

The non-deferrable *mise-en-crise* of the quotidian

O improrrogável colocar-em-crise do cotidiano

La improrrogable puesta-en-crisis del cotidiano

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Abstract

The perpetual crisis of Late Capitalism, ubiquitously present in our quotidian as background to all being-doing, is confronted by the non-method of the *mise-en-crise* of our devising. By putting our quotidian in crisis, we educe crisis from the future and invoke the infinite potential of the anarchic—a drawing forth which produces chaos within process so that difference inhabits repetition. We rely on the active forgetting of inherited disciplined knowledges and perfected operating procedures to actualise modes and practices of composition which enable experimentation through a multiplicity of contemplations and aberrant becomings. We espouse an affirmative, immanent critique as a mode of knowing and composing so that when we ask “What next?” we leave no other course of action other than the ineluctable exercise of our subjectivity as the facticity of resolution of crisis.

Keywords: Crisis; Anarchic; Critique; Quotidian; Non-deferral.

Resumo

A crise perpétua do capitalismo tardio, presente de forma ubíqua em nosso cotidiano como pano de fundo de todo ser-fazendo, é confrontada com o não-método da *mise-en-crise* de nossa concepção. Colocando nosso cotidiano em crise, geramos crise do futuro e invocamos o potencial infinito do anarquismo - um desdobramento que produz o caos dentro do processo para que a diferença habite a repetição. Contamos com o esquecimento ativo de conhecimentos disciplinados herdados e procedimentos operacionais aperfeiçoados para atualizar modos e práticas de composição que permitem a experimentação através de uma multiplicidade de contemplações e de devires aberrantes. Adotamos uma crítica afirmativa e imanente como um modo de conhecer e compor, de modo que quando perguntamos "O que vem depois?", não

deixamos outro curso de ação além do exercício inelutável de nossa subjetividade como facticidade de resolução de crises.

Palavras-chave: Crise; Anarquivo; Crítica; Cotidiano; Improrrogável.

Resumen

Confrontamos la crisis perpétua del capitalismo tardío, presente de forma ubíqua en nuestro cotidiano como tela de fondo de todo ser-hacer, con el no-método de la “puesta en crisis” de nuestra concepción. Abrazando el potencial infinito del anarquivo invocamos en el presente una crisis futura para que surja el caos dentro del proceso. Contamos con el olvido activo de conocimientos disciplinares y prácticas perfeccionadas a fin de elaborar modos y prácticas de composición que posibiliten una multiplicidad de contemplaciones y devenires aberrantes. Como estrategia para lidiar con una crisis, proponemos una crítica inmanente, afirmativa, como modo de construcción de saberes que se basan sobre la filosofía de la diferencia y su articulación, de forma que cuando preguntemos ¿Que sigue ahora? no dejamos ningún otro curso que el ejercicio de nuestra subjetividad como hecho factible de la diferencia.

Palabras Clave: Crisis; Anarquivo; Crítica; Cotidiano; Improrrogable.

Deleuze opens *Cinema 2: The Time Image* by relating a scene from Giorgio De Sica’s 1948 landmark film *Umberto D*. We see a “young maid going into the kitchen in the morning, making a series of mechanical, weary gestures, cleaning a bit, driving the ants away from a water fountain, picking up the coffee grinder, stretching out her foot to close the door with her toe. And her eyes meet her pregnant woman’s belly, and it is as though all the misery in the world were going to be born” (Deleuze, 1985/1989, p.1). Deleuze identifies the scene as illustrative of the

transition from one regime of images to another: it depicts “a necessary passage from the crisis of image-action to the pure optical-sound image” (Deleuze, 1985/1989, p.3)—it is the threshold that heralds the transformation of the movement-image into a time-image. And what makes this a time-image and not an action-image of crisis lies in the uncertain creative temporalities of what will ensue from this complex visual sign unfolding on the screen. As understood by Deleuze, it is not the action depicted that is relevant but the rendering perceptible of the quality and intensity

of the creative temporalities that emerge from the depiction of activity. What is depicted is ‘a life’ lived at its emptiest, at its most mechanical, bereft of all creativity except for the passive gestation of crisis and the acquiescent, impotent acceptance of whatever will come will come, whatever will be, will be. And in this scenario of exhaustion, within the boredom and ennui of a depleted quotidian, we are witness to the annunciation of crisis. What comes to be seen in the affective residual of the fatigue and the mechanical gestures of the young woman’s prepartum indolence are the symptoms of depletion and the likely fulfilment of delivering on the promise of still-born exhaustion of any creative potential.

