

WITH A FOREWORD BY
GILLES DELEUZE

TRANSLATED BY
SCOTT BRANSON

**GAY
LIBERATION
AFTER MAY**

/68

**GUY
HOCQUENGHEM**

GAY LIBERATION **AFTER MAY '68**

BUY

THEORY Q A series edited by
Lauren Berlant, Lee Edelman,
Benjamin Kahan, and Christina Sharpe

DUKE

**UNIVERSITY
PRESS**

**GAY
LIBERATION
AFTER MAY
'68
GUY
HOCQUENGHEM**

WITH A FOREWORD BY GILLES DELEUZE

TRANSLATED BY SCOTT BRANSON

DUKE

DUKE UNIVERSITY PRESS *Durham and London* 2022

**UNIVERSITY
PRESS**

© 2022 Duke University Press
All rights reserved
Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞
Designed by Matthew Tauch
Typeset in Alegreya and Helvetica LT Std by Copperline
Book Services

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Hocquenghem, Guy, 1946–1988, author. | Branson, Scott,
[date] translator. | Deleuze, Gilles, 1925–1995, writer of foreword.
Title: Gay liberation after May '68 / Guy Hocquenghem ; with a foreword
by Gilles Deleuze ; translated by Scott Branson.
Other titles: Theory Q.
Description: Durham : Duke University Press, 2022. | Series: Theory Q |
Includes index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2021034684 (print)
LCCN 2021034685 (ebook)
ISBN 9781478015451 (hardcover)
ISBN 9781478018087 (paperback)
ISBN 9781478022695 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Gay liberation movement—France. | Gay activists—
France. | Social movements—France—History—20th century. |
France—History—1958– | BISAC: SOCIAL SCIENCE / LGBTQ Studies /
Gay Studies | HISTORY / Europe / France
Classification: LCC HQ76.8.F8 H63 2022 (print) | LCC HQ76.8.F8 (ebook) |
DDC 306.76/60944—dc23/eng/20211013
LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021034684>
LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021034685>

Cover art: Design and illustration by Matthew Tauch

THIS WORK RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM THE FRENCH MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE CULTURAL SERVICES OF THE
FRENCH EMBASSY IN THE UNITED STATES THROUGH THEIR
PUBLISHING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

THIS BOOK RECEIVED A PUBLICATION SUBSIDY FROM DUKE
UNIVERSITY PRESS'S TRANSLATION FUND, A FUND ESTABLISHED
BY PRESS AUTHORS WHO DONATED THEIR BOOK ROYALTIES TO
SUPPORT THE TRANSLATION OF SCHOLARLY BOOKS.

DUKE
UNIVERSITY
PRESS

Contents

vii		<i>A Note on Terminology</i>
ix		Translator's Introduction: A Queer Anarchism That Dare Not Speak Its Name
1		Foreword · GILLES DELEUZE
6		Volutions
13	01	Black November
17	02	Cultural Revolution WHY WE FIGHT THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION DOESN'T JUST HAPPEN TO CHANGE LIFE FOURIER
38	03	After-May Politics of the Self EVERYDAY LIFE DEPRIVATIZED BY "EVERYTHING" HERE AND NOW TALK ABOUT POLITICS GEISMAR IS GEISMAR LONG LIVE FREE BENGAL WHAT DO WE WANT: TO LIVE! THE GOOD LIFE OF LEFTISTS
62	04	Youth Culture / Pop High THEY DIDN'T DIE OF OLD AGE DOPE: SO DOPE! POMPIDOU, WE WILL NOT BE YOUR FAMILIES!

DUKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

79

05

Fags

OUR BODIES BELONG TO US

FOR THOSE WHO THINK THEY'RE "NORMAL"

FOR THOSE WHO ARE LIKE US

WHERE IS MY CHROMOSOME?

TOWARD A HOMOSEXUAL VIEW OF THE WORLD

"IT'S YOU WHO MUST BE CURED"

102

06

Motorcycles

THESE STRANGE DESIRING MACHINES

PARIS CAR MOTORCYCLE BICYCLE

107

07

MLF—FHAR: Toward What End?

WOMEN AND FAGS

A SHAMELESS TRANSVERSALISM

119

Translator's Notes

153

Index

DUKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

A Note on Terminology

Throughout the text, where applicable, I use the terminology *trans/transgender/trans people* to keep within the current understanding and articulations of gender. Hocquenghem and Deleuze both use the term *travesti*, which was current at the time, though it has the connotation of *transvestite* or *cross-dressing*. Sometimes this was a contemporary articulation of a political stance, like with *Street Action Transvestite Revolutionaries*, of Les Gazo-lines. But mostly in this text Hocquenghem (and Gilles Deleuze) are discussing what we understand as transgender or transsexuality. On the other hand, I translate Hocquenghem's reclaiming of slurs used to identify gay people within a similar lexicon.

DUKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

Translator's Introduction

A Queer Anarchism That Dare
Not Speak Its Name

You don't dare say it, perhaps you don't even dare say it to yourselves.

GUY HOCQUENGHEM, "For Those Who Are Like Us"

Already well into his academic and militant life, in 1974 Guy Hocquenghem presented a dissertation in philosophy at the University of Paris VIII, Vincennes. The first half of this dissertation was his first book, previously published in 1972, the theoretical treatise *Le désir homosexuel* (*Homosexual Desire*), which is currently one of the few works by Hocquenghem available in English.¹ The second half would be published independently the same year as his second book, *L'après-mai des faunes*, a translation of which you are now holding in your hands: *Gay Liberation after May '68*.² This half of the dissertation primarily consisted of a series of radical journal articles, political communiqués, and manifestos, which Hocquenghem wrote and published in the years after the May '68 uprising.

The year 1968 marked a global wave of uprisings that resonates with today's rebellions. The "events" of May in France felt to many involved like the brink of revolution and the near-toppling of the bourgeois state: emerging from student groups protesting university regulations, French capitalism, and US/global imperialism, the student movement began to occupy buildings. This occupation resulted in violent clashes with the police, which led to widespread labor support and a rash of wildcat strikes across France that brought the economy to a halt. Eventually, the parties and unions came to an agreement with the state, leading to a reimposition of "law and order," though the autonomous militants involved felt betrayed. In the essays and

D

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

articles collected in this book—starting with pieces from May 1968 at the spark of the revolt and then reflecting on the hopes and failures in the years after—Guy Hocquenghem speaks just as boldly and passionately to those of us engaged in struggle and devising theories of liberation today. Hocquenghem's writing in this book has a sense of urgency, whether it stems from the enthusiasm of recent participation in street blockades and General Assemblies that gave glimpses of another possible world or from anger at movements getting co-opted, militants selling out, and revolutionary commitments coming to nothing. These texts bear witness to the change of life that Hocquenghem experienced as a part of May 1968 and the years after. He continued experiments in horizontal organization, collective living, new connections of desire—all contesting the dominant mode of capitalist crisis, retrenchment, and capture. These are moments for Hocquenghem to envision a world contrary to the dominant one, or as the Zapatista slogan goes, “a world in which many worlds fit.”

