

Özgün Makale

# “Love” in *Three Colors: White* from Chela Sandoval’s Perspective on Social Justice<sup>1</sup>

Chela Sandoval’ın Sosyal Adalet Perspektifi  
Üzerinden *Üç Renk: Beyaz*’da “Aşk”

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## Abstract

In the light of the *methodology of the oppressed* as developed by U.S. third world feminist Chela Sandoval, this study posits that the subject is not a fixed entity, but rather the result of a fluid and complex process shaped by power relations and social dynamics. Sandoval emphasizes the importance of resistance as a means of challenging oppressive systems and creating social change. She also explores an understanding for the politics of love, which involves recognizing and valuing the multiple ways in which love can be expressed and experienced. Sandoval's work provides a valuable framework for understanding and navigating the complexities of the postmodern world. In this context, the article analyzes *White*, the second film of Kieslowski's cult trilogy *Three Colors* based on Sandoval's views. As discussed throughout the study, *Three Colors: White* reveals how love functions as a catalyst for subjects to regain their autonomy and empowerment.

**Keywords:** Chela Sandoval, Politics of Love, Social Justice, Three Colors: White.

## Öz

Bu çalışma ABD’li üçüncü dünya feministi Chela Sandoval tarafından geliştirilen ezilenlerin metodolojisi ışığında, öznenin sabit bir varlık olmadığını, aksine güç ilişkileri ve toplumsal dinamikler tarafından şekillendirilen akışkan ve karmaşık bir sürecin sonucu olduğunu öne sürmektedir. Sandoval baskıya karşı mücadelede ve toplumsal değişim yaratmada direnişin önemini vurgular. Ayrıca, aşkın ifade edilebileceği ve deneyimlenebileceği çoklu yolları tanımayı ve bunlara değer vermeyi içeren bir “aşk politikası” anlayışını irdeler. Sandoval’ın çalışmaları, postmodern dünyanın kaotik yapısını kavrama ve bununla başa çıkma konusunda değerli bir çerçeve sunar. Bu bağlamda, makale Sandoval’ın görüşleri doğrultusunda Kieslowski’nin kült

<sup>1</sup> Makale başvuru tarihi: 14.03.2024. Makale kabul tarihi: 08. 05.2024.

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üçlemesinin ikinci filmi *Beyazı* analiz etmektedir. Çalışma boyunca tartışıldığı üzere *Üç Renk: Beyaz*, aşkın öznelere özerkliklerini yeniden kazanmaları ve güçlenmeleri için nasıl bir katalizör olarak işlev gördüğünü ortaya koymaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Chela Sandoval, Aşkın Politikası, Sosyal Adalet, *Üç Renk: Beyaz*.

## Introduction

Dealing with emotions has not only gained significance to understand human nature and behavioral patterns or the construction of subjectivity, but also to analyze the socio-cultural structures. This interest is relatively recent and it can be considered as a culmination of a paradigm break. With postmodernism, the standpoint of modernism that consecrated and prioritized reason was replaced by a world shaped by emotions. As shifts began to popularize new perspectives brought about by changing times and conditions, academic literature began to move away from modernist<sup>2</sup> arguments to present alternative standpoints. In particular, the curiosity that shifted from grand narratives to the “fragmented” and “ordinary” narrations of the reality has led the emergence of emotions as a method in humanities and social sciences. Emotions<sup>3</sup>, which have come to the fore in parallel with poststructural and postmodernist theories, have become the focus of disciplines other than psychology. Because the relationship of individuals with their subjectivity and thus with the world has changed. Subjectivity has evolved into a structure that can be constructed and constantly reshaped, and thus the individual has become known for its capacity of *will* and *agency*.

A closer look at this whole process will give us the opportunity to think more deeply about the political power of love, which is also the main issue of this article. Accordingly this article examines the film *Three Colors: “White”* to analyze the evolving and transformative potential of love as a postmodern emotion. We consider “love” as a political point of departure that challenges the hierarchical relationships between the oppressor and the oppressed. In this endeavor, we will employ the methodology of the oppressed, as outlined by U.S. third world feminist Chela Sandoval, regarding the postmodern conditions as a potentiality for the oppressed to resist. We will first discuss the concepts; semiotics, deconstruction, meta-ideologizing, democratizing, differential movement, which are the five techniques proposed by Sandoval in the methodology of the oppressed to problematize oppressor-oppressed relations and to establish social justice. We will then attempt to demonstrate how this methodology can be operationalized in practice through the film *Three Colors: White*. Therefore, we will reveal the understanding of “love” by third world feminist Chela Sandoval in the axis of subjectivity and emotions, and then we will discuss the possibilities of resistance and empowerment offered to the subject by such a perspective through the film *Three Colors: White*.

## Love as a Political Concept

As underlined from Spinoza emotions are the “affections of the body by which its power of acting is increased or diminished, is assisted or restrained, and also the ideas of those affections” (cited

<sup>2</sup> The modernity project emerged in the 18th century and aims to bring prosperity to humanity by establishing scientific dominance over nature and to save it from poverty (Harvey, 2014, p. 25).

