general--but also an element of the nonrepeatable phonetic unity of the whole work" (101)

At the end of the chapter Medvedev drops the tone of pleasant discussion and indulges in a little name-calling. He quotes Šklovskij about the articulatory nature of the meaningless "transrational word" and then splutters: "This is a profession of the most naive artistic hedonism. Shklovskii radically distorts the true nature of the poetic sound" (103). It would appear that Medvedev is getting himself in the mood for the battle he is about to undertake in the next chapter.

The next chapter deals with the nitty-gritty of formalist theory. The tone has changed and has become more combative, more distinctly negative. "Device," "transrational word," plot [sjužet] and story [fabula] are central to the Formalist lexicon, and a good deal of
effort is put into their demolition. *Skaz* is also treated, very summarily. The conclusion to which Medvedev arrives is that there can be no boundary between material and device:

The concept of "laying bare the device" is in a bad way. Nothing shows more clearly and obviously that the formalists are wrong in thinking that the device is the essential thing and the material is just motivation than a work like *Tristram Shandy*. (115)

Here Medvedev is criticizing, of course, Šklovskij's study of *Tristram Shandy*, or rather Šklovskij's decision to use this particular novel for interpretation. Medvedev observes in passing:

*Tristram Shandy* is not a parody of a good novel, not a parody of an artistically regular novel, but of a bad novel, and, at the same time, a parody of bad reality. In Shandy's house nothing is hung as it should be, in its proper place, and the same is true of the novel. (114)

Towards the end of the chapter, he offers the "proper" formulation of the problem of poetic construction:

What, in fact, is the element which unites the material presence of the word with its meaning?

We submit that social evaluation [social'naja ocenka] is this element. (119)

If the utterance is removed from its social setting and materialized, it loses the "organic unity" of its
elements. Medvedev says that every utterance, including the literary, poetic utterance, is subject to the demands of the social evaluation.

However, Medvedev allows that each epoch "has its sphere of objects for cognition, its own sphere of epistemological interests" (126). An object becomes the focus of "social energy" only as needed by the social group, which does so not for the sake of the utterance but for cognition, with the word being an aspect of cognition. Evaluation is not complete in the word. On the other hand, in the poetic work, the utterance is "detached both from its object and from action": "social evaluation is complete within the utterance itself" (127). Since the story provides the social evaluation, it is not dispensable, but develops together with the plot. This all sounds, however, like a circumlocution around the problem of whether a text is an independent entity, and seems to contradict in spirit the claim that the work of art is an object of intercourse, made up of social connections, and not a closed-off organism (11).

Skaz, which is said to "contain the full depth of the narrative," again enters the picture (127). Skaz, along with the plot and the development of the work, are oriented towards the audience and "cannot be understood outside of the interrelationship between speaker and listener or author and reader" (128). This
relationship, then, may perhaps be seen as providing the "social" context and "evaluation" necessary for a work's ideological existence.

In the last chapter of this part, Medvedev faults the Formalists for having gotten around to the problem of genre last of all. He claims a study of poetics should begin, not end, with genre. (He must not have felt very strongly about this, since he also is nearly at the end of his study.) Genre for the Formalists was "mechanically seen" as a group of devices with a "defined dominant." Medvedev, instead, places genre as having a "two-fold orientation in reality": towards the listener, and towards the conditions of performance and perception.

Genre is a means of depicting reality; language plays an essential role in the process of consciousness. However, though we think with language, it is the utterance that forms the basis of our inner speech and our perception of reality. Genre, in literature, provides this same perception. "[A] genuine poetics of genre can only be a sociology of genre" (135).

In the final part of the book, some of the serious criticism against the Formalists is reexamined, sometimes with a pseudo-scientific approach that tends to undermine the seriousness, rather than otherwise: "A (the author) and R (the reader) . . . [and] the ready
communication X, which will simply be transmitted from A to R" (152; Russian, 203). Most of all, the Formalists are faulted for having separated the work from the "interrelationships between people, of which it is an aspect"; this destroys the connections which are essential to the work (153). Again, the major Formalists are quoted extensively, particularly Tynjanov, Šklovskij, and Ejxenbaum.

It is interesting to note that in this final part of the book are some of the linguistic habits previously mentioned in connection with Volosinov. (Perhaps Volosinov really wrote the book published by Medvedev?) It may be that these linguistic gestures are most noticeable here because the "tone" is closer in some undefinable, but subtly perceived way to the works of Volosinov. An example of the paragraph question, followed by six paragraphs, then a paragraph answer:

What are the preconditions of this conception?