Submitting a collection of radical communiqués and previously published journal articles as a dissertation could be seen as something Hocquenghem merely threw together in order to get official institutional recognition—and a higher pay rate as a professor at Vincennes, part of his transition into what he called *professional homosexual/revolutionary*. It was certainly a non-traditional dissertation, accepted through a revised process that was part of the educational reforms that came after May '68 as a compromise—the same compromise that created Paris VIII (Vincennes) in the first place. On the other hand, we can see these two parts as more than a tenuous linking of two already written or published books. Specifically, the theory of *Homosexual Desire* only makes sense in the context of the practical militant experience recorded in *Gay Liberation after May '68*.

Now, at last, we can read Hocquenghem's contemporary analysis of the beginnings of gay liberation from an unflagging militant perspective and get a full account of the radical extent of his revolutionary queer politics, situating his theoretical contributions in the larger context of organizing and confrontation with the state. Though *Gay Liberation after May '68* has been long out of print in French, it provides a necessary companion to his better-known first book. If we separate the first book's theory of identity, sexuality, and desire from the action in the streets facing off with cops or the militant organizing and collective life, we run the risk of uncritically assuming the very institutional position as professional fag or revolutionary

careerist that Hocquenghem critiques on every page of this book: a queer identity that, instead of aiming to destroy any institution that might contain it, helps buttress its ideological stranglehold. It was this tenuous position between committed militant and professional that Hocquenghem would navigate his whole life.

Homosexual Desire established Hocquenghem as a forerunner in the field of *queer theory*, a term that came later and is associated more with Anglo academic production than its tangential field, so-called French theory. Hocquenghem's first book appeared in both French and English shortly before another foundational French queer theory text, the first volume of Michel Foucault's *History of Sexuality* (which was arguably influenced by Hocquenghem's analysis, though Foucault drew different conclusions that moved away from antistate militancy). Hocquenghem's theory of desire and critique of homosexual identity in *Homosexual Desire* were inspired by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's attack on Freudianism as part of an anticapitalist analysis: he used much of their theoretical framework and terminology to displace the Oedipal notion of homosexual identity toward a mobile and disruptive homosexual desire with an explicit horizon of collective liberation. That is to say, Hocquenghem's queer theory is explicitly anticapitalist and, stemming from May '68, also antistate and anti-institutional. Thus, even *Homosexual Desire* was a product of Hocquenghem's militant work with the Front homosexuel d'action révolutionnaire (FHAR) and, before that, on the streets during May. As the penultimate chapter of that volume, "The Homosexual Struggle," declares, Hocquenghem's theoretical innovation always served militant liberatory aims.

Unlike *Homosexual Desire*, which is laid out as a theoretical treatise that masks a revolutionary manifesto, *Gay Liberation after May '68* has a less unitary structure. This book is made up of a collection of texts written over six years, mostly pulled from the radical journals that Hocquenghem wrote for and edited, as well as pamphlets distributed outside gay clubs. Still, Hocquenghem's militancy is always the main thrust; remarking on his tone, he notes that he uses "writing in order to persuade, chock full of exemplarity."³ Along with the multiplicity of texts, Hocquenghem acknowledges a sense of collective authorship, situating his writing in his lived experience among comrades in the midst of struggle. Hocquenghem describes his own writing in this book as a collective experience: "There is an editorial we implicit in these texts, since none of them could have been written, debated, revised without the existence of the militant groups, the leftist journals, the people with whom I live. And this we hollers its convictions with an urgent tone,

with the obvious desire to rally.”⁴ Additionally, there is a self-criticism in the book: between articles, Hocquenghem reflects on his earlier views, his passions, and the movements. This dialogic aspect leads him to propose an alternative reading method to the one that “seek[s] out the order of causes and of consequences, the logic of convictions, or even the fictive unity of a self.”⁵ Instead, he urges us to “consul[t] them like the pages ripped out of a diary, guiding oneself by intuitions, images, sensations, on a disorderly course like the swirls [*volutes*] of flames they might feed.”⁶ The book contains its own movements in all directions: attempts to follow through ideas with the flexibility learned from militancy outside of party structures and determinant theories, simultaneously within and against institutions.

The book begins with a foreword by Deleuze, previously published in English elsewhere, which gives a philosophical rendition of Hocquenghem’s queer militancy.⁷ The book then moves to Hocquenghem’s introduction, “Volutions,” one of two major theoretical statements in the book.⁸ The book is then broken into seven chapters: chapter 1 deals with the deaths of militants; chapter 2 contains ecstatic texts from 1968 to 1972 detailing the stakes of a revolution that touches every aspect of life, not just labor; chapter 3 offers critiques of militants who betray the movement in pursuit of an “apolitical” cultural revolution of lifestyle, while also trashing the media’s representation of militants, and it culminates in the cheeky survey Hocquenghem and others sent out to leftist militants and academics about their private life; chapter 4 discusses drugs, pop, rock and roll, and the rejection of traditional families; chapter 5 comprises a selection of texts Hocquenghem wrote during his time with the FHAR (mostly in 1971), making the argument for a gay liberation that demolishes society and ending with a 1973 interview in which Hocquenghem declares the end of the gay movement; chapter 6 contains two short texts on motorcycles, desire, and anti-automobile organizing; and finally, chapter 7 looks at the tenuous and revolutionary relationship between the women’s movement and the gay movement, and closes out with Hocquenghem’s other major theoretical text in the book, “A Shameless Transversalism,” announcing a possible direction for militant queer anticapitalist movements after May—that is, after the revolution has been recuperated.

Thus, *Gay Liberation after May ’68* is less queer theory than it is critical queer liberatory praxis, from May ’68 to the MLF and FHAR and beyond—promoting the kind of radical queer actions and style echoed in the US context in groups like Bash Back! and the current work of Black queer/trans ab-

olitionists and anarchists who have made such astonishing contributions to the long project of liberation.⁹ Through it all, the reader will feel embedded in the climate of Hocquenghem's day with the same fury and desire, building to a kind of joy that can be brought into our current militant contexts.

Hocquenghem explicitly breaks with the dominant revolutionary tradition, from the various communist formations to Jean-Paul Sartre's "old story of commitment." Instead of enshrining the worker as the revolutionary subject without any texture or content beyond a vaguely masculinist profile, Hocquenghem shows that militancy breaks out at every level of life: "We no longer commit ourselves to just battles, we act through our positions; not out of a sense of men's battles, but through the breaking out of tiny obsessions for no reason: getting high, motorcycles, sodomy, being trans, all these ways of living aren't just an issue of how to be revolutionary, but are the absolute present of the untimely."¹⁰ Hocquenghem's biographer, Antoine Idier, reads this line as a "double rupture: the existence of a politics that no longer has revolution as its horizon and that is no longer Marxist."¹¹ Idier rejects the attempts by some critics to understand Hocquenghem and the FHAR as a queer Marxism, since the explicit challenge to Marxism is one of the specificities of French gay liberation. This challenge might be one of the important lessons May '68 holds for us today. The initial betrayal experienced by those awakened by May '68, even before the neoliberalization of the former militants, was in the clear failure of the French Communist Party (*Parti communiste français*; PCF), as well as the various other Marxist and Maoist party formations, to connect with the potential of the moment and listen to the youth in revolt.¹² Instead, on their own, the students and the workers organized along anarchist lines, in the spirit of Spain, under the influence of the Situationists—and, as Hocquenghem emphasizes, with the openness of cruising the Tuileries.

