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Title: Berlin as a Setting in Vladimir Nabokov's Russian Prose

**Abstract:**

As I show in this paper, Vladimir Nabokov's image of Berlin developed from the depiction of Berlin in the tradition of literary naturalism as it is observed in "A Guide to Berlin" (1925) to a philosophical interpretation, understanding, and inner acceptance in his last Russian novel "The Gift" (1938). The city of Berlin represents the idea of the writer's existential journey, and this is realized in the characters' travel along "the roads of life", in the poetic expression of their thoughts and feelings, and is literally illustrated in the writer's portrayal of the characters' physical motion throughout the city (for example, Ganin's riding the tram and departing from a train station in Berlin in the novel "Mary" (1926), Shchyogolevs' departure for Copenhagen and Fyodor's walks along the many streets of Berlin and his triumphal moment of maturity in Berlin's Grunewald in "The Gift"). Thus, the perpetual motion and the dynamic acceleration of urban development become an immutable attribute of the cityscape in Nabokov's Russian prose where not only objects but also characters are involved in the stream of metamorphosis. In the course of this study, it was revealed that the theme of Saint Petersburg is present in Nabokov's works evoking visual and literary parallels, but it is depicted mostly in a symbolic way as the writer attempts to construct semantic bridges to the Russian literary tradition (Alexander Blok and Alexander Pushkin). Nabokov puts Berlin on the map of Russian literature, and Nabokov's Berlin becomes a symbol of transition and change. Furthermore, the idea of unity of the individual and his environment and the possibility of mental reconstruction and retrospective idealization of the past find their poetic representation in Vladimir Nabokov's Russian prose.