<sup>3</sup> Within the scope of the study, the use of the concept of ‘emotion’ rather than ‘affect’ or ‘feeling’ as distinguished by Massumi (2015) is a conscious choice; because emotion is inherently related to the social. Although emotion is a more fragmented and limited expression of affect, it is important in terms of its relationship with the external. We are learnt what kind of emotions we produce as a result of which affects; it changes according to time, culture, gender and even class; it is always reshaped. It is not static. Emotion not only organises social life but also shapes the position and connection points of individuals in social life. Emotion has a close connection with representation, images and physical reactions.

in Carlisle, 2020, p. 163). The etymology of the “emotion” coming from Latin a word, “emovere”, refers also to ‘to move, to move out’. Surely emotions are not only about movement, they are also about attachments or about what connect us to the other. The relationship between movement and attachment is instructive. What moves us, what makes us feel, is also that which holds us in place, or gives us a dwelling place. Hence movement doesn’t cut the body off from “where” of its inhabitation, but connects bodies to other bodies (Ahmed, 2004, p. 11). Although emotions are often thought as internal and subjective feelings, they are actually social and cultural practices. Emotions are not what comes from the singular body and reflects outside, but what moves from outside to inside and connects the individual to society (Ahmed, 2004, p. 9-10). Precisely for this reason, love, one of the most desirable of emotions, has a remarkable political agenda.

Love has been one of the most preoccupying subjects throughout the history. Many disciplines have been interested in the nature of love. In Ancient Greece, love was divided into eros, philia and agape, and their relationship with different concepts such as power/weakness, good/evil, pleasure/pain was questioned (Comte-Sponville, 2014). Each period and culture has dealt with love in line with its own understandings. Today, love is an emotion often associated with politics. The answers to questions such as “what the language of love does, how it functions, what it legitimizes and what it ignores” are now put forward in a political manner. This is because it has been understood that emotions are not internal and individual delusions. What makes “love” as a political concept attractive is its potential for opposition, organization, unity, solidarity and social justice. In this respect, the way through which Sandoval conceptualizes “love” as a political concept, in her studies, is quite inspiring.

On the basis of the concept of “differential consciousness”, Sandoval presents a map of struggle for the freedom of the postmodern subject who is capable of *love*, hope and transformative resistance, in regard to her own position within feminist studies and her subjective experience as a Chicana<sup>4</sup>. Sandoval (1999) sheds light on the relationship between the subject and the power in this namely postmodern era and attempts to explain this relationship through the example of Silicon Valley. She says that in the last 20 years, giant technology companies such as Lockheed, IBM, Macintosh, Hewlett Packard have laid off more than 30,000 workers and that many other employees will face the similar fate in the upcoming years. The majority of these employees, who are not in the executive positions but in the employee status, are the U.S. people of color and indigenous people. These people immigrated to America for a better life but they found themselves in a society organized hierarchically in terms of race, gender, language, and social status. Sandoval (1999) likens the lives of these people to a *cyborg life* and says that in the future everyone will share a similar fate. The colonized people of America have already developed the cyborg skills necessary to survive in technology-human conditions in the last three hundred years (p. 248). Therefore, the experiences of these people provide a roadmap for all subjects, and should be taken into account.

Her methodology offers paths of social movement for the Western subject. As widely discussed, in the postmodern era, society gained a new look. A fast, flexible, individual and technology-oriented lifestyle has prevailed. Although the decentralization of the human subject in this new social order is considered as an adverse condition for social justice, this new human

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<sup>4</sup> “Chicano/a, identifier for people of Mexican descent born in the US. The Chicano community created a strong political and cultural presence in response to years of social oppression and discrimination in a predominantly Caucasian American society. Like most historically disenfranchised groups in the United States, some Mexican Americans have taken the term Chicano, previously considered a pejorative word, and used it to empower themselves.” (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Chicano>)

condition is promising for Sandoval. Accordingly, the social movements that emerge in the conditions of the modern world are incomplete and inadequate because they are organized from the top to the bottom and are carried out by those who speak *on behalf* of the masses. The critique of modernity forms the framework that Sandoval draws while dealing with “love” as a political concept.

Sandoval (2000) brings together the reflections of a wide variety of writers from different theoretical and ideological schools as Derrida, White, Foucault, Fanon, Haraway, Barthes, Lorde, Anzaldúa, on first world powers and third world struggles. Sandoval's methodology is essentially nourished by the U.S. third world feminist criticism. This criticism not only claims that the late capitalist and neocolonial first world order has exclusionary practices over the categories of race, class, gender and sexuality, but also argues that feminist, postmodern, poststructuralist critical theory has exclusionary and hegemonic movements as well (Tapia, 2001, p. 735). Accordingly, the idea of categorization can turn into an exclusionary mechanism. However, the decentralized and fragmented subject of the postmodernity creates new possibilities because postmodern identities are more transitional and do not characterize differences as contradictions. In this respect, postmodern conditions are the main components that make Sandoval's methodology possible. What lies under Sandoval's critique of modernity is her understanding of postmodernity whose detailed outline of the specific social processes and social changes accompanied has yet to be theorized.

Since definitions determine contexts, it is essential to draw the framework of modernity and postmodernity before discussing the divergence point of postmodernity from modernity. Modernity is essentially a change in understanding and living associated with four fundamental revolutions in science, culture, industry and politics. It signifies a break from traditional societies, which has not followed a coordinated course in space and time for all humanity (Jeanniere, 2000, p. 95-103). The set of concepts that should be considered together when talking about modernity consists of positivism, rational thought representing rationality, grand narratives, determinism, unification, the new in the face of the traditional and, of course, a state of equilibrium with high predictability. The modern age is a time when emotions are not trusted but mind is prioritized.

