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Can the refugee speak? Albert Hirschman and the changing meanings of exile

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Article

Can the refugee speak? Albert Hirschman and the changing meanings of exile

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Abstract
This article presents a critical reading of Albert O. Hirschman's typology of exit, voice and loyalty as a heuristic for understanding the changing meanings of exile in the 20th and early 21st centuries. It is argued that Hirschman's experiences as well as the theory he distilled from them are highly relevant for researchers of forced migration and exile. After first defending the usefulness of Hirschman's analytical framework for exile and diaspora studies, the article then highlights the need to revise and complicate his approach. Hirschman could not foresee the emerging global possibilities of cultivating 'the art of voice', new forms of internal and self-exile as a result of post-fascist versions of authoritarianism, and the growing difficulties faced by refugees including, refugee scholars and writers, to exit their countries and find a safe haven somewhere else. The gaps in Hirschman's theory are addressed by drawing on insights from the writings of Judith Shklar.

Keywords
exile, exit-voice, AO Hirschman, refugee intellectuals, JN Shklar

Introduction: Hirschman as an exile

In trying to make sense of their situation, 20th-century intellectuals in exile have produced a broad range of unsystematic reflections, prophetic musings and angry diatribes, but very little in terms of conceptual work. A notable exception is the economist and political scientist Albert O. Hirschman. In this article, I am going to argue that

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Hirschman's historical experiences as an exile – and the theory he distilled from it – are highly relevant for researchers of forced migration and exile today. Hirschman never explicitly addressed the subject of exile in his writings, although his life was shaped by multiple experiences of flight and displacement. Because of his Jewish family background, he had to escape from Berlin in April 1933 at the age of 17 and continued a life on the move through Spain, Italy and France until he left Marseilles for the United States in December 1940 (where he was later harassed by Senator Joseph McCarthy's infamous House Committee on Un-American Activities). In between he had joined the ranks of the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War and had become a soldier in the French army against the Germans. The entire first half of his life was punctuated by the recurring need to decide whether to stay or go (Adelman, 2014).

Much later, and in hindsight, Hirschman realized that his now well-known analytical framework of 'exit', 'voice' and 'loyalty' was profoundly influenced by his own experience of exile. His astute little book *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*, published in 1970 in the United States, discusses the question under what circumstances consumers, voters, residents or spouses use their exit options from markets, political party allegiances, neighbourhoods or marriages, and how exit interacts with voice, defined as the willingness and ability to produce change within given institutional arrangements by speaking up and protesting. His main argument is that people with choices will rarely seek improvements; they just head for the exits. From this simple model Hirschman draws a host of surprising insights on a wide range of topics. A few years later, when a German publisher asked Hirschman to add a new preface for the translation of his book into his native language, something interesting happened: Hirschman suddenly realized how deeply his writings were influenced by his own exit from Germany in 1933 (Adelman, 2013: 571–2). This intuition opens up the possibility of a new reading of the book. The key to understanding Hirschman's thinking about the costs and consequences of exit is his own experience of exile. Recalling the plight of Jews in Germany in the 1930s, he explains the 'deeper reasons' for his lifelong preoccupation with the alternatives of exit and voice, escape and protest, flight and fight:

> Most of the young emigrated, like myself, in the years after Hitler's seizure of power and left a severely weakened [Jewish] community behind. There was certainly no longer any practical possibility of effective voice, regardless of whether one left or stayed. Still, the true origin of the book may be a carefully repressed sense of guilt, which is simply there, even if it seems intellectually absurd. (Hirschman, 1974: vii)

Hirschman argues that 'voice' is the central mechanism of democratic politics. Voice is defined as 'any attempt at all to change, rather than to escape from, an objectionable state of affairs' through 'various types of actions and protests, including those that are meant to mobilize public opinion' (Hirschman, 1970: 30). Here 'changing' is defined as the opposite of 'escaping' in a way that makes 'escaping' look bad. In the case of the Jewish community in Germany, which was already greatly shaken and weakened by the daily terror it was exposed to, Hirschman suggests that it was further weakened with every single person who gave up on exercising voice by leaving the country. On the other hand, it's clear that only those who gave up defending the practice of voice escaped *early*

enough. 'Only pessimists survived the Holocaust', as Walter Laqueur (cited in Roberts, 2018) once remarked.

In what follows, I wish to tease out and reflect on some of the implications of Hirschman's social theory for thinking about exile today. There are six themes which need to be explored: exile as a special kind of exit; the role of voice in different conceptions of exile; exile as a condition of voicelessness in Hirschman; contemporary ways of retrieving voice in exile; non-territorial exile 'at home'; and the relation between exile and loyalty.

