(Re)territorialisation of marginality
as a refusal of a mechanic center

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The study approaches the marginal voices as *alternative forms* placed into a tensioned / recessive relation with the *center*,

the domain of "normality", the *dominant pole*, into a common equation, appealing to the *weak oppositions*. This study will establish that the offensive of the recessive elements confirms the dichotomy of the world, proposing a *versus rule*: *Center vs. Margin, Liminality vs. Marginality, Hard vs. Soft/Alternative Models, Communitas vs. Societas, Center vs. Periphery, Dominant vs. Recessive Pole, Dominant vs. Secondary Groups.*

The present study will approach *a weak perspective on marginality* and *the refusal of a canonic formula: Ştefan Augustin Doinaş and Luceafărul Review,* placing in the same relation *marginal hypostases (the wanderer, the drifter, the tourist, the adventurous, aliens vs. locals, sedentary vs. nomads)*, establishing that the *margin*, the *limit*, the *separation of the interiors and the exteriors*, the front exposed for the *subsistent dimension* exists only to the extent it is exposed, inaccessible and not to be appropriated by a dense, opaque, unexposed, immanent, and nonexistent center.

Within the structures of the non-Euclidian displacements reminded by Henry Poincaré[1], (de)forming, fractal, chaotic, or by the displacement currents in Maxwell's theory, the present study[2] will be limited (to a *marginal border*) to show that a *weak perspective* on *marginality* is at once possible and (im)possible. Set in perspective as a space with fractal and chaotic geometry, situated on a pluralist design, *marginal voices* are media conquered by strained networks, with impact on the construction of the images, representations and subjects who interact within these networks, establishing an unequal relationship between the dimension of the *whole* and that of the *shattered pieces*.

Marginality refers to an agonistic relationship between the *center* and the *margins* of a structure - system, subsystem, poly-system or universe. Politically, along with the monopolistic attempt to absolutism of each ideology, the ideological representations depreciated the *alternative forms*, freeing a "secondary mythology" (in relation to the *center* – the domain of "normality", and the source), *marginality* becoming ideology as well, while the *marginal* becomes an activist ⁄ an *outsider* who survives history, sabotaging it.

The relationship between recessive and marginality, can be (re)activated by using a term such as *liminality[3]*, as a return of postmodernism on (pre)modern values in structure, systems, subsystems, poly-systems as some *no man's lands*.

According to Mihai Spăriosu[4], marginality refers to an agonistic relationship between center and the margins; *liminality*, in turn, would have a neutral relationship between two or more structures as happens between two or more border states. Marginality cannot provide access to new worlds, cannot initiate them, the way *liminality* does. If the socio-cultural institutional structures operate in an indicative way, the *liminality* processes operate in a subjunctive mode. Concerned about *liminality*, Adrian Oţoiu[5] approached it in relation with marginality and structural inferiority, with the theories upon multiculturalism and cultural a-theological forms or with exilic inferiority.

Such *weak oppositions* depend on the manner in which we notice the report among the visceral elements from the inner cavities of this new political paradigm, as well as on the identification of the main features that bring ontological justification to the

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[1] Poincaré Henry, *Ştiinţă şi ipoteză (Science and Hypothesis)*, Scientific and Enciclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1985.

[3] The term of *liminality* enters in the Romanian circulation with the translation of Arnold von Gennep (*The Rites of Passage,* 1996) şi Victor Turner (*The forest of symbols*, 1967), being extended by referring to the *communitas*. The *liminoid* indicated the liminal attribute of some ritual situations from contemporary societies.

[4] Mihai Spăriosu, *The Wreath of Wild Olive: Play, Liminality and the Study of Literature*, Sunny Press, New York, 1997.

[5] Adrian Oţoiu, *Trafic de frontieră: strategii transgresive în proza generaţiei'80 (Frontier Traffic: The Prose of the Generation of the Eighties)*, Paralela 45 Publishing House, Piteşti, 2000.

