Nothing New Beneath the Sun [editorial]

'Whether to Act or Merely Dream'
(refuse all representation and dialogue with powers-that-be)

Authorities Finally Confirm Stingray (IMSI) Use in Prison Island – in Scottish Prisons
(…but results so far are poor)

Panopticons Then and Now
(self-defeating paranoia held up to the reality of data overload)

'Education Centres' Plundered and Vandalised, Santiago
(communiqué: vandal delinquents rampage through the gated structures of academia to appropriate means for mutiny)

Special Hydraulic Fracture
& extraction in the sights

'Antagonistic Margins'
(the queer relation of desire, terror and seduction)

…and more!

In the suffocating grip of our daily routines, what space do we find for spontaneity? For wonder for this Earth we share, even as it is diminished? For companionship not relegated to sharing in the misery of (alternative) consumption, the segregated couple, the nuclear family? For the power of self-creation and subsistence outside the markets that are imposed?

The hurt and absences of this way of life too often become turned inward, a shame we carry as if it were our own. We are sold pre-packaged aspirations — always to be a little deferred so as to respond to the requirements of the dominant reality — when we want immediacy, heroic lives of adventure, belonging, caring and daring; life not survival. Always, the desires of those who exploit, imprison, toxify and repress us are posited as above those of ourselves, those for revolt.

We are kept on edge yet always distracted, close to breaking point, cowed and disempowered by disciplines or puffed up by divisions, mesmerised by the enforced idiocy of the spectacle in which even the drama of a dying world has been turned into a sort of reality TV series, portrayed as completely out of our hands.

The figureheads of economic growth and 'development' would have us turn a blind eye to misery that can't be portrayed in statistics. We have become determined to overturn their calculations. Our visions are of full unemployment, zero voter turnout, continual hi-tech breakdowns instead of breakthroughs, a rampant outbreak of the 'crime' named freedom; until we forget these categories and many more. People emerging from their different cages, forming face-to-face affinities to relearn the art of gifting not just competing, of respect for the more-than-human, of dignity and rebellion. A landscape wild with life again beaconing us to rejoin the dance, the blurring or dissolution of borders, genders, roles and prescriptions. Life without deadtime. And these nascent visions, however partial, are perpetually becoming armed. **The only question is where they will find breath next.**

Feel that breath, let it awaken in you.

NOTHING NEW BENEATH THE SUN [Editorial]

"Out of this confusion will one day come formulations capable of firing point-blank on our enemies. In the meanwhile, let sentences remembered here or there have what effect they may." – Raoul Vaneigem

We once read that the root of the word amateur is *amātor* (lover). What has reached your eyes here is for sure no more than the work of amateurs; but those in love with the wild forces which make our presence on this troubled Earth worth the pain, romantics in search of relationships and moments of rebellion or revitalisation. We can't pretend to be the most cutting-edge project in the world of anarchist thought or activity, rather, this is a fanzine in the classical sense of the term – **a collection of what moves and inspires us to continue the dialogue with others who share some of these minoritarian perspectives.** From the fountainhead of subversive literature we find time to encounter as it comes out, here we re-serve some choice morsels for wider consumption (especially when they previously only appeared online to our knowledge).

We are an internationalist project. We find it important to arm ourselves with the divergent but informative experiences which those overseas have chosen to share (to the degree that they enable us to also analyse our local conditions or act in tandem), translated by accomplices and released into the world, while never forgetting regional specificities.

Resurrecting materials from our collective archive can serve as a nod to influences on the personal thinking behind this project, as well as an intergenerational lens we can evaluate the older texts by. **What's different in the conversation from then to now? What's the same? What can this tell us?**

We'd be naive to assume that our choice to print in paper form (though we always also make an online edition sooner or later) breaks us out of the increasing phenomenon of ghettoisation of marginal conversations via subculture or internet reliance. But we do think, from personal experience, that a print copy offers a different method of engagement for whoever does come across it. We have no idea where or who this reaches, given autonomous and usually unconnected comrades who do print runs. We can't expect quantifiable 'results' of what we release into the world but while for now we make no plans to revise the aesthetic and tone which enlivens us personally, we do aim for the diverse content gathered within to be explicable to readers without (too

much of) an assumed 'background' in these topics or circles.

With quite a few of the pieces within, we tried to explain via introductions why they were chosen. The text frames we've affixed amongst the articles are editorial decisions, not those of the original authors (unless written by an editor). Where we've included a listing of rebel acts along the lines of the question at hand, they weren't selected as the most spectacular or 'hard-hitting', but as a mixture of intensities, methods, ideas and stated desires.

The largest editorial contribution this time – 'Caught in the Net', on the neuroses of the digital age – will accompany this volume (and, eventually, its online edition) as a separate companion piece. If you didn't get it, email us at returnfire@riseup.net and we'll send a copy.

We'd like to take a moment to thank the German comrades who took on the task of translating our main work 'The Veil Drops' from our previous volume (apparently as well as the essay 'Smarter Prison?', by Radical Interference, which we released as the companion piece for that issue). Props also to the folk of the Fenrir publication, who rendered 'Sealife Deformities from BP's Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill' (from back in Return Fire vol.1) into both Italian and Castellano Spanish versions, and also extended the critique with a chronology of petro-chemical atrocities. Cheers to those who've transcribed and/or reposted parts of our own contributions to Return Fire (namely Rabble with their own editorial summary for 'The Veil Drops'; In the Belly of the Beast; The Acorn; Anarchist News; 325; and anyone we've missed out), and of course those who widen the print distribution in a self-organised way.

We'll soon be uploading more text from this and older volumes to join that by us already available to individually reproduce via the invaluable Anarchist Library archive, as well as copies of translations which we published for the first time in some cases. Previous volumes in their entirety can be downloaded in PDF form

from several sites; trying searching actforfree.nostate.net for "Return Fire" or email us directly at returnfire@riseup.net for download links, to submit material for future issues, or to communicate about the topics raised or other directions (or barriers) to an anarchistic life in the largely un-anarchistic worlds we inhabit today.

So, through this channel and project or another, we will continue reaching for those whose practices, wants, feelings and ideas resonate or inform the sense of self, pride and the impulse to walk along a similar path of struggle and confrontation, of desires and creation, that we treasure in the diverse anarchist project of joyously living despite everything we are born amongst. **It strengthens us to know of others treading this path, with all the ups and downs, contradictions and successes that come from rebellious decisions and wills.** We're thinking of those who join our random conversations and bear witness to one another's grievances in the more-or-less intimate spaces of our lives, those who we feel an insurgent closeness to despite being separated by many kilometres or the walls of the jails where they have fallen prisoner, or the encounters that surprise us most with those who have never considered themselves anarchist or such... We know that even here in the open prison atmosphere of the stifled British metropolis-isle, this nameless spirit lives on; although it often finds difficulty in expressing itself, we always keep an ear open for when it passes.

In a global moment where some prospects of insurrectionary ruptures seem tantalisingly immanent, yet elsewhere almost unimaginable, and where all the other aspects of a subversive practice (however necessary they still are) are threatened with disarming and commodification, we'll continue to use this journal to promote conflict and sabotage, raising a voice for the unknowable and wild things we want to honour and also realise.

For disruption of the industrial supply chain and the metropolitan system of normality.

For active negation of the rule of civilised law and moral authority.

For attack on the production centres of gender, human supremacy, nationalism.

For the ones in the same struggle on the street and interpersonally, or in the clink; also for the ones who came before us and those who will come after.

For our personal joy and liberation.

Always in defence of the Earth.

Insurrection, memory, freedom, life.
To all those whose hearts are beating faster...

R.F.

'WHETHER TO ACT OR MERELY DREAM'

The present social organisation is not just delaying, it is also preventing and corrupting any practice of freedom. The only way to learn what freedom is, is to experiment with it, and to do so you must have the necessary *time* and *space*.

The fundamental premise for free action is dialogue. Now, any authentic discourse requires two conditions: a real interest in the questions brought up to be discussed (the problem of content) and the free search for possible answers (the problem of method). These two conditions should occur *at the same time*, given that the content determines the method, and vice versa. One can only talk *of* freedom *in* freedom. What is the point of asking questions if we are not free to answer? What is the point of answering if the questions are always false? Dialogue only exists when individuals can talk to each other without mediation, i.e. when they relate reciprocally. If the discourse is one-way, no communication is possible. If someone has the power to impose the questions, the content of the latter will be directly functional to this (and the answers will contain subjection). **Subjects can only be asked questions whose answers confirm their role as such, and from which the bosses will draw the questions of the future. The slavery lies in *continuing to reply*.**

In this sense market research is identical to the elections. The sovereignty of the elector corresponds to the sovereignty of the consumer, and vice versa. TV passivity is called *audience*; the legitimation of the power of the State is called *sovereign people*. In either case individuals are simply hostages in a mechanism that gives them the *right* to speak after having deprived them of the *faculty* of doing so. What is the point of dialogue if all you can do is elect one or the other? What is communication if all your only choice is between identical goods and TV programmes? The content of the questions is meaningless because the method is false.

'Nothing resembles a representative of the bourgeoisie more than a representative of the proletariat,' Sorel wrote in 1907. What made them identical was the fact that they were, precisely, *representatives*. To say the same of a right or left wing candidate today would be banal. But politicians do not need to be original (advertising takes care of that), it is sufficient for them to know how to *administer* that banality. The irony is that the media are defined a means of *communication* and the voting spree is called *elections* (which in the true sense of the word means free, conscious decision).

The point is that power does not allow for any other kind of management. Even if the voters wanted it (which would already take us into full 'utopia', to imitate the language of the *realists*), nothing important could be asked of them from the moment that the only free act – the only authentic election – they could accomplish would be **not to vote.** Anyone who votes *wants* inconsequential questions, as authentic questions deny passivity and delegation.

[…] Take the example of the housing estate. What would happen if the inhabitants were able (once again, we would be in 'utopia') to express themselves concerning the organisation of their own lives (housing, streets, squares, etc.)? Let us say right away that such demands would *inevitably* be limited from the start, because housing estates are a consequence of the displacement and *concentration* of the population according to the needs of the economy and social control. Nevertheless, we could try to imagine some form of social organisation *other* than such ghettos. […] **How, under the present social order, do you reconcile the inhabitants' desire to *breathe* with the interests of the bosses of the motor industry? Free circulation of individuals with the fears of the luxury boutique owners? Children's play areas with the cement of the car parks, banks and shopping centres? The empty houses left in the hands of the speculators? The blocks of flats that look like army barracks, that look like schools, that look like hospitals, that look like asylums?** To move one wall in this labyrinth of horrors would mean putting the whole scheme in question. The further we move away from a police-like view of the environment, the closer we get to clashing with the police.

How can you think freely in the shadow of a church? wrote an anonymous hand on the sacred wall of the Sorbonne during May '68[1]. This impeccable question has wider implications. Anything that has been designed for economic or religious purposes cannot fail to impose anything but economic or religious desires.

A desecrated church continues to be the house of God. Commodities continue their chatter in an abandoned shopping centre. The parade ground of a disused barracks *still contains* the marching of the soldiers. That is what he who said that the destruction of the Bastille[2] was **an act of applied social psychology** meant. The Bastille could never have been managed as anything other than a prison, because its walls would have continued to tell the tale of incarcerated bodies and desires.

Subservience, obligation and boredom espouse consumerism in endless funereal ceremonies. Work reproduces the social environment which reproduces the resignation to work. One enjoys evenings in front of the TV because one has spent the day in the office and the underground. Keeping quiet in the factory makes shouting in the stadium a promise of happiness. Feelings of inadequacy at school *vindicate* the insensate irresponsibility of a Saturday night at the club. Only eyes emerging from a McDonald's are capable of lighting up when they see a Club Med billboard. *Et cetera.*

You need to know how to experience freedom in order to be free. You need to free yourself in order to experience freedom. Within the present social order, time and space prevent experimentation of freedom because they suffocate the freedom to experiment.

[…] Only by upsetting the imperatives of time and social space will it be possible to imagine new relations and surroundings. The old philosopher said one can only desire on the basis of what one knows. Desires can only change if one changes the life that produces them. **Let's be clear about this: rebellion against the organisation of time and space by power is a material and psychological necessity.**

[…] Curiously, those who consider insurrection to be a tragic error (or an unrealistic romantic dream) talk a lot about social action and areas of freedom for experimentation. One only has to squeeze such arguments a little, however, for all the juice to come out of them. As we said, in order to act freely it is necessary to be able to talk to each other without mediation. And about what, how much, and where can one engage in dialogue at the present time?

[…] We forget we are all living in a ghetto, even if we don't pay rent and every day is a Sunday. If we are not capable of destroying this ghetto, the freedom to experiment will be a poor thing indeed.

Many libertarians believe that social change can and must come about gradually, without any sudden rupture. For this reason, they talk of 'areas free of the State' in which to elaborate new ideas and practices. Leaving aside the decidedly comical aspects of the question (*where* does the State not exist? *how* do you put it in parentheses?)... [t]o say that all the changes that are necessary could be done gradually merely confuses the issue. **Change cannot even begin to take place without widespread revolt.** Insurrection is the *whole* of social relations opening up to the adventure of freedom once the mask of capitalist specialisation has been torn off. **Insurrection does not come up with the answers on its own, that is true. It only starts asking questions.** So the point is not whether to act gradually or adventuristically. The point is whether to act or merely dream of acting.