... However, such a supposition is absolutely incorrect. (161; Russian 215-216)

A few pages from the end of the book, Medvedev declares: "[w]e may now sum up." Strangely enough, he gives the impression that he is summing up the Formalists', rather than his own discussions. The last sub-section allows that, in the past, Formalism played a
productive role, and succeeded in formulating the problems to be faced, even if it was unable to solve them. The book concludes:

We believe that Marxist scholarship should even be grateful to the formalists, grateful that their theory can be the object of serious criticism, in the process of which the bases of Marxist scholarship will be clarified and strengthened. Every young science—and Marxist literary scholarship is very young—should value a good opponent much higher than a poor ally. (174)

The dialectic of dialogism implied in this statement is a major feature of Baxtinianism. It is only in a dialogue with one's interlocutor, often one's opponent, that a dialogic truth can be reached. Baxtin's thought—as well as Baxtinian thought—stands for an ability to encompass disparate factors within a single entity or consciousness. In Medvedev, this appreciation of the adversary (something which caused an uneasy sense of vacillation throughout the text) is the very quality which constitutes its membership in the "Baxtin school."
CONCLUSION
BAXTINIANISM BETWEEN FORMALISM AND DETERMINISM

Baxtin seems to be very much in danger of receiving the same kind of treatment he deplored in Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics. He has been characterized in print as a Formalist, a post-Formalist, a Marxist, a humanist, a structuralist, a materialist, and a number of other such designations. The danger lies in that, having thus been pigeon-holed, he may be reduced to a single one of his many facets, and the scope of his thought may go unappreciated. As a number of different scholars have asked: "How can we use Baxtin, without misusing him?" If in the Dostoevskij book, Baxtin exhorts us to recognize and appreciate the multi-voiced nature of Dostoevskij's polyphony, so must we accept and attempt to coordinate the multiplicity found in Baxtin, and in the Baxtin school.

Wehrle reports that it was the Soviet psycholinguist A. A. Leont'ev who first drew attention to the "Baxtin school" (ix). Baxtin, Medvedev and Vološinov met in Vitebsk in the early twenties, and may have there drawn up the guidelines for what they set out to accomplish in
Leningrad: the elaboration of a science of ideologies based upon Marxism. According to Wehrle, *The Formal Method, Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, and *Freudianism* were part of this concerted effort to rethink the study of culture.

The importance of the contributions of the Baxtin school, as seen in those works which relate to the productive lifetimes of its three main proponents, is in the main developed in that area which lies between Formalism and Marxism. If the development of Baxtinianism is rooted in a post-formalist esthetics, it is also the case that the development *starts* there, without ending up in the same place. Baxtin hovered between the two poles, as it were, of the formalist and the Marxist-sociological approaches to the text. He plotted a course between the Scylla and the Charybdis of literary studies: between the temptation to regard the literary text as an immanent structure and the opposing temptation to see it as a product of socio-historical determinism. Literary studies seem to be constantly torn between these opposing tendencies, as competing literary theories swing back and forth from appreciating art "for art's sake" to evaluating art "for life's sake."

Of the three theorists considered in this study it is Baxtin who best managed to chart a course between
these two poles, these two temptations, in the most subtle and elegant fashion, and to do so without falling too far either into a materialistic account of culture on the one hand, or falling in the other direction towards abstract formalistic formulations that divorce the literary product from society and history.

Vološinov found himself more tempted by Marxism, and of the three, relied most heavily on Marxist sociological formulations. In *Freudianism* and *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, the opposition of the text as an immanent entity constituted less a temptation than a danger. Although it may be the case that the book on Freudianism does little to advance the methodology of Baxtinianism (that is, it does not serve to stretch or expand the systematic structure of Baxtinian theory in the same way that the other four works of the "Baxtin school" do), it does indeed belong to the Baxtin school of thought. It is a vital member of the core of Baxtinian works largely because it applies a Baxtinian methodology to the social as represented by the "psyche" and psychological sciences. In addition, this work on Freud participates in the "circle" because it adds a more thoroughly grounded Marxist rhetoric to the Baxtinian canon.

This type of expansion of the systematizing structure of Baxtinianism is accomplished to an even
greater degree in Marxism and the Philosophy of Language. This work covers many of the same points of discussion that were seen in the Dostoevskij book. But here again, as with the work on Freud, this is done with a rhetoric which is concretely rooted in the socio-economic and historico-political foundations of Marxist dogma.