establishment of a new mental structure – *the weak thought* ("*pensiero debole*"[6]).
Without taking into account such a vernacular trajectory, by which to confer to the
typologies of postmodernism a protochronous dimension (*centering* it within a
routine climate or, on the contrary, *de-centering* it, by a *marginal* overbid), one can
decide rather to take "refuge" inside a "territory freed from the fascination with
modernity". Thus, the idea of a *strong renewal,* often considered compulsory, can be
renounced, and one can provide the opportunity to glance "without a faked
innocence" and "after almost one hundred years of utopian, blind view into the
future", not as much "back", as "*laterally*". For there is no idea of the reinstalling
another center that occupies the fore in such an option, but rather the recourse to the
"gentile wicked tricks", translated in a *recessive conduct*, in a "strategy of delay"
that would contribute to a "digressive change of the previous movement".
The minute, petty, singularly and limited power games, the *marginal* ones assault the
strong and *structured power games,* although the *marginal* constitutes, to a greater
extent than the state and institutional "battles", the object of unrest and of the
multiple theoretical investigations. As diffused and dissented as it appears, *marginal
power* represents a manner of resistance with the principal objective related always
to the facts of power and to the instances of power with an immediate action.
Most of the attitudes related to the contrary oppositions emphasize the fact that the
report that is instituted is marked by the *prevalence of the recessive*, by its
irreducible meaning that it can be considered even superior to the dominant.
Under the circumstances where the persistency of discursive, traditional-mimetic
patterns, founded on the agonistic categories of *difference* stubbornly persists in the
struggle for power, the present study becomes a singular initiative to defend within
the perspective of political philosophy, the *alternative model*, rising above these
differences in a *weak synthesis*, making possible the acceptance of both the *center*
and the *margin*, by mutual correction, adjustment, affirmation and retrieval. The
investigation is no longer in the position to opt or sacrifice one for the other, but
takes into consideration one with the other. The present study does not propose a
research of the evolution of the *recessive pole* toward the *dominant pole*, but an
evolution on the "orbit" of each of the two poles, with the permanent possibility of
their overcoming.
When we turn toward the consideration of a global picture, the "periphery" appears
as a counter-part to the conventionalism and the respect for authority and tradition
associated with the "center". The periphery is associated with the term "non-center",
as an "exit" option, as a conventional alternative to protest – "voice" and /or
conformity, "loyalty".
The subject of *margin* and *marginalization* in political philosophy, but also that of
their correspondents developed "in negative" (of inclusion, retrieval and integration,
by the relationship with all the elements mentioned that also defines this topic) can
be approached starting from the relationship among the concepts such as
marginality, alterity and *minority*.

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[6] Gianni, Vattimo, Pier Aldo Rovatti, *Gândirea slabă (Weak Thought*), Pontica
Publishing House, Constanţa, 1998.

Thus, the offensive of the recessive elements on the center confirms the dichotomy of the world, installing what Poincaré called the *world with four dimensions*.

The *mechanical center* can be identified with the center that sucks in the products of culture, appropriates the credit from them and offers their legitimacy, and when it chooses to return the cultural products appropriated, they are deprived of most, or any, meaning. The center is the engine of the empire of power producing one sole monotonous discourse, where all the elements found an equal "voice", with a particular architecture in the East and in the West.

The luxury to identify oneself as a *tolerated outsider* is virtually impossible. Thus, the malady (be it a political one) becomes the symbol, the emblem of a "society of excluded". The circulation *center-periphery* remains permanent, and never any position is definitively either won or lost. A *real marginality* – fed by the imaginary - continues to manifest itself; the representatives of the marginal may have changed, but marginality remains, with a different rapport between a *certain center* and a *certain periphery*. The "centrals" in the strong meaning of the word, lose power, while the "secondary centers" crystallize in the micro-groups and in the multitude of the poles of attraction.

According to Virgil Nemoianu[7] any sketch for a theory of the *secondary* corresponds to the tensions between two main parts. The first would be related to a relatively ordered confederation of nuances, details, secondary elements, exploring also the changing relations and patterns within a multitude of nuances and transformations, decomposing the decline and the disappearance of any main structural types and of any hegemonic pretensions. The second envisions the entropic retrieval, each advancement being conceived as a step down for the substance, as a refusal of potential and a blockage of the options.

Capitalizing on Tönnies[8], Giovanni Sartori[9] operates a clear-cut distinction between *Gemeinschaft* (*Community*) and *Gesellschaft* (*Society*). For Tönnies, *community* is a lively organism, applied to the primary group, while *society* becomes a mechanical aggregate founded on mediations of the exchange and on contract. Sartori opts for a weaker interpretation of community, extending the concept to that of *secondary group*, considering that *alterity* is the counter-weight necessary for identity: "any community presupposes an insulation, a togetherness of recollection that is also a closing against whatever means the outside, an exclusion, that is, a certain conception of "us" that is not conceived in relationship with "them" or from "their" perspective.