The obvious function of this scene is to activate our expectations and predispose us towards a seemingly foregone conclusion which will at first seem inevitable but which the film’s unfolding will fight all the way. At its most basic, the scene taps into our memorial circuits of understanding and sets us off on a particular trail of interpretation of the images based on our archive of experiential comprehension. We could even say that De Sica is visually trolling the viewer, for what possible interest could there be in this protracted depiction of the

banality of the early morning program of an Italian domestic? Other than underscore what Deleuze calls the transition from the movement-image to the time-image, the tediousness of the scene helps to build up in the viewer whatever dramatic suspense there may be within the *ennui* of a depleted quotidian. Through the woman’s activities and gestures, we see that her existence is the symptomatic outcome of protracted crisis. Though she is not crisis itself, we understand her as a conceptual persona of crisis, as the personification of the symptoms of crisis of the end of history. And in opening up the scene so as to overtly belabour the routine in the servant’s everyday, De Sica accomplishes something else—we get to see what is actually going on in the maid’s here-and-now as a construction of space-time. By slowing things down, we actually get to see what is happening: De Sica brings out the tension between the insignificant meaninglessness of the maid’s present and its likely future historical replication. The film’s narrative deconstruction of the quotidian becomes a *mise-en-scene* of the *mise-en-crise* brought on by the plague of WW II and the ensuing ruination which serves as the backdrop to this insouciant woman’s situation—it

is De Sica's filmic plane of immanence. Yet, even if time seems to come to a standstill and appears to be devoid of the momentum and potential to propel it forward, the barrenness of time is overcome by the pregnant portent of the woman's belly as a built-in "...and then?", a "...what now?" or even a "...so what?". It's an itchy-scratchy problematisation implicit in the positing of the need for a decision to be made, of a complete resolution to the interrogative proposition. The scene activates moribund forces that are present in the evident finality of a disdainfully dismissive retort such as "Whatever...". But there is no getting away from the inevitable resolution of the intuitive advance of process because time marches on with or without us. Because we live and breathe in the world and not in a vacuum, there is difference built-in within the repetition of naked repetitiousness. It might only be the differential of potential in two instances of the "same thing" separated by an infinitesimal interval of time which responds to advance with "what next?" but the difference making potential is there. What de Sica portrays is how "the most banal or everyday situations release accumulated 'dead forces' equal to the life force of a limit-situation" (Deleuze, 1985/1989, p.3).

The ineluctable answer to "ok, what next?" is the subjective difference which cannot be deferred.

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The concept of Crisis has forever been about the deciding of outcome at the turning point, as the moment of discernment involved in judgement under duress. The ancient Greeks articulated the concept as a circumstance of movement in both physical and mental terms. According to Liddell and Scott (1883), *krisis* involved separating and distinguishing within decisions or judgements, a trial of skill or strength, and the turning point of a disease towards its resolution. The etymology of the word as per Harper (2016) derives from *krinein* "to separate, decide, judge" from the Proto-Indo-European root **krei-* "to sieve, discriminate, distinguish" (source also of Greek *krinesthai* "to explain") which is the root of both crisis, critique and criterion (Walter & Pinho, 2016; Assad, Brown and Butler, 2013; Shrag, 1992; among others). The English etymology, as set forth in the O.E.D., demonstrates that the non-medical sense of crisis came into usage in 1627 in reference to a "Chrysis of Parliaments" and expanded its meaning to express crisis as destructive event such as in "the Chrysis of the English tongue"

(1661), the “Great Crises in Church and State” (1715) and “to escape a crisis so full of terror and despair” (1769). By their definition, a crisis is a vitally important or decisive stage in a process; it is a turning point in the state of affairs in which a decisive change for better or worse is imminent.

The common thread to the evolution of the non-medical sense of crisis lies in the production of distress, affliction or suffering arising from some adverse event affecting a sphere of activity. This state of crisis as a calamitous event befalling government or markets and commerce makes us equate being in the world with a state of emergency where the destabilising effects of crisis indiscriminately cause untold hardship and suffering both locally and globally. Because of the displacements, adjustments and accommodations required to respond to crises and which, more often than not, result in loss and diminution, Virilio (2006) characterises crisis as criminogenic. Bollnow (1996) points out that crises are often understood as having arisen from mistakes or neglect which should have been foreseen or avoided through greater attentiveness and more insightful planning—a state of affairs exuberantly and dutifully

reported by the shrill wailing of mediatic sirens.

