

Title: *A Sentimental Journey* through the Gothic Landscape: Karamzin's Transitional Prose  
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Nikolai Karamzin is known for his historical studies, his travelogues, and his essays. With the notable exception of "Poor Liza" (1792), he is less well known for his short prose fiction. The works that he produced during this period represent a pivotal time of generic experimentation, however. This paper examines Karamzin's two so-called Gothic stories, "Sierra-Morena" (1793) and "The Island of Bornholm" (1794), and their role as transitional generic pieces. Both tales tell the adventures of Russians abroad and evoke earlier Sentimental travelogues like Lawrence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy* (1768), Goethe's *Italian Journey* (1786-88), as well as Karamzin's own *Letters from a Russian Traveler* (1789) in terms of both narration and subject matter. Beyond the nostalgia and melancholy of the Sentimental narrators in these stories, though, lie the dark passions of the Gothic mode, waiting to startle and horrify the hapless reader (as well as the hapless narrator). This paper will examine the way the Sentimental narrator perceives these Gothic elements. The clash of Sentimental and Gothic landscape, as well, will be treated. Ultimately, by examining these transitional, hybrid works that proved to be so influential on early nineteenth-century writers, this paper suggests that the Russian Gothic, an often over-looked and little studied genre, was much more instrumental in shaping the course of Russian literary history than previously suspected. These early Gothic landscapes, for example, are echoed in the later landscapes of Turgenev and Nekrasov, as well as in urban landscape depiction throughout the nineteenth century. This paper represents a small part of a larger dissertation on the influence, impact, and use of the Gothic in Russian Realist prose.