[…] To act when everyone advises waiting, when it is not possible to count on great followings, when you do not know beforehand whether you will get results or not, means one is already affirming what one is fighting for: a society *without measure*. This, then, is how action in small groups of people with affinity contains the most important of qualities—it is not mere tactical contrivance, but already contains the realisation of one's goal. Liquidating the lie of the *transitional period* (dictatorship before

communism, power before freedom, wages before taking the lot, certainty of the results before taking action, requests for financing before expropriation, 'ethical banks' before anarchy, etc.) means making the revolt itself a different way of conceiving relations. Attacking the technological hydra right away means imagining a life without white-coated policemen (i.e. without the economic or scientific organisation that makes them necessary); attacking the instruments of domestication by the media now means creating relations that are free from *images* (i.e. free from the passivity that fabricates them). **Anyone who starts screaming that it is no longer – or not yet – time for rebellion, is revealing the kind of society they want in advance.**

[…] No matter whether it is a question of pollution, prison or urban planning, any really subversive discourse ends up putting *everything* in question. Today more than ever a quantitative project (of assembling students, workers or unemployed in permanent organisations with a specific programme) can only act on detail, emptying actions of the strength of putting forward questions that cannot be reduced to a separation into categories (students, workers, immigrants, homosexuals, etc.). All the more so as reformism is less and less capable of reforming anything (think of unemployment and the way it is falsely presented as a resolvable breakdown in economic rationality). Someone said that even the request for nontoxic food has become a revolutionary project, because any attempt to satisfy it would involve changing the whole of social relations. Any demand that is addressed to a precise interlocutor carries its own defeat within it, if for no other reason than that no authority would be capable of resolving a problem of general significance even if it wanted to. *To whom* does one turn to oppose air pollution?

The workers who, during a wildcat strike, carried a banner saying, *'We are not asking for anything'* understood that the defeat is in the claim itself ('the claim against the enemy is eternal'). There is no alternative but to take everything.

"The problem with positive anarchist projects of self-organization is not simply that they propose an alternative to domination, but that they are often separated from a relationship of social conflict. A community garden can very easily be incorporated into the project of gentrification, but it is an altogether different project when it takes a conflictual approach to legality, property and civil society. The problem with anarchist proposals of direct democracy and social justice, isn't simply that these are alternatives, but that they are alternatives that try to make us legitimate to civil society. Our positive projects are vital in proposing and practicing a manner of living that breaks from the structures of domination, meeting our individual-collective needs and desires; driving wedges between the identity of the rebel who desires another life, and that of the productive white person or citizen who wants to make society more caring and fine-tuned. [I would propose] that we seek to spread subversive relationships of conflict at whatever level, for the personal joy we may get out of seeing domination lose it's grip across every social terrain. It is also helpful to point out that like repression, recuperation can always be a consequence of our actions. These are the two favored responses that power has towards rebellion. Since the nihilists would not have us stop the attack for fear of repression, does it make any sense that we stop experimenting with any other self-organized activity, simply because power will always respond? [...] Anarchy requires strength, vision, knowledge and care as much as it does rage and destruction. It requires that we do not fall into the despair that so many others have. It requires that we practice social revolt in the face of social control. That we do not allow technology and the dumbing down of society to strain our relationships, and our capacity to dream."

– *Resignation is Death*

*1. ed. – See **Return Fire vol.2 pg96***

2. ed. – The prison of Bastille Saint-Antoine, in Paris, was stormed by a crowd in search of gunpowder on July 14th 1789 in the French Revolution. Seven remaining prisoners were found and released (one of these, the notorious libertine Marquis de Sade, had stoked the link between the revolution and the Bastille, addressing the public from his walks on top of the towers and, once this was forbidden, shouting from the window of his cell) and the Bastille's governor, Bernard-René de Launay, was killed by the crowd. The Bastille was demolished, and souvenirs of the fortress were transported around France and displayed as icons of "the overthrow of despotism".

AUTHORITIES FINALLY CONFIRM STINGRAY (IMSI) USE IN PRISON ISLAND – IN SCOTTISH PRISONS

The Scottish Prison Service *[SPS]* has confirmed that it used IMSI *[International Mobile Subscriber Identity]* catchers (aka "stingrays") at two prisons in Scotland. This is the first confession of official stingray use by UK authorities, though they are almost certainly being used elsewhere in the country as well.

The SPS are using both mobile and static stingray devices at HMP Shotts in Lanarkshire and HMP Glenochil near Alloa. The SPS spent more than £1.2 million spying on both prisons. **It appears that the SPS were trialing stingray tech at Shotts and Glenochil before potentially rolling it out to other prisons.**

While stingrays can be used to snoop on conversations or otherwise gather intelligence, it appears that in this case the SPS were using IMSI catchers to stamp out mobile phone use at the prisons (it's supposedly a crime to use a mobile phone in prison). **IMSI catchers work by tricking nearby mobile devices to connect to them, rather than an official base station.** The stingray can then be used to triangulate the user's location, or to simply block the connection *[ed. – or record calls]*.

Somewhat amusingly, despite the rather expensive roll out, it seems the system wasn't all that effective at finding phones or blocking calls. *"Prisoners have developed innovative countermeasures to current*

arrangements[...]" The SPS recovered significantly fewer mobile phones at HMP Shotts in 2014 (282) than in 2013 (352). *"Some of this decline is due to the increased introduction of smartphones which use 3G technology, these 3G smartphones transmit on very low power levels and so are more difficult to accurately detect and locate."* Back in 2010, when the prisoner phones only used 2G, 1417 handsets were tracked down at Shotts alone.

The report notes that the SPS wanted to use stingray tech at HMP Edinburgh, but it lost out to the rural prisons for two reasons. First, the UK's mobile carriers had already started rolling out 4G in Edinburgh. Second, if they had used IMSI catchers at HMP Edinburgh, which is within Edinburgh's urban area, there would've been a "high risk" of interfering with mobile users outside the prison.

There have been various reports of stingray use by the UK authorities as far back as 2011, but this is the first time that it's ever been confirmed. **Last year, the mainstream media reported that it had found widespread use of IMSI catchers across London, after fake mobile masts where discovered. Over in the USA apart the usual monitoring of criminal/terrorist elements, it is now becoming common for major protests to be spied upon in case of an outbreak of disorder.**

Obviously the fear of uprisings such as those which occurred around the UK in 2011 *[ed. – see **Return Fire vol.1 pg61**]* & in Baltimore[1] & Ferguson *[ed. – see **Return Fire vol.3 pg76**]* in the US are on both governments minds. The state might try justify the use of IMSI to tackle crime or terrorism but increasingly this technology can be used to quell disorder *[ed. – and has been noted so far at demonstrations in Germany and Turkey as well, including a body-worn type for agents walking amongst the crowd]*. What is also apparent from the information gathered by the media is that the technology can be used not only to track but to listen into phone calls, not just of the specific targets but also the general population in the vicinity, as can be seen when HMP Edinburgh was rejected for Stingray tests.

Surveillance technology is vastly increasing around prison island, it does not shock us that they would be tested in actual prisons first, the most concentrated form of oppression, the testing ground for many forms of control through out society. The prison system was the first place to test the idea of unpaid work, then it was rolled out into society for jobseekers. New glass apartment blocks resemble more a prison complex with security doors and CCTV in every corner, the difference is that the gullible upstanding citizens imprison themselves. It will not be long before IMSI becomes a norm just as much as CCTV did, further limiting the possibility of dissent in this corner of the world.

What is clear is that there needs to be a backlash against the prison society, that it can never be reformed and will involve a complete eradication of the technology that makes it possible. The ultimate culprits are those companies that make it possible.

In the mean time, attack the prison society at its sources and maintain a vigilante security culture with phones. The police state is tracking & listening, let's claw out their eyes & cut off their ears!

How a 'Stingray' Cellphone-Tracking Device Works

Law-enforcement officials are quietly using gadgets referred to generically as 'stingrays' to locate cellphones as part of investigative work.

1. Often the device is used in a vehicle along with a computer with mapping software.

2. The stingray system, which mimics a cellphone tower, gets the target phone to connect to it.

3. Once the cellphone is detected by the stingray, the phone's signal strength is measured.

4. The vehicle can then move to another location and again measure the phone's signal strength.

5. By collecting signal strength in several locations, the system can triangulate and map a phone's location.

1. ed. – Multi-day April 2015 rioting and looting with many vehicles burned and cops injured in the U.S. state of Maryland after police killing of black youth Freddie Gray, provoking state-of-emergency powers in the city and deployment of the National Guard.

PANOPTICONS THEN & NOW

SURVEILLANCE // PANOPTICON // SECURITY CULTURE // PARANOIA

"Why hammer out concepts – be it speculative, critical, or pragmatist – if there is a meta-authority overseeing it all? Why conspire in the light? […] We need to develop dissident knowledge of how to bring down drones, detect sensors, hack servers, distort GPS signals, and disrupt Google by fooling its algorithms. Forget the next innovation cycle. If the common hacker's paranoia informs us correctly, we lost the war years ago and are surrounded. Soon we will be called to surrender, one by one."
– Geert Lovink "Hermes on the Hudson: Notes on Media Theory after Snowden". e-flux.com/journal, April 4, 2014.

A culture of security is one which enhances an organization's capacity to determine its interests and act on them in spite of another organization's opposed interests. Corporate workforces and law enforcement agencies both cultivate cultures of security, as do management teams, investment rings, smugglers, unions, militia men, and academic researchers. All of these cultures are supposed to control flows of information (trade secrets, exclusive suppliers, price indexes, strategic plans, etc.) and restrict communication in furtherance of an organization's interests.

Among dissident circles, the term Security Culture has been popularized as a response to the absence of organization and shared organizational interests. Security Culture carries a few hard and fast rules (don't talk to cops, need-to-know basis, interrupt gossip, etc.) which have established a rough outline of best practices when daily life and sensitive operations overlap or are indistinguishable.

Best practices are fundamental to the Insurgent, who frequently operates without clear structures of command and communication, enjoys limited operational awareness, and can hardly imagine an everyday life divorced from sensitive operations. The Insurgent, however, should not be confused with a dissident or "common hacker," as Lovink puts it, and the conflation of Security Culture with Operations Security carries heavy tolls.

Before it has a chance to protect our shared interests, Security Culture without organizational imperatives invites paranoid speculation into our attempts to determine what shared interests we might act upon. Without shared interests to balance security protocols we lose doubly, once for refusing to trust one another and ourselves enough to build power, and again for failing to connect with our comrades who lose patience with our dedication to self-policing and exclusivity.

From the Insurgent's perspective, policing limits possibility, and possibility is a condition to be exploited and multiplied.

A common hacker is familiar with the State's unscrupulous pursuit of persons who register on their threat spectrum, but hasn't learned enough about the State, capital, or policing to glean how that spectrum might be composed.

A "common hacker" is also familiar with an illimitable list of methods for gathering information in the digital age. The list is illimitable (instead of just long) because known unknowns breed unknown unknowns. Assuming that such an unlistable list is in the possession of a meta-authority, and distributed to just the right hands at just the right times to prevent an eco-warrior from spiking a tree is a paranoid and debilitating procession of thought.

A "common hacker" has noticed that American people discover another egregious violation of their civil liberties and rights to privacy every few years. A common hacker assumes that this is evidence of a meta-authority orchestrating a grand coup or seizure, but an insurgent understands that managing crisis and maintaining business as usual are the only organizational imperatives shared between every federal agency and every corporate interest in the first world.

From a common hacker's perspective the end is nigh, from the insurgent's, it is ongoing.

It is closer to the ISIW's business to hammer on concepts than to hammer them out. Not so much to shape or refine them, but to see what they're made of.

We propose that the umbrella category of Surveillance, while of great concern to issue-based electoral debates, has little to offer our understanding of Insurgency. It's a test to see the forest for the trees, but effective policing does not follow from increased surveillance, nor does frightening our friends into placidity make us safer, stronger, or smarter than we were ten years ago.

We understand most flavors of Anarchist and many political dissidents would like to contribute to decentralized resistance to policing, but every headline and announcement with regard to State and corporate surveillance, every leak, every stuttering admission, every investigative report, every sting, every declined opportunity to comment… too often these messages reinforce the common hackers' paranoid conception of the State (or whatever) as an omniscient and cohesive entity, one for which every badge, snitch and suit is directly employed. **Security Culture could be a clever precondition for minimizing risk while building decentralized resistance to policing, broadly, but it manifests more often as a herd mentality, offering its most vulnerable constituents as sacrifice while the herd reproduces itself.**

The Paranoid's shadowy network, the telos of the global Panopticon (a solitary warden who controls an entire prison) has an analog under CCTV. It is characterized as the omniscient and personified puppet master who is so often invoked in dissident circles. The growing reception of onlookers – Facebook laborers and survivalists alike – have assigned some marketable celebrity to the act of pointing cameras at rifles, trying to get a better close-up. *Look how shiny, their boots.*

Our inquiry must favor concepts which invite indiscernibility, opacity, camouflage, and noise in order to assess the State's logistical capacity to stifle dissent, and the Insurgent's opportunities to further attack those capabilities. The following [addresses] dragnet data capture, information gathering, intelligence gathering, and the deterrent effects of associating contemporary surveillance techniques with the edifice of the Panopticon.

These concepts are broken and reassembled within conceptual categories more useful to the Insurgent.

Please note that the following pieces do not address communications forensics, targeted intelligence operations, or profiling, among other considerations commonly associated with Surveillance. We eagerly await your contribution on those topics.