In other words, the European construction of modernity creates a “social order with differential and hierarchical classifications based on race, gender, class, and sexual orientation” among other factors. Institutions, social groups, and political, economic, and cultural infrastructure establish a major geopolitical center of knowledge and power. These structures and practices hold privilege and can shape the prevailing social imagination. This hegemonic approach suggests gendered and racialized identities are confined as monolithic subjects, forcing the other to the periphery or alternate space and establishing it as an ahistorical category (Bornstein-Gómez, 2010, p. 47). Sandoval criticizes this understanding of modernity and goes one step further to argue that postmodern conditions give the subject greater possibilities to achieve social justice. It is because the fragmented structure of postmodernity also constitutes a structure that contains possibilities of resistance. Therefore, as Jameson (1991, p. 92) argues what characterizes postmodernism is the lack of “cognitive maps” that shape the everyday, the individual and the identity. We live in a multinational, consuming world dominated by global capitalism and everything is fragmented... As so is meaning. The meaning, which was built around grand narratives in modernism, has become very shredded and focused on individual stories and multilayered in postmodernism. However, unlike Jameson, and clearly in opposition to him, Sandoval proposes to turn this postmodern situation in one's favor.

From this perspective, regardless of their distance from power, each subject possesses the power to act, and this power to act is in fact nourished by the Spinozist power to exist. Spinoza argues that power is not limited to the ruling elite but is present everywhere as the ability to increase or decrease the individual's strength and potential. For Spinoza, every existence is fated with the desire to maintain its own existence, and in this sense, to exist is to be an acting being. Being and power are understood in terms of agency. Therefore, for Spinoza, it is never possible for a subjectivity to be completely destroyed (Baker, 2024).

The positionalities based on mutual recognition serve as standpoints<sup>5</sup>. As an Ethiopian proverb cited by Scott (2008) suggests, “when the great lord passes the wise peasant bows deeply and silently farts”. When we approach the issue through such lenses, we realize that who are disadvantaged in the power hierarchy are not so helpless after all, and have other options than the “victim” role. This is because power relations require the subjugator as well as the subjugated to repeat the roles that will enable them to maintain their positionality towards each other. However, both sides can adopt other masks and roles behind the scenes. Through these, it becomes possible to endure acts that will sustain the public scenario, as well as to open breaches in the routine and breathing space. For Scott, the attitudes of the subordinates, which seem to be inaction or submission, may not be limited to plain meanings; on the contrary, they can be interpreted as the most reasonable expressions of resistance or strategies that can be exhibited in the current situation. For it is more important *what the subject does against the apparatuses of oppression and control rather than what power does to the subject*. Transformation and change are embedded in the answers to the latter. The discursive transformation, which frequently comes to the fore with the 3rd Wave Feminist Theory and evolves from victimization to empowerment, finds the roots in this possibility of resistance. Besides this transformation not only contains the possibility of resistance, but also creates emotional catharsis and takes emotions into the account.

According to Sandoval people living under postcolonial oppression have long been experiencing the division, fragmentation, disintegration and decentralization, in short, “being between a rock and a hard place”, that the Western postmodern subject is currently experiencing (cited in Hoofd, 2004, p. 3). Sandoval argues that new methods of struggle can be developed based on their survival strategies and how these people cope with this situation. So to speak, she invites the Western postmodern subject to the guidance of the postcolonial subject.

For Sandoval, differential consciousness implies a new kind of subjectivity developed under many conditions of pressures. This kinetic and self-consciously mobile new subjectivity has made itself mostly felt within the U.S. third world feminism. Because women of color have been suppressed in different ways for so long, they have learned to either emphasize or hide their different aspects as a political consciousness in order to work effectively in political organizations. For example, if an U.S. third world feminist wants to work effectively and feel comfortable in a racially organized group, she will underline the racial aspects of her identity while downplaying its gendered aspects. The third world feminists practice transforming their ideologies and identities according to different power structures. Sandoval (cited in Moya, 2002) describes this as a deliberate, strategic tactic (p. 79-80). She argues that citizens become subjected to the dominant ideology, but can still learn to define, develop, and control the dominant ideology. They have potential to “break with ideology” (Sandoval, 1991, p. 2).

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<sup>5</sup> The concept “standpoint” is used with reference to Nancy Hartsock's standpoint theory.

## Methodology of the Oppressed

To provide a capacity of agency, Saldoval's methodology offers five technologies that enable social movement, which are semiotics, deconstruction, meta-ideologizing, democratics and differential movement with which others can be possible (Sandoval, 2000). First technology semiotics is for "sign reading" which is prerequisite for other technologies. The second technology "deconstruction" is to separate the meaning of signs from their dominant meanings to challenge the dominant ideologies. The third one "meta-ideologizing" works for converting the meanings of the dominant signs into a new, imposed and revolutionary concept. "Democratics" as the fourth technology is a process of locating, resettlement, which brings together the three previous technologies, semiotics, deconstruction and meta-ideologizing, not only for survival and justice, but also to produce egalitarian social relations, or in other words, "love" in the postmodern world. The last technology "differential movement" is a *polyform*, which enables other technologies to approach their destination (Sandoval, 1999, p. 249-250). In this sense, the concept of "differential consciousness" is to create the areas of alliance. What she wants to convey with differential consciousness is the areas of alliance established on the basis of our differences and diversity. However, as one of the paths to this alliance, she prioritizes emotion rather than reason. And as an emotion she chooses "love": love in the postmodern world. "Different methods, when utilized together, constitute a singular apparatus that is necessary for forging twenty-first-century modes of decolonizing globalization. That apparatus is "love," understood as a technology for social transformation" (Sandoval, 1999, p. 1).