Medvedev, closer in thought and approach to Baxtin, remains somewhat between the two poles. He has a much better appreciation for Formalism and Formalist contributions than Vološinov, but ultimately feels obliged to adhere to a Marxist line of thought which accused the Formalists of being too abstract and a-historical in their search for literariness, those features which were exclusively in the domain of literature. The sympathetic condemnation of the Formalists offered by Medvedev in his study seems to represent an internalized dialogue of the type described by Baxtin in the book on Dostoevskij. It never becomes quite clear whether Medvedev is arguing with the Formalists over the issues he discusses, or with himself.

The value in a study of the Baxtin school may be found precisely in the transition between the various approaches, in that otherwise opposing views come to
thus constitute an aggregate and total theory, a more comprehensive system. The tensions seen between the works of Vološinov, Medvedev and Baxtin prefigure current arguments between structuralists and deconstructionists, on the one hand, and semioticians and neo-historicists, on the other. This may account for the current popularity of Baxtin and the Baxtin school.

In Baxtin, polyphony and dialogism as notions are not at odds with Marxism: based on a social matrix, they are firmly rooted in a sociological appreciation of the text. Yet there is something in the notion of polyphony that also sees the process of literary text as immanent, or at least as the product of language systems and generic conventions, rather than the product of class conflict and economic conditions—as something that arises and develops from the humus of literary history, rather than being created, caused, or determined by economic or social conditions outside the parameters of literary history.

With the carnivalesque, Baxtin goes even further, turning history itself into a kind of literary text. He here examines history and culture as if they were the result of the interplay of literary genres and literary texts, rather than describing artistic texts and genres as the products of history and culture, as it would be
presented by most Marxists. Periods of history are analyzed and understood in terms of the genres of discourse available to those periods. It may be this lack of willingness to provide a "historical judgment" that caused the dissertation not to be accepted when it was presented in 1940.

As for the issue of the disputed texts, a certain amount of confusion still exists, a confusion which is not likely to be resolved. Wehrle reports that a paper held by the VAAP (The All-Union Copyright Agency) was signed by Baxtin, saying that if the listed works were to be republished, it should be done in his name (xxvi). Clark and Holquist report, however, that though the paper was prepared for Baxtin's signature, he never actually signed it, and therefore never officially admitted that the texts published by Vološinov and Medvedev were actually written by him (147).

Although it seems clear to me that the books originally published under the names of Vološinov and Medvedev were not written by Baxtin, there are areas in common between the three which permit us to say they belong to the Baxtin school. What is Baxtinian about them is a complex and subtle account of literature which manages to situate it in history and in a social context, while still giving it a privileged status as a product of human consciousness, without making it simply
a mechanical product of socio-economic forces and conditions.

The Baxtinian canon stands for polyphony and the ability to encompass self-contradictory truths in a single construct. It allows for multiplicity of voices. It seems that we must also resign ourselves to an unfinalized truth, and perhaps, an unfinalizable criticism.
APPENDIX\(^1\)

Mixail Mixajlovič Baxtin

A Short Essay of his Life and Work\(^2\)

Mixail Mixajlovič Baxtin was born on November 17 (or 4, Old Style), 1895 in Orel, where he also spent his childhood. His father belonged to old established gentry; his family had been well-known from the fourteenth century and had given Russia a number of distinguished social and cultural figures— in particular the poet I. I. Baxtin, one of the founders of the first Siberian journal The Irtyš, Becoming the Hippocrene\(^3\) (1789-1791), and the eminent critic and associate of

\(^1\) This biography of Baxtin was published in Problemy poètiki i istorii literatury: sbornik statej (Mordovian State University: Saransk, 1973), in a very small printing. It is thus difficult to obtain in Russian, and, to my knowledge, is not available in English. In my translation I have attempted to adhere to the somewhat grandiose style of the original. Hereafter, my notes will be identified as "(Trans. note)." All other notes are from the Russian text.

\(^2\) V. V. Kožinov wrote section I (through 1945), S. S. Konkin wrote section II (after 1945).

\(^3\) (Trans. note) The Irtyš is a river in western Siberia and Kazaxstan.
Katenin and Griboedov, N. I. Baxtin who in the 1840's and 1850's was a state secretary.

By the time Mixail Mixajlović was born, his family no longer possessed any estates; his father worked in a bank, first in Orel, then in Vilnius and Odessa, where in 1913 M. M. Baxtin finished high school. In the same year, he enrolled in the historical-philological department of the Novorossijsk (now the Odessa) University, and then transferred to the Saint Petersburg (now Leningrad) University. At that time, several famous scholars were teaching at the latter institution—the Hellenist F. F. Zelinskij, the logician A. I. Vvedenskij and others. But Baxtin's opinions and scientific methodology were mainly formed by an independent study of philosophy, cultural history, esthetics, and philology.

