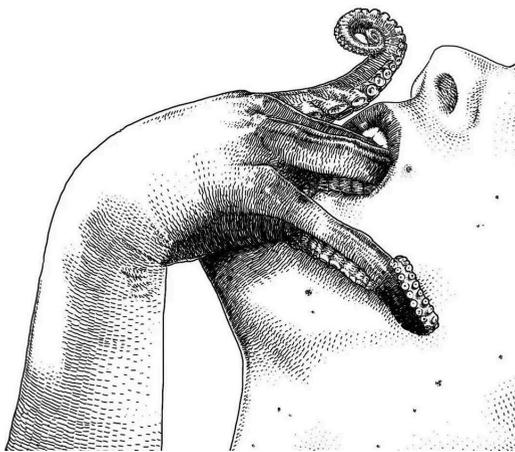
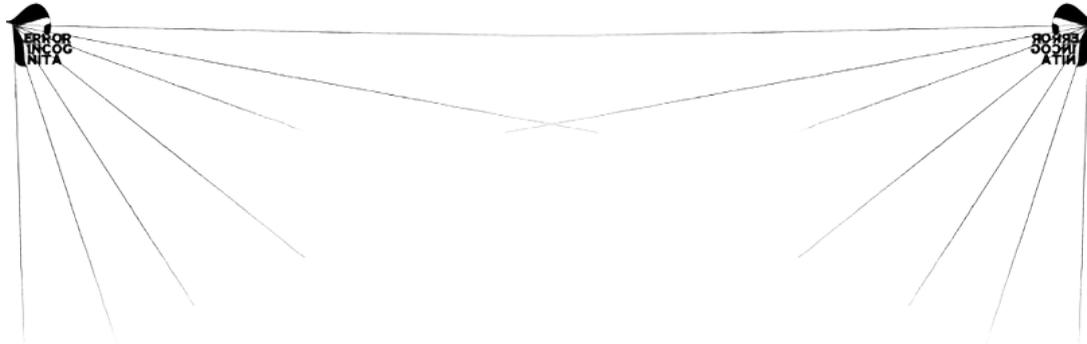




ERKOR INCOG NITA

Presentation
& reading
of the translation

part 1:
introducing
seduction



***against consensus reality • for unreasoning rebellion
against fixed identity • for desertion and disruption***

//a few words about the translation//

What we present is the coming out of an internal process, a translation project (from english to greek) that has been ongoing since the summer, provoking various discussions. It has reshaped our collective terms of discussion and navigation of everyday relations - relations that unfold within a polymorphic spectrum of community - as well as the terms through which we interact with different political fields and with "current events" as they emerge. What the hell do we mean when we say "I desire" this person, this action over that X meeting, this (maybe less terrible) life (over another) - what is, in the end, a "true" choice and what is "false" consciousness? What are the limits of the tools introduced by feminist waves within the a/a/a space and how does that space "breathe" under their weight? Why do our politics, at times, seem so disconnected? Who are the "senders" and who the "receivers" of our diverse actions and positions - or are we maybe unable/unwilling to reduce the reality we share into a schema of transmission, since we always are/ have been seductive and seduced within relations (with people, places, situations)? All this and more comprise the (erotic)/investigative paths followed translating terror incognita, a text written by the Experimentation Committee, in the united states.

This printout is a collection of fragments from the first part of terror incognita (I. consent, seduction, violence), and it was shared as part of an event at the squatted Exostrefis on Strefi Hill, on April 30th, 2024.

I. MAYDAY DEBACLE

You know the story.

Friends spread the word. Somebody puts up fliers and stickers; some might or might not have advertised it as a “queer dance party”. Some idiot posts it on Facebook. There’s a buzz. Last year it was cool, could have been better though; this year it’s gonna get wild.

Boom. Ten minutes, eighteen thousand dollars in damage, eleven arrests, sixty-five thousand dollars in bail. A week of frenzied legal support, consoling terrified parents, borrowing respectable clothes for court, assuming every blue sedan is full of faceless enemies.

We sit in a park in a tight circle, with an out-of town facilitator in hopes of easing tension. Lots of anger to vent, critiques to advance, defensive planning to do. One theme comes up again and again: it wasn’t consensual. We didn’t know what we were getting into; we didn’t have any way to choose or to get out safely when we figured out we weren’t into what was going on. And even those of us who didn’t go and had nothing to do with it have to deal with the consequences as a town. We didn’t consent to this. What do we do now?

II. TRASHING THE BOOKFAIR

We’re invited to make a presentation at the anarchist book fair; they schedule us at the very end of the last day. Brainstorming, we realize we can’t just do another panel discussion. Whenever we act, we set a precedent: So fuck a wellmannered presentation.

