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## Anarchives – Differential Moments of Affirmation through Revolutionary Love

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**Abstract:** In order to counter the idea that there is no way out of the grand narratives of separation between the Western, dominant modes of production of knowledge, art and politics and the opposing ones, anchored either in the movements of liberation of the Third World or in the transition from the ex-Communist to a global capitalist model, I propose a type of practice that I call revolutionary love. This practice may generate a space of “differential consciousness” (Sandoval), related to a space of “relational matrices,” which involves discord and dissension, “adventitious growth,” and “surplus movements” (Massumi). Revolutionary love is poetically transcribed in the micropolitical gestures of anarchives – a toxic input that can free desire from the imperceptible repressions it is obeying.

**Keywords:** Revolutionary Love, Anarchive; Differential Consciousness; Decolonial Critique; Principle of Unrest.

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The disquieting context in which this text originated is delineated by an aporia we often encounter – one of the fundamental types of aporia of the present time: that is, the idea that there is no way out of the grand narratives of separation – between the Western, dominant modes of production of knowledge, art and politics and the countering ones, anchored either in the movements of liberation of the Third World or in the transition from the ex-Communist to a global capitalist model. The aporia is expressed either through a simplifying reconciliation that leaves most challenging issues unresolved or, on the contrary, through divergent points of view – a crack in the geopolitics of knowledge – that cannot be palliated by any humanist attempt. In the space opened by the failed encounter between thought and political practices stemming from the Western world and the capacity to create vital forms occurs a type of love that I call *revolutionary*, able to generate a space of “differential consciousness”<sup>1</sup>. In this context, “differential consciousness” is not necessarily related to macropolitical gestures; on the contrary,

it allows the vital form to evolve and to testify for a poetics that diverges from macropolitics and from grand narratives. It can create anarchival moments as deviations from grand narratives – unexpected encounters that defy ideologies, resurgence of obsolete terms or concepts as for instance the quest for immortality, affective excess or subversive love. The core traits of these anarchival moments consist in their unexpected, undeniable force of affirmation, which is insured by “micropolitical” gestures – defined as “differentials that move at the interstices of force-form in ways that trouble all grand narratives, including that of the macropolitical”<sup>2</sup>. The troubling effect they generate involves the idea of a multi-vocal affirmation, an affirmation that presupposes a paradoxical power that goes beyond reconciliation: “the infinite improbability which occurs regularly”<sup>3</sup>.

The type of affirmation I will address in my attempt to delineate the anarchival is *revolutionary love*, understood as going into the excess of being, as “a gentle hemorrhage of being”<sup>4</sup>. In her book *Methodology of the Oppressed* (2000), following Barthes (from *Incidents, The Pleasures of the Text and A Lover’s Discourse*), Chela Sandoval discusses “differential consciousness,” which could be attained by humans only through a difficult passage and not through a synthesizing term. Rather through a leap than through dialectics. It could also be attained through an eccentric term – revolt or the methodology of the oppressed. Crucially, this passage cannot be fulfilled without a preliminary moment of shock. Extrapolating, Sandoval indicates love as a hermeneutics capable of creating differential modes of consciousness<sup>5</sup>. The access to what Barthes calls the gentleness of “the

abyss”<sup>6</sup> – haemorrhage of being, utopian non-localization – cannot be attained otherwise than through the difficulty of the passage.

Discussing Barthes’s processuality of falling in love, of erotics able to submit to what is “intractable,” Sandoval addresses revolutionary love that occurs outside ideology. She calls it prophetic love, which ensures the entry into a realm that overcomes the divergence of the two terms of the relation (either Western centrality or the subversive, reactionary paradigm – two actors that exclude each other mutually). Revolutionary love means exposure, providing a passage to the realm of the “differential”<sup>7</sup>. It also means disconnection from a specific typology of power, a shifting of the older paradigms, a thorough removal from them, and drifting into abyss. Barthes (quoted by Sandoval) places it in relationship to the third meaning, which “can only be discerned when it is understood as extending, outside the limits of dominant culture, knowledge, and information”<sup>8</sup>. This third meaning subverts not “the content, but the whole practice of meaning” altogether<sup>9</sup> because it unsettles the peace of mind of the Western ego, narratives and law, engaging with new logics of being and of consciousness:

Turning thus from narrative’s comforts and limits, from love’s “Western modes,” Barthes searches for the *punctum*; he finds what is “obtuse;” he gives himself over; he drifts “on the intractable bliss that beckons” in that place of life that survives outside and between narrative forms, where meanings live in some free, yet marked and wounded space, a site of shifting,

morphing meanings that transform to let him in<sup>10</sup>.

Therefore revolutionary love imposes at the same time the originality of relation as well as differential consciousness. It is a subversive act.

What meaning could we then confer to the juxtaposition of two terms as divergent as they seem at a first glance – revolutionary love and the anarchivé?