So to speak, love will save us, she says. She talks about "love" both as a survival tactic for the postmodern subject and a strategy that will create areas of alliances among subjects. So she comprehends love as a significant power. "Love is reinvented as a political technology, as a body of knowledge, arts, practices, and procedures for re-forming the self and the world" (Sandoval, 2000, p. 3). The reason why Sandoval chooses the concept of love for social movement and revolution could also be well understood by her own words:

To fall in love means that one must submit, however temporarily, to what is "intractable", to a state of being not subject to control or governance. (...) subjectivity can become freed from ideology as it binds and ties reality; here is where political weapons of consciousness are available in a constant tumult of possibility. But the process of falling in love is not the only entry to this realm, for the "true site of originality and strength" is neither the lover nor the self. Rather, it is the "originality of the relation" between the two actors that inspires these new powers, while providing passage to that which I call the differential (Sandoval, 2000, p. 141).

On the other hand, she states that other third-world writers like herself conceptualize love in a similar vein. Love is understood by third world writers like Guevara, Fanon, Anzaldúa, hooks, Pérez, Minh-ha, or Moraga, to mention a few, as a "breaking" through the barriers in search of "understanding and community"; love is also described as "hope" and "faith" in the potential goodness of some promised land. Theorizing social transformation, these authors view "love" as a hermeneutic, a collection of behaviors and practices that can bring all citizen-subjects toward a different mode of consciousness and the technologies of method and social movement that go along with it, irrespective of social class (Sandoval, 2000, p. 139).

The individual learns about love and falling in love from the socio-cultural structure that live in. Since how love is defined in our societies includes the answer to the question of what we, as

subjects, do with love, it is essential to understand the values surrounding love. For instance, lifelong monogamous heterosexual and class-orientated love is an ideal of the modern world. On the other hand, as Illouz discusses in *Why Love Hurts* (2012) in chapters two and three (p. 18-108) with reference to case studies, the love of the postmodern world tends to be multicolored, competitive, more transient, allowing for transitivity between classes and even maximum choice. Such a change of the framework is the main reason why love moves out of the private sphere and becomes a political agenda. To extent that the love is freed from modern rationality, it will contain the contact and transformation possibilities.

Taking differences as an empowering agent rather than a divisive threat, based on love in the sense of strategy, may thus enable a relationship in which everyone is dependent on each other, rather than where the more oppressed need the leadership and assistance of the less oppressed. In this sense, we can think of love as a strategy that invites collectivity. When we talk about love as an emotion that invites us to relationality, we see that it has a serious transformative capacity. So how can this love be interpreted as a transformative force?

### **Love in *Three Colors: White***

To show how love can be a transformative force, we look at Krzysztof Kieślowski, one of the most important figures of Polish cinema, and *White*, the second film of his cult trilogy *Three Colors*, for two main reasons. First of all, Kieslowski is that of a director saying, “The subject of my films is love. The lack of love. The need for love. That’s the only subject for me.” (cited in Griffin, 2016, p. 148). For this reason, he is characterized as the “filmmaker of emotions”. The fact that love plays such a central role in Kieslowski's cinema is likely due to the director's grasp of the transformative potential of love. Kieslowski's approach to love is not malevolent and desperate. For Kieslowski, love is a confrontation in which the individuals discover their own subjectivities, selves, wills and desires in their inner journeys, and through love the individuals change their worlds. The second reason is the commonality of the experience. In the film, Kieslowski talks about a love affair on the France-Poland line, while at the same time dealing with the center-periphery dichotomy in the European geography in a very simple and modest way, and in addition to the political criticisms it contains in the background, it is also a concrete example of what Sandoval is arguing for when she prioritizes love in the search of social justice.

Kieslowski's trilogy *Three Colors* consists of the colors' of the French flag signifying each a French value as freedom, equality and fraternity. With a narrative structure built around the themes, the films drag us into a questioning gaze about these concepts. The focus of all three films is love, but through colors and the values associated with them, we witness a different side of the interactive nature of love in each film. In this sense, *White* is a film about being able to love again, based on the principle that “love does not seek equality, it creates it” in reference to Stendhal's famous novel *Red* and *Black*. It tells us that love is not independent from power relations and ongoing negotiations; however it requires equality in emotion.

*White* begins with a close-up of a worn burgundy suitcase moving through the baggage line of an airport. As the film progresses, the meaning of this suitcase and burgundy becomes clearer. However, it should be noted instance that burgundy is a color that facilitates controlled and thoughtful action (Gülşen, 2021, p. 76); it is often associated with power and status. When we look at the film as a whole, we observe how subjects in relatively weak positions in power relations change the balance thanks to their ability to act strategically, and how the color evolves symbo-

lically from its first meaning to the second. This transformation is where Sandoval's first technique, semiotics, is revealed. This technique functions through the use of symbolic elements, including clothing styles, body language, speech styles, and the words chosen by individuals in social interactions to produce identity, meaning, and interaction.