The refusal of a canonic formula: Ştefan Augustin Doinaş and Luceafãrul Review

We will be approaching in this part, Zygmunt Bauman's *wanderer* and Ştefan Augustin Doinaş' *drifter*, as *marginal hypostases* for the dichotomy *communitas* vs. *societas*.

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[7] Virgil Nemoianu, *O teorie a secundarului* (*Theory of the Secondary. Literature, Progress and Reaction*), Univers Publishing House, Bucharest, 1997.

[8] A. Tönnies , *Comunità e Società*, Ed. di Comunità, Milano, 1963.

[9] Giovanni Sartori, *Ce facem cu strãinii? Pluralism vs. Multiculturalism (Pluralism, Multiculturalism and Foreigners*) Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 2007.

With one mention: this part becomes a singular approach, having in view that, if Ştefan Aug. Doinaş's article ("The Last Vagabond" published in *Luceafărul Review*) had proposed in the Romanian scene of 1943, a journey (as Doinaş confessed) initially undetermined and without the concrete knowledge of its analytical itinerary, Bauman has become familiar with the Romanian scene (unaware of Doinaş's initial theory!) only in 2000 (through the publication of *Postmodern Ethics*, at Timişoara, Amarcord Publishing House).

Luceafãrul Review has been published in two intervals: from 1934-1939 and from 1940 to 1945. The first interval had in view a programmatic, axiological, teleological project, the second (re)apparition has assumed a recessive relationship between the periphery (messianic orientation or balkanization in Istrati's case) and the nuclear one. Following an orthodoxy orientation, Luceafãrul Review from 1930, has adopted an uncensored initiative and occidental experiences, having in mind the expressionist feeling or the existentialist experiences, traducing them into an aesthetic finality. This is why the *Luceafãrul*'s project articulated some actual objectives: taking into account the local dimension of the cultural development; the affirmation of the cultural identities, blending all the social categories and the cultural life etc.

More limited and heavily contoured around the idea of literary realism, *Luceafărul,* from 1940, has proposed a *cultural project* focused on cultural models with a dual side, from the socio-historical, philosophical goal toward a social, practical, useful one, pleading for raising the *ethical* over the *aesthetic*.

The texts published in *Luceafărul Review* during 1940 – 1945, leave the impression that mankind's destiny and imaginative power are moderated not only by biology and psychology, but, mainly, by history. This adjustment can be recognized in the selection of the causal bondage, which can defined the art of constructing the central Romanian destiny, not as a case study, but as an approach of a social group placed under the history accidents (as a particular case the Vienna Diktat, from 1940). New realism expressions could be recognized in the limitation of the convention's role (poetic and narrative) and in the dilation of the omologic representatively, in the sense in which the fictional reality recreates the essential marks of the real world.

We should mention that with or through the model proposed by *Luceafărul* magazine – a model anchored in what Bauman named „social space" – the activity of the magazine was subordinated to the imperative of setting a distinction (be it stuck in the well-tempered Transylvanian pattern of traditionalisms). This subordination determined a change in the manner of reaction and in the correct decoding of the messages of synchronization or of the messages that include and carry along particularities emitted by Western culture in this perimeter. These Western particularities were often received only in a fragmented manner in the Sibian margin of *Mitteleuropa*, against a background of intellectual drowse.

By the appeal to a well-known Habermasian aporia we shall accept the presupposition according to which Sibiu was a good mediator for all that is related to the activation and constitution of a new *generation – marked by the existence within a less rigid sphere, politically* - engaging (associational) aside the "feeling of friendship" and a series of structures designed *explicitly* as well at the level of the

political perspective, of the *communicational project*, as implicitly, within the *network of social relations*, in the *design of the very relational fabric.*

 (Re)issued under the auspices of the Association of the Schoolmasters of Sibiu county, *Luceafărul* magazine from 1934-1939 determinedly engaged in the affirmation of the national specificity, resorting in a pedagogical and traditionalist key in affirming the national specificity, arriving, in a pedagogical, traditionalist, peasantry ("poporanist") key, to the emphasis of the values of the Transylvanian village and of its social, national and spiritual roots, as an instrument of regaining balance for the attempts of (con)formation and resort to tradition – imperatives envisioning the highlights of regional nationalism and its organic integration into pan-Romanian flux of the time.