In his essay *Hope in Common* David Graeber describes the system of social control under capitalism as a *"a vast bureaucratic apparatus for the creation and maintenance of hopelessness, a kind of giant machine that is designed, first and foremost, to destroy any sense of possible alternative futures."* In their quest the machine's operators are aided by the hopeless themselves, for one simple reason. Being proven wrong is irritating in general, but in the question of hope it would be utterly devastating. What if hope turns out to exist after all, after one had given up on it forever? How miserable would you feel if after abandoning your most cherished dream, you discovered years later it had been within your grasp all along, if you had only had the courage to reach for it? Desperate to avoid such a fate, legions of amateur doom sayers labor tirelessly to convince the rest of us that all revolution is bound to fail and we might as well give up now. Their patron saint is Henry David Thoreau, who in his celebrated work *On Civil Disobedience* made a cogent and brilliantly composed argument for the abolition of government – only to dismiss the idea with a breezy *"But that's never gonna happen, so let's just do random minor things the government doesn't like and hope they don't shoot us."*

Thoreau's intellectual descendants continue his quest today. Some among them like to point to the massive firepower wielded by the US military as proof that no "alternative future" could ever come to pass. More sophisticated pessimists, perhaps aware that seemingly invincible armies have succumbed to revolution many times throughout history, prefer to focus on the psychological and propaganda weapons of today's ruling class. **In any screed from this latter group one will more likely than not run across Jeremy Bentham's infamous[1] Panopticon.** This was a prison design in which many inmates could supposedly be controlled by a single guard because, due to the layout of the building, the prisoners could not tell when they were being watched, and would therefore have to assume that they were always under observation[2]. Multiple jeremiahs would have us believe that the current infestation of surveillance cameras, databases, smartphones, and NSA monitoring constitute an impassable barrier to uprising through the imposition of Panopticonesque uncertainty on the entire population. The original Panopticon was a complete failure as a prison (a fact the Jeremiahs seldom mention). Yet Bentham's invention still contrives to carry on his mission in a way he could never have imagined, by providing rhetorical ammunition to pretentious armchair theoreticians endeavoring to persuade us that resistance really is futile.

Unfortunately for the theoreticians (not to mention the nation's retailers), most shoplifters have never read Tiqqun *[ed. – see Return Fire vol.3 pg58]*. Untroubled by half-baked quasi-philosophical jargon-mongering, these folks manage to pull about $13 billion worth of merch a year, in the US alone, out from under the mall surveillance cameras that are supposed to leave them paralyzed with doubt. **This is in spite of warning signage, uniformed guards, and public displays of live surveillance footage – all intended to reinforce the message of deterrence. We should not be surprised that none**

STEAL YOUR LIFE

of this works very well. Any loss prevention professional will tell you that the cameras are mostly useful only for preserving evidence in those rare cases when someone gets caught, not for preventing attempts. **The Panopticon relied not only on the lone watchman, but on close confinement of the prisoners to isolate individuals and ensure that anyone not being watched at a particular moment didn't cause trouble.** Absent these strict conditions, the rough equivalent of today's supermax prisons, the Panopticon effect crumbles rapidly. Were Bentham's inmates allowed to congregate in common areas, or even housed two per cell so that one could screen the other from view, his system would break down, while if they were locked alone in their cells 24/7 the Panopticon would be unnecessary. After all, it would hardly matter whether the prisoners were being watched if they couldn't escape no matter what they did.

Out here in minimum security the Panopticon's deficiencies multiply exponentially. The requirements of selling mass surveillance mean that much of it is voluntary. If the government tried to force everyone to carry a monitoring device with them at all times that reported their location and most of their conversations to a central authority, the outcry would be deafening, no one would comply. The only way to pull it off is to throw in Candy Crush, charge 100 bucks a month, and wait for the suckers to roll in. But Iphones can be left at home, cameras can be smashed, communications can be encrypted, Facebook accounts can be closed. Even a relatively small minority who see through the authorities' bluff can make life very difficult for them.

Worse, in any attempt to institute a real-life Panopticon uncertainty works both ways. The prisoners may never know when they're being watched, but neither can the guards ever be certain what the prisoners are getting up to in their unobserved moments. The natural response is to monitor as much activity as possible at all times. In the digital age this urge manifests itself in the massive data harvesting programs carried out by the NSA and other intelligence and law enforcement agencies. Sadly for them however, while capturing and storing data is easy, **data by itself is not information.** The NSA's enormous capability to intercept data has not been matched by any corresponding ability to analyze it, much less to act on whatever information is extracted. Data mining has shown some promise in keeping track of known suspects, but has been nearly useless at uncovering new ones. The forces of order are therefore left to wrestle with unmanageable masses of data on people who are little threat to them, while those harboring nefarious intent can slip

"[Born of] paranoia about surveillance apparatuses like the NSA's, which seems to have unfortunately gotten worse since the Snowden leaks *[ed. – see Return Fire vol.3 pg48]*, the idea that the state is all seeing, completely functional in all space and invincible strategically has begun take root, and has generated a passive sort of waiting. [T]his idea of the all powerful state tends to concentrate around the concept of panoptic power, the ability of the state to see all action in all moments. But, this understanding of the Panopticon is fundamentally misinformed, relying on the notion that the concept of the Panopticon can be equated to actual surveillance, and that this forms the basis of mass surveillance initiatives such as bulk metadata collection by the NSA. [...] It is fundamentally important to differentiate panoptic deterrence from actual intelligence gathering, which not only attempts to remain secret, but also attempts to *weaponize information operationally.* When we are speaking about actual intelligence gathering, entrapment operations, undercover work, signals intelligence and so on there is a very different goal in mind, the gathering and use of information through the maintenance of a certain clandestinity, through the ability to monitor without being detected, and this is what we are seeing currently from organizations like the NSA. For example, the purpose of the geolocation of cellular phone SIM cards is not to allow the one being monitored to know that they are being watched, at which point counter-measures can be introduced. Rather the point is to actually gather location data and use it within a structure of increasingly fluid, small force footprint counter terrorism operations, and this necessitates the actual gathering of intelligence to go undetected. In this sense, deterrence becomes a hindrance to the attempt to gather and weaponize information, generating a focus on countermeasures among targets, rather than maintaining clandestinity and operational secrecy. [...] As such, we cannot analyze the scope of state force capacity merely through the lens of information gathering, but have to analyze it on the basis of information becoming weaponized, or processed and made into the basis of actual material operations. When we add in this plane of analysis the picture of state force capacity changes dramatically."

– Some Thoughts on the Limits of Surveillance

beneath the radar merely by taking some basic precautions.

Interestingly enough, the history of the Panopticon actually does reveal a useful lesson for insurgents, one which has predictably been lost on the jargon-mongers. Bentham pitched the idea as a money saver, a way to replace a large workforce of guards with a single volunteer (yes, really!) warden. While the English government ultimately turned him down, modern capitalists have not all shown the same good judgement. Despite that $13 billion, some retail chains have reportedly been cutting back on loss prevention personnel and relying more on technology in a misguided attempt to reduce expenses. A similar tendency has cropped up in municipal budgets, which have been slashed in many cities to the point that even police departments are coming under the ax. Federal grants for surveillance systems are available to local police, and surplus military equipment can be obtained from the Defense Department, but funding for basic policing functions, such as officer salaries and patrol cars, is scarce.

The poster child for this trend is Oakland, [California,] where the municipal government is developing a network of high resolution surveillance cameras, combined with various tracking tools such as license plate recognition, aimed at suppressing mass protests. Christened the Domain Awareness Center *[ed. – see Return Fire vol.2 pg66]*, the project is drawing loud squawks from civil libertarians and progressives. Few seem to recall that the city cut its police force to 696 officers the week after the Oscar Grant verdict[3] came down, losing much of their capacity to respond to anything seen in the footage. The department has since declined to 624 officers, a 20 percent reduction from mid-2010. **That's not their only problem, either.** A recent survey of OPD rank and file cops reveals severe deficiencies in operational logistical capacity, including broken radios, deteriorating patrol cars, and police stations so dilapidated one officer referred to them as "Section 8 housing." Department morale has been eroded by infighting, mandatory overtime, and the withering contempt in which many Oakland residents hold cops, among other factors. Officers are quitting almost as fast as they are recruited, exacerbating the personnel shortage. Oakland's police would be a lot more dangerous if the $12 million being spent annually on the DAC had gone toward addressing these problems, instead of generating countless hours of video

footage that no one will have time to view or analyze.

And finally, leading the charge into this technological quagmire we find the Pentagon, who have been putting "toys before boys" for years now, with disastrous (for them) results. Decades of increasing expenditure on fancy weapons systems while cutting back on readiness and personnel have produced a military that has in the last 60 years proven incapable of successfully occupying any country more formidable than Panama.

The true takeaway from the Panopticon then, is that it doesn't work, that clever schemes and high tech gadgets can never effectively replace boots on the ground. **The former East Germany, where nearly a sixth of the population had been coerced into informing for the Stasi, gives us an example of a genuinely effective use of uncertainty in social control.** Rebellion was nearly impossible, not because one might be recorded on video, but because there was no way to find comrades who could be counted on not to snitch.

The Stasi had an advantage, though. They didn't have to deal with computers. Relying on paper files right up to the day the Berlin Wall came down, their data overload problems never became too unmanageable, their sense of possibilities constrained more or less within the bounds of feasibility. Today Moore's Law[4] and multi-billion dollar black budgets combine to appeal irresistibly to the most treacherous of authoritarian instincts – the pipe dream of complete control, no uncertainty required, all transgressions seen and punished. Attempting this by recruiting more guards for one's Panopticon only reproduces the original problem at a higher organizational level, as Edward Snowden *[ed. – see Return Fire vol.3 pg48]* demonstrated so graphically. **But what if you could find guards who never took bathroom breaks, never slept, never decamped to Hong Kong with 58,000 of your most sensitive operational documents? The**

problem with people is getting them to do exactly what you want and nothing else. Computers, or at least computer salesmen, promise to do away with this annoyance forever.

They can't of course, not really. Any programmer can testify that all programs have bugs, that getting a computer to do precisely what it's supposed to and no more is functionally impossible for any non-trivial task. Cops presented with an opportunity to fulfil their deepest held control fantasies tend to overlook this little inconvenience, which is why they keep spending money on things like facial recognition software. Facial recognition made its public debut at the 2001 Super Bowl in Tampa to the usual chorus of dire warnings by privacy advocates. They needn't have worried – at the time it didn't work well enough to threaten anybody's privacy. But that didn't stop the Tampa police from adopting it that summer to surveil Tampa's Ybor City district, although they abandoned the project after only a few months. It's easy to guess how they were taken in. Some stories are too good to check, and the ability to do instantaneous automatic mug shot look-ups on anybody who turns up in their surveillance footage is near the top of any cop's Christmas list.

Facial recognition doesn't work a lot better now than it did in 2001, even though its adoption has mushroomed. A 2013 article from Ars Technica explains that far from the process being automatic, most images have to be hand tweaked before matching is attempted. Differences in camera angle, lighting, makeup, facial hair, glasses, and other variables also reduce accuracy. The technology is effective in situations like preventing drivers license fraud, where the photographs in the database were taken under the same conditions as the picture to be matched. However, facial recognition in high-profile criminal cases is still mostly done the old fashioned way, by publishing photographs of suspects and waiting for someone to recognize them and rat them out. Both digital and human approaches are far too labor intensive to be useful in large scale tracking efforts

(although masking up thoroughly is still highly advisable in certain situations).

Comparatively few radical analysts bother to investigate these sorts of technological underpinnings, even when they're writing about technology. A case in point, Naomi Klein, whose otherwise informative 2008 article for Rolling Stone decrying the rise of state surveillance in China included what amounted to an advertisement for the capabilities of the facial recognition software sold by L-1 Identity Solutions, a US vendor of security technology. Klein's main source on this subject was a salesman named Yao Ruoguang, whose company was peddling L-1's software in China at the time. Yao trotted out what was probably the standard demo he showed prospective customers – taking his own picture with a laptop camera and comparing it to a database of a claimed 600,000 images. Supposedly the search returned several correct matches in about a millisecond. Klein took Yao at his word, even though such a test could easily be faked, and Yao had every incentive to do so. Even if the demo was otherwise legitimate, the conditions under which the sample picture was taken – good light, a closeup frontal shot, and presumably no facial adornment – were far more favorable than those typically found in the field. Klein apparently never asked about any of this. She also accepted Yao's implicit claim that the only technological obstacle in the way of widespread use of facial recognition in China was the low resolution of existing surveillance cameras. As we can see from the Ars article linked above, this is hardly the case. At this point it seems relevant to mention that Yao's company also manufactured *high* resolution surveillance cameras. It is not known how much his sales increased as a result of Klein's article.

Klein's error is representative of more than just technological cluelessness and inexperience of industrial salespeople (which could have easily been cleared up with an email to a digital rights group such as the Electronic Frontier Foundation). **Like too many other critics, she rejects the police state's claims of motive, but swallows whole their claims of capability. Countless essays and articles describe various aspects of state repression, but present them, *a la* Klein, as inescapable *faits accompli*. Analysis of strengths and weaknesses with an eye toward resistance is comparatively rare. Perhaps the authors fear that any admission that the state is vulnerable would imply a responsibility to attack it?**

In any case, cops and critics alike agree that the state's efforts to maintain and extend their control of society are, if not perfect, at least logical and purposeful, that

repression is targeted at those who pose the greatest threat, that if you have nothing to hide you have, perhaps not nothing, but at least very little to worry about. It's a highly suspect assumption. Jeremy Scahill and Glen Greenwald's report *Death by Metadata* reveals that US drone strikes in Pakistan, Somalia, and Yemen and are mostly targeted using phone metadata obtained by the NSA, with very little human intelligence (of either sort) involved. The result is pretty much what one would expect. "Real terrorists" who know they're targets change phones and SIM cards regularly to avoid detection, while victims of strikes often include random bystanders and uninvolved users of the same phone. This situation will only get worse for the NSA as word of Scahill and Greenwald's report spreads and more people start taking appropriate precautions.