Firstly, we could affirm that, as it is the case with revolutionary love, the transfiguring force of the anarchivé is located within the difficulty of the passage. The old world—the world of identity politics and of separation—changes at a vertiginous pace that is often ungraspable from the vantage point of the new political and aesthetic dynamics. The new world still needs a long time to emerge. Since the politics of archiving of the old world is still to be problematized, we could affirm that the anarchivé is situated in differential consciousness: the same differential consciousness that characterizes revolutionary love. Revolutionary love as passage, as exposure, as drifting into the intractable, as overcoming irreconcilables; the anarchivé as search for the flow of a vital form that creates the basis “of an inventory that is able to carry this potential in itself – that is, an archiving ‘for’ and not ‘about’.”<sup>11</sup>

Secondly, the conjecture between revolutionary love and the anarchivé stems from their capacity to make an inventory of poetics, to catalogue modes of artistic and political survival in the form of contagious viruses and of toxic transmitting of geopolitical and aesthetic proposals that fall outside the grand narratives imposed by Western Europe and the U.S.

The discussion of the decolonial frame in the context of the connection I make between revolutionary love and the anarchivé is not arbitrary. It also stands at the core of Suely Rolnik’s text on *Archive Mania*. She searches for a poetic axis that could “destabilize the politics of production of knowledge”<sup>12</sup>. The link between revolutionary love and the anarchivé consists thus in their consistent and intentional remapping of territories, of sensibilities and cultures that are constantly destabilized. The cultural outcome resulted in this processual metamorphosis would be less a melting pot than a transnational society whose micropolitical tendencies are framed by a “politics of desire”<sup>13</sup> able to free them from unconscious repressions and automatic mechanisms of action and reaction:

A whole world, instituted by that hegemonic thought, is being destabilized. Its territory is being transformed from underground, its cartography modified, its limits redrawn. A process is beginning in which the cultures that until then had been suffocated are being reactivated, and new sensibilities introduced in the construction of the present, giving a cue to different modes of response<sup>14</sup>.

This cue to new modes of response, to new cartographies is equally given by a type of love that is able to relay the plurality of cultural others. Not a love of the heart, but a love of distress, a love that enters a differential zone by breaking out the established relationships with power. This revolutionary love is poetically transcribed in the micropolitical gestures of anarchivés. It is not exhausted by them. The potential

that revolutionary love carries with it can be translated in the viral force of anarchives – a toxic input that can free desire from the imperceptible repressions it is obeying. The anarchives is a constant resurgence of vital forms that destabilizes grand narratives.

### Disquieting Concepts

Revolutionary love is disquieting because it presupposes the hiatus of a passage.

However, apart from being a vital form, involving anarchism and revolt, revolutionary love is mainly caught in a dilemma: it has to design frames for a world whose main foundations are threatened with randomness and whose ideologies are exposed to nihilism. These are frames for a social order that defies algorithms – a hermeneutics of chaos that endeavours in infinite permutations rather than obsessional monotheism of order. Within these frames, one of the most persistent questions refers to the notion of contemporariness, of what it means to belong to the present time. Because present time, in its neoliberal or capitalist “unbounded” paradigm, possesses its own modes of capturing and contextualizing; this is the reason why one of the most urging contemporary philosophical problems is “being in the passage – the problem of what we are, in this very moment”<sup>15</sup>. It also consists in understanding these modes of capturing and archiving them.

Among the theorists that addressed contemporariness, Michel Foucault advanced the idea of self-deconstruction of the Western man, whose target is not “to discover what we are, but to refuse what we are”<sup>16</sup>. But how to refuse what we are, without falling into self-despise, without

becoming a facile prey to different forms of barbarism or ideologies, in their well-established, well-forged or redundant forms? The question is how to reinvent processes that would be able to remap subjectivities in a capitalist expanded field?<sup>17</sup>

In an activist logic, there is apparently no way out of the phagocytic machine of capitalism. “Jameson’s despair is that there is no way to make effective interventions, no way to re-chart subjectivity in an advanced capitalist cultural machine that desires our interventions to feed its machinations”<sup>18</sup>. Nothing is left out; the model seems to exclude counter-effective movements that are ingested by the dominant logic. Thus, according to this logic, in order for counter-movements to appear, they should take either the form of affective excess, of parasite, emergent or symbiotic tendencies within the general body of the capitalist system or to find subversive (non-capitalist) tendencies within the capitalist field. All these forms constitute a cartography of excess connected to the way the anarchives practice re-charts subjectivity. This fold of counter-movements pertains on the one hand to the anarchives defined as a “repertory of traces”<sup>19</sup> (Manning 2020) and on the other hand to that dimension that disconnects from ideological power and that we call “revolutionary love” – a machine of unravelling desire, of energizing affirmation, shaped in discord<sup>20</sup>.

In order to contextualize the paradoxical content advanced through the concept of *revolutionary love* as a key articulation between the anarchives understood as a “repertory of traces of events” (Manning) and the possibility of countering the internal logic of capitalism through a “surplus-value”<sup>21</sup>, we should refer to the way

it is understood by Sandoval. The author connects love in the postmodern world to the idea of differential consciousness. Love, in her understanding, functions as a hermeneutics of social change. In this context, she makes reference to Frantz Fanon: "Today I believe in the possibility of love, that is why I endeavour to trace its imperfections, its perversions"<sup>22</sup>. Differential consciousness is also a concept extensively discussed by Barthes and it is connected to all attitudes, gestures, visions that are not expressed through words. It is accessed through poetical modes of expression: music, images, sounds that tend towards a no-place, towards a spatiality that has to be reinvented.