The magazine self-declared a tribune of affirmation for the national specificity – through articles oscillating between rituality, fatalism, eugenic aspiration at the purity of race. In its *Sunday Transylvaninism* the magazine will limit itself to the didactic construction of the collective intellectual profile, bringing to attention the peasantry in its dimension of pattern for the Romanian ethical modernism. The project represented a plea for the idea that the vernacular intellectual model of the 30s was differentiated from the international(ist) one only in its *local signs*. Also, part of this plea was the appeal to an integral nationalism and to the rediscovery of the local creative forces, capable to recognize in the catalytic reaction of its conservative structures: royalty, orthodoxies, nationality etc., in front of a possible historical cataclasis.

Along with the faint demarcation line set between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*[10]*,* one can notice that the *resurrection of the marginal model* was also (inter)mediated by *Luceafărul* in the 30s. Published in *Luceafărul* (1943, III, 122-129), Ştefan Aug. Doinaş's article *The Last Vagabond: Panait Istrati*[11]*,* anticipates Bauman's undertaking, stating that "since this journey does not start from a well-determined point, it does not know its itinerary yet, because we want to experience what the writer himself has experienced in his life. Some overzealous people could jump to the conclusion that we tend to propose for each writer a critical method adequate to his/her temperament: this belief would be wrong. In our case, however, we believe that the most fortunate attitude is that of not trying to find any systematization of the material, which coincides to the very attitude that Panait Istrati had regarding life".

According to Doinaş, Istrati's adventure as a conscious *vagabond* is slowed down by a certain bourgeois spirit, salutary to the soul, which is specific to the person who always wants to live peacefully with his or her neighbour.

The issue of *vagabondage* is superimposed by Doinaş himself to the life state of modern man, through attributes that consider the fact that modern man is eternally alone; even in a crowd, he is isolated; he lives with all his plenitude the tragedy of individualisation; evermore unintegrated, he is always intoxicated, to a painful

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[10] A. Tönnies, *Comunità e Società*, Ed. di Comunità, Milano, 1963.

[11] Such a (re)activation of the *Last Vagabond* – Panait Istrati – choosing (intentionally) to present this issue (at the *Formes et Stratégies du Refus* conference at Nice – a familiar space/ alternative for Istrati), (re)confirms the need of investing the margin with a dynamical (un-fixed) cultural.

voluptuousness, with the longing for other simultaneous existences; from the so called "crisis of individuality", modern man experiences a continuous closeness to death – this is because modern man is an individuality and only individualities die.

From this point on, *the vagabond* - Panait Istrati – fails to completely represent modern man. His characters experience everything in a direct way, never reflexively, without experiencing a tragicalness that would do nothing else but authenticate their life. This is because for modern man the option is the limitation to a concrete aspect of life which requires earning the spiritual self, and this is possible only through will, an attribute which, according to Doinaş, Istrati lacks: "By knowing, therefore, that Istrati's vagabond does not effect option, and by knowing on the other side that "option is the one thing in the world that best resembles suicidal" (V. Jankelevitch), we will understand why the real tragicalness is absent from the work we are discussing. Modern man has finally learned to indulge in negative attitudes as well. From this point of view, Istrati's man is completely different from the modern man. If it is true that "the strongest is the one that can have revenge but does not do it, the one who can love but does not do it", then we will concede that Istrati's man is a weak being, hesitant, because he loves and he takes violent revenge, always aiming beyond his possibilities"[12].

The type of *prodigious vagabond* that Doinaş proposes is gradually separating himself from modern man as he gives up the spiritual attributes, settles for what *only* the effective involvement in life offers him. *The last vagabond* becomes the type situated between the fiery romantic and the lucid modern, tormented by the lived life and the imagined one, like a tragic God who turns to himself, resuscitating and reviving himself. *The Last Vagabond* thus stays a wonderful being in his antonymic structure, a Diogenes, with the lamp of his heart, in broad daylight, looking for Man[13].

While Bauman proposes two postmodern types the *vagabond vs. the tourist* or, in an early lexical version, the pair *aliens vs. locals*, *sedentary vs. nomads*, Doinaş places in the same analytical equation *the adventurous* vs. *the vagabond*.

Seemingly the same versus formula is used by Bauman as well, in order to separate the *vagabond* from the *tourist's* profile. A *communitas* in which the rambler is simultaneously accepted as screenwriter and director (Bauman), the vagabonds being the beaters who gather together and drop down exhausted, singing praise hymns to existence (Doinaş) – a spectacle to which willingly or unwillingly we are present!