Whether natural or artificial, a crisis is an event which disrupts an ongoing process and requires corrective action in order for the process to return to its original operation. In self-regulating “natural” systems such as ecological processes or biogeochemical cycles, crises are a normal part of the system as the dynamic creation of unbalance within the process which seeks the effectuation of a regulative function. Whether brought on by natural causes or by artificial disruptions, crises are assessed in terms of their human impact and disruptive power: ultimately they test governability and management. Historically considered sporadic, crises have become so frequent that they are now considered a normal aspect of the complex dysfunctionality at the interaction of social, political, economic and financial processes. But what is inescapable is that the present is besieged by crisis: social, economic, financial, political, educational, employment, sexual, agricultural, spiritual, ecological, energy, sustainability, fisheries, housing, military, migrant, health, infrastructure, global warming, water rights, oil, banking, credit, governability, identity, social security,

public security, institutions, policing, etc. And no matter who we are or how we choose to define ourselves—conservative or liberal, God-fearing or atheist, single or married, black or white, male or female, gay or straight, or anywhere in between and beyond, crisis spares no one—our historical existence in the world is plagued by crisis.

The ubiquitousness of crisis was not lost on Walter Benjamin, who saw it as part of the human condition: “The desperately clear consciousness of being in the middle of a crisis is something chronic in humanity” (Benjamin, 1999, p. 545). For him, crisis was varied in its articulation as the different aspects of one and the very same kaleidoscope called historical process. Marxist thought understands crises as inevitable, unique events which indicate the turning points of peaks and troughs in the cyclical process of “chaotic” capitalist development (Baubion, 2013; Pfor & Hosie, 2009). There is an implied necessitarianism in this understanding of crisis, both, in terms of an implicit determinism of the inevitability of crises in the unfolding of history and in terms of the essential mechanism of the dynamics of capitalism which considers crises as indispensable for enabling the creative

destruction that gives capitalism its life force: the chaos that results from crisis and the subsequent period of adjustment are seen as production of opportunity and creation of value.

Through the acceleration of historical processes, capitalism has become increasingly integrated in its modes of production and the instruments and subjects of labor (Virilio, 2006). Thus, the dromological conjunction of the horizontal expansion and the temporal integration of process is producing serialised procession of crises which are more intense, more frequent (Montani, 2016; Dawson, 2011), and more encompassing in extension so that the spatial separation and the temporal interval between zones of crisis and non-crisis becomes negligible. We now have states of permanent crisis (both in terms of spatial extension and of temporal expression) which become not only durative but durational and intensive: the historical appearance of punctual crises separated by intervals of stability has been replaced by a different conception of process as the chronic spatialised multiplicity of concretised crises of shifty intensive metastabilities. The production of crises can now no longer be considered a linear serialisation of punctual events but a

chaotic disposition of “the simultaneous, of juxtaposition, of the near and the far, of the side-by-side, of the scattered” (Foucault, 1998). Crises in various arenas of activity overlap spatially and temporally, and a conjunctive simultaneity of these minor crises can produce a major incident that affects many sectors and swaths of the population simultaneously as an integral accident or catastrophe (Virilio, 2006).

Over the past decades, a change has taken place in the occurrence of crises from unique events which just “happen”, which are accidental and even catastrophic (Virilio, 2006), and whose effects are mitigated, controlled or rectified to become manufactured events instigated by the manipulation of social, political, and legal conditions towards the precipitation or catalysis of crisis. Now, if by definition, the chaos arising from crisis is productive of disruptions, dissolutions, fragmentations or new alliances which unleash opportunities for inventive creation and production of value, then the disturbances arising from the artificial *mise-en-crise* of “man-made” crises can be understood to be productive. By picking up the pieces from the artificial siting or inducement of crisis within process and re-assembling them, these newly aggregated fragments can be re-

arranged innovatively to invent new processual machines. These can be harnessed to cobble new assemblages or devise novel human and non-human technologies as expressions of the possibility of making sense and fabricating coherence as the realignment of value creation. The cyclic process of crisis thus proceeds from a phase of apparent stability, to a dissolution of that stability, a phase of chaotic instability, and a consequent novel composition along novel alinements which in turn become predictable and habitual. The crisis is transformative in that the initial meta-stable phase is transformed through crisis into a completely new assemblage where the new order has no use for the past except as provider of fragments as raw material towards novelty and innovation.