This mode of differential consciousness, via Barthes, can be attained by human thought through a non-conformable passage. Barthes calls this term "falling in love," which takes us out of what is controllable and projects us into the originality of the relation. Importantly, this passage cannot be accomplished without a precursory moment of shock. In order to extrapolate and to transfer this ex-centric projection into the field of social change, Sandoval indicates love as a hermeneutics capable of creating differential modes of consciousness. Consciousness in this context is mainly used in the sense of social awareness, of creative possibilities of inhabiting the world that diverge from the dominant paradigm of the neo-liberal, capitalist politics of knowledge.

Starting from the zero degree of consciousness, a new space of possibility is created. Love can access and guide our theoretical and political moves, our revolutionary manoeuvres. This refers to the fact that the access to what Barthes calls

the gentleness of the abyss – "a gentle hemorrhage of being... u-topic non-localization"<sup>23</sup> – is made possible only through the difficulty of the passage. Revolutionary love subverts ideology, simultaneously imposing the originality of relation. It overcomes the dichotomy either-or, affirming that there is no hope... and nevertheless. It is a subversive act.

How are then attained these differential modes of consciousness we mentioned earlier? They originate in the ontology of relation before being directed to one or the other of the actors. The originality of relation is the entrance gate towards what Barthes calls differential<sup>24</sup>: it departs from dominant narratives of love in the West, constituting a synchronic process that permeates older narratives of love in the form of a rupture. At the limit, it enters the realm of the abyss, of the originality of relation, when everyday affects such as abandonment and frustration are evacuated in favour of a relation "without a site, without topos, without discourse"<sup>25</sup>. This a-topos "space" may seem vague, yet it means a removal from dominant narratives. It is the only solution within the paradigm of the capitalist expanded field – a field that phagocytize everything, by giving every action a specific direction, transforming useless acts into useful ones and catapulting pure duration into a well-oriented, valuable time. Whatever name we would give to this "impossible outside," it is marked by a specific dimension: it is a place of life, of "surplus value"<sup>26</sup>. A place that escapes capture and develops a poetics of the useless. A space permeated by revolutionary love.

Every love is revolutionary. However, in the sense developed by Barthes and taken over by Sandoval, it possesses a

specific dynamic, capable of breaking out the relationships with power in the same way the anarchic resists repression (either ideological or, more subtle, psychological) through developing techniques embedded in a “differential zone”<sup>27</sup> – the condition for life to flow again. The juncture between the anarchic and revolutionary love consists in this useless poetics originating in the differential zone. Either in an aesthetic or in a political sense, what is at stake here is the vital capacity of the body, the flowing experience of the world. This experience would be thus capable of overcoming trauma imposed by a specific system of power, be it capitalist or dictatorial<sup>28</sup>. Barthes, quoted by Sandoval, calls it a constant drifting “outside the limits of dominant culture, knowledge, and information”<sup>29</sup>. In the aesthetic realm, Rolnik characterizes this experience as depending “on the ability of the body to become vulnerable to what surrounds it, to let itself be taken over by the sensation of disparity between the forms of reality and the movements that fluctuate underneath its apparent stability, which set it in a ‘state of art’.”<sup>30</sup>

The zero degree of differential consciousness constitutes then the lines of flight of a new magnitude that can engage with logics other than the dominant narratives of the Western world. This is what characterizes both the logic of revolutionary love and the logic of the anarchic: both invent tactics of flow that permeate and subvert the entire practice of meaning of the Western logic<sup>31</sup>. Besides being a “repertory of traces,” immanent tendencies and emergencies, they are specifically directed towards a politics and an aesthetics to come, capable of puzzling dominant mechanisms of power. More concretely,

“differential consciousness” in which revolutionary love roots is described by Sandoval in the following terms:

The zero degree of meaning, counter-narrative, utopic no-place, the abyss, amor en Aztlán, soul. It is accessed through varying passages that can include the differential form of social movement, the methodology of the oppressed, poetry, the transitive proverb, oppositional pastiche, *coatlicue*, the middle voice<sup>32</sup>.

Moreover, in the quest of anarchival traces that could escape the Western “archive mania” and the colonial repression of artistic practices, Rolnik advances the conclusion that:

The object of this type of repression is the body itself and the possibility of inhabiting it... The activation of the bodily ability that was repressed by modernity constitutes an essential dimension for any poetic-political action. Without such activation, the only possibility is to produce variations around the modes of production of subjectivity and of cognition that found us as colonies of Western Europe – precisely the condition we want to escape<sup>33</sup>.

It is an essential statement, which highlights the fact that, whether we want it or not, an anarchival model may provide alternatives to the central logic of modernity. It should also provide modes of subjectivity that resist colonial repression<sup>34</sup>. Rolnik does not offer a definition of the anarchic, but she insists on the fact that in

addressing alternatives to the archive mania, one has to absolutely pass through “the activation of the bodily ability”<sup>35</sup>.

To both revolutionary love and the anarchic, the most important moment is the excessive one, the divergence of being and the differential zone where dominant power discourses are drifted towards a zone where bodily energies can be activated.