The FHAR came into being when lesbian militants split from the *Mouvement de libération des femmes* (MLF), or Women's Liberation Movement, in order to bring a focus on sexuality to radical feminist actions. They joined with lesbians from the oldest French homophile group, *Arcadie*, which had a less political and even assimilationist perspective. The first FHAR actions took place in early 1971 to interrupt an antiabortion meeting and a radio show on the "homosexual question." Hocquenghem was one of the first gay cisgender men to attend the meetings, which eventually encompassed different sexual and gender positions than the original lesbian emphasis.¹³ Though the FHAR, like the MLF, was a new formation, it inher-

ited the legacy of the May '68 uprising, where there had already been action committees focusing on feminism and homosexuality from a revolutionary perspective.

Before joining the FHAR, Hocquenghem had a number of years of militant action and study under his belt, even predating May '68. He had come up through a variety of Marxist party formations, more specifically those of Maoist tendencies, and eventually made moves toward a more anarchist strain, though he didn't tend to label his mode this—or any—way. We can't ignore that his political education parallels the development of his sexuality. Hocquenghem met René Schérer, his philosophy teacher at the Lycée Henri IV, when he was fifteen. According to Hocquenghem, his teacher (also his onetime lover and lifelong collaborator) was the one who taught him about both sex and politics.¹⁴ Thus, for Hocquenghem, revolution and sexuality were never separate phenomena.

Later, as a student at the elite École normale supérieure (ENS), Hocquenghem was notorious for his militant tendencies. His persona and voice were clearly identifiable during the May '68 uprising, not only because his writings in political journals began cropping up at the time but also due to his participation in the streets and disruptive interventions on campus and in meetings. Over the ensuing years, Hocquenghem continued to write and agitate within revolutionary, anticapitalist formations like the FHAR and to participate in experimental living arrangements while attempting to eke out minimal stipends as a student at the ENS and then later with income as a teacher at Vincennes.¹⁵ Even after May, unlike many of his fellow *soixante-huitards*, Hocquenghem did not give up his radical commitments to anti-capitalism, despite keeping his university post until his death in 1988.

The limited English reception of Hocquenghem's work in the field of queer theory has deemphasized his militant involvement. *Gay Liberation after May '68* therefore restores the context of militancy to our reception of Hocquenghem. While queer theory had its birth in gay liberation, we are still working through what this legacy means in the aftermath of the revolutionary moments of the 1960s and 1970s. Michael Moon's beautiful introduction to the reprint of the English translation of *Homosexual Desire* remarks on the uniqueness of the book in fusing gay liberation and French theory. I would echo Moon's comment that even Hocquenghem's first book "still requires to be read not only as a treatise but also as a manifesto, a powerful incitement to join an intense political struggle whose time has come."¹⁶ Until now Hocquenghem's work available in English has been relegated to the realm of theory that can be easily taken out of context, essen-

tialized, removed from on-the-ground struggles. But his writing always takes a clear stance, explicitly anticapitalist, anticolonial, antiracist.

For many Anglo readers of queer theory, Hocquenghem might be best known as an early precursor to what became known as the “antisocial thesis.” In the acclaimed roundtable published in *PMLA* in 2006, featuring Robert L. Caserio, Jack Halberstam, and José Esteban Muñoz, Tim Dean writes that Hocquenghem precedes both Leo Bersani and Lee Edelman in articulating an understanding of homosexual desire as a threat to social order.¹⁷ Importantly, Dean highlights that homosexual desire, as “the killer of civilized egos” as Hocquenghem puts it, “betokens not the end of sociality but rather its inception.”¹⁸ Here Dean emphasizes the utopian aspect of Hocquenghem’s thinking, beyond mere shattering. The *utopian* epithet may ultimately be the shameful mark that has put Hocquenghem’s militancy out of reach, making it seem dated.¹⁹ For Hocquenghem, (homosexual) desire points to the possibility of destroying capitalism along with colonialism, racism, misogyny, and sexual repression. In a field dominated by Foucauldian discursive analysis and concepts of power, the understanding of an inherently liberatory queer sexuality gets easily dismissed along with the “repressive hypothesis” as a naive or even immature position.

In a way, it seems like queer theory has “grown up” and out of the revolutionary fervor that animated militants like Hocquenghem. Still we must find a way to relate to this legacy, especially as so many of us try to reclaim that enthusiasm in our current struggles. Kadji Amin makes a helpful and subtle distinction between Hocquenghem’s articulation of his theories and the influence they have had on later queer theory, calling Hocquenghem’s strand “liberationist negativity,” as opposed to the “psychoanalytic negativity” typified by Bersani, Edelman, and Dean.²⁰ While theorists like Bersani reject the redemptive quality to sex that liberationists like Hocquenghem were so passionate about, Amin points to the ways that psychoanalytic negativity also invests (queer) desire with an equally utopian dimension in its self-shattering effects. Amin acknowledges the animating motive of liberationists like Hocquenghem toward an anticapitalist, antiracist, anticolonial “erotic coalition” but also marks their shortcomings in actually living out these hopes given “the imperfect and messy relations . . . between queer eros and the political,” or in any “alternative socialities.”²¹ Amin thus pushes for a deidealization when it comes to thinking queerness, which can allow us to access this history realistically—and perhaps aside from our own liberatory hopes for our future movements.

In other words, our utopian, liberatory commitments often diverge

from the work we get caught up in organizing, which not only comes up against the force of the state but also against the internal policing and disagreements among comrades. In this book, Hocquenghem shows us both the utopian dreaming of a militant fag and the messiness of splintering so familiar to those involved in the long-term struggle for liberation. But instead of a “growing up” that leaves behind our liberatory dreams and instead of a pessimism that sees the failure of the liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s as the inevitable and eternal triumph of capitalism, we can take up Hocquenghem’s urgency as a call to aim our sights on liberation explicitly and continuously. We can do this without a nostalgia for a revolution that never occurred, perhaps even in the key of the kind of queer “failure” that Halberstam theorizes.²² But I also want to point our attention to the untold and unremembered histories of fags and dykes and trans people living out these “alternative socialities,” in all their messiness, against the dominance of the state. What I read in these texts as Hocquenghem’s queer anarchism parts ways with all the preconceived leftist strategies and demands a constant calibration, an ethical choice, to imagine liberation as an act of solidarity across differing forms of oppression and to keep doing it better until we get there.

This translation of Hocquenghem’s second book, then, can help restore for today’s militant, theoretically inclined queers a different lineage that resituates queer militancy at the foreground of theory, where queerness is not only what is done between the sheets but in the streets (though of course queer sex also happens on the streets, a longtime phenomenon and provocation). A revisionism that fits all resistance into the mold of civil and human rights protests has forgotten (or worse, intentionally obscured) the militancy of the liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s—Black liberation, women’s liberation, gay liberation, the American Indian Movement, and the global decolonial movements—all of which posed a real threat to the nascent neoliberal order.²³ Today’s students of queer theory, along with today’s movements, are relearning that this militancy—its active threat to the state—is what helped achieve whatever minimal steps toward “equality” racialized, gendered, and economically excluded groups have received. More important, today’s queers are walking in the footsteps of militant homos like Hocquenghem in their agitation. Reading Hocquenghem today can help us rethink our queer militant lineages, expand our chosen elders, and revive a strain of thought that is ever more needed in an age of global uprisings; the increasing threat of repression, violence, and devastation; and the ever-present possibilities of liberal recuperation.

