

*Nassim Winnie Berdjis*

**Imagery in  
Vladimir Nabokov's  
Last Russian Novel  
(*Дар*), Its English  
Translation (*The Gift*),  
and Other Prose Works  
of the 1930s**



**PETER LANG**

Europäischer Verlag der Wissenschaften

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abbreviations and Transliteration	11
Introduction	15
1 Translation and Imagery	23
1.1 Translation	23
1.1.1 Nabokov's Translations of Masterpieces	23
1.1.2 Bilingual Writing and Auto-Translation	25
1.2 Nabokov's Prose Works of the 1930s: A Chronology of Literary Creation and Publication in Russian and English	26
1.2.1 <i>Соглядатай/The Eye</i>	33
1.2.2 <i>Подвигъ/Glory</i>	34
1.2.3 <i>Камера обскура, Camera Obscura, and     Laughter in the Dark</i>	36
1.2.4 Nine Short Stories	38
1.2.5 <i>Отчаяние</i> and Two Versions of <i>Despair</i>	39
1.2.6 A Dozen Short Stories, a Play, and <i>Приглашение на казнь/Invitation to a Beheading</i>	40
1.2.7 <i>Дар/The Gift: Creation, Publication, and Critical Response</i>	43
1.2.8 Fragments: <i>Solus Rex</i> and a Second Volume of <i>Дар</i>	45
1.3 Imagery	48
1.3.1 Two Modes of Writing	48
1.3.2 Critical Responses to the Dichotomy of Metaphor and Metonymy	50
1.3.3 Simile, Pun, and Allegory	55
1.3.4 Lodge's "Two Modes of Modern Writing" in Realism and Modernism	56
1.3.5 The Proximity of Prose and Poetry in the Works of Vladimir Nabokov	57
2. Metamorphoses	61
2.1 Abstract into Material	61
2.1.1 More or Less Tangible Objects	61

2.1.2	Emotions and Ideas Posing as Natural Phenomena	67
2.1.2.1	Landscapes	67
2.1.2.2	Animals	69
2.1.2.3	Plants and Fruit	72
2.1.2.4	The Weather and the Universe	75
2.1.2.5	Liquid Thoughts and Emotions	79
2.1.3	City Life and Machinery	83
2.1.4	Sounds and Colors	86
2.1.5	Weight, Chains, and Links	90
2.2	Time	93
2.2.1	Time in Terms of Space	93
2.2.2	Watches and Clocks	95
2.3	Metamorphoses within and among Different Realms of the Material World	99
2.4	Metamorphoses of Men into Objects or Plants	114
2.5	Metamorphoses of Men into Animals	121
2.6	Animation and Personification	132
2.7	Synesthesia	145
3	Language Games	151
3.1	Говорящие имена--Telling Names	151
3.2	Puns and Ономастореия	166
3.3	Literature and Chess	178
4	The Development of Artistic Talent	183
4.1	Inspiration	183
4.2	Fedor's Muse: Zina	194
4.3	Phases in Fedor's Artistic Development	196
4.3.1	Poetry	196
4.3.2	His Father's Biography	199
4.3.3	<i>Жизнь Чернышевского/The Life of Chernyshevskij</i>	200
4.3.4	Fedor's Masterpiece: <i>Дар/The Gift</i>	205
4.3.5	Fedor's Dream	208
4.4	Perverted Artists: "Весна в Фиальте"/"Spring in Fialta," <i>Отчаяние/ Despair, and Камера обскура/ Laughter in the Dark</i>	210

4.5	Inventing One's Life: <i>Созлядамай/The Eye</i> and <i>Подвигъ/Glory</i>	218
4.6	The Role of Writing in <i>Приглашение на казнь/ Invitation to a Beheading</i>	228
4.7	Prisons and Performances	234
4.8	Movies	244
5	The Power of Vision	249
5.1	Focused Vision in Contrast to Myopia	249
5.2	Hungry Eyes: Literature as Food	260
5.3	Looking Back: The Mechanism of Memory	262
6	Art and Nature: the Exquisite Cheats	271
6.1	Art and Natural Science	271
6.2	Hunting and Naming	273
6.3	Butterflies and Moths	276
6.4	Fog	281
6.5	Fire and Ice	283
6.6	Transparence	287
6.7	Light Effects	293
6.7.1	Light and Shadow in Contrast to Substantiality	293
6.7.2	Liquid Light	295
6.8	Rainbows	296
6.9	Mirrors	299
6.10	Clothes and Fabric	305
6.11	Painting	311
6.12	Life Imitating Art	315
7	Numbers, Forms, and Ideology	319
7.1	Advertising and Commerce	319
7.2	Architecture and Maths	322
7.3	Magic Geometry	330
7.3.1	Circles and Spirals	331
7.3.2	Triangles within Circles	336
7.4	Ideology and Art	338

8 Religion and Human Existence	343
8.1 Man and Religion	343
8.2 Nikolaj Gavrilovich Chernyshevskij as a Secular Christ	350
8.3 Christian Imagery and Motifs in <i>Приглашение на казнь/ Invitation to a Beheading</i>	351
8.4 Life and Death	354
8.5 The Promise of Metaphysical Existence	366
9 Conclusion	371
List of Works Cited	381
Index	391