Returning to love: what kind of revolutionary love can there be? Is the potential for such an act not simply exhausted by all failed projects of fraternity, all misled revolutions, all solidarities in the name of random identity ideals? Love seems to be an outdated project because every time it is invoked, there is a tendency to appeal to common values, worldviews, and enthusiasms. What about a world in which divergent identities are dominant – a puzzle of invisible tendencies that exclude each other? How is then love possible? And what kind of love?

I would thus highlight the fact that, in order to activate “the bodily ability that was repressed by modernity” or to access the “differential zone” inhabited by revolutionary love, love cannot be other than paradoxical. It is not a mania (a creative power, as in Plato)<sup>36</sup>, but a reflected solidarity, able to stand against barbarisms to come. What is specific to revolutionary love compared to Plato’s love is the fact that it is tied to the most extreme discord. Because the world of the future, with its porous frontiers, will be a world of discord. This is precisely the reason why there is an absolute urge for such a concept as revolutionary love. And the reason why I quote Houria Bouteldja, who is one of the most vehement activists of discord: she invokes the concept of revolutionary love as a desirable

limit, which becomes an instrumental concept in a world permeated by separation, dichotomy and hatred:

The We of a politics of love, which will never be a politics of the heart. Because in order to accomplish this love, we do not need to love or to pity. It will be enough to recognize each other and to embody this moment “just before hatred,” to postpone it as much as possible and, with the energy of despair, ward off the worst. It will be the We of revolutionary love.<sup>37</sup>

Moreover, a “politics of affects”<sup>38</sup> could be seen as a fair analogy to what we have designed so far as revolutionary love. Affects are powerful, disturbing, integrating and disintegrating and therefore they need a centripetal force, conceived as revolutionary love. Revolutionary love emerging from this politics of affects includes incompatible stances and divergent positions, building a pluriverse apparatus of meaning; it is a response to the “monotheism” of archives. It is not a politics of the heart in the above-mentioned sense, but rather a politics of a playful hybridization of being, capable of supplementing action by an excess of activity. This is akin to what Brian Massumi has in view when he mentions the “excess of activity over action”<sup>39</sup>. The fragility and unpredictability of action, in the sense conceived by Hannah Arendt in *The Human Condition*, cannot be palliated only through forgiveness and contracts<sup>40</sup>, which presuppose a long running time. Under the conditions of a time undergoing vertiginous change, as it is the present time, there is a need for an equally vertiginous concept: the concept of revolutionary

love. It is vertiginous in the sense of being able to redesign escapes from ideologies, to overcome repressions and to anarchively irreducible traces of bare activity. Briefly, to release the “poetic force that an archiving device can transmit”<sup>41</sup>. This concept is able to frame the anarchive as the poetic force present within the archive. Revolutionary love means the poetic force released by a politics of affects; the excess of activity over action. Politically and aesthetically, revolutionary love and the anarchive are bound together in the “excess of being,” in a vital form that both are able to release.

### Difficulties

A consistent part of decolonial critique brings into discussion the possibility of recovering relational temporalities. The colonial project is mostly understood as a project of separation: between individual and community; between the subject and the non-human; and between subject and its inner subjectivity. The outcome of this separation project leads to the shattering of relational worlds. In order to counter this schizophrenia, we should then recover relationality. Instead of the hollow time of the subject, one should highlight relational temporalities, based on the ontology of relation, that is, Rousseau’s model as a counterpart to Descartes’. The question that compellingly arises at this point is the following: if revolutionary love anarchives incompatible stances and divergent positions and is able to face dissension, how can one possibly accomplish the passage from violence to love? How can violence be integrated into revolutionary love? What are the gestures, the events, the manifestos that can provoke this overturn?

First of all, within a decolonial context, departing from the dominant capitalist paradigm, the difficulty comes from an expansionist, promethean trauma that renders reconciliation and dialogue difficult to accomplish. Secondly, the difficulty arises from divergent categories within our vision of the world: as individual beings, we constantly hesitate between the two. As social and political beings, we have to choose: on the one hand, there is freedom, tolerance, and secularism; on the other, solidarity, belonging, and community. On the one hand, there is civilizational progress<sup>42</sup>; on the other, there is loss of dignity in a project of relegation into barbarism of everything that steps out of the triumphal march of modernity<sup>43</sup>.

In order to overcome these historical and conceptual scissions, Sandoval’s hermeneutics of love is instrumental. In her understanding, love could create a differential space of possibility. Romantic love, combined with risk and courage, can make everything possible<sup>44</sup>. The passage to a new form of humanity nullifies the antagonistic terms created by the rhetoric of modernity (civilization-barbarism, progress-regression) in order to counter a more dangerous barbarism and to render it inefficient, in an act of simplicity. This act of simplicity implies “the Us” of revolutionary love, whose aporia is expressed by Houria Bouteldja in her book *Les Blancs, les Juifs et nous*. She considers what we called the zero degree of differential consciousness, namely an almost impossible passage: “This Us of the diversity of our beliefs, of our convictions and identities, this Us of their complementarity and irreducibility. This Us of a peace that we deserve because it has been paid expensively”<sup>45</sup>.



