



Petersburg/Petersburg: Novel and City, 1900-1921

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Since its founding three hundred years ago, the city of Saint Petersburg has captured the imaginations of the most celebrated Russian writers, whose characters map the city by navigating its streets from the aristocratic center to the gritty outskirts. While Tsar Peter the Great planned the streetscapes of Russia's northern capital as a contrast to the muddy and crooked streets of Moscow, Andrei Bely's novel *Petersburg* (1916), a cornerstone of Russian modernism and the culmination of the "Petersburg myth" in Russian culture, takes issue with the city's premeditated and supposedly rational character in the early twentieth century.

"Petersburg"/Petersburg studies the book and the city against and through each other. It begins with new readings of the novel—as a detective story inspired by bomb-throwing terrorists, as a representation of the aversive emotion of disgust, and as a painterly avant-garde text—stressing the novel's phantasmagoric and apocalyptic vision of the city. Taking a cue from Petersburg's narrator, the rest of this volume (and the companion Web site, stpetersburg.berkeley.edu/) explores the city from vantage points that have not been considered before—from its streetcars and iconic art-nouveau office buildings to the slaughterhouse on the city fringes. From poetry and terrorist memoirs, photographs and artwork, maps and guidebooks of that period, the city emerges as a living organism, a dreamworld in flux, and a junction of modernity and modernism.

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