One's chances of not being killed by a Hellfire missile in Yemen would therefore seem to depend about as much on luck and knowledge of cell phone security as on abstention from anti-US activity. This is unlikely to be the result of a deliberate strategic choice. The fundamental dilemma of any counter terrorism operation is eliminating existing enemies without creating more new ones, and indiscriminate killing of random civilians fails on both counts. Yet Scahill and Greenwald make it clear that accuracy is not a major consideration when targeting, that the main focus is on "feeding the beast", i.e. keeping the drone operation running at full capacity. It is telling that reviews for civilian deaths occur only *after* strikes occur, not during the planning stages. US drone tactics thus appear to derive more from bureaucratic inertia, extreme resistance to admitting error, and an abiding fascination with the idea of soldier-free warfare than from any deliberate plan. These afflictions are far from unique to the NSA.

The NSA's drone difficulties highlight another aspect of mass surveillance seldom noticed by radicals – the difference between a Panopticon and a failed intelligence operation. It is axiomatic that the value of any intelligence source plummets once the adversary finds out about it. British intelligence in World War II went to great lengths to keep the Germans from realizing that the Enigma code *[ed. – used by the Nazis for communications transmission]* had been cracked, even refusing to share decrypted messages with the Soviet Union lest the Russians' own leaky codes expose the secret. The problem is compounded when the "adversary" is the population of an ostensibly democratic country, since discovery means not only loss of effectiveness but loss of face as well. Unlike Walmart, the NSA has no interest in publicizing their surveillance efforts. Their

aim, however clumsily pursued, is to discover useful information without being detected, not to deter resistance by projecting the illusion of omniscience. **Yet Snowden's revelations have apparently led many to conclude that NSA surveillance is inescapable, instead of examining them in detail for ways to defeat it.**

We can also see parallels between mass data collection and drone strikes. Both projects are carried on because they're technically doable, and appeal strongly to the authoritarian mindset, not because they work particularly well for their ostensible purposes. In both cases public exposure alone threatens to cancel out any minor benefit generated. In both cases

"I would like to dwell on another aspect that seems to be an obstacle to our action: the analysis of the effects and transformations of dominion. Far too often it seems that this analysis is useless and doesn't give us the ability to affect reality; on the contrary it feeds fear and sense of impotence in the face of the magnitude of the challenge and the monstrosity of the harmfulness to be opposed. […] I'm not saying that we don't need analyses but that they don't have to become an end in themselves, exercises of intellectual skill detached from direct action. What's the use of publishing endless lists of companies responsible for the destruction of nature if nobody attacks them? […] In spite of everything we are not helpless. Bare instruments of analysis, direct action and the determination of the few can demonstrate that we are not all resigned to accept passively and at the same time they show to the other exploited that it is still possible to fight back."
– *The Urgency of the Attack*

government agencies are trying to accomplish a Herculean task with laughably inadequate resources. "Eliminating all enemies of the US in three separate countries one explosion at a time" vies with "establishing a real-life Department of Precrime" for the title of most ridiculous government boondoggle ever.

There is good reason to believe then, that the security establishment's surveillance and monitoring plan, to the extent they even have one, not only isn't working, but can't work. If they are running a Panopticon it's only a byproduct of the impossibility of their true goals, and therefore far less effective than it might be. **It's not difficult to peek behind the curtain to see the flaws in its inner workings and tailor one's tactics accordingly. That few of us do so is more of a testament to the enormous weight of propaganda and indoctrination imposed by the media and school system than to any actual invulnerability of the surveillance state.** When supposedly radical analysts take the propaganda at face value and repeat it the impact is doubled. After all, if one's friends and one's enemies are both telling the same story it must be true, right? *Not necessarily.* The first step in fighting the hopelessness machine is not believing everything it tells you. Or failing that, at least not repeating it…

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1. *Infamous literally, that is – no actual Panopticon was ever built. [ed. – Bentham, a ultilitarian philosopher writing in the late 1700s, based his panopticon ideas on his brother's ideal regime in Russia; where he was running the first factories in its early industrialisation. Prison wings based on the Panoptican design do indeed exist today, but only long after Bentham's death.]*

2. *ed. – From the start, Bentham suggested the panoptic model be deployed in non-prison institutes also, as follows: "No matter how different, or even opposite the purpose: whether it be that of punishing the incorrigible, guarding the insane, reforming the vicious, confining the suspected, employing the idle, maintaining the helpless, curing the sick, instructing the willing in any branch of industry, or training the rising race in the path of education: in a word, whether it be applied to the purposes of perpetual prisons in the room of death, or prisons for confinement before trial, or penitentiary houses, or houses of correction, or work-houses, or manufactories, or mad-houses, or hospitals, or schools" (Panopticon Letter I).*

3. *ed. – Oscar Grant III was shot dead by a transit cop in Oakland, U.S.A., 2009, sparking a few nights of rioting and looting. Over a year later, the cop was absolved of murder (declared guilty instead of involuntary manslaughter). As predicted, more disorder followed the ruling.*

4. *ed. – Moore's Law is the observation that the number of transistors in a dense integrated circuit doubles approximately every two years.*

'EDUCATION CENTRES' PLUNDERED & VANDALISED, SANTIAGO

[ed. – From the capital of Chile, anarchists taking responsibility for participating in various moments of occupation and looting early this year during the long-running student struggles in that country, which have frequent anarchist participation with a discourse critical of the education complex at base and the societies which need it; see **Return Fire vol.2 pg30**. *Our one point of contention with these authors would be on their identification of their actions as "political exercises", against "promoters of inequality, morality and power" etc.; we think equality is a democratic imposition of 'rights' (necessarily implying a universal 'authority'), itself a morality, and politics is the art of deceptions and representation. We find our stance on such robberies as closer to the author of 'Nomadic Insurgence', who asserts that "[t]he insurgent outlaw is amoral – he rejects law in all its forms, because it restricts her life and limits his possibilities. An insurgent outlaw may destroy a stolen item, sell it on the black market, keep it or share it among friends – as it pleases her. He may rob a bank and use the money for a project, squander it on friends, take a trip or burn it. [...] The insurgent outlaw is consciously trying to increase her power of self-creation..." With that minor quibble aside, we salute those keeping up an ungovernable presence within the student struggles and beyond .]*

We are part of what the press call 'vandalism', we are part of what citizens call delinquency, we are the individuals who tend to break the murderous routine with small actions – individuals for whom self-compassion and mercy have given

way to tangible reality, a reality that shows its worst face in everyday life; a life that is crying out for destruction so as to give space to the overwhelming impetus of autonomy and total freedom.

In a context of struggle, plunder and destruction become essential for insurgents, rebels and anyone who is against the system; undoubtedly its spontaneous and organized practice will always be there. As secondary school, technical and university students are begging the State for improvements in education, the minorities that long for sedition continue to annoy the authorities and to foment widespread disorder[1].

A historic bust of the crucified Jesus is seized by masked fighers while sacking Santiago's Gratitud Nacional cathedral during student demonstrations, and destroyed in the street, 08.08.16

"[Occupation is useful] not because of the facilities it procures for us but for the faculties it builds in us: the capacity to take over space, and within that space to destroy and create as we see fit, which means to self-organize, and to attack and erode control. All the better that occupation should be temporary, then, because knowing that we cannot, in the short-term, win any material prize, we may be all the more cruel with the infrastructure we take hostage. What we win we take with us, and can use again wherever we go: what we win is the capacity to occupy. This is another way of saying that we must be the first real Vandals, the first real barbarians, the first real horde. Because the truth of the matter is, thus far, everyone who has sacked Rome has been seduced by it. The pacifists would misquote Nietzche *[ed. – see* **Return Fire vol.2 pg52***]* and suggest that to fight a monster is to become it, but they have simply been seduced by the democratic myth of dialogue, and they don't realize that they are already monsters. So too were the barbarians already Romans. Those who marched through the marbled gates were not savages still green from the forest, rebelling viscerally against civilization. In fact they had already served in the legions, and were now turning on the aging Empire in order to cut it up for themselves. [...] Therefore, to sack Rome, we must do so as a horde, and never as an army, in every way possible. We must smash the fortifications without planning how they might be repaired, should we ever need to close them again behind us; we must walk naked before the clothed, without feeling shame; we must talk loudly among the educated, to teach them our words; we must burn their holy books without the least awe or ceremony; we must open the prisons, walk through them until we are sure they don't contain a soul. We must burn the libraries and museums, but let the curious and romantic among us first take out any treasure they want, to fill the streets and homes with, for we have no plans and no prohibitions. [...] The question is how, then, to become a horde?"
– *Here... at the Center of the World in Revolt*

Without thinking twice we take advantage of certain situations in which we've been targeting for a while – at different times and contexts – the 'education centres' in Santiago of Chile, we plundered them, destroyed them and occupied them in order to spread the seed of anarchy in many ways; we took advantage of this for individual purposes and also – and mainly – for political anti-authoritarian projects. **There was no exception this year, we plundered electrical appliances and various equipment which will help us in future political actions.** We stole them from the promoters of inequality, morality and power[2]. For our part we're satisfied, even if we will aim higher and higher, there are plenty of places.

Plunder and destruction are political exercises that make us smile in complicity with our affinity ones as we put them into action against the target chosen during the organization of an action. Routine is being broken up, we leave no space to authority's lovers or those who play politics and go to the police and protect the property of others who ruin their lives with huge debts.

It's time we became faster, we expect nothing nor do we have anything to expect from education and its puppets (comrades, leaders, directors, politicians); we negotiate nothing nor do we have anything to negotiate with the State/Capital; we need to start acting towards the exacerbation of the conflict with power so as to see it being destroyed in front of our eyes.

During one march, anarchists fire upon police with high-range pyrotechnics, linking their struggle to the *"war without truce on any form of authority, whether speciesism, patriarchy, the academic monopoly of knowledge, the state, the destruction of nature, the family structure..."* etc., 21.04.16

In memory of anarchist-nihilist comrade Sebastián Oversluij Seguel, who together with unknown persons emptied a room of a great many computers and electrical appliances for political purposes in the Juan Gómes Millas campus, Universidad de Chile, on 19th November 2010.

Without any doubt such an inspiring story calls us to dedicate our raids and

destructive gestures to *Pelao Angry [ed. – as Sebastián was known]*, who fell in an expropriation action in Pudahuel on 11/12/2013 *[ed. – see **Return Fire vol.2 pg26**]*.

SEBASTIÁN O SEGUEL ILLEGAL GANG

WINTER, JULY – $HILE 2016

1. We've been appreciating disorder, plunder and destruction during students' demonstrations since 2006, with continuity in autumn 2008 and a decrease in intensity in 2011, which has lasted to this day with variable presence and strength. Throughout all these years, unquestionably, with an anarchist/anti-authoritarian fighting presence that left no one indifferent.

2. Municipio de Santiago: the damage amounts to over 1,300 million [of Chilean pesos].

'TO BUILD, WE MUST DESTROY...'

[ed. – A selection from an anarchist text released after combative Chilean student demonstrations, by Individualist Cell 'Birds of Fire']

There they were, the voracious youth again, destroying everything, erecting barricades, clashing with police, nothing could stop them... There is fire and passion in their hearts, love and hatred on their insides, courage and decision. The beauty of chaos has returned to grace the streets, it is not only fire that adorns the asphalt, it is also the energy of the youth, the abolition of the sexes, everyone in the struggle... Will this struggle bear fruit? To want to study just to be someone in life? The individual who goes searching for real happiness, does not stop at so little, she *[sic]* knows that she can educate herself, and although that path is longer, that doesn't make it less interesting, because everything else is interminable...

[...] Chilean society is convulsing, it knows there's a conflict and doesn't know how it will end, there are students wounded, two dead and a few in jail, there are others on hunger strike. The tension increases, it's visible in the streets every time there's a day of action and protest, the confrontations between pacifist and violent protestors keep on increasing, so much that they have struck and snatched the masks off of some *encapuchadxs [ed. – hooded fighters]*. Careful, citizens[...]

To raze the school is possible today, as was done in the *colegio* Guillermo Cruz de Estaciòn Central, [and] in the *colegio* Gabriel Gonzales Videla *[ed. – scene to rioting and arsons during a tense 2011]* [...] those places intentionally lit ablaze by those beautiful *pajarillas ['little birds']* who understand that this destruction is a great step towards the conquest of life...

The journey is intense and difficult, it always has been, when individuals fed up with their miserable conditions organize and attack. One cannot be afraid of those who organize only for one specific goal although it is only to destroy, because at this point we know that to build, we must destroy... And all the reasoning these petty politicians supposedly have when they talk about the problem of education, does nothing for anyone, because the bureaucrats and businessmen almost always end up winning. And they believe that to repress passion is a simple thing, that with a little tear gas and a little water *[ed. – from police water cannons]* they will snuff it out, like any other flame,

so they will have to be reminded that they are wrong, again and again, those idiots. The night always illuminates our steps, just like free love allows us unlimited bliss, to find us with the beautiful silence of obscurity, or at the feet of the fresh rays of the rising sun[...] running into the heat of a barricade, it's magic, like something supreme, or can only god be supreme? We burn the churches with their pedophile priests inside, we watch those cowardly abusers from the front to spit in their faces... Another day comes, but this is one of the beautiful ones, because we will combine the sun that caresses us with its heat with an emancipatory fire full of joy and hope...

[...] Today it is time to kill the cops in our heads, and this, to be sure, is a great battle. It's much easier to throw a rock at an armoured truck *[ed. -- commonly deployed in Chile against demonstrators such as the students]* and believe that, from this act, liberty closely follows. It's much easier to spend hours and hours talking about revolution and organization. It's much easier to believe that going to a free university will change the world. Students, don't be fooled, remember that those who control the world also attended the university, and to their disgrace, some studied for free. And what did they become? Heartless beings capable of torture in their jails and murder for a few cents, and what do you say now? That you'll be different? This remains to be seen...