What is her reason for writing this book? Her explanation: "Because I share Gramsci's anxiety: The old world is dying. The new world still needs a long time to emerge, and monsters appear in this twilight"<sup>46</sup>. What should then replace the decline of Western civilization? "One single answer: peace. One single means: revolutionary love"<sup>47</sup>.

This statement leads to a subversive project, a project full of revenge, because, despite the above-invoked revolutionary love, one hears incessantly the litany "us versus you." Thus, tension erupts. The author excludes this "you" that gave birth to a hegemonic, Promethean, and armed ego. Then, how can this "you" become "us"? How can this irreconcilable tension be recovered into differential consciousness? Moreover, how can this conquering project, among whose founders one could count Descartes, be palliated by revolutionary love? "I think therefore I am. I think therefore I am... God... Can we imagine the removal of this ego from the political context of its enunciation? No, answers the South-American philosopher Enrique Dussel"<sup>48</sup>. This ego affirms itself. It confronts death. It becomes the form of the modern, virile, capitalist ego.

These are serious accusations that have already been expressed by Charles Taylor, who criticized Descartes for having inaugurated the power of instrumental reason, based on exclusion and inflated projects of domination. Yet Taylor is not the representative of a political platform and his words do not become an indictment. Is then the indictment of militant politics able to create the differential consciousness of revolutionary love, that unpredictable passage towards a world yet to come? We should not forget that at the centre of the Western paradigm, of this "armed ego"<sup>49</sup>, we have an

alternative to Descartes, namely Rousseau. It is Rousseau who invoked relational temporalities. And we should also not forget that the basis of differential consciousness is precisely the ontology of relation.

In this respect, Lewis Gordon mentions the most persistent strategies of ignoring relational logic. The first logical incongruence is related to the view according to which groups would meet without influencing each other, as in colonial gender theories or in some racist theories. According to this string of theories, only one group would influence the other, while in fact, he suggests, both groups impact each other. These representations are grounded in a simplified model of identity, where the relation between identity and alterity is formed on the model of a relationship between substance and form, between pre-given entities. We tend to ignore that every time a human being meets another human being, a completely new situation is created. What happens when human beings meet each other? What occurs is the unpredictability of the relationship. The outcome is a "new" time. Confronted to this "new" time, the most frequent reactions are the following: the conservative one, which implies a sustained fear of future, or the reaction of return towards an immemorial time, towards an authentic past. The model of a linear time, with unique outcome, presupposes the fact that, every time we imagine possibilities for the future, one of them is inevitably revolutionary. Whereas in reality all these multiple possibilities presuppose that agents of ideas in history are diverse and that a multitude of people could become agents – Fanon who precedes Foucault, Dussel who precedes Deleuze and Guattari. The new is

the outcome of an unpredictable encounter, of a historical power of agency, a common effort of articulating humanity.

Modes of estrangement from such a project are those in which philosophy and thought are “zombified,” encapsulated into categories that do no longer correspond to present time – as stated by Gordon in his book, *Disciplinary Decadence. Living Thought in Trying Times*. For instance, in order to confront this zombification of thought, a metacritical procedure is needed, which implies both a critique of the colonial and of the decolonial project. The most obvious criticism could refer to the way the epistemic is replaced by moral purity, while thought is located outside the circulation of ideas. In this sense, Gordon’s conclusion is that thought should be re-humanized. This process should start from humility and from the presupposition of incompleteness, which leads to the need of practices that must be incessantly re-invented – radical pedagogies, puzzling disciplines –, opposing zombified thought to vivid thought. In the same vein, Gordon advances the teleological suspension of disciplinarity – a trespassing of canonical frontiers between disciplines in view of a more genuine contact with reality, of fidelity towards evidence, of an increased attention to the world. And the acceptance of the unpredictability of events; of the fact that we are moving alongside a humankind that advances at a speed for which we most probably do not have tools for understanding. “*Human being presupposes the divergence of being,*” states Gordon<sup>50</sup>.

### Divergence

From the divergence of being, as understood by Gordon, arises once again the connection between revolutionary love

and the anarchic. Divergence of being presupposes multiplicity, paradox and uselessness, the imprints of revolutionary love that make reference to what Massumi calls “qualitative surplus-value”<sup>51</sup>. Paradox stems from the fact that revolutionary love must continually overcome the genuine ignorance that compulsory objectifies threats as coming from external causalities. Ignorance causes pain. It mainly causes anticipated pain, which is equivalent to a generalized posture of fear. This is the reason why often decolonial discourse becomes a symptom of fear. Fear reacts to fear. Islamophobia leads to overrated counter-reactions, whose outcome is the demonization of the Western world. However, without being exposed to such counter-reactions, no process will be destabilized, no tendency will emerge, no microprocess will be triggered.

What exposes microgestures to macropolitical attitudes is always excessive, referring to differential consciousness in the sense we outlined above. It is a leap, a derivative, a deviating and transfiguring force that extrapolates the shock and translates it into the force of possibility. What is excessive in the aesthetic and political events? It is their anarchical force, this capacity to create a differential landscape, swarming with tendencies – a potential for capturing the more-than present in every event. The capacity to transmute the chaotic energy of the fools into the poetic force of a process through which “new sensibilities (are being) introduced in the construction of the present, giving a cue to different modes of response”<sup>52</sup>.