Of especial significance for Baxtin was the thorough assimilation of German philosophy and, as well, of Russian literature which was inseparably linked with the development of national thought. An organic [as opposed to mechanical] blend of systematic, objective and consistent German philosophical thought with the

4 (Trans. note) Katenin, Pavel Aleksandrovic (1792-1853): Russian poet, especially noted for his realistic ballads. Griboedov, Aleksandr Sergeeviç (1795-1829): poet and playwright, best known for his comedy, Woe from Wit.
ecumenical breadth and depth of Russian creative spirit thus stood before Baxtin as an ideal.

After graduating from the university in 1918, Baxtin settled in the city of Nevel' (now in the Velikie Luki province) and worked for two years as a teacher in the United Workers' school. He was soon elected chairman of the presidium of the school council.

In 1920 Baxtin moved to Vitebsk, which at that time was a noted national cultural center. Here there were many well-known cultural figures who had founded in Vitebsk a National Institute of Higher Education, an arts school and a conservatory. In this city a journal called The Arts was published, and outstanding concerts were organized (at that time many artists of the former Mariinsky theater lived there), as well as public debates, lectures, etc. Baxtin gave courses on world literature and esthetics in the educational institutions of Vitebsk, and delivered many public lectures and directed literary groups.

In Vitebsk Baxtin also began work on his books, which were to be completed and published only much later. In these years he became close to P. N. Medvedev, who at that time was chairman of the Vitebsk Province executive committee, and to V. N. Vološinov and I. I. Sollertinskij, teachers at the Vitebsk conservatory, who became his friends and students. A
series of articles and books, created from conversations with Baxtin on various problems of philosophy, psychology, philology, and esthetics, was published afterwards.⁵

In 1921, Baxtin married a native of Vitebsk, Elena Aleksandrovna Okolovič (1901-1971), who for the course of fifty years was not only his precious friend but also an irreplaceable helper in his work.

Starting in 1923, Baxtin suffered from a severe bone disease (chronic osteomyelitis) which soon developed into a disability and eventually led to the amputation of a leg (in 1938). Baxtin was forced to stop working. In 1924 he returned to Leningrad, where he conducted non-government work at the Institute of the History of the Arts and at the State Publishing House.

In 1924, Baxtin was asked by the then famous journal Russian Contemporary, one of the directors of


which was A. M. Gor'kij, to write the work "On Questions of Methodology of the Esthetics of Verbal Art." This profound theoretical essay, which brought clarity into an entire series of problems of literary and artistic studies, was unfortunately not published at that time, since the journal Russian Contemporary shortly thereafter ceased publication. This essay is now included in a book of collected works of Baxtin, which is being prepared for publication at the time of this writing in the publishing house Xudožestvennaja literatura. It contains an original and exceptionally productive solution to the problems of material, form and content of the artistic text, about which there were such sharp and often fruitless controversies both then and later. The methodological principles formulated in this essay became the basis of future works about literature by Baxtin. In general, over the course of twenty years he developed the general theoretical and historico-cultural concepts, from which grew his books about Dostoevskij and Rabelais and a series of works about the nature of the word, about the essence and development of the art of the novel, and so forth.

Baxtin did not hasten to publish the results of his investigations; his first book appeared when he was

6 (Trans. note) It has since been published, under the title Voprozy literatury i estetiki, 1975.
already thirty-four years old. He discussed the problems which interested him with a group of eminent Leningrad scholars (who were, by the way, not only scholars in the humanities; one of the closest friends of Baxtin was a biologist, I. I. Kanaev, who is now a corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences), with writers, and with representatives of the arts.

It is worthwhile to note that Baxtin, who was one of the first scholars in the world to study the nature of carnivalistic culture, was very interested by people of the "carnival" way of life; friends and close acquaintances of Baxtin at that time who were of that type of people included the poet N. A. Kljuev (1887-1937), the undeservedly forgotten writer of prose and poetry K. K. Vaginov (1900-1934), the literary scholar L. V. Pumpjanskij (1894-1940), the poet-improviser B. M. Zubakin (1894-1937) who published, among other things, the collection of verse Bear on the Boulevard (Leningrad, 1928). The "carnival" atmosphere that was characteristic of this circle of people found its reflection in the novels of Konstantin Vaginov The Goat's Song (Leningrad, 1928) and The Deeds and Days of Svisstonov (Leningrad, 1929); in these novels was created the parodistic image of L. V. Pumpjanskij, introduced under the names of Teptelkin and Coo-coo.
In 1929 Baxtin published the book Problems of Dostoevskij's Art. Shortly after, there appeared a long article by A. V. Lunačarskij (New World, 1930, No. 3), dedicated to this book. Although in some ways polemicizing with the author, the critic at the same time praised the book as the deepest investigation of the artistic structure of the novels of Dostoevskij.