After May '68, the question of recuperation was particularly pressing. This is true for every radical movement in confrontation with the state. The institutions and agents of the state will grant symbolic victories that shift the demands from dismantling to reform in order to pacify one identity group with concessions while actually strengthening the tools of oppression. The compromise that led to Vincennes and Hocquenghem's eventual doctoral thesis is one example. To avoid such recuperation, some militants aim for a "purity" politics that avoids any entanglement with the current power structures, trying to exist altogether outside. But instead of letting the fear of recuperation stop action dead in its tracks, Hocquenghem here asks us to turn the idea of revolutionary purity on its head, asking, "How can we generalize 'recuperation,' sink the boat by overloading it, instead of emptying it in order to uphold 'purity'?"²⁴ We might even say that if we took it seriously, what we now call *queerness*, and what Hocquenghem described as *homosexual desire*, would necessarily destroy all ideas of purity along with the surrounding institutions and eventually itself.

As for the tradeoff of becoming a professional revolutionary or on-duty fag, Hocquenghem suggests that instead of an ascetic revolutionary vow, "Let's organize in order to have enough to live off of and to sustain what we like."²⁵ Hocquenghem speaks out against the midcentury communist piety that demands the bourgeois youth implant themselves in factories as workers. And against the student dedication to a false appearance of pennilessness, Hocquenghem advocates for an engagement in the oppressive systems and bourgeois professions that imagines ways to turn them to our needs and their ruin: "The only thing we could change here is not to demand everyone quit or blame themselves for constant 'recuperation.' . . . It's often uptight and shameful leftists themselves who argue for the elitist character of these jobs and in this way unconsciously defend their status. So what? Anyone is capable of being a designer; anything goes in journalism today; pirating university degrees could be organized on a grand scale. Everyone gets a PhD; it's not impossible."²⁶ One has to make a living in this current system, but it makes no sense to invest professions and labor with any romantic or revolutionary value, whether you are a manual laborer or a leftist intellectual. Better to use one's position to degrade everything that supports the system.

In "The Good Life of Leftists," results from the survey Hocquenghem and his comrades sent out to well-known figures, he writes unsparingly about the hypocrisy with which people approach their work life: "No one admits to having a profession, yet they've been doing the same things for

ages. . . . What does this mean? The shameful leftist social climb?" He concludes with the "surplus value" that a revolutionary pose gives the intellectual: "To be a leftist is also a way to be different, to stick your nose out of professional drabness. That doesn't always mean getting paid. . . . There are some for whom the way of life just lets them get famous: Sartre lives like an ex-student in a dorm-style studio."²⁷ Being a leftist is another process of individuation, a CV line that makes you hireable.

And yet Hocquenghem also questions the revolutionary moralism that calls even having a job "recuperation" and proposes instead to invert the relationship. Instead of allowing the institutions of power to co-opt revolutionary excitement or drain the ideas of their danger, he suggests that people with access to the resources of these institutions could instead engage with them in a radical liberatory way. The delightful image of manufacturing PhDs in order to sink the elite status of holding such a degree actually provides a strange case, however, considering the state of the university today. Still, Hocquenghem's thought has resonance with the way Fred Moten and Stefano Harney motivate the Black radical tradition in *The Undercommons*, toward collective organizing "in but not of" the university: "One can only sneak into the university and steal what we can."²⁸ Hocquenghem would agree that our allegiances ought never to lie with the institutions, but with the movements: an escape plan, or what Moten and Harney theorize as "fugitivity."²⁹

The fact of gay liberation's various recuperations into homonormativity seems definitively to show that nonnormative, or deviant, marginalized sexuality and gender are not simply revolutionary in and of themselves. To understand deviant gender and sexuality as revolutionary, we might think of "gay sex" as a form of liberation. Consider the following forms of nonmonogamous, nonheteronormative relationships: cruising and other forms of public sex; multiplicity of partners; or, as Hocquenghem would argue in his more theoretical mode, the public, desublimated anus. We can further imagine genderfucking until the binary of forcibly assigned gender disappears. For Hocquenghem and other gay revolutionaries, these forms of sexuality and gender enactment literally entail the downfall of capitalist society and its enforced hierarchies.

But if homosexuality is liberatory, Hocquenghem sees it as something to be eventually cast off, "destroyed," since as it becomes a settled and recognized identity, it comes to serve a purpose for the state. Thus he moves beyond the seemingly immature position of a simple utopian idea of gay sex. A liberal movement aiming for an acceptable version of homosexuality

only achieves a token of progress, while forcing the rest (particularly trans people or racialized queers) to remain in the territory of dangerous perversion, subject to violence from the state and its agents. Instead, Hocquenghem insists that homosexuality as a liberatory force must explicitly dislodge misogynist patriarchal culture, as well as racial capitalism and colonialism. Liberation comes through living the perversity and deviancy of sex and gender that are excluded by heterosexual family life in order to maintain hierarchies of domination: queer sex is a form of refusal, an ethical action that specifically aims to undermine domination and destroy society. Hocquenghem was already witnessing the splintering of gay liberation into assimilationist demands for rights, in an attempt to prove that “we are just like you.” In the end, focusing on different forms of desire as identity markers plays right into market logic. As Hocquenghem writes, “The desiring fascism that marks the annals of the great libertines of the Western world is also the great big sense of being in one’s place, dressed up to look like the most absolute radicalism and revolutionary apoliticism.”³⁰ For Hocquenghem, this pose is the ultimate betrayal of May as it concerns gay liberation, “as if the whole journey since May could be summarized in the move from the world of slaves to the world of libertinized masters.”³¹ In other words: turning the revolution into a job, capitalizing on oppression. The social expenditure of a liberal pursuit of desire (bourgeois gays) reinstates the major class distinction by framing desire as a luxury, an expensive dessert on the menu of actual revolution. Instead, Hocquenghem envisions a nonhierarchical desire that dissolves all distinctions of bodies, types, and identities.

Seeing the trends of the movements, Hocquenghem quits revolution, but not for recuperation. He critiques the very notion of revolution in the introduction, “Volutions,” and so when we use the traditional term *revolution* to describe his positions, we aren’t fully comprehending his project. In his foreword, Deleuze teases out *volution* as the critical term for Hocquenghem’s methods: “Imagine a fast-turning spiral: Hocquenghem is at several levels at the same time, on multiple loops at once, sometimes with a motorcycle, sometimes stoned, sometimes sodomized or sodomizing, sometimes trans. On one level, he can say *yes, yes I am a homosexual*; at another level *no, that’s not it*; at yet another level, it’s another thing altogether.”³² The volution becomes a strategy to turn away the methods of identification, what Hocquenghem calls being “pinned down by social entomology.”³³ Deleuze’s description might also outline Hocquenghem’s efforts to escape recuperation, a nondialectical dialectic with no telos except liberation, whatever that means. (I leave that definition empty on purpose,

to allow for new navigation to take on different commitments and solidarity, and also because whatever is outside of society and civilization risks recuperation immediately upon being represented.)