This passage from minor to major gestures<sup>53</sup> is convincingly expressed by Massumi in his book *The Principle of Unrest*:

Minor gestures always have to play the major, subverting, perverting, hijacking, or hacking it. And however dismissive I can be about the grand gestures of macropolitics, they, like the resentment of anti-racist identity-based politics, are strategically necessary at certain junctures... Under certain conditions – and these conditions are rare – a grand gesture may open the relational field in a way that the minor gestures swarming in it have room to amplify and boom<sup>54</sup>.

It is in these cracks between minor and grand gestures that surplus-value of life can be conveyed; it is in these cracks that “bare-activity”<sup>55</sup> can flicker. Love can create these spaces of possibility for traces to insert in reality. Love is not equivalent to the anarchic. The anarchic could also consist in poetic manifestos, in cartographies of new sensibilities, in “methodologies of the oppressed,” in modalities through which cultures, proposals, and experiences that have been suffocated can be reactivated. Archives have viral effects. In the archival context, love (in its revolutionary, subversive aspect) becomes the trigger able to create different memories of the future – different geopolitics of desire. It does so because it is caught in an impossible encounter and not in a politics of fear stemming from colonial practices. The form of politics we are addressing here diverges from fear through the unexpected dimension of differential consciousness and through passionate tendencies:

Such tendencies are passionate: that is the best word for a movement that affirms its own occurring. Love is a

good example, as long as analogy is not taken too far, since the kinds of tendencies I’m talking about come in many an affective form—we’re back at the affective level I talked about earlier. Love is tied up with all manner of economic pressures and opportunities, but we still seek and sustain it for its own sake. We value it for its own quality, for the heightening of experience it brings: for the qualitative surplus-value it offers<sup>56</sup>.

Differential consciousness, the core-concept involved in revolutionary love, is related to surplus-value of life, in the sense that it eludes dichotomy (reaction-counterreaction, threat-fear). It also eludes the false alternatives present in demonization (of capitalism, of Western World) and understands that all these mechanisms of capture can be palliated through an excessive, affective “principle of unrest” with all implications of an activist philosophy, centered on the notion of movement<sup>57</sup>. What makes the difference between love in general and revolutionary love is the passage from a potentiality to an excess of activity, capable of constituting un-captured channels – the multifaceted processes of the anarchic. It is one of the triggers that can push the neo-liberal, expansionist model to the “point of no return,” by its remainder of bare activity over useful action. Archiving means cataloguing political and aesthetic escapes from the exclusive Western, capitalist-driven geopolitics of knowledge. It has the aesthetic potential to propose alternative politics of knowledge.

“Revolutionary love” is not useful, it is an excess of being, a hemorrhage of being, it is precisely what is useless in programmatic

ideologies and in hatred discourses proliferated within the oppression-oppressed paradigm. It also constitutes an opening towards anarchives of paradoxical encounters, enabled by moments of shock. The anarchivistic is not useful. It is the possibility of creating “new meanings that are the condition for life to flow again.”<sup>58</sup>

Massumi addresses the complicity between the outside and inside of capitalism, the “processual duplicity”<sup>59</sup> as an ontopowerful tool. In this context, the excess of potential can leave traces that could be called anarchivistic traces:

There is always a remainder: an excess of potential over capture, of bare activity over useful function, of just-arising over normalized operation. If you define action in terms of functionality or operativity, then there is always an *excess of activity over action*. In Deleuze and Guattari’s vocabulary, there are always ‘lines of flight’ suggesting themselves: tendential movements which, if extended to follow their own arc, uncaptured, would move in very different directions than the established channels: these are the counterontopowers I mentioned earlier.<sup>60</sup>

It seems that in the excess of activity over action one could find the tendencies that can result in the anarchiving impulses. What we call revolutionary love is the trigger that can expand the space of transformative events: from indignation to organization, from distrust to “relational matrices”<sup>61</sup>. It involves discord and dissension. Love devoid of discord and subversion is placed in a difficult position because every love is preliminarily nullified by all possible

involvements it sacrifices. Being in love with one person or one cause involves the sacrifice of all others. Embracing a cause means inevitably excluding all others, be it political, ideological or philosophical. It also means temptation of migration, of treachery, and of escape. Due to its toxic effects, revolutionary love proposes a cure through the experience of becoming together. In the infinitesimal discrepancy between becoming together and being together lies the anarchivistic potential of the visionary place described as “derivative, or surplus-value of the event”<sup>62</sup>.

The energy of what we call revolutionary love is then related to what Massumi names “adventitious growth” and “surplus movements”<sup>63</sup>. It is also embedded in the subtle analysis he delivers regarding the passage from the affective element present in a politics of threat and fear to a politics of care. This passage cannot be accomplished other than through an affective modulation that should be as compelling as the radical threat. The shock-effect cannot be avoided or excluded. It is this shock-effect that eludes the force of reason. The same shock effect, affirms Massumi, operates on the background of transindividual sympathy, attuned to the “horizon of intensities of life that arise through the collective play of differences”<sup>64</sup>. No illusions, no cynicism, no critique, but the attunement to a differential consciousness created by the possibility of life transmutation that goes far beyond mere living. Revolutionary love transmutes eventually narratives of threat and fear into anarchives of possible encounters, whose base is relational-affective.