In the next scene, we see a man in a burgundy sweater and tie arriving at a courthouse in France with his worn-out shoes and quick steps, and we realize that he is about to attend a court hearing. This man is Karol, a Polish immigrant, an award-winning women's hairdresser, who will appear before a judge in the courtroom because his wife Dominique has filed for divorce. The hearing takes place through an interpreter because Karol does not speak enough French to express himself fully. From the dialogues we realize that Karol's impotence is related to the fact that his wife, whom he loves, wants to leave him. In fact, things went well until they moved to France, but then Karol became unable to fulfill his "duties" as a husband. Hearing these words, the judge tries to silence Karol and make him sit down, as if to say that there is no need for more, but Karol says "where is equality? Is it because I don't speak French that the court doesn't take my arguments into consideration?" Karol continues to speak, saying that he needs time and wants to save his marriage since he does not think that the love between them is over. The judge then asks Dominique if she still loves her husband and she answers no. The trial ends in Dominique's favor.

The "equality", considering its origins and effects, is not a phenomenon that can be dealt with independently from the questions of "according to what and according to whom?" In this framework it is why Sandoval proposed the concept of differential consciousness. Because as the court scene reveals, an understanding of equality that is detached from all its ties, ultimately reinforces the power of the powerful. Some of the requirements that postcolonial feminists especially emphasize and demands to be considered together with the concept of equality, such as recognition, representation, balance in the distribution of opportunities and resources, and fair conditions for participation in social life, should not be ignored. Otherwise, saying "we are all equal" will mean nothing on its own. The perceived reality of social conditions, such as Karol's "linguistic inadequacy" or his "immigrant" status in France, determines the limits of our space for action. This is why concepts such as differential consciousness that create a reverse perspective are so valuable. Only in this way can technologies that enable social reconciliation be put into circulation.

Corinne Kumar (cited in Marcos and Waller, 2006), a third world feminist like Sandoval, criticizes the modernist paradigm of rights, including the concept of equality, for excluding future possibilities and cultural pluralism. For her, this paradigm is only functional for citizens of states that "regulate all diversity, ignore all historical specificities, and homogenize all aspirations into universal norms of freedom, liberation and equality" and marginalizes for the rest (p. 26). Recognizing this fact is important in order to hear the stories of those who, like Karol, cannot be incorporated into the dominant discourse, to understand the values that construct their identities, and to open spaces for them to become agents. The ability of differences to meet on the principle of equality requires the positional mobility of individuals and the flexibility to re-evaluate positions. However, in its current definition, equality is a value considered within modernist rigidity. Accordingly, as Sandoval proposes, the initial step in understanding differential movement is to recognize the distinctions between individuals. This can be achieved by adopting a perspective that allows the individual to comprehend their own thoughts, feelings, and motivations. In other words, the periphery is unable to grasp its own reality through the meaning maps of the center.



After the court, Dominique hands Karol the burgundy suitcase, gets in her car and drives away. Since his accounts have been seized and his card cut up and thrown in the trash by the bank clerk, Karol is left on the street with his suitcase without a penny in his pocket. He has only the key of the hair salon he runs with his wife and spends the night there because he has no other choice. In the morning, when Dominique arrives at the salon, she is worried, suspecting a burglary because of the open shutters, but when she sees Karol curled up asleep on the chairs, her worry turns into anger. She moves to call the police but hangs up when Karol says he will give her the keys. The keys bring the two closer together and their desire is briefly rekindled; Dominique is in Karol's embrace but the flame quickly burns out and Karol's *inaction* leads to another argument. Karol asks Dominique to come with him to Poland to make things better, but Dominique refuses, saying never. Raging against Karol for not understanding anything, she says, "If I say I love you, you won't understand. If I say I hate you, you won't understand that either. You won't understand if I say I want you, I need you." Then she sets fire to the curtains of the hair salon and says she will tell the all policemen of Paris that Karol has done this for revenge. Karol is forced to flee the salon. The problematic of language, which becomes a serious barrier in Karol's experience, is shown to the audience for the third time. Since this emphasis will be seen frequently in the following scenes, it is necessary to open a parenthesis here.

Language, which is considered the mirror of thought, is essential for both individual and social consensus and sharing. In fact, the technology that Sandoval calls meta-ideologization cannot be activated without language. However, it is important to underline that language is not only related to thought but also to emotions, since "we live in and through our emotions. ... Our lives ... are defined by emotions" (Solomon, 2016, p. 24). As we see in the film, emotions are acts that "encompass one's physical well-being, actions, gestures, expressions, feelings, thoughts, and ... interactions and relationships with other people" (Solomon, 2016, p. 19). Therefore, language is reflected in thought but shaped by emotions. Not speaking the same language is not only a linguistic problem in this sense; it is also about the distance between worlds of experience or frames of reference. The freedom that comes with knowing a language is not only about being able to speak a language; it also requires internalizing that language's ways of feeling and understanding, its strategies for defining, classifying and coping with the world. It is precisely for this reason that the voices of postcolonial feminists should be heeded. This enables us to comprehend the relationship between semiotics and deconstruction, two of Sandoval's techniques, and utilize them to facilitate the articulation of marginalized groups' voices, questioning oppressive ideologies. The analyses of text, discourse, and culture that can be employed in this interrogation enable us to move beyond the limitations of fixed, singular interpretations.