Exile as a special form of exit

In Hirschman's original analysis, exit means leaving a system – a family, an organization, a nation-state – that is experienced as declining, disappointing or dysfunctional beyond repair. Viewed in this way, exile is a particular type of exit: the *involuntary* and supposedly (but often not really) *temporary* exit of an individual from the political community he or she belongs to. The idea of the temporariness of exile is central because refugees are defined, at least initially, by their hope of returning home and not knowing what's next. Of course, both as a fact of life and as a state of mind, the temporariness of exile may last forever.

Exile is also by definition involuntary, a form of forced migration. This is true in spite of the fact that in most cases the involuntariness of going into exile still implies an element of choice, if only because the person who feels forced to go into exile needs to decide where exactly to find a better place and how to make sense of the physical move out of the native country. Some of this definitional ambiguity of the term is deeply inscribed in its etymological roots. The Latin and Greek origins of the ancient word for an 'exiled' person (*exsul*) point to 'the one who is taken out', but also to the more active meaning of the one 'who walks out' (De Vaan, 2008: 196–7). The term thus covers a spectrum of experiences, from intellectuals who had to run for their lives to escape their henchmen, to writers who chose self-exile in other, still harrowing, but less severe circumstances (like James Baldwin or J. M. Coetzee) and, of course, to countless fugitive working people – slaves, servants, indentured immigrants, convicts, seamen or soldiers – who became runaways because they had no voice, no choice, and no loyalty for their masters (Stanziani, 2018).

While refugees are defined by the movement out of their homeland, the question where they are moving to remains open. 'Ok but, if we left, where would we go?', asked the Turkish-Armenian editor and journalist Hrant Dink in the last article he wrote before he was killed in 2007. 'To Armenia? Fine, but for someone like me who could not stand injustice, how would I put up with the injustices there? Wouldn't I find myself in even more trouble? As for Europe, well, it just wasn't my cup of tea' (Dink, 2007). People in Europe tend to believe that every refugee who makes it into the so-called West moves 'from Hell to Heaven', as Kurdish novelist Bakhtiyar Ali (2016) writes. But this narrative ignores the many doubts and fears surrounding the decision to go into exile, including the fear that the West might turn out to be anything but heaven. Hirschman had the same self-congratulatory western narrative in mind when he wrote that European immigrants in the United States always felt a certain 'collective compulsion to be happy'

in what they were told was the 'greatest' country on earth (Hirschman, 1970: 113). But refugees did not search for the earthly equivalent of heaven then, nor do they now. They are only hoping to move from overly politicized to what Ali calls 'unpoliticized' or 'natural' spaces which are not owned by anybody (Ali, 2016).[1] For many places during the 20th century, only the 'hell' part of the hell/heaven binary was undoubtedly true. 'Merely *not* being in Germany gives one rest', Thomas Mann wrote to Hans Reisiger in early 1932 (cited in Venclova, 2008: 128).

In Hirschman's language, the decision to go into exile is a symptom and a consequence of the disappearance of 'loyalty' to a state that betrays its own citizens. More importantly, fleeing into exile is the consequence of being deprived of 'voice', that is, of the ability to change the political situation through speech, protest and assembly. The problem, according to Hirschman, is that 'the one who walks out' because she has been silenced by the state will find it even more difficult to exercise voice in exile. The condition of exile has a chilling effect on the exercise of voice. Postcolonial theory has taught us that the 'subaltern cannot speak' (Spivak, 1994: 104). But the subalterns are not alone. Even intellectuals, western and non-western, can lose their voice if they are forced to withdraw into exile. An important first question, then, is how to think about the possibilities of voice and public speech under conditions of exile. Historically, there are two streams of thought: those who think that refugee intellectuals in exile retain an effective, even prophetic voice, and those who are much less sanguine and tend to see exiles severely handicapped in their ability to 'speak' in the sense of mobilizing public opinion against the government they escaped.