Bauman uses the terms "flaneur" and "flaneuses" to designate the pattern of the beholder whose tireless curiosity - the wanderer's freedom – is accepted both as a script writer and a producer. Such a conception of distinct fields (political and philosophical) launches the operational contrast between *communitas* and *societas*. Supposing that *societas* is characterized by heterogeneousness, irregularity, differentiating the orders or nominal system, *communitas* is marked by homogeneity, equality, the absence of orders, anonymity: "In other words,

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12 Ştefan Aug. Doinaş, *The Last Vagabond: Panait Istrati* (*Luceafărul*, 1943, III, 122-129).
13 *Idem*.

communitas melts down that what *societas* struggles to cast into shapes and to hammer out/forge. Otherwise *societas* shapes and solidifies all that in *communitas* is liquid and without mold"[14].

Unlike the *sedentary*, the *nomads/migrants* keep moving. They go around a well structured territory with firm and attributed bearing to each fragment. A trait that separates them from the *pilgrims* is that *nomads* don't have a final destination to mark their itinerary beforehand, and no stopping is favored but all crossing places to be just halting points. They move from one place to another in a strictly normal sequence, following rather the order of things than inventing the order, dismantling it when they leave. Between *nomads* and *drifter/wanderer*, the latter conveys a suited metaphor for that what Bauman calls "humans belonging to the post modern condition"[15].

Drifters require no destination; they are pushed ahead by an unfulfilled desire, hope, because "the drifter is a pilgrim without destination, a nomad with no itinerary. The drifter travels in a shapeless space, whereas every consecutive establishment is local, temporary, and episodic".

Like the *drifter*, the *tourist* has his own biographical time and answers only to the flexible experience of space. According to Bauman, the tourist's esthetic capacity, the curiosity, the need of amusement, his desire and ability to live new experiences can be called an absolute freedom of organizing the space from the tourist's world; the kind of freedom that the *drifter* can only dream about. Just as the *drifter*, the *tourist* is extraterritorial, living outside the territory like a privileged, like an independent, as a right given to be free to choose in a world called by Bauman, the *tourist's shell*.   Both the *drifter* and the *tourist* move around places where other people live who can deal with the settlements of these delimitations; the *drifter* and the *tourist* having only a brief and formal encounter with them (hypocritical meetings). According to Bauman "this is the life formula of the drifter and the tourist, physically close, and spiritually far"[16].

In the postmodern era the *drifter* and the *tourist* are no longer insignificant types. They turn into patterns destined to dominate/control and mould the entirety of life and the whole day by day, into stereotypes that all practice is measured, because *social field* represents for Bauman a source of energy and the *esthetic* - a playing field.

In conclusion, the *marginal element* could be integrated into the community of being(s). According to Jean-Luc Nancy[17], in the institution and in the exposure of the being, in the being which is abandoned in the world, the "essence" is exposed to the self. The self represents a case of philosophical and political "regime", precisely as it happens with the category of *otherness*, because to be in-self represents the condition to be for existence. This is where the being falls this is the essential

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[14] Z.Bauman, *Etica postmodernă (Postmodern Ethics)*, Amarcord Publishing House, Timişoara, 2000, p.129.

[15] Bauman, *op.cit.*, p.261.

[16] *Ibid.,* pp. 263.

[17] Jean-Luc Nancy, *Comunitatea absentă (The Inoperative Community)*, Ideea Design& Print Publishinh House, Cluj, 2007.

accident, for the Self is the sovereignty, the coming, the event of the being. In accord with Nancy, in-it(him/her)self represents the *margin*, the *limit*, the *separation of the interiors and the exteriors*, the front exposed for the *subsistent dimension* that exists only to the extent it is exposed, inaccessible and not to be appropriated by a dense, opaque, unexposed, immanent, and nonexistent center. Hence, there is no communion or common being, but only being-in-common, a being which shares and whose hallmark is the *aseitas* of existence which identity is exposed.

The new meaning of existence represents a purpose and an ideal of accomplishment, an end of history, a fulfilled humanity. *Meaning, language, the other, singularity* become in the traditional lexicon of the political doctrines, an anti-thesis, the logic of the limit establishing that anything that is between two belongs to everyone (not open for the dispute of appropriation).

The marginals are placed between the disaggregation of the masses and the aggregation of the group, such an exposure extracting the sap from the simultaneous imminence of the withdrawal and involvement in relation, in liberty and necessity, the indecisive mark of the *foreigner* and the *peer*, of *singularity* and *collectivity*, of *attraction* and *rejection.*

Bauman, Zygmunt, *Etica postmodernă (Postmodern Ethics)*, Amarcord Publishing House, Timişoara, 2000;

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