[...] The revolt is here, we must increase our participation, our generous egoism *[ed. -- see **Return Fire vol.1 pg41**]* needs to contribute, for now, to the struggle, to gather and organize ourselves for specific ends such as destruction, enjoyment, loving camaraderie, encounters with chaos, advancing towards the dawn [or awakening] of the creative nothing *[ed. – see **Return Fire vol.1 pg92**]*, then returning to our hiding places, to rejoice and dance with the birds, to nourish ourselves with the energy of the trees, to feel the ocean breeze, to hear the lovely melody of the wind...

We have said it already and we'll say it again: our revolution has already begun, we make it from day to day, making free love, declaring ourselves against every god and religion, deconstructing the dominating language that they imposed on us, openly opposing any society, we make it when we stop being men and women and become unique human beings.

SPECIAL HYDRAULIC FRACTURE

[ed. – Published by Moai, a Spanish-language newsletter on biological, technological and social control. Lightly edited from the original translation done by Theory Without Borders.]
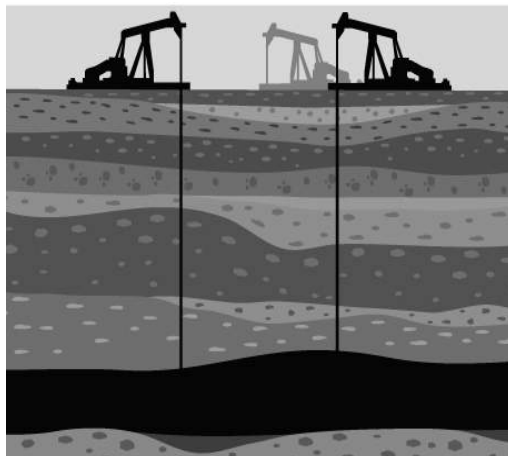
What is Fracking?

Fracking or hydraulic fracture is an unconventional method of extraction of natural gas, also known as "shale gas". This gas, fundamentally composed by methane, is found stored in small pores or impermeable rock bubbles, normally of schist or slate, located thousands of metres below the surface. "Unconventional gases" are denominated to those that for their cost or difficulty of extraction are less profitable. However, with the advance of extractivist technologies, these gases can be catalogued as conventional in a short period of time.

The hydraulic fracture consists in "breaking" or "fracturing" the mother rock that contains the gas for its extraction. For this a perforation technique is used: firstly the surface is drilled for up to 5,000 metres vertically and after that several horizontal kilometres are also perforated (from 1.5 to 5 km). After this water with sand are injected with great pressure (98%). It should be noted that this water and sand also contain a series of chemical additives (2%). This provokes small explosions that fracture the rocks and liberate the gas, which ascends from the surface through a pit. The sand mixture is in charge of keeping the fracture open in order to constantly keep obtaining gas. Part of the injected mixture returns to the surface (between 15 to 85%[1]), whilst the rest ends up in uncertain places.

The usual step in these types of exploitations is to build platforms that contain between 6 and 12 pits of extraction, in order to allow the surface of the terrain that occupies the platform to be composed by tens of hectares. To this we must add that the pits have a very brief useful life, which allows the occupied surface by the platforms to occupy a huge area of a territory.

Why Fracking?

Currently, even though natural gas consumption is booming, electrical energy (primarily generated thanks to petroleum and the consumption of fossil fuels) represents around 80% of the global energy consumption. On the other hand, the extraction of conventional natural gas possesses an energy return on investment (EROI) of between 1 to 6 and unconventional or "shale gas" between 0.7 and 13.3. These are ridiculous numbers compared to the current energy return on investment of petroleum, which can have rates of 100.

Then, why invest millions of euros in its extraction? This is easy to explain if we analyse the current energy crisis[2]. There are many studies, books and publications that have invested their efforts into demonstrating and studying that we have reached the peak oil process and that the new petroleum pits discovered possess less fuel of worse quality, bigger cost of extraction and, therefore, less EROI. This theory is easily predictable by simply analysing the spectacular increase of the price of fossil fuel.

We survive in a system completely dependent on fossil fuel and electrical energy generated by the same, which also base their system of social domination on energy control. It would be stupid or ingenuous by our part to think that the big defenders of this system of social domination, which include huge petroleum companies, were not going to reinvent theirselves so that the end of cheap petroleum doesn't suppose a threat to their businesses, privileges and power of social control. It is here where fracking serves as a tool to delay the discovery of new alternative energy sources. By improving extractivist technologies and conducting explorations in many places of the planet, the gas reserves will be able to be maintain their energy system for a short period of time and prevent the explosion of a true energy catastrophe, which doesn't benefit in the slightest big petroleum multinationals.

Why Oppose Hydraulic Fracturing?

There are many varied motives to oppose the extraction of unconventional gas. It is obvious that such an aggressive extractivist method will provoke a series of environmental problems.

On the one hand it is of vital importance to highlight the contamination of aquifers and subterranean waters, created due to the filtration of the mixture that is injected in the pits for the extraction of gas. These 600 chemical substances injected into the surface, many of them carcinogenic, end up in subterranean waters and will consequently be consumed by all human beings and animals, thus generating a chemical contamination of all the affected ecosystems. These human beings will be affected by this consumption of contaminated water. This has already been demonstrated through the analysis in cow livestock in several areas of the United States, where many animals suddenly died after consuming water close to the gas platforms. The effects towards the human race will take longer to appear, but can go from stomach infections to cancer, along with provoking death after constant consumption.

Another type of contamination that fracking provokes that isn't well known is the emission of radioactive substances to the atmosphere. Substances that are found naturally in the depths of the ground and contaminated water can also reach the atmosphere. One of these chemical substances is radon-222, which is the second highest declared cause of lung cancer.

The small explosions generated by the injection of pressured water are also capable of causing seismic movements into the ground, as demonstrated in places like England or the United States[3]. This could explain, along with popular opposition and French colonialism in Mali and Niger *[ed. – i.e. also over access to uranium and other fuel sources]*, the prohibition of this method in France, where the huge quantity of nuclear plants combined with earthquake risks could cause huge catastrophes.

2014 government proposition for 2,800 fracking wells across the U.K., including in so-called 'protected areas', and every English county except Cornwall. A moratorium has been announced in Scotland (which imports U.S. fracked gas) and Wales.

Extractive platforms generate a series of environmental and pollutive consequences that are hard to list. It is not only about the visual impact of the platform, the waste from concrete, gas pipelines, etc. But also the creation of roads, transportation of materials, the canalisation of water into the platform, the large water waste, the deforestation of the terrain, the erosion, the creation of residual ponds and many more problems that would require a lot of paper to write down.

These ecological and health consequences should ideally be the main reason to face and stop these projects if we truly valued the health of our surroundings. However, these are not even the most important reasons to stop fracking: if companies were truly interested in investing into improved extractivist technologies in order to guarantee that no health dangers existed there would still be enough factors for us to oppose these projects. Fracking opposition, from our part, should include the fact that it is a new method of exploitation of natural resources that only contributes perpetuating an anti-ecological, exploiting, unfair and inhuman system. We don't only express our opposition to fracking as an aggressive method to extract gas, but also to the opposition of any type of extraction of gas.

Permissions, Licenses & Businesses

Currently there are over 30 permits of exploitation conceded in the [Iberian] peninsula, concentrated around the north, primarily. These numbers are ever-changing due to the approval of new permissions, as there are already more than 50 solicitations; but also due to the opposition and resistance from some communities to allow these projects (albeit the latter is improbable and abstract).

These exploitations will be conducted, if we don't stop them, by businesses like SHESA (Society of Hydrocarbons of Euskadi); BNK Petroleum, with its Spanish counterpart Trofagas, Heyco, R2 Energy and San Leon Energy.

A landscape of fracking wells, U.S.A.

"FORESTS PRECEDE CIVILIZATIONS AND DESERTS FOLLOW THEM."
~ François-René de Chateaubriand

The False Opposition to Fracking

From the arrival of the plans of exploration of shale gas in the [Spanish] State, there are many voices (from individuals and collectives) that have risen up to try and prevent these exploitations of gas. For this reason, it is important to analyse determined strategies and alternative methods of fighting presented by numerous ecologist groups which, in our opinion, aren't effective or coherent and are even capable of benefiting the enemy that they intend to destroy.

In regards to the methods of struggle: the first thing that we must clarify is that *fracking is a global problem originated by a global energy scheme.* It is not only about a project in a specific area. Due to this it is important to conduct the fight against fracking on a global level and not only focus it on a specific platform, valley, etc… (No Fracking, not here or anywhere)

The town halls and Autonomous Communities[4] belong to a State that encourages and support this global plan of energy development based on the hydraulic fracture. Due to this it lacks sense, from a logical perspective, to use or beg these institutions to stop fracking. On the one hand, it is obvious that if we intend to stop fracking, any type of dialogue with the State contributes towards an anticipated defeat. On a moral level it is a lost battle. It is true that in some cases the collection of signatures and pressure from political groups have managed to stop some local projects. However, these are underwhelming victories, as no global opposition is ever presented, only local. On the other hand, if the governments indeed stop specific projects it is only because these are not fundamental projects for their energy development. In the case of fracking in the [Spanish] State, several specific permissions can

be obtained this way, because there are countries with enormous levels of poverty that exist, with bigger gas reserves and less popular pressure, allowing businesses to easily extract gas from those places. Therefore, the only way to oppose these mega-projects effectively and coherently is through a real fight, not collaborationist, that at the same time develops a global criticism towards capitalism.

In regards to alternatives: This is probably the most delicate and controversial point. The only proposal by "eco" friendly parties, NGO's and ecologist collectives against fracking are renewable energies, accompanied by a light decrease in the levels of consumption.

Renewable energies can pose, with a big economic investment in investigation and development, an alternative to the extraction of gas through hydraulic fracture, but they will never be an alternative to capitalism. The ideal world that these groups offer needs more roads, industries, trucks, primary resources, big factories, video surveillance and electricity cables passing through the woods to fully function. Renewable energy is also completely dependent on fossil fuels (plastics, transportation through roads, vehicles, etc…) and continues forcing human beings to work to produce cars, wind turbines, solar panels, etc; which impedes the liberation of the individual, who is still tied up and trapped in a sick, unhappy and monotonous job and lifestyle.

On the other hand, these groups don't tend to propose any political change accompanied by their "renewable revolution" in order to continue a capitalist system where the only things that matter are money and economy, thus ignoring values like friendship and nature. This approach not only represents no real alternative to the system of domination, but can also drastically benefit it. In a world where contamination reaches extreme levels, cancers increase enormously and the disasters provoked by petroleum and nuclear energy are part of our everyday lives, the best alternative to maintain the system of domination is through renewable energy. In fact, it's what is slowly extending the system. Small steps are being taken to improve the profitability of renewable energies, creating electric vehicles, etc… This way the State and businesses clean their image towards the people that they have to exploit, whilst they also pretend to care about the planet's health without changing the system of domination.

We don't want a world where the same contradictions continue to be applied, where people's lives are completely

domesticated, robotized and alienated and where the relationship between human beings and nature is inexistent. We don't want cities painted a pretentious "eco" green or a scenery full of wind turbines of more than 100 metres in height. We fight for a free world where people can re-establish their relationship to nature that prevailed during centuries past. We fight for a world where capitalism and domination disappear, which is only possible by renouncing the commodities that the energy and technological system provide for us. A world without fracking, or petroleum, or renewable barbarities: a free and wild world.

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1. The numbers of return of contaminated water are proportioned by the own extractivist businesses, are not validated by any independent study. Therefore it is probable that the percentage of water that isn't recovered is bigger than as indicated.

2. One of the key concepts to understand the gravity of the energy crisis is the EROEI (Energy Return on Energy Investment. The TRE is the relationship between energy that a well provides us and the energy that we have to spend to obtain it. Hence, conventional petroleum has an EROI of 20, which means that for each unity of energy destined to the production of petroleum (in the elaboration of materials used in wells, its installation, perforation, operation, the maintenance, etc) 20 unities of energy are obtained. The critical value of the TRE is 1: when the TRE arrives at an equivalent, lots of energy is renewed as the one invested and the system stops having any sense as an energy source.

3. ed. – Fracking near Blackpool in the north of England by the company Cuadrilla was halted after causing two minor 2011 earthquakes, while the U.S. state of Oklahoma for example has seen a sever spike in quakes of 3.0 magnitude or higher since 2008, when fracking ramped up in the area. The number of 3.0 magnitude quakes rose from 2 in 2008 to 889 last year; as of this November, there have been 572 so far in 2016.

4. ed. – Autonomous Communities are the 17 separately-governed semi-autonomous regions of Spain, i.e. Catalonia, the Basque Country, Galicia, etc.

EXTRACTION IN THE SIGHTS

20.11.16, Copenhagen, Denmark: *Arson of a G4S van,* "as gesture of complicity to the spirit of the warriors defending their sacred lands against the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline. […] G4S is a security company with a long history of part Danish ownership and they currently provide security for the construction of the pipeline after a series of arsons against the construction sites. We hope our message of solidarity with fire reaches you." (*The Dakota Access Pipeline would carry fracked oil from the U.S. state of North Dakota through to Illinois, cutting under the Missouri River less than a mile upstream from the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation's drinking water supply. This has precipitated possibly the largest gathering of indigenous Americans ever, as members of over 100 tribal groups have converged to protect the*

land and water. While major disagreements have taken place between indigenous warriors or accomplices of whatever heritage pushing for confrontational action and pacifist elements or hired Non-Violent Direct Action consultant "camp leaders", combat has nonetheless ensued with the large militarised police deployment – including horse-riding warriors rallying a herd of buffalo into police lines, burning barricades on the access roads to the camp occupations, logs and molotovs hurled at oncoming cops, and much construction machinery put to the torch, while other forms of direct action have regularly shut down pipeline work. In different parts of the world, train-lines carrying oil cars or even specific fracking materials for the North Dakota wells have been blockaded (U.S.A.), bank facade and ATM sabotage carried out in solidarity (Switzerland), and a gathering of industrialists disrupted by invaders who tussled with the guarding cops (Canada).)

