

Title: From Native Land to No-Land's-Man: Marina Tsvetaeva's Renunciation of Homeland
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Tsvetaeva's "From native villages!" (May 1925), was the last poem she composed during the initial period of her emigration, when she lived in Prague; five months later she moved to Paris. Tsvetaeva's Prague period poetry marks the pinnacle of her lyric writing and shows a predilection for liminal spaces, as many have noted (Ciepiela, 100; Hasty, 108). Tsvetaeva privileges spaces "between" as the locus of poetry, the "mediator that divides the worlds of myth and chance," equivalent to the poet (Venclova, 140). This "betweenness" also represents an expression of Tsvetaeva's exilic state during her first years of emigration, as she attempts "to reassemble [her poetic] identity out of the refractions ...of exile" (Said, 179).

"From native villages!" however, represents a shift in Tsvetaeva's view on exile. Edward Said defines three phases of exile, quoting Hugo of St. Victor: "The man who finds his homeland sweet is... a tender beginner; he to whom every soil is as his native one is ...strong; but he is perfect to whom the entire world is as a foreign land" (185). While moving to Paris may have disquieted Tsvetaeva (Schweitzer, 256), in this final Prague lyric, she expresses an attitude that resonates with Said's third exilic stage: "It's all the same: Pest, — Brest," and this sentiment occurs even more strongly in poems of the 1930s (e.g., "Nostalgia for homeland"). This paper will trace this shift in Tsvetaeva's exilic stance and consider how it informs her decision to move to Paris and to return to Russia.

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