The role of voice in different conceptions of exile

For ancient and early modern political thinkers such as Themistocles, Cicero or Machiavelli, being forced into exile involved little more than moving to a safe place outside the walls of the city where they used to have influence, connections and an audience. Machiavelli simply retired to his estate in San Casciano outside of Florence when the Medici returned to power. In the contemporary world of nation-states, however, exiles are not only spatially removed but also culturally estranged from their familiar surroundings. They lose not just their job, but their vocation, a community of belonging, a form of life. They are forced to live in alien nations, and in alienation, which typically implies an existential crisis marked by loneliness, economic troubles and the fear of stigmatization. Nevertheless, much of the literature written by exiles about the condition of exile is tinged with exaggerated idealism and self-consoling triumphalism. An example is Edward Said's famous claim that exile is, paradoxically, the true home of the intellectual and the precondition for developing a critical perspective that challenges the boundaries of cultures (Said, 2002). An even better example is Hannah Arendt's glorification of refugee intellectuals as 'the vanguard of their peoples' (Arendt, 2007 [1943]: 274), or as conscious pariahs pointing the way towards new moral and political futures. Her famous essay 'We Refugees', written in 1943, acknowledges the hopelessness of the situation of Jewish émigrés in the Second World War, but makes an effort to generate hope out of despair by assigning a unique moral role and a historical mission to exiles.

Whereas Arendt and, to a lesser degree, Said, represent the dominant tendency to describe exiles as prophetic intellectuals, two other émigrés, Karl Marx and the political philosopher Judith Shklar, represent a position at the opposite end of the spectrum. Even before he became a self-confessed 'communist', Marx was forced to leave Germany for Paris and Brussels, because he was feared by the Prussian authorities as a critical journalist of the Cologne-based *Rheinische Zeitung*. Later on, after the failed German revolutions of 1848–9, he decided to make London his place of exile. Unlike Arendt, however, Marx did not believe in the redeeming qualities of forced displacement and even ridiculed his fellow exiles for their pitiable efforts to compensate for their political impotence by giving in to fantasies of vanguardism. 'The more this refuse of mankind found itself hindered by its own impotence as much as by the prevailing situation from undertaking any real action', he writes, 'the more zealously did it indulge in spurious activity whose imagined deeds, imagined parties, imagined struggles and imagined interests have been so noisily trumpeted abroad by those involved' (Marx and Engels, 1852: 29).

In a similar vein, Judith Shklar, who fled her native Riga as a child with her Jewish parents, dismissed Arendt's notion of exile as a situation of ethical and epistemological privilege.[2] Referring to Arendt's active involvement in Zionist politics, Shklar called for more systematic research on émigré politics, which she described in terms reminiscent of Marx's portraits of defeated German revolutionaries in London:

> These politics are so dreadful because they consist entirely of recriminations, for nothing new happens to émigrés, there is no one to persuade, no followings to be organized, and no offices or measures to be pursued. There is no future, only a past. Exile does nothing for one's character. It is a very desperate condition. (Shklar, 1998b: 366)

Hirschman would agree with Shklar that there is always 'a certain pall of defeat' (Shklar, 2019: 207) hanging over exiles. But the two theorists also differ in some respects. As I will show below, Shklar, unlike Hirschman, is strongly interested in 'internal' exiles such as Henry David Thoreau who heroically – and quite effectively – fought for ethical and political values that were not regarded as acceptable by mainstream society. Hirschman's analytical framework, when applied to exile, has no room for internal exiles and does not seem to allow for any kind of effective voice under the conditions of exile.

Exile as voicelessness

The general argument Hirschman developed from his own life experiences of flight and exile is that people no longer use voice to bring about change, if exit options are readily available and loyalty has been severely weakened or destroyed. If a product or service is provided by one among many companies that compete with each other, you don't bother complaining if you are unsatisfied with a particular product or service; you just try another company. Citizens or subjects of a modern state are in a very different situation. They cannot simply choose another country if they are unhappy with their own. This point was already made by David Hume against John Locke's doctrine of tacit consent,

which maintains that anyone living on land under the jurisdiction of a state tacitly consents to the burdens that state imposes on him. Hume's objection is that consent cannot be assumed when inhabitants of modern states do not have realistic exit options: 'Can we seriously say that a poor peasant or artisan has a free choice to leave his country, when he knows no foreign language or manners, and lives, from day to day, by the small wages which he acquires?' (Hume, 1993 [1748]: 283). Even when loyalty towards the state is weak, exit is often not an option because it is too costly and dangerous. This is why people have a strong incentive to use voice if they want to bring about change in the country where they happen to be born. Voice is exercised whenever individuals and groups cannot simply walk away from emerging conflicts. This is true for personal relationships and economic life, as well as for politics.