One of the U.S. military supply trucks torched after their retreat from clashes on the highway and turned into yet another barricade in the fight for Standing Rock, 27.10.16

16.10.16, rural Iowa, U.S.A.: *Three bulldozers and one excavator burn, to the cost of $2million, on the worksite of the Bakken pipeline, another due to cross the state of Iowa from the gas-fields of North Dakota downwards. (In August, $1million more of damages had been wrought by another arson of another two pieces of machinery on the same spot, with two other arsons of equipment elsewhere on the same night.) The landowner admits that surveillance of the entire pipeline route is nearly impossible.*

03.01.16, Cambridge, Canada: *Unknown individuals* "used a manual pipeline valve to restrict the flow of Enbridge's Line 7", *a pipeline which runs crude oil from the Alberta tar sands (see* **"Another Figure of the Migrant"**) *in parallel to the company's notorious Line 9.* "We then applied our own locking devices to delay response time. […] This action was undertaken to show our ever lasting love and support to the brave folks who've taken similar actions in the traditional territories of the Huron-Wendat, Mohawk, and Anishinaabek people. […] We fight for the land and water; and we fight for our lives."

22.10.15, Germany: *Clashes between defenders of the Hambacher Forest (see* **Rebels Behind Bars; Some Light on the Investigation Leading to the Imprisonment of the Comrade Arrested on April 13th**) *and the coal company trying to destroy it to expand their extraction. As tree-cutting work begins, around 20 assailants cross the security fence (which had been damaged in multiple places during fighting the*

day before) and "smashed the window of the digger and the security car, the electronics of the cutting machine were sabotaged. One security tried to intervene and to arrest a person, but other[s] prevented him from doing so. Afterwards, it was possible to do more severe damage to the digger, its hydraulics were cut and the electronics completely destroyed. The group could retreat without problem into the forest. But a smaller group of 2 persons, which was also present in the area, was missed. Police arrived soon and left the scene again together with an ambulance car. It was assumed the people had got arrested. As a direct response to the arrests, a group of 30 people destroyed the remaining parts of the fence and smashed the windows of a truck. Afterwards, the two highway bridges which are used by the securities as permanent guardings points were attacked, lights and generators were destroyed." *The mob was too large for security to intervene.*

22.03.15, Elliott State Forest, U.S.A.: *A few 'mountain beavers'* "emerged from the hillside and destroyed the road leading into the Dean Scholfield timber sale in the Elliott State Forest. A three-foot deep trench now blocks the sale's entrance. Long lengths of rebar were cemented into three holes in front of the trench, preventing bulldozers from easily reconstructing the road. [F]or those of us who are intimately connected to this land, a clearcut is a clearcut. No matter if the trees are 100 or 250 years old: the mountain beavers will be trampled, trapped and poisoned and the coho salmon downstream will struggle to survive as temperatures rise and silt settles on the gravel beds. The ancient myrtle that is reaching towards the sky and watching the forest around it mature into old growth will be carelessly thrown into a slash pile, burned as hog fuel at the mill. [T]he human community down hill will breath in the drift and drink the water contaminated by the aerial spraying of herbicides. [...] We have been labelled many things: [vermin], vandals, and "eco-terrorists." So we'll do what we do best, and continue to gnaw at your roads and your profits."

In-Salah region, Algeria: *In the midst of a wide-spread struggle against fracking in the Sahara desert (Algeria is said to be fourth in the world in the size of its recoverable shale gas reserves), rioting breaks out after authorities refuse to release prisoners of the struggle. The police headquarters, the police chief's house, some police barracks, and a police truck are all set ablaze, and 40 officers injured.*

07.01.15, Pastaza province, Ecuador: *Waorani indigenous fighters invade the Petrobell oil field in the Amazon, causing enough damage to shut down eleven oil wells operating at the facility. The army are called to the scene and six soldiers are wounded in the clash with seven warriors armed with blowguns, shotguns, pistols and spears. Six of the seven are imprisoned on January 8th, and the seventh "allowed to remain free with certain restrictions based on his advanced age". It is noted that in 2011 and 2012 indigenous warriors had already attacked the facilities of oil companies in the area.*

04.04.14, Vancouver, Canada: *Anonymous midnight attack on the $3million home of the CEO and director of Mira Resources (an oil and gas company operating in Ghana and Angola), who is also the president and CEO of Aldrin Resources (a uranium company that has begun drilling in the Athabasca Basin in Saskatchewan) as well as the director of Athabasca Nuclear. Multiple gunshots are fired upon the house, before a vehicle is heard speeding away.*

07.01.14, Verucchio, Italy: *Some 'Boar from Marecchia Valley', aligned with the Earth Liberation Front (E.L.F.), enter a CMC site that quarries materials to* "carry out death projects from Val Susa *[ed. – see* **Return Fire vol.1 pg70**] to Ethiopia and all over the world, by building high speed railway tracks, highways, dams, shopping centres, etc. […] We placed tanks of petrol and triggers made of firelighters, fumigators and matches under 9 heavy vehicles. Unfortunately, because of the strong wind that extinguished the triggers, only two vehicles got destroyed, but the message went through..."

Dinant region, Belgium: *Truck and van of a forestry company destroyed by arson. Shortly before, as the anarchist journal Hors Service noted,* "another forest cutting vehicle of another company was attacked with fire. It seems that, since permits were given to transform even more forest into industrial wood production sites, opponents are directly attacking..."

23.06.13, Elsipogtog, Canada: *Following an escalation the day before (when Royal Canadian Mounted Police came under attack while disrupting a festive gathering) in the efforts of Mi'kmaq indigenous and other peoples to prevent explorations for shale gas deposits to frack, a driller of the fracking corporation is torched. Other actions during this phase of the struggle (see* **Return Fire vol.2 pg61** *for further events) include demonstrations, blockades and expropriations of company vehicles.*

08.03.13, Solnechnogorsk district, Russia: *'Wolfpack' group of the Informal Anarchist Federation (F.A.I.) / E.L.F. destroy a tracked dozer and an excavator at a sand extraction complex.* "The sand from this site goes to the highway construction projects in Khimki forest *[ed. – see* **Memory as a Weapon; A Shorter History of a Northwest E.L.F. Cell**] as well as some other regional development projects. […] Because of damp weather one of the devices

failed to ignite[...] With ravaging flames from the burning excavator at our backs, we approached the bomb and re-wired it."

08.03.13, Espoo, Finland: *While in Helsinki people protest the toxicity caused by the nickel, zinc and uranium mining of Talvivaara corporation outside Finlandia Hall during a shareholders meeting, others throw smoke bombs into the corridors of the company headquarters and graffiti the exterior. The action is also in solidarity with the Kulon Progo struggle against mining and metal industries in Indonesia, and captive Tukijo (see* **Return Fire vol.1 pg70**).

13.06.12, Farnham, Canada: *Sabotage of a major rail-line in Québec, chosen* "for the crucial nature of the merchandise it transports," *such as Alberta tar sands oil (see* **"Another Figure of the Migrant"**), "before this sole railway divides into different destinations such as Sherbrooke city, Bromont's techno-park (which hosts some of the biggest names in the high-tech industry, including the infamous IBM) and further down on to New England. [Techno-industrial society] intoxicates the living[...] There are many more fluxes that are crucial to the functioning of this system of oppression and its Holy Merchandise, and we are committed to do it again, and strike targets that will always hurt them more."

11.06.12, Olympia, U.S.A.: *The Washington State Loggers' Association building receives threatening graffiti and all 24 windows broken.* "Roughly a decade after the fervent period of Earth Liberation activity that occurred in the late 90's and early 2000's *[ed. – see* **Memory as a Weapon; A Shorter History of a Northwest E.L.F. Cell**], [some] cling to the idea of hope and others view this as nothing more than a deceitful delusion. Neither narrative concerns us. What truly concerns us is that the living world around us is dying, and that the strength of our heart atrophies through inaction."

26.01.12, Bima, Indonesia:
A thousands-strong crowd ransack and burn two government offices to express their outrage at a controversial gold mine. The mob continue on to a nearby detention center and force the authorities to release 35 of their comrades who were arrested at a protest against the mine during the past year.

31.07.11, Santaigo, Chile:
Santander bank smashed with hammers and rocks by the E.L.F. The bank finances HidroAysén, "[a] hydroelectric project that intends to build 5 dams in Patagonia, in addition to the construction of a large power line. Which will destroy hundreds of hectares of wilderness and with it the lives of thousands of wild species." *In the months before, large-scale clashes had broken out over the mega-project in Coihaique while a government-appointed commission voted the dams ahead (commissioners were kept indoors for their own safety as people threw rocks and battled cops with water cannon and tear gas) and also in Santiago, with injury to police.* "The logic of money over life is ultimately what we reject and fight. Nor are we interested in that false defense of the Earth only because it is "richness" that should exist in order to be

Barricades in Santiago against HidroAysén and its world

contemplated as a tourist destination or because places like the south *[transl. – of Chile, largely wilderness]* distract from the frenzy of the city *[ed. – see* **Return Fire vol.3 pg52**]."

09.05.11, Sarawak, Malaysia: *After days of blockading the roads to defend the land, residents of ten different Bidayuh villages set fire to five logging camps and the attendant heavy machinery. Around fifty people came from each village; police are too outnumbered to intervene.*

11.04.11, Chesterfield, U.K.: *Some paint-wielding individuals* "descended upon the Shell offices", *citing among other things the company's gas pipeline project in County Mayo (western Ireland).* "This was done because we are anarchists who are in love with this planet, and willing to strike wherever and whenever we see fit[...] We know this action alone will not stop Shell, but it is a manifestation of desires to see harm done to those who destroy the planet and every living creature on it. We will continue, we will build and develop skills, we will strike again."

24.06.10, Cramlington, U.K.: *Sabotage at Shotton opencast coal mine.* "One excavator, two bulldozers and ten heavy earth movers were damaged [including] cut electrics, cut hydraulics and coal dust in oil tanks. Also 150 meters of water pipe was slashed, flooding an area of the mine[...] resisting total environmental destruction, climate change and civilised culture..."

23.02.10, Bristol, U.K.: *Anarchists storm the RBS bank headquarters; despite traffic and nearby security,* "the mob succeeded in breaking windows, smashing paint-bombs against upper floors and setting fire to tyres in the middle of the road." *Dedicated to indigenous resistance to the Alberta tar sands, financed by RBS.*

SOLD OUT TO THE INDUSTRY
- GMB Union Backs Fracking

The sickening pro-fracking stance of a British trade union is a useful reminder of how the "Left" has historically failed to fight industrial capitalism.

While people power in Lancashire was persuading the council to throw out fracking applications, the GMB was busy cosying up to the industry.

The GMB is a "general" trade union in the UK, affiliated to the TUC [Trades Union Congress] and the Labour Party and boasting more than 631,000 members.

As it proudly declares on its own website, its Northern Region recently had the bright idea of getting a briefing on the fracking issue. And who did these "leftists" ask? Frack Off perhaps? Friends of the Earth? *[ed. – Two mainstream faces of anti-fracking sentiment in the U.K.]* Nope – they went straight to the Chemical Industry Association, the leading national trade association for the chemical and chemistry-using industries in the United Kingdom. Who cares about pollution if jobs are involved?

As a result of this briefing, on June 18 2015, the GMB concluded: *"Given the fragility of the oil and gas sector due to price pressures, diversification through shale gas could well become a key employer within the energy sector."*

Billy Coates, GMB Northern Regional Secretary added: *"The strategic importance of fracking within the UK's balanced energy mix must not be ignored. Along with nuclear, renewables, green coal [sic!], oil and gas, fracking could be absolutely essential to achieving near self-sufficiency which will benefit domestic and business need."*

"Business need"? What sort of language is that for a trade union to adopt?

And this is not a one-off. It follows a statement from the GMB Congress on June 8 2015 which says that *"while there are important considerations, the economic, indigenous energy and employment benefits cannot be ignored".*

The union has even done a deal with UKOOG, the front group representing the fracking industry in the UK.

It is shamelessly buying in to the whole fracking circus, admitting: *"GMB has welcomed UKOOG's development of the National College for Onshore Oil and Gas. As part of this agreement, GMB will have a seat on the Operation and Advisory Council of the National College."*

Here we have the heart of the problem that has afflicted the "Left" since back in the 19th century. At heart, it is not actually against the capitalist system, it just has certain minor quibbles with the way it is run.

But, of course, these left-capitalists are in denial about all this. They refuse to admit that industrialism and capitalism are essentially the same thing – that you cannot pretend to be against an economic system and yet wholeheartedly support the physical infrastructure that enables that system to maintain and expand its control.

They are also apparently incapable of seeing through **the capitalist lie that there is something inherently good about "jobs"** and are happy to fight for the

"right" of their members to spend their lives as slaves to the global industrial greed-monster.

Even worse is the hypocrisy surrounding this, which echoes the hypocrisy of the ruling elite with their oxymoronic "sustainable development".

The GMB, like others on the industrial left, seem to think they can claim to be "green" at the same time as cheerfully oiling the very machineries that are killing the planet.

It is with no apparent sense of irony that the pro-fracking union boasts on its website: *"GMB is recognised both nationally and regionally as being the leading trade union on health, safety and environmental issues."*

The anti-fracking movement will hopefully ensure that from now on the GMB is instead recognised as a corrupt and cowardly collaborator with the business mafia which is destroying our planet for its own profit.

18.