Indeed, in Baxtin's book Dostoevskij for the first time appeared as an original artist, an artist of genius, one who discovered completely new principles for an articulation of the world on the esthetic plane. The book relies on the firm foundation of philosophical, ethical and esthetic conceptions, which articulate the nature of consciousness, the essence of human personality, the specifics of artistic creation as an organic whole of content and form. At the same time, the object of investigation throughout the length of the entire book is shown to be the artistic reality of the works of Dostoevskij. Whether the subject under discussion is the general artistic principles of Dostoevskij, the protagonist and the position of the author, the idea, the plot or the word—everywhere we have to deal with this artistic reality. It is possible to perceive Baxtin's book in two different ways (of course, each of these perceptions would be one-sided)—both as an original treatise about
personality, human consciousness and art, and as an investigation of the "structure" of Dostoevskij's artistic world. But the highest value of the book consists of the fact that these different sides are organically joined together. The more or less acute rupture of content and form so characteristic for works about literature is decidedly surmounted in the book.

Around the time of the book's publication, there was a struggle between the formal and the sociological (essentially, a vulgar-sociological) methodology. Despite the external contradictions of these different directions, they coincided in the main point: in both, the organic unity of artistic content and form was broken. Attempts to unite both directions into a "formal-sociological" methodology (for instance, in the works of B. I. Arvatov) led merely to the intensification of their problems. Baxtin, rejecting these tendencies and relying on the great traditions of classical esthetics, went on a principally different path.

The essence of classical tradition in esthetics is vividly revealed, for example, in the famous judgment of Puškin: "A unified plan of the Inferno is a work of great genius." It is relatively simple to demonstrate "how the Inferno is made." But it is immensely more difficult to understand and explain that the "plan" of
Dante's epic poem is a "fruit of great genius" in and of itself. In Baxtin's book the very "plan" of Dostoevskij's novels and the very structure of their verbal fabric is shown as just such a "fruit of great genius."

Soon after the appearance of the book on Dostoevskij, Baxtin settled near the border of Siberia and Kazaxstan, in the city of Kustanaj. He lived there about six years, working in local offices. At this time he became interested in problems of the theory and history of the novel. In 1934 and 1935 Baxtin completed a major essay "The Word in the Novel." He then began work on a monograph about Rabelais. In the autumn of 1936 he was invited to a job in Saransk, in the Mordovian pedagogical institute (now a university), where Baxtin taught the general history of world literature for a year.

In 1937 Baxtin moved to Moscow and settled in the town of Kimry on the outskirts of Moscow. Here he completed a book on the German novel of the eighteenth century, the so-called "Erziehungsroman," a sort of laboratory in which the great German philosophical-esthetical culture of the end of the

7 The first chapter of this work was published in the journal Voprosy literatury (1972, No. 6); it was published in its entirety in a book of selected works of Baxtin (by "Xudožestvennaja literatura").
eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries was developed. This book was accepted by the publishing house Sovetski pisatel' and was prepared for printing, but the war delayed the publication, and in the complicated conditions of wartime, the manuscript was lost (the author had kept only a part of the rough draft).

In the years preceding the war Baxtin worked in the sector of theory of literature and esthetics of the Gor'kij Institute of World Literature of the USSR Academy of Sciences. On October 14, 1940, he delivered a lecture "The Word in the Novel" to a session of the sector, and on March 21, 1941 another, entitled "The Novel as a Literary Genre." The lectures made a great impression of their audience. They were subsequently published.\(^8\)

In 1940 Baxtin finished work on the opus François Rabelais in the History of Realism, which he intended to present as his dissertation. The war disturbed these plans; the dissertation was not defended until 1946 (more on this below). Afterwards, on the basis of this dissertation, Baxtin prepared a book on Rabelais (published in 1965). Finally, on the eve of the war he

\(^8\) The first was published in the journal Voprosy literatury (Questions of Literature), 1965, No. 8, and in the collection Russian and Foreign Literature, Saransk, 1967; the second in the journal Voprosy literatury, 1970, No. 1.
wrote a large article "Satire," on a commission from the editorship of the then Literary Encyclopedia, but the tenth volume of the encyclopedia, for which the article was intended, never appeared.