To a certain extent, Hocquenghem's removal of the prefix *re* from *revolution* stems from a wariness of the famous Marxian maxim that history repeats itself, first as tragedy then as farce. This sums up, for Hocquenghem, the betrayal of May: "They were right to baptize May a 'dress rehearsal.' There is no Re-volution, we no longer want to share the prefixes that moor the flight of our wills, their overflow dissolving our powers. Above all when these prefixes reinfect us with their sickness of the past: the tradition of the worker movement, their stupid idea of change; we rehash other ideas and restart civilization—the same civilization we want to forget. Changing words while keeping the prefixes—and thus *Revolution* becomes reactionary."³⁴ He discusses such reactionaryism in his article claiming solidarity with the Bengali Liberation Army, in the face of French Maoists siding with China and the ultimately genocidal actions of the Pakistani government.³⁵ We see "leftist" groups taking such reactionary measures today, when different Marxist-Leninist groups, for example, defend murderous states such as Syria or Iran for "strategic geopolitical reasons" or even defend US military operations cloaked in liberation, as if there isn't a way to be antistate, anti-imperial, and antiwar—in other words, supporting people's self-determination.³⁶ As Hocquenghem notes, these parties ignore riots and uprisings when they don't "do" revolution in the right way, or when the parties can't seize the momentum of the uprising for their own ends. Militants must fear recuperation from revolutionary leftists just as much as they fear state power and capital. And ultimately the professional revolutionaries will crush movements that don't fit their agendas, don't make specific demands, and won't broker with state powers.

When you take away the repetitive prefix, you are left with the link to desire that in Hocquenghem's view is the actual force for liberatory, or utopian, aims. This utopian strand of Hocquenghem's thinking is grounded not only in gay liberation, queer theory, or the revolutionary practices of cruising and sodomy but also in a (queer) reading of Charles Fourier, the utopian socialist whom Hocquenghem pits against Karl Marx as the more important "revolutionary" thinker of the nineteenth century—a thinker who doesn't offer a continuation of tradition but, rather, "an interruption in the rhetoric of the classroom greats" (i.e., an overlooked text).³⁷ I call this a queer reading in part because Hocquenghem writes alongside his former teacher and lover, René Schérer, making this a work that emerges from a

gay context. Furthermore, Hocquenghem and Schérer insist on “redoing” Fourier since the utopian socialist starts with desire as a form of production, thereby displacing a classical Marxist separation of production and consumption. For them, Fourier breaks out of the prison of civilization, to which Marxist progressivist thought is still confined, and also understands production and desire outside of the narrow framework of economy. In other words, as Hocquenghem reflects back on this essay, Fourier is nondialectical, untimely, “detemporalized, simultaneous like two television sets projecting their clips side by side . . . neither before nor after, but a constellation.”³⁸

Given Hocquenghem’s love of Fourier, Ron Haas claims him not as a Marxist or even a leftist but instead as utopian. Haas understands how Hocquenghem tries to retain queer tradition and elaborate its utopian possibilities: “For Hocquenghem, the rich, tenebrous homosexual worlds of the past pointed to an infinity of other avenues for the expression of human desire and human fellowship—not just for homosexuals—avenues that were slowly being blocked for the sake of bourgeois respectability.”³⁹ Hocquenghem can claim homosexual love as “the only love that aims at equality because, being marginalized, it has no *social use*.”⁴⁰ A liberationist commitment, then, would deploy this disruptive, even nonhuman desire against the cisheteropatriarchal and capitalist shackling of desire through repression, guilt, and sublimation.

But Hocquenghem is always ready to leave behind any political position as soon as it gets recuperated. This happened quickly with “the homosexual” position after a militant gay movement was born. Just as the contemporaneous decolonial movements got folded into liberal humanism through the idea of “human rights” (alongside proxy wars and Cold War manipulations), gay liberation was shuttled toward assimilation and inclusion. Homosexuality, according to Hocquenghem, is entwined with humanity as one of its obsessions: “Homosexuality haunts humanity, like the guilty conscience of sexuality.”⁴¹ Hocquenghem the utopian wants to do away with civilization and its inventions, like the human, the homosexual, and economics. Hocquenghem’s Fourierist idea of liberation is the liberation of desire, the flux of desires that circulate differently from Marxist capital. The ultimate utopian dissolution is of identity, pointing to the “transindividual”: the exchange of desire “reveals that *the individual is not the full human being*.”⁴²

Hocquenghem’s “revolutionary” stance goes beyond mere reclamation of the negative, the transgression for transgression’s sake that Marx-

ist thinkers would dismiss.⁴³ As Hocquenghem says in an interview with Georges Danjou, “Every time we try to make homosexuality respectable, we push up against the same obstacle: how to remove fags from criminality, without ruining the libidinal or erotic relationship between fags and criminals?”⁴⁴ In fact, he claims, “The criminal aspect of homosexuality offers an opportunity”: “it’s this relationship between fags and criminals that makes homosexuals a group of people beyond redemption for society, a quite amazing revolutionary movement.”⁴⁵ The emphasis, then, is on a group “beyond redemption for society”—Hocquenghem’s whole game is to tear down society; today we might call his approach anarchism or abolition. He argues that we must continually reaffirm a practical commitment to oppose capitalist cisheteronormativity because that monster continually swallows up resistance. Hence, those who oppose it must also shift territory. In fact, for Hocquenghem, quitting is a strategy. The willingness to quit protects the revolutionary from recuperation, even for those whose identities have been demonized as unnatural.⁴⁶

In “Against the Gendered Nightmare,” the anonymous authors state: “[Hocquenghem’s] writing represents some of the earliest queer theory which explicitly rejects Civilization—as well as the families, economies, metaphysics, sexualities and genders which compose it—while also imagining a queer desire which is Civilization’s undoing.”⁴⁷ Hocquenghem argues that queer positionality itself produces the conditions for liberation that ultimately dissolve the position as a fixed identity along with the structures that force these identities onto us. But importantly, as the authors of *Baedan* insist, the goal isn’t to replace the structure with another system, which would just be one more step in the history of oppression. The authors of *Baedan* ground their understanding of Hocquenghem in his militancy. In particular, the authors draw “important ties between Hocquenghem’s project and the insurrectionary anarchist project as we conceive it,” through the emphasis on desire and the spread and dissolution of autonomous groups: “Only by avoiding the old-forms of ‘revolutionary’ or ‘working class’ organization can we side-step the traps which are laid out by recuperation. To orient ourselves around desire, and to pursue the ‘blissful enjoyment of the present,’ would mean to disavow the progressive ideologies of reform, inclusion, movement building, or incremental change.”⁴⁸ The radical critique of *identity*, of gender and sexual roles as prescribed by cisheteropatriarchal racial capitalism, gave way to what we might now call a form of *identity politics*, transforming revolutionary disruption into neo-

liberal demands for recognition and rights. However, the way we understand this term today in its mainstream use is already the neoliberal recuperation of the movement work of marginal groups.