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In human terms, crises are make-or-break events which test bodies and compel them to truly make battle with life at a survival level. They oblige these corporeal entities to break away from the (complacency of) comfort, the (deadening) routine of habit or from a seemingly untenable situation—a statement which applies equally well to the social one and to the individual many. Through crisis, the integrity, solidarity and coherence of assemblages

is assessed through an assault on the fundamentals of existence as a test or trial. For Simondon, “in the being put to the test, a law of all or nothing manifests itself” (Simondon 1958, p.91) so that the limit condition of the test as singular event is where life is experienced at its fullest and acquires its maximum realisation. The test engages being at all levels and forces bodies to use all of their capacities to the limit so as to assess resourcefulness under extreme duress. This full engagement in the resolution of the assault is explained in Simondon (1958) though his understanding of the test and the transformative implications of the passage from nonage into adulthood which can be traced back to Kant and his *Aufklärung* article of 1755.

This attitude towards crisis as the Big Critical Event disparages the humdrum quotidian as deadening, too routine and customary, and too run-of-the-mill to be of interest. Bollnow considers the everyday as an “inauthentic condition” (Bollnow, 1996, p. 5) which needs spicing up by regular crises to keep things interesting, or to maintain life at a “critical level”. Echoing Nietzsche, Bollnow indicates that “The human being actualizes his authentic existence only in the crisis and only through the crisis. The critical

moments are the only moments which really count in human life. To exist means to stand in crisis” (Bollnow, 1996, p. 5). In line with historical materialism, “crises are not something accidental at all; that on the contrary align human life according to its essential nature and in every moment lies in crisis and can only be conceived through crisis” (Bollnow, 1996, p. 4). Rather than being a surface effect—a glitch on the surface of advance of the unfolding of history—crisis would be integral to life and imparts being with vitality even if it is experience intransitively by “standing in crisis” or “lying in crisis” or “wallowing in crisis”. So even if crises are commonly portrayed as experienced passively, they are suffered actively: populations are “fallen prey to the world” in that they require adjustments and accommodations which produce hardships affecting the bottom line of survivability of their constituents. Crisis assaults the operative coherence of abstract machinic assemblages of bodies, of forces, of language, of actions and gestures, of materialities and virtualities which compose those associated milieus to which we become accustomed and which provide continuity and repetition, a semblance of stability and the comfort of habit.

Thus, crisis is felt as a tangible threat, as physical and mental abuse, as violence carried out on bodies.

Given its pervasiveness and pernicious effects, perhaps crisis could once again be considered a medical condition. When Ortega y Gasset characterises in *Toward a Philosophy of History* (1941) the moral crisis which overwhelms society as the sickness of our age he was applying the idea to a body-social to what was already understood as an illness of the body in Antiquity by Hippocrates and Galen. Now, given our evolved understanding of the nature of diseases and their causality, instead of sickness, perhaps we should refer to crisis as a syndrome, as the effect of the concurrence of various symptoms. The shock of crisis suffered by a body-social generates trauma (Kalayjian, Donovan & Shigemoto, 2010)—a trauma which produces wounds and leaves scars as traces of the experiential passage of crisis as threshold experience and reveals itself both materially and psychically in terms of the one and many. In their analysis of the residual effects of Hurricane Andrew which devastated Southern Florida, USA in 1992, Kalayjian, Donovan and Shigemoto (2010) find that “Survivors cope with trauma in a myriad of ways.

Some suffer anxiety, shock, feeling of helplessness and hopelessness, intense anger, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression and psychosomatic illness such as constant headaches and nausea” (p. 74). Further, citing Park and Ai (2006), they assert that survivors feel that “their global meaning, consisting of beliefs, goals and subjective feelings has been shattered by the trauma” (p. 75). This repeats the findings of Cropanzano, Rupp and Byrne (2003), who posit that states of crisis in individuals have been linked to emotional exhaustion characterised by “a plethora of ailments, including physiological problems, depression, family difficulties, and a general breakdown in feelings of community”. These ailments were observed after one “occurrence” of crisis, but when we consider the effects of perpetual crisis, we can understand the widespread feelings of helplessness and exhaustion of creative capabilities in failing to adapt to the ceaseless offering of change as well as the depletion of intellectual, emotional, spiritual and physical resources to cope with the demands of the constant reshuffling of the experiential landscape of crisis capitalism. So that once we come to see these chronic repeating attacks of crisis as recurrences of illness pervading the

social body, one would want to activate clinical faculties and act therapeutically without delay, without deferral, to “cure the disease” lest its relentless attacks kills the socio-political animal outright.

