

**Title:** Dostoevsky's Gothic Cityscape: Sublime Anxiety in the Early Petersburg Prose  
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Dostoevsky's Petersburg works are marked by sharp contrasts: light and dark, transcendence and insignificance, and, out of a frequently confusing, inhospitable, and terrible cityscape, moments of beauty. This paper analyzes the Gothic-inspired moments in Dostoevsky's St. Petersburg across a swathe of his early prose, including *Poor Folk* (1844), "A Weak Heart" (1848), and *Netochka Nezvanova* (1849). As his heroes (and heroines) experience the city, their wrought psychologies influence its depiction to the reader. Dostoevsky's Petersburg, in these episodes, is punctuated with moments of the sublime, but a sublime that emerges from overwhelming anxiety. As this paper argues, the Gothic mode, used in particular in these moments of pseudo-physiological urban representation, lends itself to building feelings of anxiety and dread. In some sense, Dostoevsky's Gothic cityscape, in its engagement with sublime anxiety, links the eighteenth-century ideal of the city's plan with its darker reality, mixing an early Realist vision with Romantic feeling and creating new Gothic-Realist psychologies.