In fact, at the same time that Hocquenghem was critiquing his experience with the limits of the FHAR and MLF formations as groups formed around “identities,” the US-based Combahee River Collective, a group of Black lesbian feminists, was articulating what the collective called *identity politics* along similar lines to Hocquenghem’s critique: “We are actively committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression, and see as our particular task the development of integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that the major systems of oppression are interlocking.”⁴⁹ The Combahee River Collective developed its position from a disappointment with militant groups similar to what Hocquenghem describes in *Gay Liberation after May ’68*. The group insists, “Our liberation is a necessity not as an adjunct to somebody else’s but because of our need as human persons for autonomy.”⁵⁰ Black people, women, and queers can’t be tacked on to the “workers’ revolution.” At the same time, the Combahee River Collective understands that it isn’t something called “biological maleness” that produces the violence of patriarchy; furthermore, patriarchy itself works in tandem with anti-Blackness, homophobia, and class struggle. Ultimately, the freedom for those in the Combahee River Collective would mean collective liberation because it would derive from “the destruction of all the systems of oppression.”⁵¹

Hocquenghem is aligned with this understanding of *identity politics* when he writes that gay militants are “not revolutionaries who specialize in the sexual problem” but instead, “precisely because they live by embracing the most *particular* situation[,] . . . what they think has *universal* value.”⁵² In the French leftist context, to focus on gender and sexuality as movement work was seen as either a form of bourgeois decadence or a deflection from the economic priority of a proletarian revolution, an “adjunct” as the Combahee River Collective calls it. In fact, in France antihomosexual laws were relatively recent, stemming from Vichy and then reconsolidated by Charles de Gaulle’s government. It may not sound quite right to bring into conversation someone so committed to the destruction of identity positions with a group articulating a position stemming from what it calls identity. Still, *identity politics* has been taken up by modern-day electoral politics and targeted advertising in a way that does not reflect its militant origins. Idier suggests that with *transversalism* Hocquenghem is working toward what

we might today call *intersectionality*, a specific inheritance of the Combahee River Collective. *Transversalism* would then articulate an intersectionality that destroys identity.⁵³

Hocquenghem's ideas resurface in the current anarchist trans militancy grounded in the abolition of gender, family, and prison—forms of destruction that he advocates in this book—and, importantly, tie into decades of queer and trans movement work.⁵⁴ Though Hocquenghem himself is a cis gay man, in his enthusiastic manifesto that closes this book, “A Shameless Transversalism,” he sees transness as the beginning of the destruction of gender and sexual hierarchies, which are themselves tangled up in the racial capitalist-colonial machine. Hocquenghem launches an appeal to stymie academic comprehension, political capture, and individualistic concepts of identity: “A shameless, slutty transversalism, having lost all modesty—i.e., all sense of what’s appropriate—that endlessly tries to put square pegs in round holes, losing its identity while gaining it, lewd when accepted as theoretical, ‘untimely.’ . . . Confusing the order of causes and consequences.”⁵⁵ There are no sanctified objects, and logic is put in distress; the only worthwhile theory is “lewd,” tarted up, and ready to go. Hocquenghem had already announced this horizon of an abolition of gender and sexual identities at the end of *Homosexual Desire* as “a slope toward transness through the disappearance of objects and subjects.”⁵⁶

The fullest understanding of transness that Hocquenghem gives in this book is the following: “*Transgender*, for example, is not the middle between man and woman, or the universal mediator (man into woman, woman into man); it’s one part of a world transferred into another like we pass from one universe to another universe parallel to the first (or perpendicular, or askew . . .); or rather, it’s a million inappropriate gestures, transferred features, events (growing breasts, removing hair) happening in as untimely a way as the appearing or disappearing of a feline smile in *Alice in Wonderland*.”⁵⁷ Hocquenghem puts transness—I won’t say trans identity—in an analogous destructive position to homosexual desire in the liberation of features, gestures, and events from the grounded, essential body, from the subject—women subjected to the relationship of penetration, the man wielding the phallus.⁵⁸

Hocquenghem is writing in the context of trans-led uprisings in the United States like Stonewall and the radical trans group Les Gazolines creating situations and disruptions in France. Thus, he also notes in his new term a slippage, from *transversalism* to *transness*: “Transversalism, transgender, versatility [*transversalisme, transvestisme, versatilisme*].”⁵⁹ Deleuze shows

how transversalism moves toward a destruction of gender, from the specificity of homosexual desire to a new position: “Wouldn’t the homosexual be, not the one to stick to the *same* sex, but the one who discovers countless genders that we have no idea about?”⁶⁰ The liberatory disruption of homosexuality gets us to the point where, as Deleuze writes, “there is no longer a homosexual *subject*, but homosexual productions of desire, and homosexual arrangements that produce utterances, that swarm everywhere, s&m and transgender, in love relations as much as in political struggles.”⁶¹ Hocquenghem calls this point the “homosexual view of the world”:

We homosexuals refuse *all* the roles: because it is the very idea of Role that disgusts us. We don’t want to be men or women—and our transgender comrades can explain that best. We know that society is afraid of everything that comes from the deepest parts of ourselves, because it needs to *classify* in order to rule. Identify in order to oppress. This is what makes us know how to clock people, despite our alienations. Our inconsistency, our unsteadiness, frightens the bourgeois. We will never be able to freeze ourselves, even in the position of the proletarian revolutionary: we have suffered the role of man that they have forced on us in the flesh.⁶²

The important thing, then, is the betrayal of the masculine imperative; being a man and being gay are disciplinary measures, ostensible police orders. In breaking with the MLE, he calls out the feminists for excluding trans women, a problem that persists in some so-called feminist groups today: “As if feminine qualities were not basically trans to begin with.”⁶³ Hocquenghem acknowledges here what we now might call the *performativity* of gender, where the feminine position is on the one hand a project of masculine domination; but he goes further, in a liberatory push, to show that transfemininity displaces essentialist underpinnings, presenting a “queer” femininity that slips transversally through the masculine grasp.⁶⁴

Although Hocquenghem himself doesn’t engage here with Black liberation, if we want to understand his message for today’s militants, we must look toward the more radical work in Black/trans theory and movements. The most important currents in Hocquenghem’s militant theory must be articulated in relation to the Black radical tradition, specifically a Black queer/trans feminist thinking, and Black anarchism. In *Black on Both Sides*, C. Riley Snorton also uses the term *transversality*, with reference both to Guattari and Édouard Glissant, to elaborate an understanding of Black-

ness and transness in relation to each other. Snorton refuses biologizing or essentializing definitions to show that transness forms “conditions of possibility for the modern world,” but also announces escape from modes of domination, in “the transitivity and transversality of fungibility and fugitivity of gender/sexuality and Blackness.”⁶⁵ Along with Snorton, Fred Moten emphasizes a fugitivity and escape that help formulate an understanding of Blackness beyond skin color as an intentional, radical taking of sides, against domination and toward freedom. Like Hocquenghem’s militant transversality, there is a sliding, a moving from one position to the next to escape being fixed and understood, confined and labeled, all toward the horizon of something radically outside, elsewhere.