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Curiously, the article by Kalayjian, Donovan and Shigemoto, is prefaced by an inspirational quote by Howard Thurman, an African-American author, philosopher, and civil rights leader, which states “Ask not what the world needs, ask what you need to come alive because what the world needs is people like you—who have come alive” (Kalayjian, Donovan & Shigemoto, 2010, p. 73). We write ‘curiously’ because in the implicit onus towards self-reliance and self-dependency towards the resolution and the crafting of solutions to the problematic effects of crisis, we perceive a particular understanding of what crisis entails and its social dimension. In its appeal to “come alive”, we see a recognition of the deadening effects of chronic crisis as a challenge to be overcome—not through salvation by God, the State, or the social organisation of the common, but through ourselves as stand-alone individuals. Only the individual “coming alive” leads to a path of social action; but if the individual is disinclined to take this first step towards

deciding “what’s next?” then all is lost. In the gaping void of the featureless landscape of anomie and ennui of chronic crisis, the question which critically defines our subjectivity at its most fundamental is “To be or not to be?”. And to simply pose this question as the decisive moment of choosing, as the most basic expression of our subjectivity, is a *mise-en-crise* of our existence. By asking this question, we fight fire with fire: we are using the creative potential of crisis to overcome the overwhelming effects of perpetual crisis. Some might frown upon fighting fire with fire, and look for water to douse the flames, yet we propose to conjure crisis differently. We problematise the situation by inducing crisis and activating the creative destruction within process through the dissolution of the archive which can be seen simultaneously as an ankylosed repository of habit, of complacent compliance, of self-serving custom, of deadening routine and as the landscape of physical, intellectual, emotional, spiritual landscape of exhaustion and depletion?. How does one create destructively? How does one put the well-trodden path of habit, comfort, complacency, self-satisfaction and routine in crisis to compose and create movement?

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Crisis is usually seen as a negative affect in terms of what it does to bodies, but within process, crisis is a necessary mechanism integral to the advancement of processual becoming. And even if crisis is a concept abstracted from experience, its predominant usage as the designation of a particular type of macro-event adumbrates the exact articulation of its specific processual operation as a technical term. In its elaboration, we move away from its external manifestation in the world and attempt to identify its workings at a molecular scale within, through and by process. We wish to liken it to a first gesture towards an indeterminate logic of experimentation towards the invention of new passions, beliefs and desires as Gabriel Tarde suggestively proposes throughout his work. We seek to give it a dynamic which identifies it within process alongside André Gide's *mise-en-abyme* or Husserl's *epochē* or Bergson's method of intuition. Yet, we posit putting in crisis as a non-method because it is not a pre-established protocol that looks to be repeated or copied. As such, it is linked to the method of intuition as elaborated by Bergson and Deleuze in that the methods are modes of understanding the

problematization and resolution of becoming. They both describe passage yet articulate it differently both in terms of causality and processual advancement. As such, they are both liminal moments but approach the threshold differently, traverse it differently, and offer up their results differently. Crisis and intuition both present conjunctions of circumstances, of occasions, which afford the opportunity of becoming as event. They are both auspicious moments in which a multiplicity of conditions are ripe, charged, pregnant with the possibility of an emergence which when offered the right opportunity, the odds are that potentials will be activated and actualised and movement will happen. Both can be seen as a turning-point, an inflection which deviates the relation so that flux diverges towards novelty and innovation; here, the deviation is a veering away of the clinamen—the taking-off of the line of flight. This divergence is a moment of truth in that it passes the test to the smallest detail of the commitment of the advance into novelty—the outcome of which is not the intuition or the crisis. The result is the payoff of movement but it is not movement itself. And the criteria of truth in the happening itself is not a true or false test of logic but the coherent

operativity of the movement. The moment of passage for both is in the motive conditions of action as the making time of difference in the time of its making—it is the feeling of the creative differencing as affective outcome and as “the basic generic operation of passing from the objectivity of the data to the subjectivity of the actual entity in question” (Whitehead, 1929/1978, p. 41). Thus, both occupy the moment of passage as the transiting of the interval between the what comes before and the what comes after. The alinements of becoming appear at different stages of processual advancement for intuition and for crisis. For intuition, alinements of causal conditionings become increasingly acute until an ineluctable conversion occurs. For crisis, alinements for developmental conditionings result from the aggregative outcomes of association. Thus, intuition can be characterised as a fashioning of alinements, whereas crisis distinguishes itself as alinements which lead to perceptual aggregation.