Love as a revolutionary trigger is transmutational, creating relational tendencies that comply with living in the larger

sense than with survival. It creates anarchives— as a force of migration from trans-individual sympathy to a politics of care; as the configuration of a politics of desire through a preliminary moment of shock; as the transfiguration of the eccentric term of revolt into a hermeneutics capable of creating differential modes of consciousness; as the attunement of irreconcilable identities to a “differential that troubles all grand narratives” (Manning). It also creates relational tendencies through an excess of

activity over action. Revolutionary love delivers troubling discourses, each of them excessive in the sense that they testify for the divergence of the actors involved, and potentially for the divergence of being. The anarchival force present in revolutionary love is the imprint of a politics-to-come, a politics that leaves traces through moments when fear has been overcome, when the horizon of intensities of life has been attained and the bodily abilities of the subject have been fully inhabited.

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## NOTES

1. Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2000, p. 140.
2. Erin Manning, *For a Pragmatics of the Useless*, Durham, Duke University Press, 2020, p. 82.
3. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, second edition, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1998, p. 246.
4. C. Sandoval, *op. cit.*, p. 141.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 140.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 142.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 144.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 146.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 143.
11. Suely Rolnik, *Archive Mania: 100 Notes, 100 Thoughts: Documenta Series 022 (100 Notes - 100 Thoughts/100 Notizen - 100 Gedanken)*, bilingual edition, Berlin, HatjeCantz, 2012, p. 1.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
15. C. Sandoval, *op. cit.*, p. 159-160.
16. Michel Foucault, "The Subject and the Power", in *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 8, no. 4 (Summer, 1982), apud Sandoval, *op. cit.*, p. 216.
17. The connection with capitalism in this context is obviously not evident. It implies a long discussion initiated by Francis Fukuyama in *The End of History and the Last Man*, Free Press, 1992, and resumed among others in *Capitalist Sorcery. Breaking the Spell* by Isabelle Stengers, transl. in 2011 by Palgrave Macmillan from the original edition *La Découverte*, 2007, Bruno Latour in a lecture given on February 26<sup>th</sup> 2014, at the Royal Academy of Copenhagen, called "On Some of the Affects of Capitalism," and recently in two texts that I addressed several times in this paper, due to their importance for the subject, namely Suely Rolnik's *Archive Mania*, HatjeCantz, 2012, and Brian Massumi's *The Principle of Unrest. Activist Philosophy in the Expanded Field*, Open Humanities Press, London, 2017. Firstly, the discussion is about the impossibility of imagining an outside of capitalism. In this logic, even the counter-moves would feed the internal logic of capitalism, which is one of generalized mobilization. Stengers calls this logic "being entrapped" and "capture of the soul." Secondly, one could imagine possible escapes from this generalized logic – what Massumi calls "the qualitatively different kinds of movement" (*The Principle of Unrest*, p. 21), "adventitious growth" (*Ibid.*, p. 26) or "qualitative surplus-value" (*Ibid.*, p. 27). Rolnik addresses it in terms of "unraveling of desire" (*Archive Mania*, p. 8) that leads to new meanings – a precondition for "life to flow again" (*Ibid.*, p. 8).
18. C. Sandoval, *op. cit.*, p. 160.
19. E. Manning, *op. cit.*, p. 92.
20. Discard as a key-concept to the politics of the anarchive, as refusing the easy flow of time, and as re-shaping the event in its contemporariness is addressed by Erin Manning in the chapter "What Things Do When They Shape Each Other," in *For a Pragmatics of the Useless*, Duke University Press, 2020.
21. B. Massumi, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
22. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, Grove Press Inc, 1967, apud C. Sandoval, p. 41-42.
23. apud Sandoval, *op. cit.*, p. 140.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 142.
25. *Ibid.*
26. B. Massumi, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
27. C. Sandoval, *op. cit.*, p. 143.
28. S. Rolnik puts both totalitarian regimes and capitalism in relationship to the archive mania by means of the unconscious repression. This repression hinders thought either through censorship, ideology fear and humiliation under dictatorships. Or, subtler, in the context of financial capitalism, through the instrumentalization of desire (museum exhibitions, artistic projects supported by governmental funds – the promise of a paradise on earth). This archive compulsion is in both cases equally diverted because it diverges "from its primordial focus, which consists of opening up new roads for life to flow." (S. Rolnik, *op. cit.*, p. 14).
29. C. Sandoval, *op. cit.*, p. 144.
30. S. Rolnik, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
31. In the context I am describing here, all references I extensively use (Sandoval, Rolnik, Barthes, Foucault, Gordon) are addressing the subversion of the entire practice of meaning of the Western logic. This does not mean that we have to fully obliterate this practice. On the contrary, it has to be

reconfigured starting from the zero point of “differential consciousness.” Moreover, it does not mean replacing one paradigm by another, but inventing a new paradigm – the third meaning analyzed before in the text – starting from the abyssal confrontation between the Western model and the “politics to come.” Therefore, the crucial role of revolutionary love, which is related to the practice of the anarchic.

