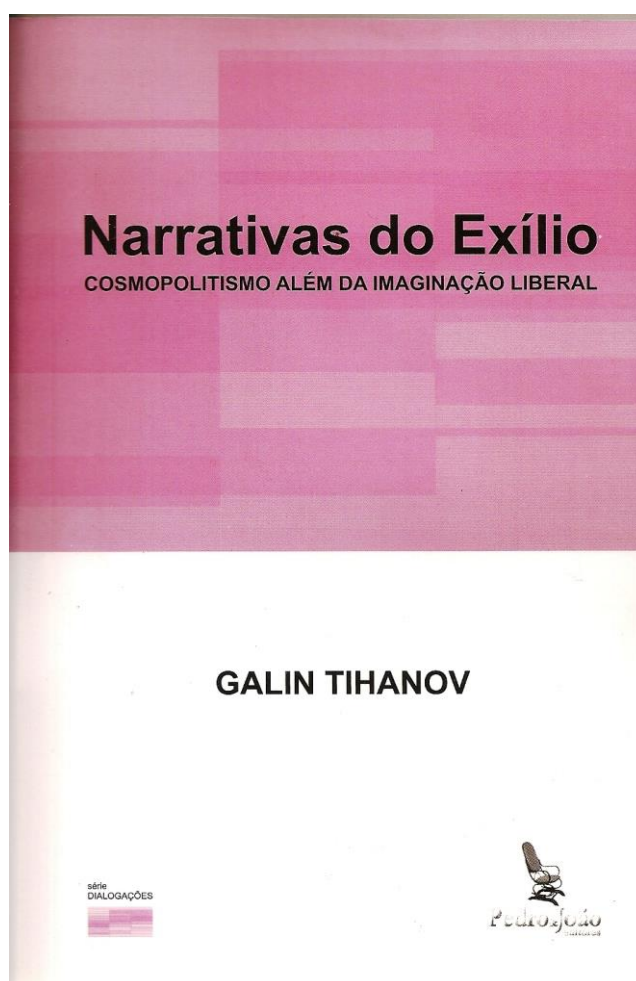


TIHANOV, Galin. *Narrativas do exílio: cosmopolitismo além da imaginação liberal*. [Narratives of Exile: Cosmopolitanism beyond the Liberal Imagination] Série Diálogos dirigida por Maria Isabel de Moura. Trad. Camila Caracelli Scherma; Marina Haber de Figueiredo; Mateus Yuri Passos; Michele Viana Trevisan; Nanci Moreira Branco; Rômulo Augusto Orlandini; Tatiana Aparecida Moreira. São Carlos: Pedro e João Editores, 2013. 186 p.

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¹Although I am a foreigner and I was not able to assess the fluency and clarity of the translation performed in the book reviewed, I had the opportunity to compare the Brazilian translation of Tihanov's essays with their Russian versions and, in some cases, I noticed a gap in conveying some ideas of the author. Unfortunately, besides that, the translators did not observe the standardization of transliteration rules of Russian names conventionally used in all recent translations from Russian into Portuguese, such as the case of Vladímir Maiakóvski (which appears as Mayakovsky), Viktor Chklóvski (transliterated as Shklovsky), Yuri Tyniánov (Yuri Tynianov) and so on.

Russian literature is usually divided into three stages: classical and modernist Russian literature produced until the 1917 revolution, Soviet and post-Soviet literature. However, this division lacks a very important link: the valuable contribution from writers, poets and literary critics who had left pre-revolutionary Russia and the later Soviet Union for various reasons, mainly political, and started writing from their exile. The history of Russian literature and of its émigré literature as a “parallel reality” became the central focus of several lectures recently pronounced in Brazilian universities (such as Universidade de São Paulo – USP, Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo – PUCSP e Universidade Estadual Paulista “Júlio de Mesquita Filho” – UNESP) by Galin Tihanov, who is Professor of Comparative Literature and Intellectual History at Queen Mary, University of London. *Narrativas do exílio: cosmopolitismo além da imaginação liberal* [Narratives of Exile: Cosmopolitanism beyond the Liberal Imagination] gathers four essays² written in different occasions, but linked by a central theme: cosmopolitanism as a key characteristic of emigration culture. Once exile is analyzed both as a universal phenomenon and as a concrete case (i.e., writers who emigrated from Russia), the book will certainly attract a significant number of readers who are interested in that issue.