Hirschman thinks that the absence of an easy way out of a dissatisfying situation is often a good thing because it nudges people not only towards voicing their complaints and concerns but also to practice and cultivate what he calls the 'art of voice'. Unlike exit, 'voice is essentially an *art* constantly evolving in new directions' (Hirschman, 1970: 43). The decision to exit a situation can be taken quickly and in isolation, whereas the use of voice requires both cooperation and creativity. Voice needs to be patiently developed over time. Easy exit options can therefore be bad for voice. The possibility of simply opting out from what we don't like tends to '*atrophy the development of the art of voice*', as Hirschman (1970: 43, emphasis in the original) puts it. You don't need to practice exit to be good at it. But voice is different: it atrophies through lack of use.

Easy exit options are bad for the art of voice, but having no exit option at all is even worse. Voice is only effective if one can credibly threaten exit. For example, only when women were allowed to divorce their husbands and were no longer discouraged from remarrying did they get a say in their marriages. On the other hand, people who cannot credibly threaten to leave the system – women in patriarchal families, the former citizens of the walled-in German Democratic Republic or members of the mafia – are condemned to silence. A third way to kill the art of voice – apart from making exit too easy or denying exit options altogether – is to arbitrarily impose exit on dissenting citizens by forcing them to live away from their native country or home. Examples are the ancient Greek practice of ostracism and other kinds of forced exile. Hirschman also mentions the case of criminal gangs or totalitarian states which severely punish the choice of exit (1970: 96–7). A typical response to members who have escaped their control is to bar them for life from re-entering.

Let me draw two preliminary conclusions. First, despite being a critic of 'excessive exit' and the detrimental effects of too much emigration for the respective source countries (1978: 107), Hirschman never denies that exit in its multiple forms should be welcomed as a fundamental right.[3] Yet the core of his normative argument is that the primary democratic good in need of defence is not the right of exit but the art of voice. However, for the art of voice to develop and flourish certain conditions need to be in place which make individuals less likely to use their right of exit. Such conditions don't have to be legal in nature. What he calls 'loyalty' is often more effective in making exit unattractive. Loyalty can take on different vertical and horizontal forms of patriotism, obedience, love, faith or solidarity. Hirschman's most striking example for the value of solidarity as an antidote to exit is the Black Power movement in the United

States. The emergence of this movement was possible only because a critical mass of talented, upwardly mobile African-Americans did not leave or distance themselves from the black neighbourhoods where they grew up but used their resources to become civil rights leaders. The recurrent 'physical moves out of the poor quarters' (1970: 109) by talented young blacks were replaced by their efforts to give voice to the entire African-American community.

Second, Hirschman thinks about voice and exit in terms of a strict alternative. Once you leave, you lose your voice, that is, your ability to change things in the state or the organization you have left. Exiles often need to learn another language to be able to communicate; they have lost their audience; and they have lost the public stages from where to reach others. Exile is thus an example of involuntary voicelessness. Those who are well versed in the art of voice are the first to be forced into exile. The consequences are chilling both for the exiled person and for the community that is left behind.[4]

Hirschman's typology of exit, voice and loyalty had a great appeal to many who were not convinced, in particular, by Herbert Marcuse's portrait of our times in *One-Dimensional Man*. Marcuse believed that individuals in late capitalist societies are condemned to a life without meaningful options, or a life of voicelessness and permanent internal exile (Heins, 2017).[5] Against Marcuse, Hirschman claims that modern society is full of dilemmas and does in no way release individuals from the need to choose between sometimes dramatically different courses of action (Adelman, 2013: 438). However, this focus on choosing between alternatives has blinded Hirschman to the fact that sometimes individuals can choose one course of action without giving up entirely on its alternative. I suggest expanding the analytical framework presented by Hirschman by exploring two situations which are particularly prominent today: the mobilization of voice in exile and being exiled and silenced at home.

Voice in exile

The first situation is one of living in exile without giving up on voice or other kinds of agency. One of the ironies of the present age is that states eagerly try to shut borders for refugees, while refugees and their supporters are getting smarter at erasing borders. True to one of the etymologies of the word 'exile', present-day refugees are not only those who are 'taken out' and turned into victims, but also those 'who walk out', as Yassin al-Haj Saleh explains with regard to the current Syrian refugee situation:

> Most of the world's six million Syrian refugees do not live in special camps. It is to their credit, especially those who have sought shelter in countries further away from Syria, particularly Europe, that they have invented something new in international politics: crossing multiple borders, that is, *erasing borders in an unprecedented way* that can be imitated by others. In fact, the Syrian refugee 'crisis' (which also includes within it many non-Syrians: Iraqis, Iranians, Afghans, even Africans) is an example of the power of refugees' agency; that refugees are not hapless victims; and that the status of refugee does not contradict the possession of agency and choice. (Al-Haj Saleh, 2018; emphasis added)