The lights dim and my co-presenter rolls in a shopping cart full of commodities. She pours wine into a glass as she begins her speech; she continues pouring when it reaches the brim and begins to flow down her arm and onto the floor. She drops the glass, then heaves the bottle aloft and lets it fall with a crash. She repeats this with bottle after bottle, then sets about destroying the other contents of the cart.

Flour fills the air, settling everywhere like snow, turning to red paste in the wine and broken glass; smashed furniture and food and computers pile up in a tangled mess, liquid spreading across the floor. The audience is paralyzed.

They give us two standing ovations. It takes us an hour to clean up—good thing we brought cleaning supplies. The organizer takes me aside: “That was great, but I’m glad you didn’t ask permission. We could never have consented to let it happen.” This is strange: everyone is happy with what we did, yet no one would have permitted it if they’d had a choice. How can we justify sidestepping them? Our experiment is a perfect illustration of the maxim that it’s better to ask forgiveness than permission—but isn’t that contrary to the spirit of consent?

And if this is complicated, how much more complicated is it when a few people like us start a real riot that no one would have consented to, but everyone is proud of afterwards?

III. THE CHRISTMAS BOOT

I'll be the first to admit that I'm a kinky weirdo, but never in my life had I imagined myself licking a boot. It wasn't a secret desire I had repressed; I was perfectly aware of people with foot or uniform or leather fetishes, which I regarded with polite indifference. The thought had never popped into my mind while masturbating, nor had I felt the urge while having sex with a booted lover. And since then, it hasn't re-entered my sexual repertoire—I never sought it out again nor really even seriously considered it. It stands alone, a monument to a specific time and place.

It was at the yearly queer anti-Christmas holiday our crew of anarchist friends had created. For four years running, we'd hosted it at our punk house, as it grew from a potluck with a few gifts exchanged to a whole festival of zany performances, costumes, unicorn pinatas, spin the bottle games, and dancing in a carnivalesque atmosphere. That night we were all intoxicated, not by alcohol but by the strange chasm of possibility that seemed to have opened up, as if we had permission to break all the rules that governed our jocular insurrectobromances and responsible polyamory.

As the music pounded, a crew of us in the kitchen hovered around a cake, then started feeding it to each other, then smearing it on each other and making out. I headed over and before long was slurping frosting off a neighbor's neck while my ex's partner ground up against me from behind. Soon I was on my back on the kitchen floor, dizzy with excitement and exhilaration, kissing somebody while someone else pulled my hair. And then I saw it: his black leather boot, planted on my chest, with a burning stare from behind black-rimmed glasses fixed on me from above. I squirmed in feverish delight while the boot ground onto my collarbone, and then like a thunderbolt from hell, it hit me: I need to lick this boot. There could not possibly be anything hotter, more appropriate, more desirable, more reasonable than to lick this boot on my chest right now with all these people watching me.

And I did. Tasting that musky leather tang on my vegan tongue, watching the demented light in the eyes of my friend as he pressed his foot down, I felt a delirious surge of filthy desire and satisfaction unlike anything I could remember.



So: we are anarchists. That is, we are a small, isolated minority of extremists. We believe fervently, and with good justification, that our political goals—including the destruction of capitalism, the state, and hierarchy—can't be accomplished without strategies and tactics that are unpalatable to the majority of our fellow citizens. At the same time, we're not vanguardists; we reject the notion of "leading" others or imposing our will on them. We are anti-authoritarians both in the worlds we desire to create and in the means by which we struggle towards them. How do we navigate this contradiction?

Also: we are sexual creatures. We want to love and be loved, to suck and fuck and kiss and caress, to subject ourselves and each other to all sorts of horrible and wonderful desires and experiences. We want to do these things, and we want to do them in ways that strengthen rather than diminish, that respect the dignity and autonomy of our lovers while securing the same for ourselves. Yet we are immersed in a rape culture that discourages communicative sexuality and offers few tools for relating in mutually respectful ways. How do we overcome this?

Yet outside of the sexual realm, consent discourse doesn't always offer a sufficient framework with which to evaluate direct action tactics and strategy. Whether an action is consensual may not suffice to indicate whether it is effective or worthwhile. Knowing that most people oppose some of our tactics, we don't plan our actions on the basis of consent, yet we don't aspire to become a vanguard either. Furthermore, since we can only desire on the basis of what we know, it seems likely that liberation won't come simply from fulfilling the desires we have now without changing the conditions that produced them. So how else might we conceive of our project as anarchists, if not through the lens of consent?

In a way, this essay is our worst nightmare. A close examination of our activities reveals that in setting out to foment insurrection, we appear to be operating according to a logic of seduction rather than consent.