If in the 1920's Baxtin was occupied for the most part with general theoretical problems of literature and culture as a whole (in particular, with questions of the theory of knowledge, esthetics, ethics, the psychology of language), then in the 1930's the focus was on problems of historic development of literature and culture (the scholar meanwhile did not, of course, reject broad theoretical generalizations). History is the main "hero" of his series of works about the novel, about Rabelais and of the work begun at that same time about oral genres (Mixail Mixajlović is still occupied with the research of this extraordinarily substantial problem at the present time).9 In accordance with this, the original internal theme of study had changed: if in the 1920's the theme of personality and its role in the creation of culture was in the foreground, in the 1930's, along with the problem of history, the theme of the people and of cultural creation came to the fore. In the history of culture, what interested Baxtin above all were the periods of transition: the era of the

9 (Trans. note) This biography was published in 1973. Baxtin died in 1975.
destruction of ancient society and of the beginning of the Middle Ages, the era of the transition to the Renaissance, the era of the final assertion of the capitalist system (the end of the eighteenth through the beginning of the nineteenth centuries). It is necessary to state clearly that these transitional periods in the development of culture, perhaps because of their exceptional complexity, are studied rather less attentively than the periods of a more or less "calm" evolutionary development—"classical" antiquity and the Middle Ages, the "high" Renaissance, classicism and the Enlightenment, the Western European nineteenth century.

As a result of his studies, Baxtin elucidated the development of literature (and of culture as a whole) in the first centuries of our era in a radically new manner in a series of works of the specifics of genre in the menippea. In the book on Rabelais he revealed not only proper Renaissance features, as is done in the overwhelming majority of such research, but above all peculiarities of the very transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. In a series of studies on the novel Baxtın showed how those characteristics of the art of the novel which appeared in completed form in the Western novel of the nineteenth century, developed precisely in the opposition of contradictory elements. Finally, in the works on Dostoevskij he outlined the
formative process of twentieth century poetics. During the years of the war Baxtin continued to reflect on the problematics which has been outlined here (though in incomplete form and of course only in its most general features). During this time, he was working in the secondary schools of the city of Kimry, where he taught Russian language and literature and German.

* * *

In 1945, immediately after the end of the second World War, Baxtin received a new invitation to work at the Mordovian pedagogical institute. Having accepted this invitation, he moved to Saransk soon afterwards, and in the autumn of that same year, established himself there as head of the department of general literature. In 1957, the pedagogical institute in the capitol of the republic was expanded into the Mordovian State University, now named after N. P. Ogarev. Baxtin became the head of the department of Russian and foreign literature in this new university.

For a good quarter of a century Baxtin devoted himself to working in the institutions of higher education in Mordovia and to the business of instructing the people of the republic. These were years of varied, intensive creative work by an
indefatigable literary scholar, teacher, and educator of student youth, one who popularized art and literature among the great masses of the working people.

During the first years of living and working in Saransk, Baxtin continued working on his main research project, *François Rabelais in the History of Realism*, the manuscript he had presented back in 1940 to the A. M. Gor'kij Institute of World Literature in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Candidate degree in philology. The defense of the dissertation, however, took place only in autumn of 1946. The official committee, the doctors of philological sciences A. A. Smirnov and I. M. Nusinov, and the doctor of artistic sciences A. K. Dživelegov rated highly the work of Baxtin and expressed their conviction that the dissertation candidate had merited the awarding of the degree of doctor of philological sciences. This high evaluation was supported by an array of other scholars who had entered into the debate. It was pointed out, in particular, that the research was of great and fundamental interest for literary scholarship. There were, however, other voices as well. As was observed soon afterwards in one of the chronicle reviews, "the principal objections against the fundamental positions of the dissertation were presented by N. K. Piksanov, corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences, and the
professors N. L. Brodskij and B. Ja. Kirpotin. This circumstance called for the second appearances of all three members of the committee, who once again confirmed their evaluation and their proposition. The discussion lasted for more than seven hours. The degree of candidate of philological sciences was unanimously awarded to Baxtin. Immediately following this, the proposition of the committee about the awarding of the doctoral degree to the candidate was put to the vote. Seven voted for this proposition, and six members of the council, against. In the higher certification committee the results of the voting were not supported and confirmed, and the scholar was denied the degree of doctor of philological sciences. This meant that the research by Baxtin remained unpublished and essentially untouched for twenty years. It was only in 1965 that the publishing house "Xudožestvennaja literatura" took the initiative and published Baxtin's book under the title of The Work of François Rabelais and Folk Culture of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

It is neither possible nor necessary here to go into a detailed examination of this book and of its diverse aspects; all this has already been done in tens of reviews and articles connected to it in some way or other.