This observation can be read as underplaying the burdens of border control to be borne by refugees. But I prefer to read it as an implicit comment on the relation between

exile and borderless voice. Exile no longer necessarily implies the impossibility of voice. In a way, this has always been the case insofar as voices, once they have taken on the form of texts, travel independently from the bodies of their authors. Marx wrote nearly 500 articles for the *New York Tribune* from his exile in London, some of them quite influential. 'Manuscripts don't burn', as Russian writer Mikhail Bulgakov used to say (cited by Tomas Venclova in Hinsley, 2017: 304). Even if the body of the refugee doesn't make it across the border into exile, his or her voice may be heard in the country the refugee didn't physically enter.[6] Today, in an age of cloud-based storage services, this is truer than ever. The products of the art of voice are easy to disseminate at a global scale. This in turn helps to create new ways of exercising voice. Unlike in the past, it is no longer true that for exiled intellectuals 'there is no one to persuade, no followings to be organized' (Shklar, 1998b: 366).

One reason is that today refugee intellectuals are often only a small fraction of a much larger group of economic migrants from the same country. These migrants form a public of its own which is more or less open to the voice of emigrated intellectuals. There are plenty of ways to establish person-to-person relations through what O'Donnell (1986) calls 'horizontal voice'. Perhaps more important is the development of new media formats as a consequence of mass migration. These media are created by migrants themselves to influence power and opinion across national and cultural divides. Taking Alevi amateur television production and a Kurdish satellite TV station in Germany as her examples, anthropologist Kira Kosnick has shown how public dissent can be organized and amplified abroad. Migrant media represent 'a voice that emerges *after exit'* (Kosnick, 2008: 4; Kosnick, 2007; Hoffmann, 2010). In a world of increasingly dense transnational connections, Hirschman's original typology is too rigid because it presents exit and voice as mutually exclusive options. As Danielle Allen (2015) explains, the contemporary public sphere should not be conceived as a bounded space but rather in terms of technologically enhanced 'discourse flows' passing through various national, subnational and transnational spheres and filters. Such a dynamic perspective is not entirely incompatible with Hirschman's concept of voice. After all, voice is about 'the discovery of new ways of exerting influence'. Exile is a situation that does not make the effective use of voice impossible, but allows for 'a great deal of social inventiveness' (Hirschman, 1970: 80).

In fact, the effective and creative use of voice often leads to what Jennet Kirkpatrick calls 'attached exit', defined as a sociospatial situation in which refugee scholars and writers remain closely connected to the place that was left. This is not primarily about homesickness. Rather, the attachment is political and the activities in exile are focused on changing politics 'at home' (Kirkpatrick, 2017: 19).[7] Political scientists have further enriched the empirical and conceptual discussion about the different ways in which diasporic political agents pursue their homeland-oriented agendas beyond traditionally conceived host and home states, exercising voice through nonviolent rhetoric, petitions, media and lobbying, or through combining the public use of language with more transgressive means such as violent demonstrations, boycotts or fundraising for covert agendas (Koinova, 2017). However, voice is not only used with regard to homeland-oriented goals. Looking at the United States, Hirschman himself has remarked that the unhappiness of refugees in their new host country mixed with public expectations to be

happy and grateful can be an incentive to speak up and protest: 'The compulsion to be happy is replaced by the compulsion to use voice for the purpose of making the country live up to its image' (Hirschman, 1970: 114).

Exile at home

The second situation that requires a reformulation of Hirschman's conceptual framework is the case of those individuals who live in exile without having physically left the country which they no longer consider 'their' country. Often these internal exiles are simply not allowed to leave the country. They are forced to live under the jurisdiction of a repressive state, which means that they are condemned to a life of tacit dissent. Shklar (2019: 205) explicitly speaks of 'exiles *within* the borders of a country' and likens them to prisoners or inmates of concentration camps. At the same time, she suggests that self-chosen exile of the kind exemplified by Thoreau may be experienced as an expansion of personal freedom when compared with the unfreedom of those fellow-citizens who think of themselves as free under an illegitimate government (2019: 174).

Obvious examples of internal exiles can be found among critical intellectuals in the former Soviet Empire. Lithuanian poet and philologist Tomas Venclova claims that at some point almost 'any serious author or thinker was a covert – and sometimes an overt – oppositionist' (Hinsley, 2017: 270). From the 1970s onwards, the Soviet government produced even more internal exiles by adopting measures to discourage the emigration of its Jewish citizens, who were then called *otkazniki* (refuseniks) and whose plight became an international cause célèbre.