In *Bergsonism* (1966/1988), Deleuze reformulates the method of intuition as gleaned from Bergson to re-conceptualise intuition. The way he does this is by a progressive application of discursive carving away or reduction

of possibilities to determine what is ultimately operative as a guiding principle through the tangle of pathways of choice. Deleuze cleverly determines what is fundamentally productive in intuition through an appraisal of Bergson’s ideas by following the same ‘intuitive’ method which Bergson himself uses to analyse what is essentially operative. Deleuze, like Bergson before him, uses the method he is prescribing to do what he is prescribing. The three rules of the method stipulated by Bergson consist of appropriate problematisation, differentiating, and temporalizing: this entails (1) a critique of false problems and the invention of genuine ones; (2) narrowing and convergence; and (3) thinking in terms of duration. This is not a step-by-step protocol towards the correct use of intuition as method but an offering of strategies or possible approaches towards the positing of a precise and unambiguous problem through the almost instantaneous formulation of its exacting and fitting solution.

The method of intuition gets underway with the casting of what can only be considered as a tentative position-question as a problem seeking answers. But not just not any kind of problem, a proposition in which

something is to be done, posited as a becoming-doing, as extensive occupation which problematises both time and space. It is the answer to the simple question “how to act now?” To know how to answer this question decisively, without prevarication, without doubt, to know the why in the how of the present is the exercise of subjective freedom as the expression of intuition. This is not a formulation of the problem by attempting to contain it, by rendering it determinable by categorically delimiting it from the outside but of working with it to render the problem productive of truth within and without—the truth is in the productivity of the operational coherence of the problem as a restatement of its premises, conditions, situation, implications, through to its possible outcomes and a decisive, inevitable, ineluctable solution. Complexification is not a rendering of the problem more complicated but of unravelling the knotty implications at an impasse of ideas through the progressive refinement of the statement of the problem and the advancement of partial solutions. We find ourselves with the solution we deserve to the problem we have been able to pose, yet, if we don’t like that solution we can always continue to cast until we land a

solution we like better to a different aspect of the problem.

In contrast, our non-method of crisis begins by dissolving the archive—the ‘monumental’ repository of memorial knowledge and disciplined discursive practices—into a chaos of poessive potential. By dissolving the archive, we create an anarchieve—a primeval soup of elemental virtuality, a reservoir of free-flowing creative potential that entertains no discipline and admits no ruling power. The anarchieve itself is not an objective creation, it is pure deterritorialisation; it is a chaotic, pre-individual multiplicity that enables creative difference to flourish and offer compositional opportunity through various modes of engaging, of relating, of experimentation, of moving, of associating, of analysis and critique. The anarchieve is the premise of occupation of space and time both as vocational doing and as milieu which produces consistencies from the pursuance of creative trajectories which transcend horizons and lead to wayward territorializations—these activity-filled landscapes of creation are emergent landing sites for lines of flight as becoming-fields of possibility. Anarchives can literally be physical locales—but these usually only serve as

background activity, scenic backcloths, reticular surfaces, as canvases or screens to the saliency of movements of thought, of sense and of sensation. The architectural spaces are conditioning backgrounds to the durational intoxications of affective intensities, of alchemical topologies of transmutation, of expansive authoring of fabulation, of mystical temporalities of contemplation, of symphonic creative attunements, of empathic communication, or of the common space of the excluded middle of educational complicity. These repositories of chaos are anarchic situations of choice which have no “rhyme or reason”—they are non-paradigmatic in their unfettered availability of movement, of association and freedom of choice in the deciding “what to do next?” They are milieus which demand and produce pure creation and which as the *archē* of chaotic, autarkic, anarchic potential can only be labelled anarchival.