10 Bulletin of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 1947, 5, 123.
another, or expressly dedicated to it. Let us merely relate that this book, as has been correctly observed in one of these articles, stands particularly against "a non-historical approach to the problem of nationality in literature and art." It contains:

one of the most interesting attempts in our literary scholarship to elucidate the given problem on the basis of a study of the question of the role of folk traditions in the origin of the world artistic classics, research into the interrelationship of literature and folklore based on extensive comparative material of the development of the epic narrative genres in the literatures of the ancient world, the Middle Ages and of recent times.

Baxtin enriched Soviet literary scholarship with many productive ideas. To him lay the merit of introducing into our scientific use an understanding of the "folk culture of laughter." His deduction that, in studying the events of world literature and art, scholars should know how to listen to the voice of the people creating history, merits the most careful attention. "All the acts of the drama of world history have passed before a laughing folk chorus. Without


_12_ G. M. Fridlender, B. S. Mejlax, V. M. Žirmunskij. Ibid.
hearing this chorus, it is impossible to understand the
drama in its entirety,"—so goes Baxtin's final
deduction.\(^{13}\)

As is often the case with truly scholarly works,
this book, dedicated to the work of one of the greatest
artists of the Renaissance, grew past its "natural
limits," having elucidated in passing many other
problems of contemporary literary scholarship, art
criticism, the study of folklore and other related
disciplines.

Several reviewers justly pointed out the loss to
our scholarship caused by the delayed publication of
Baxtin's book. This loss is particularly demonstrated
by our literary scholarship being denied the priority it
would have had, had the book under discussion been
published at the time it was written.\(^{14}\)

The topical theoretical problems of literary
scholarship which had attracted the attention of Mixail
Mixajlović Baxtin in the twenties and thirties continued
to occupy his thought in the following decades. His
theoretical thought expanded and deepened, and added to
the examination were all the new sources and materials

\(^{13}\) M. Baxtin, *The Work of Francois Rabelais and The
Folk Culture of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*,
GIXL, 1965, 517.

\(^{14}\) A. Anikst. "Laughter--The Cheerful Business,"
which had appeared in Russian or foreign languages. In 1963, the "Soviet Writer" publishing house published Baxtin's book *Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics*. It was based on Baxtin's investigation, already mentioned above, of the great Russian artist of the word, which was first published in 1929. In the new book, which evoked many responses and reviews both in our country and abroad, the author included significant and interesting new material. This material is more than a survey of that part of the critical literature about Dostoevskij which appeared after the initial publication of the book and which in some way or another was connected with the polyphonic essence of the works of the humanist-writer. We are speaking of the newly reworked chapters and sections of the book, enriched with new facts and ideas, of the expansion and deepening of its theoretical fundamentals, the improvement of the research methodology. Most significant of all in this respect is the chapter "The Word in Dostoevskij." This, in the opinion of one of the reviewers, is "one of the best theoretical works of its kind in our literature. It contains a classification of the different types of word in the novel and evolves its own original
understanding of the ways and principles of the scientific study of language and of artistic prose."¹⁵

One may agree or disagree with the basic concept of the book *Problems of Dostoevskij's Poetics*, with some conclusion or another in it. But it is completely impossible not to recognize that in this study, Baxtin's contribution goes considerably beyond matters of direct relevance to the specific nature of Dostoevskij's poetics. Even those scholars who do not share the conceptual ideas of this book agree that "as regards the posing of the problems of artistic form" this book "sharply distinguishes itself on the general background of our literary scholarship."¹⁶ That is why, as is noted in one of the reviews, "not a single literary scholar involved in the study of Dostoevskij can pass by" this work by Baxtin, and "it has firmly established itself as a factor in the works of progressive foreign scholars as well."¹⁷

The research that Baxtin completed during the years of his work in the institutes of higher learning of


Mordovia is known only to a very minor extent. It consists of articles and reviews, published in the pages of the local periodical press, and not yet been published collectively. Indeed, a large part of them still awaits publication.

While living in Saransk, Baxtin devoted much time and effort to the work of the department which he headed for many years, and to the work of educating and raising the student youth. Strict, yet at the same time exceptionally benevolent, Baxtin was the heart and soul of that small collective of teachers whom he directed. Knowing well all the specialties and abilities of each one, he tried in every way possible to develop these abilities and to imbue each person with a sense of responsibility for the charge which was entrusted to him. "With amazing tact, Mixail Mixajlovič never oppressed anyone with his authority," was the observation about him by M. Ja. Šaldybina, who worked with him a long time. "On the contrary, we all regarded him as our older comrade, sensitive and responsive, and thus it was that in each of us he was able to awaken the desire and readiness to work on a heightened level of our scientific training and pedagogical skill."