In Hocquenghem’s reflections on the aftermath of May, I suggest that we discover a queer anarchism that doesn’t quite say its name, underlying his experiences of collective life and struggle and his dedicated refusal of power and identity. I am inspired here by recent work that reads an often unspoken affinity between Blackness and anarchism. In *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments*, Saidiya Hartman proposes a misreading of the studied forms of anarchism to discover “the radical imagination and everyday anarchy of ordinary colored girls.” Underneath the official labels of “deviance, criminality, and pathology” applied to the Black women whom she follows, Hartman discovers “an insurgent ground,” “open rebellion,” “waywardness, refusal, mutual aid, and free love,” “queer and outlaw passions.”⁶⁶ Hartman frees anarchism from political ideology toward an embodied enacting within racialized, gendered, sexualized positions against the state and its power. This radicalized position is what William C. Anderson and Zoé Samudzi describe as “Black in anarchy”: “a reflexive understanding of our existence within a color-based caste system [that] can predispose us to be more readily primed for radical politics.”⁶⁷ I don’t want to remove the specificity of Blackness in any of these conceptions of anarchism, but simply hope to borrow the flexibility in theorizing a queer anarchist practice beyond our standardized understanding of politics. This helps us situate the nonutopian utopianism of Hocquenghem’s gay militancy, born from struggle, in a desire for and toward disruption, within the larger context of ongoing liberation struggles that we inherit, combine, and inhabit in the current moment. Hocquenghem’s elaboration of a liberatory queerness starts from a place of anarchy imposed by its exclusion from normality. Still, in this book, Hocquenghem mostly lacks an analysis of racism, and only hints at an anticolonial critique. A true anarchist queer/trans struggle

will be explicitly tied to collective liberation, taking its cues from radical Black feminism and Indigenous resistance.

Hocquenghem's anarchism takes the sodomist's approach, from behind, trembling with desire, to open the "utopian" space: "We don't tackle the big questions that concern humanity head-on. We slip sideways between two layers of guilty conscience, crumbling the frameworks where they try to confine us from behind into multiple quiverings of the social body in its infinite urgent places."⁶⁸ The "sideways," "from behind," is a queering of that monolithic revolution that would sum up each person's needs in the will of *the people*, giving up individual and communal autonomy for one thinker's dream of liberation. Hocquenghem and his comrades embody strategies developed from a sense of autonomy, mutual aid, and self-management that many groups discover works best in moments of heightened confrontation, crisis, community defense, or even in cruising grounds. Refusing the state along with "revolution," Hocquenghem rejects names and identities, except the most degraded, like *fag*; his search for new horizons with words like *volution* and *transversalism* articulates a transgender undoing of social positions—this urge and tendency evoke a queer anarchism that cannot speak itself, since to speak is to represent and get caught back up in the play of politics. And so it goes on in its critical practice of destroying and creating, eluding capture by refusing to be seen.

I am finishing this manuscript in 2020, in the wake of ongoing global uprisings that seem to outstrip the revolutionary moment of May '68 with an insurgent fire that has been spreading at least since the Arab Spring, Occupy movements, and Black Lives Matter uprisings in the early 2010s. We are in the midst of an unquelled global surge of rage and unrest. The COVID-19 pandemic has illuminated the inherent violence of a racial capitalist world system, whether in sheer indifference to mass death, promotion of environmental collapse that occasions new diseases and global spread, insistence on economics over care, or in the imperialist and racialized impacts of incompetent health-care systems. In this context, the police killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Tony McDade have sparked a widespread uprising, with many US cities becoming sites of siege where a multiracial, Black-led coalition faces off with violent police and federal authorities. We have witnessed beautiful moments of liberation: burning down a police precinct, reappropriating resources held in chain stores, and distributing forms of mutual aid, whether providing support to arrestees or just helping people find food and shelter. As people who are new to mili-

tant actions take to the streets to demand not just the end of unaccountable racist police killings but the end of police and prisons as a whole, only to be tear-gassed by their local police with the support of their local representatives, they can no longer ignore the fact that the state runs through police order. The daily functioning of the state means the constant threat of death and physical harm, particularly targeting Black queer/trans people, all in the service of a very few.

The experience of May '68 has echoed periodically over the decades. May '68 can thus be seen as an initial sounding, *untimely* as Guy Hocquenghem would call it, part of a decades-long series of delinked, anarchist uprisings that continue to push across the globe against all forms of state oppression. We can't fail to see the brutal violence, embodied by the police, that the state enacts against its (purportedly protected) citizens in the name of liberal democracy and racial capitalism. But what necessarily gets left out is the collective experience of momentary liberation. Anyone who is familiar with or who has participated in street movements over the last twenty years—but more importantly over the last decade and, increasingly, over the last few years—might claim the overlooked legacy of May. To us, Hocquenghem's words in this book will sound as if they are describing the latest street actions and collective discussions. Like the students and workers and fags and dykes on the front lines in 1968, we've had the immediate experience of that other world—the elsewhere, escape, fugitivity, abolition, anarchy.

In *Gay Liberation after May '68*, Hocquenghem's youthful utopian excitement mixed with his bitter resentment is particularly infectious because of his unflagging commitment to a collective liberation, no matter his blind spots, whether in terms of his ability to speak in an informed way about certain positions or the way history has ultimately borne out his ideas. Hocquenghem refused capitulation; he refused recuperation; but he also didn't fuck with ideas of purity. It would be wrong, even dangerous, to dismiss the fury with which we are rising up against this civilization, willing to tear it all down, like Hocquenghem. The English translation of *L'après-mai des faunes* will therefore hopefully infuse the language of contemporary queer theory with a volitional insistence that takes a flexible and ethical stance toward liberation and the destruction of racist capitalist institutions. In Hocquenghem, today's movements recognize a comrade. Reading him, we can be cruised by a man who lived revolution in its momentary state, its timeless presence, its slip of the wrist. He knew enough to say that the revolution had to be gay, it had to be lesbian, it had to be

trans—and we must add, it has to be Black and Indigenous. It has to be honest in its solidarity with the struggles of everyone across the globe who counter the state, and it has to spell the end of humanity, civilization, and the institutions it holds dear, no looking back: “Here we see the after-May as a multiple life change. The after-May of fawns is made of leaps in all of the fields of the possible, not in faithfulness to a fixation. It is an after without a backward glance at a May, otherwise well-behaved, a horny myth notwithstanding—without kids’ nightmares about the Crisis. It’s like a summer afternoon.”⁶⁹

DUKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

TRANSLATOR’S INTRODUCTION xxix

GAY LIBERATION **AFTER MAY '68**

DUKE

**UNIVERSITY
PRESS**

Foreword

Gilles Deleuze

The foreword: no one can escape it, not the author of the book, not the editor, nor the foreword writer—the true victim—even though there is no need of a foreword. This is a gay book. It could have been called: “How the Existence of Homosexuality Began to Be Doubted”; or, “No One Can Say ‘I Am a Homosexual.’” By Hocquenghem. How did he get here? A personal evolution that can be read in the ordering of the texts in this book and their varying tones? A collective revolution due to a group effort, a becoming of the FHAR?¹ Obviously, it’s not by changing, by becoming heterosexual for example, that Hocquenghem beings to doubt the soundness of ideas and claims. It’s by remaining homosexual *for ever*,² staying homosexual by being more and more so, or better and better, that we can come to say, “but after all, no one is.” Which is a thousand times better than the boring and drab verdict that claims everyone is, everyone would be, an unconscious latent fag. Hocquenghem is not talking about evolution or revolution, but about volutions.³ Imagine a fast-turning spiral: Hocquenghem is at several levels at the same time, on multiple loops at once, sometimes with a motorcycle, sometimes stoned, sometimes sodomized or sodomizing, sometimes trans. On one level, he can say *yes, yes, I am a homosexual*; at another level *no, that’s not it*; at yet another level, it’s another thing altogether. This book does not repeat the previous book, *Homosexual Desire*; it spreads it, mobilizes it in another way, transforms it.