It would be a very serious mistake to approach émigré literature, or exile literature, according to Tihanov’s designation, as secondary, or less important, in relation to national literature. Many emigrant writers have become world renowned, among whom are Ivan Bunin (1870-1953), winner of the Nobel Prize in 1933, and Vladimir Nabokov (1899-1977), who wrote several works in English. In the Literary criticism field, there was a great contribution from the emigrant Roman Jakobson, who was, among other things, responsible for finding and divulging Mikhail Bakhtin’s work, and from other authors who were from outside the Soviet Union. This way, it is

²TN. The four essays published in Portuguese in the book *Narrativas do exílio: Cosmopolitismo além da imaginação liberal* [Narratives of Exile: Cosmopolitanism beyond the Liberal Imagination] are also available in English, as follows: 1) TIHANOV, G. Russian Émigré Literary Criticism and Theory between the World Wars. In: DOBRENKO, E.; TIHANOV, G. (Ed.). *A History of Russian Literary Theory and Criticism: The Soviet Age and Beyond*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011; 2) TIHANOV, G. De-Romanticizing Exile. In: LETTEVALL, R. and PETROV, K. (Ed.). *Critique of Cosmopolitan Reason: Timing and Spacing the Concept of World Citizenship*. Oxford: Peter Lang, 2014, pp. 215-238; 3) TIHANOV, G. Cosmopolitanism in the Discursive Landscape of Modernity: Two enlightenment Articulations. In: ADAMS, D.; TIHANOV, G. (Ed.). *Enlightenment Cosmopolitanism*. Oxford: Legenda, 2011; 4) Cosmopolitans without a Polis: Towards a Hermeneutics of the East-East Exilic Experience (1929-1945). In: NEUBAUER, J.; TÖRÖK, B. Z. (Ed.). *The Exile and Return of Writers from East-Central Europe: A Compendium*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009.

an original phenomenon that not only has much in common with the Russian and Soviet culture, but also diverges from it and, for this reason, deserves an in-depth analysis. Unfortunately, this issue was very little studied until recent times, mainly due to the prohibition of émigré literature in the Soviet Union and to its subsequent lack of knowledge by most Russians. Tihanov's book fills this gap by offering a serious and detailed work that faces several misunderstandings and myths regarding this important matter.

In the essay "Narratives of Exile: Cosmopolitanism beyond the Liberal Imagination," Tihanov asserts the need to create a methodology that can be applied to the analysis of the emigration phenomenon. His proposal is to release the exile concept from all the existing myths about it, mainly regarding its inferior positioning and its dependency on the national literature.

The underestimation of émigré literature and even its "deletion" is also due to an eternal dichotomy from Russian culture between "its own" and the "other's" (one of the key issues of the work of the semiotician Yuri Lotman), which results in seeing all aspects from "foreign" culture as strange and potentially dangerous. This behavior in face of the unknown started with Russian historical isolation in relation to the other European countries throughout several centuries, which was interrupted by the country's Europeanization at the time of Peter the Great and was reestablished with the closing of the "Iron Curtain" during the Soviet regime.

For Tihanov, one of the major misconceptions when dealing with the exile literature is the idea that the emigration culture is entirely aimed at the lost homeland, longing for reunion and Russian readers' recognition. In accordance to this idea, considered by the author as very limited, the relationships between the Soviet Union and the emigration would be defined as central and peripheral. Turning back to the émigré literature issue, would it really be peripheral in relation to the national literature? The complexity of the central/peripheral correlation is further aggravated by the fact that Russia, for its turn, has felt peripheral towards European and Western cultures in general for hundreds of years till now. Seen by this perspective, exile literature is no longer peripheral and becomes closer to the center than the national literature, which, then, starts to be considered as "peripheral." German and French philosophies,

literatures and cultures were the major guides for the Russian culture since the 18th century and not by chance the first emigrants were concentrated in Berlin and Paris.