IS CONSENT ENOUGH?

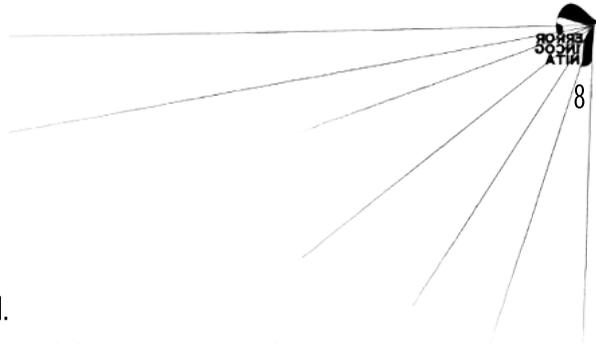
At first glance, the notion of basing our political practice on a theory of consent makes intuitive sense. What's our critique of the state? It's a body that wields power over us, even to the point of life and death, and yet no one ever asked us if we wanted to be governed. Elections don't even begin to offer us the meaningful alternatives true consent would require; as we've said before, our desires will never appear on ballots. A key anarchist principle is voluntary association—the ability to form whatever groups and collectives we want without being compelled to participate in any. We never had the chance to say no to capitalism, to government, to police, to all the systems of hierarchy that impose their rule—so clearly those can't be consensual in any meaningful way. As we do away with the coercive systems that dominate our lives, we can reconstruct new social relations based on consent: a world in which no one controls anyone else, in which we can determine our own destinies.

It makes sense... doesn't it? Certainly this discourse of consent offers a compelling way to imagine the world we want to live in. But how does it serve as a strategy for dislodging this one? It's difficult to imagine a political practice that stringently respects the consent of all people while simultaneously destroying the fabric of our hierarchical society. If we insist on the unity of means and ends, we have to dismantle coercive institutions and social relationships through noncoercive processes to build a non-coercive society. Abandoning this vision could undermine the very basis of our anarchism. Yet if we don't dismantle the coercive apparatuses of state and capital, we'll never arrive at a society in which a consent-based framework could actually be tenable.

CONSENSUS REALITY

NONVIOLENCE

LIBERAL CONSENT



Power and consent are critically intertwined.

When the state monopolizes the use of force and the economy controls access to our very means of survival, we cannot meaningfully choose. We call the boundaries enclosing our ability to consent under these conditions consensus reality.

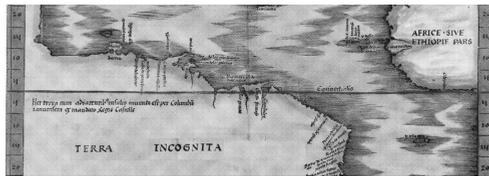
Consensus reality is the range of possible thought and action within a system of power relations. It is enforced not only through traditional institutions of control—such as mass media, religion, and socialization—but also through the innumerable subtle norms manifested in common sense, civil discourse, and day-to-day life. It isn't simply the aggregate of all our desires, melded together in a great compromise that allows us all to get along, as democratic mythology would have it. Consensus reality constitutes the ruling class's coordinated attempt to uphold their dominance and our exploitation as efficiently as possible. Capitalist democracy secures that efficiency; it is the system that currently provides the largest number of people with incentive to participate in their own exploitation. It offers a series of meaningless options to disguise a profound lack of agency over our own lives. The trump card of capitalist democracy is the idea that everyone's consent is respected in a marketplace of ideas within which desires can be freely expressed and influenced.

[...]

Free speech discourse offers each of us our own box of colored chalk to decorate the cement blocks around our feet, and calls that freedom; whether we can walk away doesn't even enter into the picture. [...]

Let's call this *liberal consent*: the notion that we must adhere tactically to the most conservative common denominator or else violate others' consent. We all have to put up with this system, so the logic goes, whether we chose it or not, because any violation would put us all at risk. This goes beyond a critique of representation—you shouldn't carry out an action on my behalf without my consent—to a critique of autonomy, since literally any action that presumes affinity with others is subject to the boundaries dictated by consensus reality.

Nonviolence is the only ideology that can comprehensively protect consensus reality against the antagonism of all who would transform it. By preemptively condemning anything that exceeds the parameters of civil discourse, it ensures that any resistance will ultimately strengthen the underlying framework of authority. Liberal complicity with violent systems of control can be “nonviolent” according to this logic, because they accept the boundaries of legitimacy decreed by consensus reality. Just as every pacifist condemns armed struggle and insurrection against the state, the gains of every “nonviolent” movement and revolution they cite, rested on a foundation of explicit or threatened state violence. We shake our heads at liberal reluctance to acknowledge that the state is fundamentally rather than incidentally violent, but that violence is woven so seamlessly into consensus reality that it simply doesn’t register.