For a dialogical communication, it is necessary not only to be able to use the words of the same language, but also to take into account the interpretations of social reality that appear in those words; in other words, as Sandoval emphasizes, to be able to "read the signs". Any language spoken without mastering its semiotic context tends to create intellectual and emotional distance between individuals. The affirmation of differences is only possible if the opposite is achieved, and such an achievement empowers the individual in terms of position and action, since "most social arrangements are also emotional arrangements" (Illouz, 2011, p. 15) and order is realized through language. In this respect, today's human beings are homo-sentimental subjects and inevitably shape their lives around their rationalized and commodified emotions.

On the other hand, the fact that Karol knows that he can be considered guilty even with a parole when he is innocent and therefore leaves the hall in fear is due to the dichotomy of us and the other, which is a structural characteristic of identities. For “identity is relational, and difference is established by symbolic marking in relation to others” (Woodward, 1997, p. 12). The one who is not from “us” is always associated with negative characterizations. This pairing is done through symbolic systems, including language. “Symbolic systems offer new ways of making sense of the experience of social divisions and inequalities and the means whereby some groups are excluded and stigmatized” (Woodward, 1997, p. 15). For instance, it is common for immigrants to be associated with crime in the same way that the poor with “dirt” or blacks with narcotic culture. As in the case of Karol, identities are coded in social memory through language and rituals under the influence of social exclusion and systems of representation.

Back to the film, Karol, wandering aimlessly in the streets, sees a bust of a young woman carved in a white stone in an antique shop window and starts to admire it. The bust looks very much like Dominique. Meanwhile, a passing man bumps into Karol as if he is not on his way, but Karol continues on his way without breaking his dignity. This is an important scene that emphasizes Karol's position in France to the audience: Not only because the beauties of this society remain for Karol something that can only be seen from the other side of the glass, but also because of his invisibility in society. Here we witness how Karol is reduced to nothingness, reminiscent of the proverb that *every dog barks in his own yard*.

Today, although immigration and immigration-related mobility have become an integral part of almost all societies, the question of who is an immigrant still remains important. This is because not everyone whom a state allows to live within its borders is automatically included in society. Only those who are integrated into the society, its material and spiritual values, lifestyle, ways of feeling and thinking; in other words, those who can merge with the other to form a whole, as defined in the Oxford Dictionary, are accepted into the society, while those who fail to do so are excluded/deintegrated or completely ignored. This result is not independent of the center-periphery dichotomy. This is because if the receiving country is cyclically inferior to the migrant's country of origin or, in other words, on the periphery, the migrant is welcomed with care and the minimum conditions for one's integration into society are considered. Otherwise, as witnessed in the case of Karol, a Polish immigrant in France, when the immigrant migrates from their homelands to one of the higher positioned center countries, they are more prone to be battered and/or ignored. The conditions set for their acceptance into society are also more severe.

As Sandoval makes visible, immigrants become the weakest links in society and in such a situation, in order to survive, they turn to Scott's methods of resistance. As in the case of Karol, the most difficult aspect of immigration is the loss of even visibility, as the individual can only define and make sense of existence through the other. Being invisible in the mirror of the other is on the one hand an element that undermines the individual's points of reference; on the other hand, from Sandoval's point of view, it can also turn into an opportunity. The immigrant can break free from the dominant ideology. The process of meta-ideologizing allows them to transcend the limitations imposed by ideology, including the blindness and prejudices that it can engender. By employing deconstruction, the immigrant can redefine their position in a way that is more just and egalitarian.

In the following scene, Karol, who has nowhere to go, sits in his suitcase in the corner of the subway station, playing a Polish folk tune with his comb. A well-dressed man in a burgundy scarf

passing by, whom we later learn is Mikolaj, first gives Karol a handout and then, unable to resist, starts talking to him. We realize that Mikolaj is also a Polish man living in France. The communication that begins with the language of music establishes closeness between the two with the confidence of speaking the same language. Mikolaj and Karol go together in a different area of the subway to drink and chat. There is an “exit” sign where they sit. In the later scenes of the movie, we see Mikolaj making Karol an offer that could be considered a ticket out of the situation he is in. Mikolaj offers Karol first to take him to Poland and then to kill someone who wants to die but cannot do it by oneself; if he accepts, he says, he will earn enough money to last 6 months. Karol refuses the offer. However, in the next scene of the movie, when Karol wants to show Mikolaj the house where he and Dominique live at the exit of the subway, he witnesses - through the shadows reflected in the window - that his beloved wife has spent the night with another man. He immediately goes to the phone booth to call Dominique and is forced to listen to her voice on the phone while she is satisfied. This causes Karol to change his mind. He hides in his suitcase and Mikolaj kidnaps him to Poland.

After the landing, since the suitcase is too big and heavy, it attracts attention and is stolen by the airport staff. Karol is confronted by the men who take the suitcase to a snowy and deserted area outside the city where garbage is piled up and open it. Karol is beaten by the men and left there. Yet when he stands, he says, “My God, I’m finally home” and we realize that he is glad to be in Poland. Karol packs up, takes his suitcase and the bust he saw in an antique shop and brought with him, only to have it broken by thieves, and heads for his own hair salon, which his brother Jurek continues to run. In his absence, he notices that the salon’s sign has been replaced with a new neon sign and, at his brother’s words referencing the new neon signs, “this is Europe now”, he is delighted, even gladder to be home.