In order to fight against the idea of emigration as withdrawal and isolation, Tihanov suggests that it should be approached as an insertion of Russian culture within (an)other culture(s), which would result in mutual enrichment. For example, if Nabokov had never left Russia, his work would certainly not be the same as we know.

One of the fields that benefited most from emigration was literary theory. Russian formalism had its revival in Viktor Shklovsky and Roman Jakobson's work. In Prague, along with the folklorist Piotr Bogatyriov (1893-1971), Jakobson continued to work with the traditions of the OPOJAZ (Society for the Study of Poetic Language) in Saint Petersburg and the Moscow Linguistic Circle. Thus, it was due to emigration that the Prague Linguistic Circle appeared: "The Prague Linguistic Circle's work, in particular, was developed in a situation of real polyglossia (...); Jakobson, Trubetzkoy and Bogatyrev were, each one of them, writing in at least two or three languages (Russian, German, Czech) at the same time."³ One of the major works of the Circle was "Folklore as a Special Form of Creation,"⁴ which was written by Bogatyriov and Jakobson in 1929. In this essay, the authors advocated the need to approach folklore studies and literary studies as two different sciences and to articulate synchronic and diachronic methods. This way, the work of the Prague Circle is a premise of structuralism and structural-typological methodology developed by the Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School. Emigration has had an enormous importance for the modern literary theory. Tihanov, employing Shklovsky's concept, observes that the scholars who had left Russia had the opportunity to "estrangle"⁵ Russian culture, to look at it from the distance. "Exile, rather than acting as an impeding factor, was right at the heart of

³Excerpt translated from the Portuguese version: "O trabalho do Círculo Linguístico de Praga, em particular, atuou numa situação de verdadeira poliglossia (...); Jakobson, Trubetzkoy e Bogatyrev estavam, cada um, escrevendo em pelo menos duas ou três línguas ao mesmo tempo (russo, alemão, tcheco)". Reference: BOGATYRIOV, P., JAKOBSON, R. O folclore como forma específica de arte. [Folklore as a Special Form of Creation]. In: BERNARDINI, A. F.; FERREIRA, J. P. (Org.). *Mitopoéticas: da Rússia às Américas*. [Mythopoetics: From Russia to American Continents]. Coorganizado pelo Programa de Pós-graduação em Literatura e Cultura Russa – USP e Núcleo de Poéticas da Oralidade – PUC-SP. São Paulo: Humanitas, 2006, p. 29-44.

⁴JAKOBSON, R.; BOGATYRIOV, P. Folklore as a Special Form of Creation. Trans. John M. O'Hara. In: *Folklore Forum*, vol. 13, n. 1, 1980, p. 01-21.

⁵TN. Shklovsky's concept of *ostranenie* is translated to English as "defamiliarization" or as "estrangement." Here we opted to use "estrangement" from the verb "to estrange" in order to be closer to the original review in Portuguese, in which the concept is also used as a verb: "estranhar."

salutary developments that promoted the development of literary theory in the interwar period” (TIHANOV, 2014, p.218).

In the field of literary criticism, there has been a reassessment of the heritage of classical nineteenth-century literature, especially of Pushkin and Lermontov. If the Soviet futurism proposed to throw both “off modernity’s boat,” emigration in the 1930s discussed which of the classical authors would be more important for the future of literature. While Georgui Adamovich (1892-1972) stated Lermontov’s primacy as a more “Western” poet, whose romantic, angry, lonely spirit was closest to the emigrants, Vladislav Khodasevitch (1886-1939), other prominent émigré writer, advocated the supremacy of Pushkin.

As a consequence of the “estrangement” and the possibility of looking at one’s own national culture at a distance, a political movement called Eurasianism (*evraziístvo*) appeared among Russian emigrants in the years of 1920-30. This movement aimed to rethink Russian cultural and political positioning not as a split between Europe and Asia, but as part of a single Eurasian continent and, therefore, as a peculiar combination of Eastern and Western traits. Nowadays, Eurasianistic ideas have had great repercussions in Russian media.