Other examples are postcolonial intellectuals such as the Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish, who was expelled from Israel to Lebanon as a young boy in 1948, then returned to Israel as an illegal immigrant with his family, and later left again, without ever feeling at home anywhere (Raz-Krakotzkin, 2011: 123–4). The life of Darwish is emblematic for the situation of millions of people who are internally displaced, second-class citizens, permanent non-citizens, or barred from leaving their country. Hirschman's framework is limited in that it tends to assimilate exit to the 'physical flight' out of a confined space (Hirschman, 1970: 107), ignoring cases of internal exile or inner emigration.[8] On the other hand, Hirschman does not limit his definition of voice to the rational public discourse of identifiable citizens. Voice includes everything from 'faint grumbling to violent protest' (1970: 16). It is very difficult to define a threshold where voice collapses into complete silence. If the public exercise of voice is suppressed, other forms of communication are likely to emerge: rumour, gossip and all kinds of anonymous 'dark speech' (Allen, 2010), which can be hardly controlled by the state. The sound of silence can be deeply troubling for the powers that be.

Shklar offers a conception of exile that goes beyond physical flight and therefore better captures the great variety of harm being done to individuals who are exiled in one way or another. For her, exiles are citizens who, as a consequence of being betrayed by their governments, either leave the country or withdraw into themselves:

> To be sure, I have long been interested in betrayal, and exiles are often created by governments that betray their own citizens. Governments also frequently abuse residents under

> their jurisdiction by denying them membership in the polity and other rights, not as a matter of legal punishments but because they belong to a group that is thought to be inherently unfit for inclusion. These people are also exiles. In fact, the more one thinks about them, the more numerous the forms of exile turn out to be. Exile itself is but a part of a larger social category, ranging *from the forcibly excluded to people who exile themselves without moving by escaping into themselves*, as it were, because their world is so politically evil. (Shklar, 1998a: 38; emphasis added)

It is important to note that Shklar thinks of self-exile at home as an exceptional option that can be chosen freely by individuals in a democracy who object on moral grounds to the fundamental injustice of their society. Her prime example is Thoreau, who was a fierce opponent of slavery in the United States, but never considered leaving the country. He was convinced that there is ‘a better way of choosing exile than going abroad’ (Shklar, 2019: 174). Thoreau is a rare example of a ‘conscientious anarchist’, who was at the same time a self-exiled ‘heroic individual’ (2019: 171, 175) and someone who continued to connect to the surrounding society by practicing the art of voice against injustice.

Exile and loyalty

In his epic and engaging intellectual biography, Jeremy Adelman writes that the concept of loyalty is a ‘blind spot’ in Hirschman’s treatise (Adelman, 2013: 446). Indeed, for Hirschman only exit and voice are relevant social ‘mechanisms’ (Hirschman, 1970: 5, 17, 19, 29 et passim), whereas loyalty is an additional force that interferes with these two mechanisms by activating or slowing down their operations. Loyalty helps to activate voice and delays exit when members are faced with declining and dissatisfying organizations. For Hirschman, the behaviour of loyalists is both functional and irrational, at least from a strictly economic perspective. After pondering on how loyalty exerts a modifying influence on conflicts between exit and voice, he concludes

> that loyalty is at its most functional when it looks most irrational, when loyalty means strong attachment to an organization that does not seem to warrant such attachment because it is so much like another one that is also available. Such seemingly irrational loyalties are often encountered, for example, in relation to clubs, football teams, and political parties. (1970: 81)

One might add nation-states or countries to this list of possible objects of ‘irrational’ loyalty. Hirschman, who had several passports and spoke many languages, follows a methodological cosmopolitanism with little interest in the production of loyalty or in the difference between the loyalty of customers to a brand and the loyalty of citizens to a state.