These explorations encourage us to tap into usually inaccessible and long-forgotten resources and invite us to contemplations of new becomings, of inventiveness, of composing with unknown potentials to produce affects, concepts, percepts which lure our becomings along different alinements away from the habit of routine

organisation and structuration. The impossible task we set before us consists of dissolving the memorial past inherent in knowledges and practices which precondition experience in our emergent cartographies not to end up with an empty shell of unfulfilled potential, but to end up with an *archē* full of actual possibility. The featurelessness of the chaotic anarchival is not “no thing”, it is an oversaturated fullness of potential looking for a problem to exorcise the possibilities within. And what is scary in that fullness of featureless chaos is that there is nothing there to help one decide as to how to advance, how to proceed, how to answer “what next?” By dissolving the archive and erasing the memory banks, there is no valid method, no trodden path to lead us forth, no trail of breadcrumbs to help us return to an origin which can reorient us. Once the archive is dissolved, we are in the origin-less midst of an uncharted, feature-less any-place-whatever. The anarchival thus becomes the site of pure becoming of creation and invention.

In these anarchivals of research-creation, the enterprise within the soupy milieu of pure potential is stirred up, whisked and enfolded into itself so that fragments begin to lump, to chunk, to coalesce and compose together into

larger fragments which in turn aggregate to create clusters of composite intensifications. When sorted out through the screening process of the Greek verb “*krino*”—which was mentioned earlier as derived from the Proto-Indo-European root **krei-* “to sieve, discriminate, distinguish”, these assemblages resolve themselves from the background screen to create objects “which do not pass” (Whitehead 1920/2004, p. 143), which compose enduring corpuscular societies (Whitehead, 1929/1978, p. 99) and corporeal assemblages as zones of opaque intensities and contrasts—physical and non-physical material images amassing on a plane of immanence. As fanciful as this depiction appears to be, it is a paraphrase of section 53a of Plato’s *Timaeus* (Archer-Hind 1888, p. 187) which does not mention *krisis* or *krinein per se* but involves the subjective discriminating actions and gestures of sorting through sifting, sieving and winnowing as well as aggregation of elemental materials. This activity constitutes two aspects of the experiential conception of the creative composition brought on by shaking, agitating and winnowing, i.e. the aggregation which exhibits perceptual qualities resulting from the shake-down

of vibration and oscillation and the composition of assemblages resulting from attunements of “‘selective gravitation’ where like attracts like” (Jammer, 1993, p. 15).

As such, the non-method of crisis proceeds from either acknowledging a problem to be dealt with, or simply from the affirmation of the desire to problematise as speculative exploration—that there is what-with to complexify, slow-down, open up, reconfigure, question, vivify, anarchivise. It is a matter of affirming the dissolution of memory-based, self-perpetuating, disciplined knowledge-creation and discursive practices, of affirming the immanent emergence of innovation and novelty through, with and by the experimentation with novelty in assemblages, in the alinements of practices and relations, in modes of organisation and participation, in articulating afresh the folds of transindividual affinities.

What emerges from these speculative explorations which constitute the rhizomatics of research-creation is the micro-politics of expression within ecologies of practices which produce minor-knowledge. This constitutes a critique—but what kind of critique? A critique which emerges immanently from the chaos of the

anarchive. Thus, the “eventualisation” of critique as advocated by Foucault in ‘What is Critique?’ seeks to understand the manifestation, articulation and application of power by restoring “the conditions for the appearance of a singularity born out of multiple determining elements of which it is not the product but the effect” (Foucault, 2005, p. 64). Once we start considering the effects of relation and dismissing its terms, we end up with determinations of affective intensities as a discussion of flows of time-pressure in power—which as Foucault rightly points out are refractory to any kind of solid determinacy on account of “variable margins of non-certainty” (Foucault, 2005, p. 64).

This would be a sustainable critical approach arising from an ontology of critique which diverges from the critical, evaluative and judgmental, which presents an alternative voice to negative critique, to cynicism dressed up as tough-mindedness (Noys, 2010, p. 71), to nihilism and defeatism, to the identification of lack and the perpetuation of conflict as the mode of the unfolding of discourse. It is a critique which does not engage the pornography of manufactured controversy: it is not a process of

continuous strife and conflict so that friction between opposing factions results in perpetual dissonance, dissension and discord and where the new synthesis is neither satisfactory to one or the other. It is a mode of critique which is based on the philosophy of difference, on an ethics of creative dissidence, on propositional invention, of partnered and shared creation—a movement of thought based on empathic affective attunements, of composing with the advance into novelty and difference. Specifically, it would be an affirmative, immanent critique as a mode of knowing and constructing knowledge that articulates itself through conceptual and practical constructivism, intuition and affirmation. As a critical methodology, it requires the engagement with the thought of others as a working with and a working through of constructive forces instead of the perpetual deconstruction of abstraction, of working contra, the identification of perceived deficiencies and the attempt at an elusive totalisation as full resolution and completeness as perfection—it is the creation of an abstract machine that enables productive thought and commentary and not judgments or disciplinary policing, but which is rigorous and engaging. As an activity in