The article “Cosmopolitanism in the Discursive Landscape of Modernity: Two Enlightenment Articulations” is an analysis of the transformations undergone by the concept of “cosmopolitanism” throughout its existence, from its origins in Kantian philosophy, to the present. Today’s relevance of this issue is demonstrated by the frequency of its use, as well as other terms with similar meanings: “Internationalism,” “universalism,” “multiculturalism,” “transnationalism,” and “globalization.”

The history of modernity, thus, can be described as an oscillation between two poles: nationalism and cosmopolitanism. As an example, Tihanov reminds us of the trajectory of comparative studies in Russia and Soviet Union. Due to the overall process of integration between Russia and the European countries, the comparative method was established in the late nineteenth century. Its principles were reported by Aleksandr Veselovsky (1838-1906) on *Historical poetics (Историческая поэтика)*, an unfinished *magnum opus* from 1899. Among other founders of comparative studies was the formalist Yuri Tynyanov (1894-1943), who explained, in his articles “Literary Fact” (1924) and “On the Literary Evolution” (1927), the laws that determine the succession

of literary genres in the history of world literature. In 1928, *Morphology of the Folktale*⁶ by Vladimir Propp (1895-1970) was published. This book employed the comparative method to the study of fairy tales from different countries. Another great scholar of Russian and universal cultures and literatures, Mikhail Bakhtin, also used the comparative method as a major tool of analysis. Thus, in the book *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* from 1929, he addresses the issue of genre in the work of the Russian classic and finds its origins in ancient and medieval literature.

However, half century after the foundation of the comparative studies, an ideological campaign against the comparativists began in the last years of Stalin's government, which was called "fight against cosmopolitans." Persecutions were directed mainly upon Jewish intellectuals, although it has never been officially stated. The fight had its political reasons, among which were the establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and the United States in 1948. In February of 1949, the best known and most important Soviet comparativists, who were all Jews, were accused of disseminating anti-Russian tendencies. Among them were Boris Eichenbaum, Viktor Zhirmunsky, Mark Azadovsky, and Grigory Gukovsky. They all lost their jobs and Gukovsky was arrested and died without ever being released. This tightening of the State's limits by persecuting the "alien" elements was a consequence of the revival of nationalism as the country's main view, which is what also happens in Russia today.

In the Brazilian context, emigration from Eastern Europe in the first half of the twentieth century was also of great value. One needs only to cite a few names: Clarice Lispector, Tatiana and Boris Belinky Schnaiderman, the latter responsible for the founding of Russian studies in Brazil. Due to this contribution, today we witness a veritable explosion of Russian-Portuguese translations of the great authors of Russian literature and literary criticism and scholarly works devoted to literary and cultural issues. Russian emigration, conceived as an important phenomenon of universal culture, does not go unheeded by Brazilian researchers.⁷

⁶TN. The first translation of Propp's work was done in 1958, which was revised in 1968. Reference: PROPP, V. *Morphology of the Folktale*. 2. ed. Trans. Laurence Scott and revised by Louis A. Wagner. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968.

⁷BYTSENKO, A. *Imigração da Rússia para o Brasil no início do século XX. Visões do Paraíso e do Inferno*. [Immigration from Russia to Brazil in the Beginning of the 20th Century. Visions of Paradise and Hell.] 2006. 134 f. Dissertação. (Mestrado em Literatura e Cultura Russa) FFLCH, USP [Master's thesis in Russian Literature and Culture at Universidade de São Paulo], São Paulo; MIKAELYAN, Y. Serguei Dowlátov no contexto da terceira onda de emigração russa. [Sergei Dolatov in the Context of the Third

Apparently, the conclusion about the enriching effect of cultural cosmopolitanism was inspired by the author's personal experience: He was born in Bulgaria in 1964, when it was part of the Soviet Union; in the 1990s, Tihanov moved to England in search of academic improvement. He is, like other generations of historians of émigré culture and literature, among whom are his countrymen Tzvetan Todorov and Julia Kristeva, a mediator of Eastern European culture who contributes to its reception in the West. It is undeniable that cosmopolitanism has become the hallmark of our time and we all constantly deal with influences from different cultures. It is precisely for this reason that the study performed by Tihanov in his four essays is more than welcome in Brazil.

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