Although the framework of belonging in the postmodern world is expanding, “home” is still an important element. “Factors rooted in individuals’ autobiographies, relationships, culture, economic backgrounds, legal status and length of settlement, have been considered as playing an important role in people’s ability to develop attachments to places and feelings of ‘being at home’” (Giralt, 2015, p. 4). “There is an explicitly social element of belonging that conditions home and identity. This social element speaks not so much to the feeling of identification and familiarity as it does to experiences of inclusion and, very often, of exclusion” (Ralph and Staeli, 2011, p. 523). It is because of this inclusion that Karol is relieved and happy to be home when he returns to Poland despite everything, and it is no coincidence that it is “someone from home” who brings him home. Moreover, his home has become a part of Europe and the European, even if it is collapsed. Just like the bust he brought with him, which supports the perfect representation of Europe. The act of breaking and subsequently reassembling the bust on Karol’s homeland serves to illustrate the simultaneous functioning and interconnection of numerous techniques employed by Sandoval. The European identity conveyed by the bust is evocative of semiotics. The act of breaking the bust is analogous to deconstruction. Karol’s subsequent act of gluing the bust back into a whole and thereby reversing the imbalance of power, albeit in a symbolic order, is indicative of democratization.

When Karol recovers a little and comes to his senses, we see that the first thing he does is to glue the broken bust back together. The fact that the bust shakes when touched but does not topple over is a reference to Karol’s endless hope that he will never stop loving Dominique despite everything. The next scene also feeds this hope: Karol tries to throw the 2 francs he bro-

ught from France in his pocket into the river, but Karol's face lights up when the franc sticks to his hand and does not fall. It is as if he has found the solution. The solution lies in creating the appropriate conditions for emotions. As Illouz underlines, in the age of emotional capitalism, “emotions have become items that can be valued, analyzed, discussed, negotiated, quantified and commodified” (Illouz, 2011, p. 157). Therefore, in order to achieve parity in love, parity in power is required first.

Karol goes to see the owner of an exchange office to get into the money business on the recommendation of a former client. The man offers Karol being a bodyguard since he is not a conspicuous character and gives him a blank pistol. Karol starts work. On the other hand, he attempts to learn French with the help of cassettes. Karol's endeavor to master the French language is, in essence, an aspiration to democratize the prevailing circumstances, thereby effecting a transformation in the realm of social justice and the distribution of power. In order for democratization to be achieved, it is necessary to have awareness, active participation, and attempt for a change. One day Karol travels out of town with his boss, pretending to be asleep and listening to a conversation between the other man in the car and his boss. He learns that Hartwig and Ikea are planning to build a warehouse on a large piece of land on the outskirts of the city, and that the villagers don't know about it yet, and that the land will be very valuable. Wasting no time, he converts the money he had saved up to that day into dollars and goes to meet one of the villagers to buy land. He bought his first piece of land for 5000 dollars. He needs more money to buy other land at strategic points. So he sets out to find Mikolaj and tells him that he will fulfill his offer to kill a man. They meet at an abandoned station, and when Karol sees Mikolaj, he first thinks that the man who wanted to die has given up, but then he learns that it is Mikolaj. “Everything is for sale these days,” he says, pointing his gun at Mikolaj and pulling the trigger to finish the job. With the sound of the blanks exploding, Mikolaj first thinks he has been shot and collapses, but then realizes that he is okay. He changes his mind, he no longer wants to die. Nevertheless, he gives Karol the money they agreed on and says, “You deserve it”. Karol says “Yes, I deserve it, but I'm borrowing it.” and offers to drink together. We see Karol and Mikolaj, bottles in their hands, running and dancing like children on the frozen, white river. Mikolaj exclaims with joy that “now everything is possible” and Karol smiles and agrees.

With the money he received from Mikolaj, Karol buys the remaining plots of land and completely monopolizes the area. His boss, realizing the situation, comes to the door, and an argument results in Karol selling the plots to his boss for ten times higher than what he bought them for. In response to his boss's words “you're an asshole”, Karol says “no, I just need money”, and thus, in a short period of time, he builds up a real capital, establishes a company and starts trading. He finds Mikolaj and tells him that he is the natural partner of the company and that they have to work together whether he likes it or not. It is significant that Karol goes to Mikolaj in a burgundy Volvo with a chauffeur, to convince him that business is going well when he sees the car. The journey begins in an old burgundy suitcase and continues in a luxurious burgundy Volvo.

Karol and Mikolaj start working together. They buy a luxurious office in one of Warsaw's most beautiful neighborhoods and start import-export business. Karol builds a mansion for himself. His former boss at the Exchange office now works for Karol. In short, he has managed to turn the tide. However, his heart and mind are still with Dominique. He wants to be reunited with her somehow, but it is clear that it will not be possible with ease. Karol comes up with a plan. He prepares a will stating that in the event of his death Dominique will inherit all his wealth. And with Mikolaj's help, he fakes his death with a fake obituary and a funeral with a real corpse

imported from Russia (after all, anything can be bought). He prepares a fake identity card and makes arrangements to live in Hong Kong, at least for a while. After the funeral, he will disappear. However, things change when he sees Dominique crying for him at the funeral.