'ANTAGONISTIC MARGINS'

Occupying the House of War: Terror and State Control

Imām Abū Hanīfah, an eight-century Sunni Muslim theologian from Iraq, developed a framework that has exercised lasting influence on Islamic theology. He distinguished between *dar al-harb*, literally the "house" [domain, abode, territory] of war, and *dar al-islam*, the house of peace. *Dar al-islam* represents the regions where the Islamic faith dominates and tranquility presumably reigns as a result of people living in accordance with the will of God, while *dar al-harb* designates the regions not governed by Islamic rulers and law. This is a legal rather than religious distinction: the difference between the house of Islam and the house of war is not determined by the percentage of Muslims in a region, but by what political system governs it. The designation "house of war" refers both to the assumption that any territory that has not submitted to the will of God will endure constant strife, and to the call for Muslims to undertake holy war against unbelievers.

The "houses" are defined thus because Islamic traditions, in contrast to those of Christianity, tend to emphasize proper conduct (orthopraxy) over proper belief (orthodoxy). **In this view, how people *behave* is more important than what they *believe*.** The pagan cults of the Roman Empire operated similarly: as long as a Roman citizen observed the prescribed rituals, he could profess whatever beliefs he wanted *[ed. – until the official take-over of Christianity: see Memory as a Weapon; 'One God & One State']*.

In contrast, Christian traditions of defining orthodoxy and persecuting heresy valued the profession of proper belief above all; merely behaving in accord with Christian precepts did not guarantee salvation. This emphasis on orthodoxy persisted through the Cold War, with its McCarthyist witch-hunts and loyalty oaths. The government promoted social conformity and patriotism to cement correct beliefs, and professing an improper creed could be lethal.

However, with the triumph of mass consumer society in the aftermath of the Cold War, orthopraxy has supplanted orthodoxy as the dominant paradigm for governance. Belief has been relegated to the same realm as religion: private, subjective, unobtrusive, optional. In the age of internet irony, earnestness is laughable, dogmatism contemptible, credulity hilarious. Whatever power satire once had has dissolved in the general undermining of all faith.

In the postmodern US, you needn't participate in rituals like voting or July 4th parades. All that matters is that you keep going to work, keep shopping, keep doing what you are told by authority figures. When the retail chain that employs you shows a video explaining that stealing from the store is really stealing from yourself, you can snicker with your coworkers on your smoke break all you want – so long as the till adds up correctly at the end of the day. Trumpet at the top of your lungs that the government is corrupt, capitalism is the crisis, consumerism is destroying the planet. Just make sure that when you act on your dissident beliefs, you do so by canvassing for a third party candidate or driving your hybrid to the co-op to buy high-efficiency light bulbs.

Resistance that moves beyond speech, that challenges orthopraxy via heretical *action,* is another matter entirely. **In the electronic era, when control no longer hinges on geographical space but on diffuse networks of power, the "house of war"**
is everywhere and nowhere, requiring eternal vigilance and omnipresent surveillance. Today's authorities utilize technologies of control that the Abrahamic religions could have only dreamed of. Imagine the inquisitions a papacy[1] armed with RFID chips, CCTV cameras, and satellite-guided drones could have carried out. Yet even with such tools at their disposal, the terror of the authorities in the face of the *dar al-harb* only grows more frantic. As the experience of being governed becomes universal, the perceived threat of any alternative looms ever larger.

As James Scott discusses in his history of resistance to the state in upland Southeast Asia, for the vast majority of our species' tenure human beings have lived without state power, or near enough to expansive stateless regions that they could escape. This placed limits on the depredations to which states could subject people, since individual flight and collective exodus remained viable options. Only in the past few centuries has state control extended to encompass the vast majority of the world's population, and only in the past several decades have transportation, communication, and military technology advanced to such a point that states can prevent people from escaping. As the state marches us towards a brave new world of total control, that shrinking fraction of undefined space is the house of war, a zone of terror.

Mountainous areas have often been among the territories most difficult to rule. High-elevation regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan that have resisted state control are represented as havens for Al Qaeda and the Taliban. **The War on Terror provides the ultimate impetus for bringing every square inch of the globe into the web of surveillance and control;** these few slender territories free from state domination now constitute threats to the security of the United States *[ed. – and the rest of the "Western world"].* If the authorities can't reach them with tanks, they can target them with drones; **what can't be colonized can at least be destroyed.** The project begun during the Cold War of imposing neocolonial domination on all non-aligned states continues in the anti-terrorism era, as the last regions that declined to be ruled by communism or capitalist democracy are tamed.

The land mines US troops spread across parts of Southeast Asia during the Cold War anticipated the project of total control advanced by the War on Terror. By rendering regions unlivable that were antagonistic to state control, they opened the final chapter in the struggle of the state to dominate all human societies. In the guise of an internecine quarrel, the

superpowers expressed their mutual terror of autonomous peoples by imposing regimes of fear: the sudden explosion that maims a forest dweller, the platoon that shoots without warning regardless of which side you're on. Petty despots in Latin America waged parallel campaigns as dictators and paramilitary death squads imposed fear as a way of life among indigenous communities from Guatemala to Chile. Now in parts of the Middle East, no one can escape the fear that a remote-controlled aircraft will rain death upon them from the sky.

The domain of the state has expanded so far, and with such brutal consequences, that life beyond it has become nearly unthinkable. Margaret Thatcher's infamous declaration *"There is no alternative"* has become the goal and vision of the security state. It aims to create the *dar al-islam* – peace through universal submission to authority – by waging endless war against all who challenge its monopoly on control and violence.

All space outside the control of the security state is, by definition, the realm of terror. Let's call these regions of possibility *terrortory*.

Blank Spots on the Map:
Terrortory & its Discontents

Terrortory is non-striated space *[ed. – see 'A Profound Dis-ease']*. When every territory has been plotted within the latitudes of power and longitudes of control, it is the *terror incognita*, the frontiers of the unknown beyond the edges of the map. It is the destination of our lines of flight. It is what lies outside consensus reality.

Close your eyes and imagine feeling terror. What do you see? Is it a person, an event, a setting, an environment? Throughout millennia of struggle between civilization and wildness, most who fought on the former side would have named places or landscapes. Frontiers and forests, the wilderness and the jungle: these areas loomed in the imagination, reminding us of the constant struggle between the gaping unknown and the precarious enclaves of civilization. But the spread of the state, combined with new technologies of destruction, allowed the balance of that struggle to swing toward the civilized, who ferociously domesticated wild landscapes and the peoples who inhabited them. **Now, as the forces of state and capital methodically eliminate the last social groups that resist civilized control, we're losing memory of any mode of life outside the binary of absolute control or absolute terror.**

The "state of nature," described by Thomas Hobbes as the primordial chaos from which all people strive to escape into the reassurance of state control, is the original *terrortory.* Life under state rule, which for the majority of its victims proved more "nasty, brutish, and short" than life outside of it, had to be justified by positing an even worse alternative. Yet in the first centuries of European immigration to North America, thousands of colonists "went native," deserting to live among indigenous tribes. Maroon colonies of escaped slaves, indigenous locals, and poor white escapees flourished in the swamps and borderlands. Without a constant war against these alternatives, supported by white supremacy as an ideological incentive for exploited Europeans to identify with their masters against their African fellow workers *[ed. – see **Return Fire vol.3 pg89**]*, the North American colonies would never have survived. The United States's racial nightmare of genocide, slavery, and exploitation originated in the terror of the European ruling classes, whose entire project of domination would have unraveled if colonists could escape to the peripheries.

Who do we find in a *terrortory?* It is inhabited by the people all Kurtzes mean when they whisper, *"Exterminate the brutes!"*[2] The imaginations of rulers have populated *terrortories* with a series of scapegoats, pushing into the spotlight to be demonized and then discarding them when the next threat arose. During the Cold War, the ruling class *[ed. – of the U.S.A.]* attacked Communists and labor agitators, along with homosexuals and other sexual deviants *[ed. – as did the Communists themselves...]*. For over a century, they have blamed immigrants, recently emphasizing Mexicans and other Latin Americans. Since the 1970s, as the prison-industrial complex has expanded, politicians have targeted criminals, sexual predators, drug addicts, and young men of color. Since September 2001, Muslims have come under their scrutiny. At other times, anarchists, Jews, welfare recipients and other poor people, and a great many more have found themselves in the crosshairs as rulers fought to redirect discontent towards the powerless.

The profusion of scapegoated demographics indicates how insecure our rulers are despite the expansiveness of their control: we see this in the proliferation of gated communities with armed guards and CCTV cameras even as violent crime drops. **No technologies can abate their terror so long as sinister peripheries and furtive longings lurk in the shadows of their minds.** The cast of monstrous characters projected onto *terrortories* share two key features: they operate *secretly*, spreading subversion under the radar, and they are *contagious*, infecting the unsuspecting with their illicit desires.

Security & Secrecy
Old mapmakers scrawled *terra incognita* – unknown land – over regions yet to be explored. The phrase conjures images from the medieval bestiary: fiery dragons soaring over secret seas, one-eyed men alongside gold-hoarding griffins. Allure, mystery, terror. But with the expansion of state and mercantile power, the extension of the Christian missionary impulse, and the triumph of scientific discourse, these unknown zones became colonies to conquer, markets to penetrate, unsaved souls to convert – frontiers to *discover*. When *[18th Century French Emperor]* Napoleon led his expedition to Egypt armed not only with soldiers and cannons but an array of engineers, scientists, and indeed cartographers, he inaugurated the modern era of governance: total conquest through total knowledge.

State power is a cartographic project: an effort to map and graph and delineate all territory so as to administer it. **From the earliest efforts to systematically survey territory and its inhabitants, through imperial Roman censuses and William the Conqueror's Domesday book in 11th century England *[ed. – whose completion peasants believed would signal the apocalypse]* rulers have seen mapping, accounting, and enumerating as crucial to control.** One of the first steps of the state apparatus in striating space is literally girding it in lines of latitude and longitude, elevation and topography.

This pursuit of total knowledge through mapping extends to the populations of states as well as their territories. Look at the state's strategy in recent years for targeting radical social movements: prosecutors press conspiracy charges, using subpoenas, undercover agents, and social media platforms like Facebook to map relationships between potential insurgents. The strategy to criminalize of youth of color operates similarly: expansive regulations targeting "gangs" *[ed – see **Return Fire vol.3 pg16**]*, anti-loitering

> "The entire history of western civilization can be read as a systematic attempt to exclude and isolate the body. From Plato on, it has been seen at various times as a folly to control, an impulse to repress, labor power to arrange or an unconscious to psychoanalyze. [...] Due to a battle-trained christian heritage, we are led to believe that domination controls and expropriates a part of the human being without however damaging her inner being (and there is much that could be said about the division between a presumed inner being and external relationships). Of course, capitalist relationships and state impositions adulterate and pollute life, but we think that our perceptions of ourselves and of the world remain unaltered. So even when we imagine a radical break with the existent, we are sure that it is our body as we presently think of it that will act on this. I think instead that our body has suffered and continues to suffer a terrible mutilation. And this is not only due to the obvious aspects of control and alienation determined by technology. (That bodies have been reduced to reservoirs of spare organs is clearly shown by the triumph of the science of transplants, which is described with an insidious euphemism as a "frontier of medicine". But to me the reality seems much worse than pharmaceutical speculations and the dictatorship of medicine as a separate and powerful body reveals.) The food we eat, the air we breathe and our daily relations have atrophied our senses. The senselessness of work, forced sociality and the dreadful materiality of chit-chat regiment both mind and body, since no separation is possible between them. The docile observance of the law, the imprisoning channels into which desires, which such captivity really transforms into sad ghosts of themselves, are enclosed weakens the organism just as much as pollution or forced medication. [...] To affirm one's own life, the exuberance that demands to be given, entails a transformation of the senses no less than of ideas and relationships." – *The Body & Revolt*

attempts to track it epidemiologically. In crowds, it can spread like wildfire, reaching epidemic proportions.

Fear of contagion often reduces to a fear of being penetrated. **The discourses deployed to target scapegoats reveal a disquietingly sexual theme.** Spies and infiltrators penetrate secure networks; homosexuals and perverts penetrate forbidden parts of the body. Illegal immigrants penetrate the border *[ed. – between Mexico and the U.S.]*, despite the 700-mile chastity belt across it. The brutal violence against scapegoats likewise takes on horrifyingly erotic casts: white obsession with the bodies of black men, the sexual mutilations that often accompanied lynchings, the forced sterilization of women of color on welfare *[ed. – see **Return Fire vol.3 pg31**]*, hysterical hyperbole about gay male promiscuity by the God Hates Fags set. Terror of penetration by subversive elements haunts the wet dream nightmares of our rulers.

Queer bodies terrify because of their refusal to conform to narratives of appropriate, authorized penetration. Hetero-patriarchal sexual narratives strive to make penetration predictable and unidirectional; queers interpenetrate, destroying the boundaries between self and the other, merging the erotic object and subject, being filled with it and becoming it, showing a radical potential for reciprocity. They're right to fear and hate us; queer sex declares war on the striation of the body, reclaiming it as *terror incognita*.

Sounds good, doesn't it? But wait – hasn't queer sex been reterritorialized by the apparatuses of state and capital? Is there anything inherently radical about sex between people of similar anatomy? **We can fight to make our own bodies into terrortories, zones of radical potential.**

But we'll never get there from within the cozy confines of queer identity. If deterritorialized *[ed. – see **'A Profound Dis-ease'**]* sexuality is reserved for those of certain bodies or sexual identities, then it remains an *identitarian [ed. – see **Return Fire vol.1 pg57**]* rather than a *seductive* goal. If queer is to have any meaning, we have to transform our sex lives into a space where queer desires – which circulate without reference to citizenship in any queer nation – can take terrifying hold of us and spread.

The Continuing Appeal of Sex & Violence

But really, why all the fuss about sex and violence? Why are anarchists so hung up on breaking windows and fucking? Are these the only spaces in which terror and the unknown can come into play? Perhaps we fetishize riots and sex as the last frontiers of unmediated relation to the body. What *are* you doing after the riot or the orgy or whatever, after all? Let's all die on the barricades in the throes of orgasm, confident for the first time that we're really alive!