One of the implications of this analysis is that we must unflinchingly recognize conflict as a reality. The vision we're putting forward aims not just to create a world in which all is consensual. We strive to prioritize each other's consent as much as possible, while recognizing that sometimes we really are in conflict, and we have to acknowledge conflicts rather than sweeping them under the rug of an imposed consensus. Our ideal is not a world without conflict, but a world in which conflicts don't produce hierarchies and oppression. We envision associations that can come together and break apart according to our desires; unlike the state, these would require no imposed consensus.

In fact, our basis for fighting capitalism and hierarchy goes far beyond the claim that these systems operate without our consent. Ultimately, we fight for new worlds out of desire, and in order to move beyond the limitations of political consent discourse we have to look more closely at what desire is.

DESIRE CONSENT, AND 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 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.

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.

The nature of desire is complex and centrifugal, in contrast to the simplifying and centripetal nature of interests.

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.

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, [which is seduction].

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. 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: "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, but the dealer, the table, and the whole house. 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 induce desires, not simply fulfill them.

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?

TRANSFORMATION INVITATION AND CONTAGION

How did you become an anarchist? Did you emerge from the womb in a black * hoodie? Did you “always know” you were going to crave riots, stale bagels, and photocopy scams? If so, congratulations, but it seems that most of us had some sort of experience that opened us to a sense of possibility we hadn’t seen before.

How does seduction work? We hypothesize that seduction unfolds via three processes: *transformation*, *invitation*, and *contagion*. We *transform* circumstances, we *invite* others to participate in these new situations, and we *infect* others with curiosity, an insatiable desire for freedom, and the means to experiment towards it.

We strive for **transformation** because if we desire on the basis of what we know, we can only induce new desires that exceed the confines of our current reality by shifting the conditions in which we live. Sometimes it can be as simple as doing things in the street without permits, or using a park or building for an entirely new purpose. Disobedience is crucial to transformation; nothing opens up a sense of possibility like literally breaking the rules. But our behavior is constrained by far more than traffic laws and zoning regulations; social norms, gender roles, and innumerable other systems shape how we act, and each way we’re constrained provides new terrain for transformation. The key lies in challenging what’s taken for granted in a way that opens up the possibility to act differently, and to imagine how the world would be different if those rules and borders were no longer fixed.

Invitation requires neither persuasion via rational discourse nor imposition by force. **Here we maintain the spirit of consent discourse, asserting our respect for the wishes of others and opposition to coercion.** We aspire to a world based on voluntary association, in which participation is based on our own free choice rather than force or manipulation, and thus we aim to prefigure that world through our methods of creative resistance.

Of course, we can't literally invite others to participate in many actions beforehand, either because they have to be organized clandestinely or because we honestly don't know what will happen. But we can shape our actions to maximize the agency of potential participants.

Seduction casts the invitee as the protagonist, the one whose agency counts—in contrast to consent discourse, which merely seeks permission. The whole point is for people to discover new desires, to want to do something they didn't want before; they have to be in the driver's seat for that to be possible. **In this sense, anarchist seduction means the opposite of its traditional negative connotation of trying to get something from people against their will or at their expense.**

Finally, we aspire to invite others into practices that will prove contagious: ideas that self-replicate, models that can be applied in a variety of circumstances, attitudes that prove infectious. **Contagion** ensures that rebellion isn't restricted to activists, scenesters, or any other particular group. Only when revolt spreads so widely that it can no longer be quarantined to a specific demographic will anarchy move permanently beyond the anarchists. We succeed when others emerge from the spaces we create feeling more powerful. We win when the ruptures of possibility we open prove impossible to close.

Let's not forget the importance of seducing ourselves with our actions. It's frighteningly easy for anarchist activity to ossify into dreary, repetitive routines. Actions that don't emerge out of our own desires are unlikely to seduce us or anyone else. But we forge our deepest relationships of struggle in collectively experiencing the new, the exciting, the terrifying. It's not just beautiful but strategic to live lives that push to the outermost edges of what's possible.

The stakes are high. From consent discourses, we retain the prioritization of caring for others and paying attention to their needs. We must never disregard the wellbeing of those we invite into zones of transformation; yet neither can we play it safe and allow consensus reality to dictate our range of possible dreams and actions. We cannot promise safety, but we can share in the danger of the unknown, in its pleasures and its risks.

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**SHARE
IN THE
PLEASURES
AND
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*This is
the anarchist
project:*

**FIGHT
FEAR WITH
& TERROR,
LET THE
WORLD
Burn**