Shklar is the relevant political theorist close to Hirschman who thought more thoroughly about loyalty. Without going into detail, I wish to highlight three aspects of her thinking about loyalty that implicitly address shortcomings of Hirschman’s theory. First, loyalty in the sense of mutual trust between citizens, and between citizens and the government, can not only be perfectly rational, but is also a necessary condition for the

survival of democratic republics. There is no functional equivalent for this kind of democratic loyalty. Shklar is also very clear that not only citizens can be disloyal towards their governments, but also vice versa. However, whereas in a democratic republic there needs to be room for civic expressions of disloyalty, the 'disloyal government' (Shklar, 1984: 184) which turns against its own citizens, driving some of them into exile, cannot be accepted. Second, Shklar adopts a normative perspective by distinguishing loyalty and obligation. Like Hirschman, she writes that loyalty is often one-sided, 'deeply affective and not primarily rational' (1998a: 41). By contrast, obligations are always reciprocal and rule-based. Since exiles are usually victims of betrayal by their governments, Shklar insists that they have no obligations whatsoever towards the state that has exiled them. This new freedom does not exclude that they may still retain some loyalty to their native land, which in turn can create problems for the host state (1998a: 48, 50–51). Finally, and without mentioning any particular case, she offers a comment on the 'carefully repressed sense of guilt' felt by Hirschman (1974: vii) when he looked back at his escape from Germany in 1933. 'Fear of persecution makes all of us potentially treacherous', she writes, but 'it also excuses us, because danger summons us to look out for ourselves and our families' (Shklar, 1984: 148).

Not only did Hirschman not think the concept of loyalty through, he also underestimated the complexities and multiple forms of exit, and hence of exile. With regard to exile, I have shown that it can be found either at home or abroad, and it can be more or less involuntary. This is still in line with Hirschman's theory. Nevertheless, Hirschman was wrong in thinking of exit as a simple practice – 'simple' in the dual sense of easy to understand and easy to do. In reality, exit, too, can be seen as an art. First of all, exit in all its forms can be a very difficult thing to do. A classical text on the difficulty of disconnecting in a connected world is Franz Kafka's *Letter to the Father*, which is about the son's several, mostly futile, 'attempts at escape' (1987 [1919]: 113) from his all-powerful father.

Apart from being difficult, exit can also be creative and transformative. Deleuze and Guattari (1987: 190) have coined the term 'creative flight' to allude to the possibilities opened up by shaking off the constraints of society. Closer to the scientific temper of Hirschman, Shklar and, more recently, Janet Kirkpatrick (2017) have explored the potentials for transformation and resistance that are often part of exit strategies. As mentioned before, Shklar was intrigued by how Thoreau's practice of civil disobedience managed to combine the exit from normal society and its obligations with both 'self-transformation' (Shklar, 2019: 173) and the continuous attempt to transform the society that was left behind. Hirschman characterizes exit as a largely instrumental and individualistic one-shot action that changes neither the one who walks away nor the organization or state left behind. For him, exit expresses the merely negative freedom of individuals to withdraw from commitments and relationships that are no longer regarded as meaningful or satisfying. By contrast, Shklar – and Kirkpatrick – have complicated and enriched our idea of exit. Shklar emphasizes practices of self-exile that undermine the very distinction between escaping and protesting, or between negative and positive freedom (Heins, 2019). Kirkpatrick discusses, among others, the examples of Thoreau, Baldwin and fugitive slaves from the American South to develop the new concept of exit as a non-individualistic and 'communicative' (Kirkpatrick, 2017: 50) practice that often

fosters solidarity with those left behind. In doing so, she challenges the binary of exit and voice, withdrawal and engagement.

Conclusion

Hirschman liked the decision of his German publisher to translate 'exit' as '*Abwanderung*' (out-migration) and 'its accent on migration as a primary form of exit' (Hirschman, 1993: 174). His theory offers a heuristic to analyse the complex interplay between migration, mobilization and resistance, including the factors shaping the art of voice. Moreover, like Shklar, Hirschman offers an example of how to resist the twin temptations of the nationalist yearning for the idealized lost homeland, and of the 'alternative nationalism' (Adelman, 2014: 2) of becoming excessively and blindly loyal to the country of exile or other national causes. At the same time, it's obvious that Hirschman writes against the backdrop of a deeply divided political world of nation-states that severely restricts the flow of discourse across borders. He has left us a tool for investigating the range of possibilities entailed in the condition of exile, which is valuable but also limited. In particular, his theory is too closely modelled on the historical precedent of European Jews escaping from a triumphantly cruel regime to the United States (and a few other places), and being separated from their native countries by impenetrable borders. Other forms of exile, which do not necessarily imply a physical movement out of one sphere into another, are neglected. The writings of Judith Shklar as well as our own recent experiences have taught us that these forms of 'inner' exile as well as new forms of 'soft' repression deserve more attention.[9]