We risk years in prison for the rush of glass shattering beneath our hammers, or pregnancies and diseases for the thrill of intertwining our sweaty flesh. Are the eroticism of rebellion and the rebelliousness of the erotic all we have left, the last rapidly eroding foothold of unmediated embodiment? When every acre has been mapped, can we imagine no other zones of possibility beyond our own unpredictable limbs? Is the body the last *terrortory*?

Terror is an erotic feeling. No center can cohere without eroticizing its periphery. The line between disgust and desire is far more porous than most of us care to admit. This is why *seduction* best characterizes our politics: spreading anarchy is an erotic process, not a rational one. This isn't to say we have to give up distributing 'zines and crafting careful critiques – but we will not argue and reason our way into an anarchist society. We might, however, seduce our way into unexpected affinities, transform the margins into volatile peripheries, and infect the body politic with subversive desires[…]

Desire, Consent, & Politics: a Prelude to Seduction

What is desire? Let's conceive of desires not as internal elements emanating from within individuals, but as autonomous forces that flow through them. Individuals don't desire things; whole societies produce and circulate desires, even if those desires remain submerged in most people. The fundamental unit of our

ordinances, video cameras on streetlamps at every intersection in the [public housing] projects. Wherever people come together on their own terms, they become a threat that must be managed by surveillance. Conspiracy is secretive; withholding knowledge, however innocuous, threatens the security state's need to know all.

As an officer once said in requesting community assistance with an investigation, *a cop is only as good as his information.* Whoever came up with the saying "secrets don't make friends" had it dead wrong. Secrets make friendships; keeping secrets keeps friends, and can keep them out of jail as well.

And secrets are threats. Our secrets terrify. Our conspiracies open secret passages into *terror incognita*.

Terror & Contagion

In his introduction to *Leviathan*, Thomas Hobbes described the state via an extended metaphor of the body, with different parts and functions corresponding to those of the state. In this metaphor, he identified sedition with sickness. The urge to rebel is indeed infectious. The FBI

analysis is not the individual human being, but the desire, with humans as the medium.

How can we conceive of desire and selfhood as they relate to consent and political action? The existing consent discourse presupposes static notions of self and desire. It presumes that desire is monolithic, composed of a single thrust rather than multiple pulls in different directions. When we have multiple desires, the desire that garners the plurality in our internal electoral process is assumed to be the only one that counts. Consent discourse presumes that what we want is knowable and can be articulated within the framework of our shared reality.

In reality, the desires we experience are not fixed or unitary. They shift constantly based on our experiences and contexts. They are multiple, contradictory, and divergent, surprising us with their diversity, frustrating us with their mutability. They resist our attempts to confine or domesticate them. They simply can't fit into a two-dimensional binary model of consent, wherein we either want something or we don't. This realization is terrifying, but it opens up new ways of understanding the anarchist project in relation to the consensus reality arrayed against us.

The nature of *desire* is complex and centrifugal, in contrast to the simplifying and centripetal nature of *interests.* The traditional approach of the left is for organizers to assist constituencies in winning victories that build power, which will presumably be deployed towards increasingly radical ends. The goals of these victories are generally framed in terms of the *interests* of the constituency, not their *desires.* This is a clever trick: as interests appear to be an objective rather than subjective matter, it is easier for an outside managerial class to get away with defining and representing them. Interests

can be framed as unitary, coherent, and integrative, whereas desires are multiple, inchoate, contradictory. **Identity groups share interests; friends and lovers share desires.** Interests are composed of calcified blocks of desire standardized to make sense within consensus reality.

Not only is desire far more complex and unstable than our discourses allow, it's also shaped by the conditions of our misery and exploitation. Even amid contradictions and chaos, the range of what it is possible to desire rarely escapes the confines of consensus reality. Who really imagines that in a free world, we'd dream of ergonomic chairs for our cubicles, more TV channels and brands of detergent, longer chains and softer cages? This is not to demean the struggles of those who fight for better conditions within this system. It's just to say that we would be paltry revolutionaries indeed if we based our programs merely on the consensus desires of groups whose allies we want to be.

The task of the revolutionary is not the task of the ally. We are not here to make the dreams of the proletariat come true. The proletariat is produced by capitalism, which we want to destroy. The task of the revolutionary is to shift our collective sense of the possible, so that our desires and the realities they drive us to create can shift in turn. **We are here to transform reality beyond where our notions of consent can lead us.** We need a different discourse to imagine the transformations that can open pathways out of consensus reality.

Sociologists studying prison life speak of "situational homosexuality," explaining previously heterosexual prisoners' homosexual behavior in terms of the conditions of their confinement in a single-sex environment. But isn't all homosexuality, and indeed all hetero- and bi- and other-sexuality, "situational" in the sense of being influenced by the context in which it occurs? Our sexual desires are shaped by the demographics of the places we inhabit, by our early experiences of

longing and experimentation, and by the media and education we're exposed to, among innumerable other "situational" influences. Sociologists see prisoners who have same-sex sex in prison and then return to cross-sex relationships upon release as being "really" straight and only "situationally" queer. **Who knows what patterns of desire and sexual expression would emerge if the omnipresent context of hetero-patriarchy, enforced through every carrot and stick known to us, were transformed?**

Many people experience their "sexual orientation" as unalterably fixed. Probably we all experience a mixture of seemingly intrinsic inclinations that frame a certain range of possibility and pleasure within which we make choices. But the queer project is not to carve out a space within capitalist hetero-patriarchy where those with unbearably persistent inclinations towards same-sex sexuality can endure them in relative peace. The queer project is to *obliterate capitalism and hetero-patriarchy* so new forms of desire can emerge. In prison society, our desire, homosexual or not, will always be "situational," constrained by countless limits. Let's destroy these constraints, opening the way for desires more powerful and terrible than we can imagine.

Introducing Seduction

There's another discourse we could try out here, a framework that seems to be implied by our current practice whether or not we wish to acknowledge it. That framework is *seduction.*

What is seduction? It's a rather unsavory concept, bringing to mind manipulative attempts to induce others to let themselves to be used for one's own ends. In a sexual context, it can imply either a romantic, charismatic, persuasive use of charm to propose a sexual encounter, or a way to trick someone into succumbing to one's advances. The connotations are discomfiting, but the salient factor is the implication that the seducer *creates* a desire, rather than simply unearthing it; she produces an impulse that did not exist before. It is this sense that we find most interesting in considering the problems of desire and consensus reality on the political level.

When we *seduce,* we present someone who ostensibly doesn't want something with a new situation in which they may want it after all. Whereas consent focuses on obtaining the go-ahead for an external action – *"Is this OK?"* – seduction focuses internally, on desire: *"How could you **want** this?"* **Our practices of seduction don't aim to induce others to do things they don't want to do, but to induce others to**

want to do them, in the most meaningful sense: to want to take on all the risks and pleasures they entail.

Again, we don't believe that we can persuade everyone to consent to anarchist revolution; not only is the deck stacked against us, the dealer, the table, and the whole house are as well. We don't buy into the idea that our goals are what everybody "really" wants, nor do we assume that everyone would adopt our views if only they had access to all the right information. We don't claim to represent anyone beyond ourselves, nor to stand in for any silent majority; in this sense, anarchist revolution is not a *democratic* project. Nor do we, despairing of those things, decide that to be true to our principles we must give up on anarchist revolution altogether and retreat into isolation among the few comrades with whom we can establish meaningful self-determined consensus. We don't think it's hopeless to resist in the face of the stranglehold of consensus reality. We want a different path forward, one that doesn't assume desire to be fixed, that doesn't rely on liberal consent.

We neither wish to impose our will on others by force, nor to disregard their desires. Instead, we want to perform a kind of dark magic, an alchemical operation. We want to *transfigure and induce* desires, not simply *fulfill* them[3].

Let's recall the militants of the Gay Liberation Front in the 1970s. They had little interest in securing rights as an interest group within civil society, but rather considered themselves at war with the straight world. We can think of these sexual militants as partisans of different configurations or forms or flows of desire. Some GLFers considered their task to be unlocking the potential for same-sex love and sexual expression latent in every person; as the ones for whom this came more easily through accidents of nature or nurture, they formed a natural vanguard in the struggle for liberated sexuality. In that context, seducing the straight took on an explicitly political eroticism. **Unbound by the frameworks of fixed identity and their baggage within civil society, anyone can become both subject and object of queer desire.** Forget advocating for the "right" of gay people to exist gayly; let's infect straight society with contagious queer desire for love, sex, and liberation.

In that spirit, our prime advantage as anarchists lies not in the coherence and reason of our ideology, but in the passionate actions we undertake and the ungovernable lives we lead. Let's not try to convert people to anarchism; let's set out, with mischievous glee, to infect everyone around us with the anarchy that flows in our veins. Let's produce situations in which anarchy is possible – even likely – even *desirable* to those who might not feel any inclination towards it today. Of course, this is a violation of liberal consent: the right to be left alone to one's desires as they have been produced by the domination of state and capital. But in our strange cruel love for our friends and neighbors, we cannot abandon them to the mediocrity of consensus reality. How can we sleep at night, knowing that their heads resound with capital's bleak dreams[…]

Queer Peripheries as Terrortories

The most politically interesting senses of queer locate it at the antagonistic margins of dominant forces, sexual or otherwise – a periphery that is always shifting in relation to centers of power. In this light, the flight into *terrortory* is a queer project.

If this is true, it's not important for anarchists to *be* queer, whatever that might mean, so much as it is for us to seek out peripheral positions from which to attack consensus reality, seducing others into these zones of possibility. Fascinating innovations in relationships and sexuality continue to emerge from queer communities because marginality catalyzes creative resistance. Likewise, our political queerness and rejection of respectability afford us a perspective from which we can continue to precipitate ruptures in the ruling social order.

1. ed. – Arthur Evans noted that Roman Catholicism had "no monopoly on the terrors" unleashed during the 12th-19th Century global Inquisition against 'heresy' and dissent. "Some of the worst atrocities were perpetrated by the Protestants, who introduced the Inquisition to countries that had been lenient. John Calvin hunted down his religious enemies, as well as witches. He once boasted of luring the Unitarian Michael Servetus to Geneva under the guise of safety and then having him burned alive as a heretic. At Geneva, the most trivial offenses were also suppressed: dancing was illegal; a group of bridesmaids were once arrested for decorating a bride with too much color; a child was beheaded for striking its father. "What the Puritans and Calvinists achieved at the Reformation was the re-establishment of the depressive, guilt-ridden attitude as the whole source of religion" ([G. Rattray] Taylor)."

2. Joseph Conrad's novella Heart of Darkness personifies the European colonial project in the depraved ivory trader Kurtz.

3. Wait, there's nothing liberating about attempting to induce desires in others. That's the function of the advertising industry, the lever of demand that has driven capitalism over the past century. Democracy purports to be a marketplace of ideas where we can all talk about what we want and then decide; different configurations of desire are constantly at war. Ad firms don't just create specific desires, they enforce a mode of desiring that can be routed through the consumer economy. Propaganda, subliminal messaging, induced addiction, outright violence: these comprise a brutal arsenal at us every moment of the day. Around the globe, the military clears the path for neoliberal pillaging, while NGOs get into the business of inducing people to want to be successful at generating currencies that can be exchanged on the global market. Ought we not be suspicious of a project framed in such transparently manipulative terms? As grim as it looks, this vista reveals that if we are not partisans of certain modes of desiring, we will remain objects rather than subjects within these desiring wars. We cannot retreat into essentialist notions of unearthing our "true" desires from some internal vault, nor a Buddhist project of extinguishing desire on an individual level while the world burns. What sets us apart is that we strive to create a world in which every person can realize her [sic] unique potential on her own terms, rather than simply pushing for this or that option within the current conditions.

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Act For Freedom Now! (Greece & global) actforfree.nostate.net

Anarchist Library (multi-lingual, open-source catalogue of print-ready texts) theanarchistlibrary.org

Anarchy, Secession, Subsistence (rejoining rebellion with the land) anarchysecessionsubsistence.blogspot.ca

Anarchy Radio (streaming and downloadable hour of global news and anti-civilisation analysis, every Tuesday) johnzerzan.net/radio

Avalanche (web presence of international correspondence publication about and from sites of social tension; each edition available multi-lingual) avalanche.noblogs.org

Attaque (France, multi-lingual) attaque.noblogs.org

Bordered by Silence (France) borderedbysilence.noblogs.org

Chronik (Germany, multi-lingual) chronik.blackblogs.org

Contra Info (global, multi-lingual) contrainfo.espiv.net

Fire on the Horizon (U.K.) fireonthehorizon.noblogs.org

Montreal Counter-Information (Canada, bi-lingual) mtlcounter-info.org/en

Non-Fides (France & global, multi-lingual) non-fides.fr

Oplopanax Publishing (a cache of handsome and engaging printable zines) oplopanaxpublishing.wordpress.com

Resonance Audio Distro (various readings as MP3s plus source files) resonanceaudiodistro.wordpress.com

The Brilliant Podcast (deeply thoughtful questioning on key topics for radicals) thebrilliant.org

Uncivilized Animals (writings on ecology, technology and society from an anti-industrial perspective) uncivilizedanimals.wordpress.com

Untorelli Press (an archive and publisher of radical pamphlets against capitalism, patriarchy, the state and civilisation) untorellipress.noblogs.org

'Whether to Act or Merely to Dream'
    – from 'At Daggers Drawn with the Existent, its Defenders & its False Critics'

'Antagonistic Margins'
    – from 'Terror Incognita', by The Experimentation Committee / *Vörtext*

Articles referenced by title throughout this chapter in ***[square brackets]*** which do not appear in the previous pages appear in the other chapters of this volume.

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