32. C. Sandoval, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
33. S. Rolnik, *op. cit.*, p. 13.
34. Decolonial paradigm attempts to equate the logic of modernity, consisting in a pervading model of progress and civilization, to the colonial grammar and to a specific construction of knowledge and subjectivity. Therefore, in order to counter this tendency, one has to affirm alternative, decentralized modernities, a decolonial grammar and a type of knowledge that is geosomatic and not ego-oriented.
35. S. Rolnik, *Ibid.*
36. In *Symposium*, Plato equates love to a quest for immortality, from which laws, governance, science, poetry, etc. arise. In *Phaedrus*, it is precisely this mania that links, paradoxically, the sensible world to the intelligible one, a property that was conferred throughout his dialogues only to intellectual capacity. Briefly, love permeates everything and is strictly related to harmony.
37. In French, in original (Houria Bouteldja, *Les Blancs, les Juifs et nous*, Paris, La Fabrique, 2016): “Le Nous d’une politique de l’amour, qui ne sera jamais une politique du cœur. Car pour réaliser cet amour, nul besoin de s’aimer ou de s’apitoyer. Il suffira de se reconnaître et d’incarner ce moment ‘juste avant la haine’ pour la repousser autant que faire se peut et, avec l’énergie du désespoir, conjurer le pire. Ce sera le Nous de l’amour révolutionnaire.”
38. Brian Massumi addresses this concept throughout his book *Politics of Affect* in the sense of a dimension of life, of “being open to the world, to be active in it and be patient for its return activity.” (Eric Kluitenberg in his review “Politics of Affect” published on September 14, 2015 in *Open. Platform for Art, Culture and the Public Domain*).
39. B. Massumi, *The Principle of Unrest*, p. 29.
40. *The Human Condition* by Hannah Arendt consists mainly in the philosopher’s attempt to found politics and public space on the most fragile, irreversible and unpredictable human characteristics, namely action. Arendt’s insistence on action stems from her fear of ideologies, be they left- or right-oriented. She does not wish to sacrifice human freedom, coagulated in the unexpected power of action – the only truly human dimension capable of engendering new beginnings. But, in order to secure the realm of such a fragile attempt, she is ensuring the connection with the past through forgiveness and the connection with the future through promises, namely contracts.
41. S. Rolnik, *op. cit.*, p. 1.
42. The Greek government debt-crisis occurred in the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2007–2008. It had a large spectrum of consequences among which reforms and austerity measures that led to a humanitarian crisis. Greece’s recession was compared to the US Great Depression. The country almost collapsed under bailout loans from the International Monetary Fund, Eurogroup, and European Central Bank that led to a real earthquake within the Greek political system. As a result, hundreds of thousands of Greeks left the country.
43. This is the main attack of decolonial studies directed against the West-centered epistemological and geopolitical project, especially by Walter D. Mignolo in his book, entitled *Epistemic Disobedience. Rhetoric of Modernity, Logic of Coloniality and De-colonial Grammar* (2010). Obviously, clashes between civilizations have always existed. But the novelty brought by the technological model of the Western civilization consists in the fact that, since the conquering of the New World, all other civilizations that did not conform to the common ideals of progress and civilization were designated as barbarian. In Mignolo’s opinion, the process of colonization is strictly connected to the process of modernization. This is the reason why deconstructing the colonial discourse automatically involves deconstruction of the modernity discourse.
44. C. Sandoval, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

45. In French, in original (H. Bouteldja, *op. cit.*, p. 139, auth. transl.): “Le Nous de la diversité de nos croyances, de nos convictions et de nos identités, le Nous de leur complémentarité et de leur irréductibilité. Le Nous de cette paix que nous aurons méritée parce que payée le prix fort.”
46. In French, in original (*ibid.*, p. 27): “Parce que je partage l’angoisse de Gramsci: ‘Le vieux monde se meurt. Le nouveau est long à apparaître et c’est dans ce clair-obscur que surgissent les monstres’.”
47. In French, in original (*ibid.*, p. 28): “Une seule réponse: la paix. Un seul moyen: l’amour révolutionnaire.”
48. In French, in original (*ibid.*, p. 29): “Je pense donc je suis. Je pense donc je suis... Dieu... Est-il concevable d’extraire ce « je » du contexte politique de son énonciation ? Non, répond le philosophe nord-américain Enrique Dussel.”
49. *Ibid.*
50. Intervention of Lewis R. Gordon at The Summer School in Toulouse, « Philosophie et décolonisation de la pensée », 26.08. 2016, <https://player.vimeo.com/video/180466435?autoplay=1>.
51. B. Massumi, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
52. S. Rolnik, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
53. As for instance the passage from narratives of anger and dispossession to activist movements of revendication and reconciliation; the passage from a revolt against the political decisions of the Liberal Party to constituting a movement whose repercussions are still to be felt nowadays – the 2012 students strike in Québec, which started as protests against the raise of University tuition fees and ended as a disruptive political movement.
54. B. Massumi, *op. cit.*, p. 65.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
56. *Ibid.*
57. *Ibid.*, p. 8
58. S. Rolnik, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
59. B. Massumi, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
62. E. Manning, *For a Pragmatics of the Useless*, p. 93.
63. B. Massumi, *op. cit.*, p. 26-27.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 46.