the world, immanent critique as herewith explored has ethical implications—principally, the subjectivities which emerge within and through the affirmative move of immanent critique disarms the question of desubjectivation in that it exercises creative subjectivity through the creative composing-with, composing-through and composing tout-court of its discourse as a collective endeavour activated individually.

As Foucault points out in “Practicing Criticism” (1981), “A critique is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged, unconsidered modes of thought the practices that we accept rest” (1981, p. 154). And this would be the first step in putting the quotidian in crisis. By indicating those ways of being, by identifying those gestures which have become easy and second-nature, those ingrained habits and shortcuts which coerce us into believing that we are making time for the good things by saving time, when in fact we are emptying time of its creative potential. This voiding of time which accelerates unfolding, exhausts and depletes us, tires us that much faster, as the light that burns twice as intensely

burns out twice as quickly—it is a matter of revivifying time. So our mode of critique is an attunement with and a recognition of the processual, of the becoming of things, of the differential offset, of the experiential passage of consequence, of experience as ceaseless thresholding which becomes the foundation of the method. It becomes intellectual movement of thought not as the abstracted synthesis of experience of bodies in the world, but of dismantling and deconstructing of experience in order to understand that things as accepted “are not as self-evident as one believed” (Foucault, 1981, p. 155). “So that as soon as one can no longer think things as one formerly thought them, transformation becomes both very urgent, very difficult, and quite possible” (Idem). Transformation thus becomes non-deferrable.

“Umberto’s Dead, Baby!”—

Treatment for a neo-realist drama for neo-liberal times

The maid was forced to move on when her daughter was born and the landlady married. Night has fallen and we see her trudging home from her job as a cleaning lady. She is exhausted and at wits end. She has worked 9 hours today, travelled one hour each way,

done more than the windows and done a great job of it. She has earned a minimum wage and had to pay for her transportation to and from work. With prices rising on all household items, she has not been able to make ends meet; her existence is one challenge after another, testing her abilities to cope on a daily basis. Although she has been aware of the mounting difficulties for a while, she can no longer postpone the resolution of her untenable situation. To stay afloat, she would need almost twice the minimum wage. Over the past few months, she has found herself transported from the deadening crisis of the “never had it so good” boredom and ennui of the depleted quotidian of brainless routine and moved to the utopia of the self-reliant, free-lance entrepreneur and the “world is your oyster of opportunity” of perpetual crisis and its exhausting ceaseless offering of change. Her world is one perpetual becoming-crisis, and though she cannot formulate it intellectually, she is beginning to understand from first-hand experience how deadening the perpetual challenge of neo-liberal, individualistic, “life-affirming”, heroic subjectivity can be. Her situation is unbearable and impacting her survivability and that of her daughter—the resolution to her dilemma has

become non-deferrable because it has come down to answering the question “to be or not to be?” She can no longer accept the status quo of what she had believed to be her inevitable destiny. Her past has become insufferable and her only option now is to put her perpetual crisis in crisis. An affective rupture is taking place and she begins to ask “how can I make my life different?”, “what kind of life do I wish to invent for myself?”, “what kind of life do I wish to pursue?” She lets go of her past and forgets it. Before her she can see a boundless landscape of singular, collective, libertarian movement, experimentation and possibility. There is no going back: something irreversible has taken place—what had been unthinkable yesterday, is today becoming-desire. And this desiring-machine occupying her body, populating her imagination, and storming her affective being is a new understanding of her situation. An understanding which subscribes to a logic of life and not to a logic of the market. An ethical imperative wells up within her that will recast her political perceptions as critique immanent in her being-doing. She might have to continue to work as a cleaning lady but today was transformative. Sitting at the kitchen table where she is doing her

accounts, she looks up and sees a moth flying repeatedly circling and striking the glass ampule of a bare light bulb trying to attain the electric incandescence within. The woman understands that she is no longer like the moth; she has become a firefly firing off sporadic luminescence in the night sky. From one day to next, she has become non-deferrable.

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