

IDENTITY DILLEMAS OF LITERARY EXILE

Nicoleta Sălcudeanu

Scientific Researcher, Institute for Social-Human Sciences "Gheorghe Șincai" of the Romanian Academy, Tîrgu Mureș

Abstract: The problem of the wandering writer becomes that of the wandering writing. The writer finds his shelter in difference and double identity. Banishment may be a new birth, a founding energy. The contemporary cultural orphanage eludes the terror of temporality, its present state represents an emancipation from metaphysical oppression and goes straight to immediacy, that means a new perception of the world, an assumed banishment and an easy resignation. Ubiquity becomes a way of life.

Keywords: identity, exile, literature, writing, culture

The ellipse drawn from man's metaphysical exile towards the shedding of his work goes through a vast existential loop (metaphysical, historical, geographic, temporal and spatial). Improving evil as a way of facing time justifies a conduct of redemption through suffering. The chance of redemption is given to art and literature, precisely by the act of evil, which allows its erosion, its ontological despair, as Guy Scarpetta shared his point of view: "To make Evil to become symbolic may even be a guarantee for it to enter a little less in reality."¹ The fact is that exiled literature makes the most brutal connection to reality, it represents the literary expression found in the closest proximity of literality. And it is also the magnificent chance of returning to the protective space of the metaphysical matrix, after a repeated, fierce, and, why not, victorious, confrontation with mundane evil. The dictionaries generally define the notion of exile as "a punishment applied in some countries for political offenses, consisting in the expulsion of a citizen from the country or the locality where he lives; voluntarily leaving someone its own country or town, usually to escape a persecution." The dictionary definition lacks the recontextualization of the concept of exile in contemporary terms.

In biblical terms, the idea of the making of the being necessarily implies that of the exile, the auroral moment of the fracture between the transcendent and the mundane or, according to the clues offered by Jean Starobinski, a consistent and subtle researcher of alienation, "In European culture, exile and distance are determined by the myth of the banishment of Paradise, so early on, the feeling of sadness could be related to expatriation or exclusion from a religious order, a supposed source of happiness and joy."² Casting out of paradise is the imminent vertical fall in the secular-horizontal manifestations of contextualization, so the genotype is betrayed, little by little, through successive amnesia, making living a kind of low-dose hybris. But the trajectory of the barely perceptible series of small betrayals of the prime model describes, paradoxically, an ascending curve that seeks to be fulfilled by the rediscovery of the lost paradise, but unconsciously, and somewhat with christian cautions, to the extent that "True Exile has no purpose, it is not a journey but a way to nowhere," as Eugen Vasiliu warns us, in his work *Decalogul exilului*, the sixth

¹ Guy Scarpetta, *Elogiu cosmopolitismului*, Edit. Polirom, Iași, 1997, p. 7.

² *Ipostaze ale melancoliei*, interviu cu Jean Starobinski, realizat de Radu Negruțiu, în *România literară*, nr.51-52 / 23 decembrie-12 ianuarie 1999, p. 44.

commandment:" Do not want the country and the luck of another individual. "³ That means that man's exile in the world will never truly be secular. This hybris appears to be the sign of a dual process: either it looks at the proportions and the original dimensions, or the new condition seems to be meant for a worthy exile, the new edifice then acquires the role of an identity manifesto. And so we come to the deviance of the behavior of the exiled, condemned, as Sorin Alexandrescu argues, to invisibility: "the immigrant is a man without a face, but with a mask (" the southern ", " the eastern ", " the Asian ", the " African "), without a family name, or with an impossible name to be pronounced ... "⁴. "He is not visible, as the locals do," he does not benefit from "social visibility", and then he resorts to the display of his identity marks, with allusion to the original, to the "infinitive", but in the "conjugated", amnesic, even emphatic, form of the "identity manifesto". That's why the invisible man's designs are bigger, more adorned, "high like no other", his books more pathetic. After all, his grandiloquence has two functions: the recovery of memory, the image of Heavenly Jerusalem, an envelope function, and then that of the recovery of his social visibility. Gradual forgiveness, the dropping of the anamnetics supply worn in the exile, is inversely proportional to the rhetoric of construction, regardless of the building material used (the word or the brick, the musical note or the chromatic paste), it expands, somewhat emphatically, as the memory decreases.

The idea of exile is nourishes, although it starts from a divine pattern and from disorder, a projection to the time before Creation, it is also nourished by the distraction of a sense without the cardinal points of the organized world. The double nature of nonfixation enriches the content of historical exile and, on the other hand, mythical exile can console and steer at some point the ontological wandering. Jean Delumeau confirms that "To some extent, the return to mythology was a way of dreaming at the age of gold. It offered the opportunity to recreate an imaginary realm where wonderful eternal young beings expose their delightful bodies", but also warns us of the possible punitive connotation of the image of paradise which lies behind its appearance of consoling therapy, proof that "In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries - (...) - the belief that the terrestrial paradise still exists somewhere at the end of the world as an oasis of forbidden happiness has slowly disappeared". Conversion to realism that has not yet been painless. Because one has never dreamed so much as in these two centuries of golden age, the Blessed Islands, the Fountain of Youth, the idyllic pastoral, and the Land of Abundance "⁵. The idea of sin will always accompany the heavenly revery and will always convert it into melancholy.