Karol bought Dominique's love with money and finally brought her to Poland, but now Dominique's tears prevent him from leaving everything behind. To make sure of her feelings, Karol secretly confronts her in Dominique's hotel room on the night of the funeral, their intimacy crowned by a passionate lovemaking with Karol *on top*. The balance has shifted, Karol is strong and resurrected in his home. In the morning, while Dominique is still asleep, Karol leaves the hotel and the police raids the room. Dominique is arrested on suspicion of being in Warsaw on the day of Karol's death and of being involved in his death. Neither her French citizenship nor the large amount of money in her account saves Dominique from her predicament; she is imprisoned on suspicion of murder. Dominique is forced to face in Poland what Karol once experienced as an immigrant in France, but with a difference...

We see that Karol has not started a new life, but is hiding with his brother, living an even more miserable life than before. He secretly goes to the prison and sees Dominique, albeit from a distance. He is also in contact with the lawyer to save Dominique, and there is a light at the end of the tunnel. The movie closes with a scene in which Karol visits Dominique. Karol brings Dominique homemade bread and cherry jam and observes her window through binoculars from the garden. Dominique's face lights up when she sees Karol and gestures to him, telling him that she will not leave when she gets out of here, that she will stay with him in Warsaw and that she wants to remarry. In the last scene Karol smiles lovingly at Dominique with tears of happiness and the innocence of a small child. The curtain closes.

As Eva Illouz (2011) says, "To fall in love is to recognize our social history and social desires lustfully and in the body of another" (p. 150). We witness such recognition throughout the film. Just as underlined by the philosopher Blackburn, what both Karol and Dominique exhibit is,

the performance show the lover not only making up the object of desire, but also making himself or herself up in their own imagination, in something of the same way that people are said to brace themselves when they look at flying buttresses, and to rock to and fro when they imagine being at sea. The poetry or feigning can take over the self, and for the moment at least we are what we imagine ourselves to be (Blackburn, 2004, p. 83).

Therefore, love is one of the strongest emotions, that keeps the will to live alive and creates a line, a kind of life strategy, to connect to life even for someone who has nothing. The political side of love goes hand in hand with identification. Love is about putting our loved one at the center of the world and ourselves at the periphery; it provides the opportunity for a change of perspective and thus allows us to engage in altruistic action by focusing on the desire, happiness, well-being of someone else than ourselves. Love changes our world.

## Final Remarks

As discussed throughout the study, emotions have not been one of the focal points of social sciences for a long time. The legacy of modernity that sanctifies reason has been accepted as the key element to understand the world we are surrounded by. For this reason, until postmodernism, no discipline other than psychology was very much interested in emotions, which were mainly confined to the private sphere. However, emotions are not something that can be considered independent of politics and sociology. In this context, Chela Sandoval not only criticizes the

modernity project, but also makes a strong criticism towards the efforts of social sciences to analyze social phenomena using modern paradigms. For this reason, the methods of survival, resistance and struggle she offers for all oppressed, subordinated and discriminated subjects in *Methodology of the Oppressed* are unusually radical. As Tapia (2001) notes down Sandoval's political intellectual labor, as well as its theoretical production -love as social movement- resist theoretical and disciplinary categorization for good cause (p. 737). Sandoval relates oppressed subjects' liminality to U.S. third world feminism. Her methodology establishes third-world feminist criticism and "tactical subjectivity", challenging the exclusionary practices of late-capitalist, neocolonial first-world orders of race, class, gender, and sexuality, as well as the exclusionary movements of power enacted in feminist, postmodern, and poststructuralist critical thinking (Tapia, 2001, p. 735).

It is precisely for this reason that a feminist critique makes it possible for Karol, the main protagonist of *White*, a Polish man, to be superior to, discriminated and marginalized against a French woman, his wife Dominique. The fact that no subjective position is fixed makes it easier to see that oppressor-oppressed relations and the phenomena of freedom and justice cannot be read independently from the power-subject angle. 3rd World Feminism's fundamental critique, which is not only of feminism but also of modern paradigms of science, politics and thinking, enables us to read the practices of subordination of the all subjects, from a feminist perspective. In other words, Sandoval's theory and methodology of the postmodern subject, based on a feminist understanding, facilitates seeing the different forms of oppression - the intersecting practices of oppression and domination, so to speak. She offers us new possibilities for resistance and the construction of subjectivity. In doing so, she reconstructs the world with a constructive language, just like Kieslowski, drawing strength from a positive concept like love. She shows us ways to transform the love/death dichotomy, which is memorable for everyone, into life. As emphasized by Sorokin, love begets love, and love as the main spring of life and evolution (cited in Restivo, 1977, p. 237). Within this understanding, this study suggests the film *Three Colors: "White"* can be analyzed as an oeuvre which treats love as an empowering and transformative emotion rather than a malevolent revenge, and how love can turn into a political power. It is evident that Sandoval's techniques not only appeal to those who are disadvantaged in the power hierarchy but also to those at the center, prompting them to view the world from a completely distinct perspective. Consequently, not only subjects on the periphery, but also those in the center, like Dominique, can discern that their position is not fixed, and through the transformative power of differential consciousness characterized by Sandoval, the possibility of social justice for all subjects becomes reality.

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