Baxtin was always extremely willing to exchange with his colleagues his extensive literary, linguistical and philosophical knowledge as well as his great
scientific-pedagogical experience. This is the reason that everyone who ever had the chance to work with him always retained a feeling of sincere respect and deep gratitude towards him. Baxtin's attitude towards the student youth was one of invariable concern and attention. He would not come to meet them with yellowed pages containing only a scanty supply of information, as unfortunately is rather often the case, but with that great and many-sided supply of knowledge which constituted the integral part of his figure as a scholar, pedagogue and person. For the most part, Baxtin gave courses of Western European literature—of the ancient classical period, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the epoch of the Enlightenment and of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. "The different phenomena of literature and art in his interpretation appeared before our minds' eye against a wide historical-cultural background and were perceived as a most important ingredient of the spiritual creation of the working people," said N. I. Šibakov, who took classes from Baxtin from 1948 to 1953. L.I. Guščina, who is now a Distinguished Teacher of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, also recalls with delight the lecture courses of Baxtin. "At his lectures," she says, "would often be heard words of some other language—the original poetic speech of Homer or
Vergil, Dante or Rabelais, Shakespeare or Goethe. We listened to him as though enchanted, always remembering the ideas and images to which he had called our attention."

The lecture halls in which Baxtin's classes took place were always full to overflowing. Not only students of the philological department came to listen to him, but students from many other departments as well.

During the years of his work in the capital of Mordovia, Baxtin prepared thousands of teachers of literature and grammar. The greater part of them has been serving honorably to the present day in the schools and institutes of higher learning, in the offices of the newspapers or in the scientific establishments of the republic and in many regions of the country, all the while remembering with gratitude their solicitous and attentive teacher.

Baxtin showed great responsibility towards that part of his work which we call "social." For many years he taught a continuously active seminar in the esthetics and the history of the theater arts in the Mordovian music-drama theater. Baxtin often appeared with special series of lectures for the writers of the republic. He read several hundreds of popular lectures for the workers of Saransk—at the factories and plants, in
schools, for different organizations and businesses. His appearances were met everywhere with sincere gratitude.

In August of 1961, because of the condition of his health, Baxtin left his state job in the Mordovian university, going on a pension. But even after this, his association with the department and his colleagues from many years of working at the same place did not cease. The encyclopedic knowledge and enormous spiritual charm of Mixail Mixajlovič attracted in the same old way all those who had ever in the slightest known him or needed his help. They came to him to share their joys and sorrows, and to turn to him for good advice. Almost every day at his apartment, there would be students, graduate students, teachers or writers. With all these people he willingly shared his vast knowledge. Baxtin read the manuscripts of senior theses, articles or dissertations, novels or collections of poetry. His support was an inspiration. Many hundreds of people are thankful to him for his part in their personal fates.

Thus passed the days, the months, the years of the life of M. M. Baxtin in the capital of Mordovia.

At the end of 1969 the state of health of both Mixail Mixajlovič and his wife Elena Aleksandrovna deteriorated, which prompted them to leave Saransk and
go to Moscow for treatment. However, as it turned out, he had to remain there in permanent residence.

Twenty-five years of intense creative work by Baxtin in the institutes of higher learning of Mordovia had left a significant imprint in the life of the republic, in the development of the education, science and culture of its people. This labor is not forgotten. In November of 1970, in connection of the seventy-fifth anniversary of his birth and of fifty years of scientific and pedagogical activity, Baxtin was awarded an honorary diploma by the Supreme Soviet of the Mordovian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. This action was met with the satisfaction of the scientific, pedagogical and literary society of the republic.

With his research Mixail Mixajlovič Baxtin continues the best traditions of Russian philology—literary scholarship and linguistics. The boldness of his creative efforts unites an extension and a depth of generalizing theory, always based on a solid foundation of facts. Free from any conjunctive considerations, in all his research he proceeded only from the interests of science.

The years are inexorable. But, overcoming his fatigue, Mixail Mixajlovič Baxtin continues to work and to go forward—to meet life head on!


---. Tvorčestvo Fransua Rable i narodnaja kul'tura srednevekov'ja i renessansa. Moscow: "Xud. literatura," 1965.


The following bibliography contains titles not cited in the text. It does not aim to be exhaustive or complete. It merely lists other studies which were consulted and were found to be pertinent, in whole or in part, to the subjects investigated in this dissertation.