Hirschman took a world of nation-states for granted, but also a world in which people could always consider exiting to the United States as the 'country of last resort' (1970: 113).[10] With the closing of the United States and the death of the ideology of 'America' as the 'last best hope' of humankind, the situation changes dramatically. The United States is increasingly unwilling to admit refugees and other migrants who are desperately looking for a better life. On the other hand, there are few new entry options for potential refugees in other parts of the world. Moreover, exit from the former last exit country is no longer what Hirschman (1970: 113) called 'peculiarly unthinkable', even if few people really choose self-exile abroad as, for example, James Baldwin did in the late 1940s. American novelist Richard Ford (2018) has recently pondered, but then sarcastically rejected, the idea that America's dismal political situation under the presidency of Donald Trump might one day force him and others to pack up and leave: 'Or in even different blunter terms, was it time now to get the hell out of America and leave it to . . . precisely who? We don't know. And go precisely where? Europe? *Great'*.

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Notes

1. The search for 'unpoliticized spaces in the West' (Ali, 2016) can also take the form of rebuilding a private life beyond politics. Exile provides a refuge from political repression, and a restored private life can 'provide a refuge from the paroxysm and futility of public endeavors', as Hirschman (1982: 129) argues against Hannah Arendt's worship of politics.
2. I agree with Andreas Hess (2018: 298) that often the refugee intellectual 'is much quicker to question "thinking as usual"', but I don't think that the mere fact of being displaced gives exiles a better access to truth and knowledge. According to Shklar, Hannah Arendt is a good example of a European exile who knew very little about her host country, the United States, and whose beliefs remained impervious to new information. 'Her ignorance of American post-Civil War history, of racism, of constitutional law, and of Southern politics was total' (Shklar, 1998b: 373). Another example is Erich Auerbach, a brilliant German philologist whose Eurocentric mindset survived many years of exile in Turkey (Konuk, 2010). So it is true that many refugee scholars have found a 'way of turning traumatic personal experiences into a creative academic performance' (Hess, 2018: 288), but this does not mean that they were ipso facto less prejudiced or more open-minded than others.
3. The human right to leave your native country does not imply, however, that (voluntary) emigrants never have any obligations towards the state or the society they leave behind, as Stilz (2016) has convincingly argued.
4. This general model was later revised and enriched when Hirschman studied the case of the collapse of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Whereas usually exit tends to undermine voice, the case of the GDR was different. Here exit from the country and voice within the country 'worked in tandem and reinforced each other, achieving jointly the collapse of the regime' (Hirschman, 1993: 177). For an earlier comment on stopping emigration as a 'defensive strategy' of the GDR, see Hirschman (1978: 104). For an analysis of how things have changed since then in a world where authoritarian regimes today even encourage their citizens to work, travel or study abroad, see Glasius (2018).
5. The American writer Richard Cecil has a poem with the title 'Internal Exile', which describes the life of ordinary citizens in terms reminiscent of Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man*: 'They rise at five a.m. and feed their cats and drive to work and drive back home and feed their cats and eat and fall asleep while watching Evening New's fresh disasters – blown up bodies littering a desert fought over for the last three thousand years, and smashed-to-pieces million-dollar houses built on islands swept by hurricanes [. . .]' (Cecil, 2004: 49).
6. See, for instance, the autobiography of the Kurdish-Iranian journalist Behrouz Boochani (2018), who was detained on his way to Australia on Manus Island in 2013, as well as the feature about him by ABC News (Australia) on Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=13DgfpxrrAU
7. There is a flipside to attached exit. It has become easier for repressive regimes to intimidate dissident exiles engaging in oppositional politics from abroad. A recent case concerns migrants of Turkish origin in Germany and the Netherlands who were invited by the Turkish government to denounce politically active expatriates and refugees by using a smart phone app that allows users to make online notifications to the Turkish police (Dutch News, 2018). For more on this, see Glasius (2018).

8. The term ‘inner emigration’ is mentioned by Hirschman once (1984: 22), but has not been further developed.
9. For more on increasingly relevant softer forms of repression such as the institutionalization of classroom surveillance and the promotion of self-censorship as ways to curtail academic and intellectual freedom, see, in particular, Hoffmann and Kinzelbach (2018). Much of this is connected to the dual rise of China and the new post-fascist authoritarianism in the declining West (Beilharz, 2018).
10. This is actually an old European idea. In notes for a lecture on John Locke, Judith Shklar wrote the following on how the concept of tacit consent was understood in Europe: ‘Obey new king, who would be ok. If you do not choose to do so, [you] can always leave . . . Go to America. If you do not go to America, it signifies consent’ (Shklar, 2019: 109).

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