A resignation from the status of "citizen of the world" in favor of that of the subaltern meaning as prisoner of identity, in its melancholic sense, often seems to be no symbolic suicide, then regression at the stern stage, entomologically speaking. The appeal to the miraculous space of mythology, on the other hand, by the existential contrast, only deepens the alienation together with the merging into the magma of a world in which identity knows a state of diffuse aggregation, remains a vague projection to the future.

An ethics of weakness and behavior as from the inside of time, and not "as at the beginning of the world" according to the new identity theories, the weak thought hypothesis posited by Gianni Vattimo (it is not known how valid today when the idea of Center does not seem so rebarrant, and the idea of returning to steady models is no longer disowned with the same vehemence) adds seemingly chances for the exiled writer to live his art in a "joyful" dissemination, free of coercion of the idea of a "strong" center. He is not where most people seek him: not in the mythical geography, nor in the consolation of auroral temporality, but in

³ Eugen Vasiliu, *Decalogul exilului*, în *Exilul. Secolul 20*, p. 19.

⁴ Sorin Alexandrescu, *Invizibilitatea emigrantului*, în *Exilul. Secolul 20*, p. 218.

⁵ Jean Delumeau, *Grădina desfătărilor. O istorie a paradisului*, Edit. Humanitas, București, 1997, p. 103.

the middle of alienation. He lives in the lightness of being. It is a seductive hypothesis, but this does not seem to solve the problem of being, it represents another utopia. Superb, but utopian.

To act, as an exiled, like at the beginning of the world is the utopia that only the spirit can propose, the literature in this case. It is the illusory meaning that can be rebuilt at the core of the derivation. That is, in existence. This involves a specific type of discourse and a wealth of themes and motifs with an obsessive substrate that is organized at the surface of the text, spraying from liming depths. The specificity of the literature of exile has, rather than a differentiated poetics, at least a special emotional arsenal, motivated by the existential sense of dislocation. The fate of the uprooted writer (in a broad sense) repeats the mythical script of the wicked Jew⁶, destined to endlessly wait for the second coming, the damned, captive of time, but a dilated, avenging time. Scriitorul este blestemat a fi ultimul om pe pământ Guy Scarpetta (*Eloge of Cosmopolitanism*, Éditions Grasset & Fasquelle, 1981) articulates a few lines of essential force of uprooting and conceptually crystallizes a problem over which the vast majority of researchers have leaned in a rather veiled empiricism. He uses Baudelaire's example to illustrate how the writer succeeds and even has to dismantle what in Scarpettian terms is called the "ideological rooting device." The poet "evokes departures, journeys, fleeing, searching for an impossible exterior, offering" as Ahasvèr the wanderer and the apostles, and who, Running by the dinghy with his bitch, runs all his life on trains and on ships. "Apostle," "wandering jew": mythical figures of "without a head", dragging the cohesion of the world into their endless diaspora "⁷.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alexandrescu, Sorin, *Invizibilitatea emigrantului*, în *Exilul. Secolul 20*.

Delumeau, Jean, *Grădina desfătărilor. O istorie a paradisului*, Edit. Humanitas, București, 1997.

Ipostaze ale melancoliei, interviu cu Jean Starobinski, realizat de Radu Negruțiu, în *România literară*, nr. 51-52 / 23 decembrie-12 ianuarie 1999.

Meyrink, Gustav, *Golem*, Edit. Cartea Românească, București, 1989.

Scarpetta, Guy, *Elogiu cosmopolitismului*, Edit. Polirom, Iași, 1997.

Vasiliu, Eugen, *Decalogul exilului*, în *Exilul. Secolul 20*.

Vattimo, Gianni, *Societatea transparentă*, Ed. Pontica, Constanța, 1995.

⁶ In the Middle Ages, in many variants, a Christian legend of the "Wanderer Jew" takes shape. According to it, on the day of the crucifixion, "the Jews pushed Jesus out of the praetorium, and he reached the gate. Cartaphilus, the doorkeeper of the pretorium and of Pont Pilate, hit the Lord over his back and said, grinning: «Come on, come on, Jesus, let it go faster, why do you stay?» And Jesus, looking at him harshly, said to him, « I do, I'm leaving, and you'll wait until I come back for the second time ». And since then, since the Lord has spoken, Cartaphilus still awaits today " (Jean Starobinski, *Melancolie, nostalgie, ironie*, Edit. Meridiane, București, 1993, p. 78).

⁷ Guy Scarpetta, *Op cit.*, p. 27.