

Title: Depictions of Faith in the Works of Dostoevsky and Gorky  
Author: Benjamin Jens, The College of New Jersey  
Email: [benjamincjens@gmail.com](mailto:benjamincjens@gmail.com)

Although Maksim Gorky famously labeled Fyodor Dostoevsky an “evil genius” and railed publicly against “Karamazov-ism,” even Gorky’s contemporaries noted the influence of his predecessor. Gorky’s problematic relationship with Dostoevsky’s works has been explored by scholars such as Boris Bialik, Richard Peace, Robert Louis Jackson, and James Goodwin, to name just a few. However, Ol’ga Sukhikh warns against creating easy contrasts or strong connections between the two authors; instead she advocates for separating the social questions from the philosophical explorations in order to better understand points of conflict and intersection.

One of the key issues for both authors was faith. Here, again, one encounters an easy contrast between Dostoevsky’s Christianity and Gorky’s atheism. But the search for faith calls for a more nuanced understanding of the problematic relationship between the two writers, especially when one considers Gorky’s God-Building phase. This paper will explore the ways in which Dostoevsky and Gorky depict faith and the search for faith by juxtaposing key scenes in major works by Dostoevsky with scenes from Gorky’s *Mother*, *The Lower Depths*, and *Confession*. In particular, special attention will be paid to the language used in these scenes to demonstrate the ways in which Gorky builds on and continues Dostoevsky’s methods.

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