First volution. Against psychoanalysis, against psychoanalytic interpretations and reductions: homosexuality understood as a relationship with the father, with the mother, with Oedipus. Hocquenghem isn’t against anything; he even wrote a letter to his mother.⁴ But that won’t work. Psychoanalysis has never been able to handle desire. It must always reduce it and make it say something else. Among Freud’s most ridiculous passages, there are those about “fellatio”: a desire so bizarre and so “shocking” couldn’t be

D

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

taken literally, it must refer to the cow's udder, and thus to the mother's breast. We'd get more pleasure sucking a cow's udder. Interpret, regress, reverse. It all makes Hocquenghem laugh. And maybe there is an oedipal homosexuality, a mommy-homosexuality, guilt, paranoia, whatever you want. But that homosexuality drops like lead, weighted down by what it hides and by what the combined advice of family and psychoanalysis wants to make it hide: it doesn't hold to the spiral, it doesn't stand the test of lightness and movement. Hocquenghem settles for presenting the specificity and irreducibility of a homosexual desire that is in flux,⁵ without end or origin, a matter of experimentation and not of interpretation. You are never homosexual based on your past, but on your present, once it has been shown that childhood was already presence without reference to a past. For desire never represents anything, and doesn't refer to something else hidden in the background of a domestic or private drama. Desire arranges, it schemes, it makes connections. Hocquenghem's wonderful essay on the motorcycle: the bike is a genital. Wouldn't the homosexual be, not the one to stick to the *same* sex, but the one who discovers countless genders that we have no idea about?⁶ But first Hocquenghem tries to define this specific, irreducible homosexual desire—and not as a regressive interiority, but as the present traits of an Outside, of a relation to the Outside: the specific movement of cruising, the way of meeting up, the “anular” structure,⁷ the interchangeability and mobility of roles, a certain betrayal (plotting against one's own class, as Klossowski says?: “They told us we were men, and we were treated like women; yes, to our enemies, we are traitors, sneaky, dishonest; yes, in any social situation, at any moment, we let men down, we are snitches and we are proud of it”).⁸

Second volution: homosexuality does not produce desire without creating utterances at the same time. Indeed, producing desire and creating new utterances are the same thing. It's obvious that Hocquenghem doesn't speak like Gide, nor like Proust, even less like Peyrefitte:⁹ but style is political—and so are generational differences, and the ways of saying *I* (see the gaping difference between Burroughs father and son, when they say *I* and talk about drugs).¹⁰ Another style, another politics: like Tony Duvert's importance today, a new tone.¹¹ Today, from the depths of a new style, homosexuality produces utterances that are not about, and should not be about, homosexuality itself. If it were a question of saying “all men are fags,” there would be no interest at all—it's a useless proposition that only entertains fools. But homosexuals' marginal position makes it possible and creates the need that they have something to say about *what is not* homosexual-

ity: "The homosexual movements have brought the entirety of men's sexual problems to the surface."¹² According to Hocquenghem, the utterances of homosexuality are of two complementary types. First, about sexuality in general: far from being misogynist, the homosexual condemns the singular phenomenon of phallocentrism in both the subjugation of women *and* the repression of homosexuality. Indeed, phallocentrism operates indirectly and, by creating the heterosexual framework of our societies, casts boys' sexuality onto girls to whom it gives the role of simultaneously being the first hunter as well as the first prey. Therefore, whether there is a mysterious connection between girls who prefer girls, boys who prefer boys, boys who prefer a motorcycle or bicycle to girls, girls who prefer, etc., the key is not to insert a symbolic or pseudosignifying relationship in these plots and conspiracies ("a movement like the FHAR seems closely tied to ecological movements . . . *even though this is unspeakable in political logic*").¹³ That's why, just as well, the second type of utterances concerns the social field in general and the presence of sexuality in this whole field: by escaping from the heterosexual framework, from the localization of this framework in a type of relationship as well as from its spreading into all places of society, homosexuality is able to pursue a micropolitics of desire, and to act as indicator or as sensor of the entirety of power relations to which society submits sexuality (including the case of more or less latent homosexuality that permeates manly military or fascist groups). Specifically, homosexuality breaks free not by smashing each power relation, "because, being marginalized, it has no *social use*; because power struggles are not initially imposed by society; because here the roles man/woman, fucked/fucker, master/slave are unstable and reversible at every turn."¹⁴

Third volution. We believed Hocquenghem was establishing himself, burrowing into his place on the margins. But what is this margin? What is this specificity of homosexual desire? And these counterutterances of homosexuality? Another Hocquenghem, at another level of the spiral, denounces homosexuality as a word. *Nominalism* of homosexuality. And really there is no power in words, but only words in service of power: language is not information or communication, but prescription, decree, and commandment. You will be on the margins. It's the center that makes the margins. "This abstract division of desire that allows control over even those who escape, this placing within the law what is outside the Law. The category at issue, and the word itself, are a relatively recent invention. The increasing imperialism of a society that wants to give social status to everything unclassifiable has created this particularization of the disparity. . . .

Dividing so as to rule better, psychiatry's pseudo-scientific idea transformed barbaric intolerance into civilized intolerance."¹⁵ But here is the bizarre thing: the less homosexuality is a state of being, the more homosexuality is a word, the more it must be taken at its word, accepting its position as specific, its utterances as irreducible, and behaving as if . . . In defiance. Out of near-duty. Through a dialectically necessary moment. By passing through and by progress. We will act like queens because you want it. We will outflank your traps. We will take you at your word: "Only by making shame more shameful can we progress. We reclaim our 'femininity,' the very kind that women reject, *at the same time we declare that these roles have no meaning*. . . . The practical form of this struggle—we can't avoid it—is the passage through homosexuality."¹⁶ Another mask, another betrayal, Hocquenghem ends up Hegelian—the necessary moment through which we must pass—Hocquenghem ends up Marxist: the fag as the proletarian of Eros ("It is precisely because they live by embracing the most *particular* situation that what they think has *universal* value").¹⁷ This surprises the reader. Tribute to the dialectic, to the École normale supérieure?¹⁸ Homo-Hegelianism-Marxism? But Hocquenghem is already somewhere else, in another spot on his spiral, saying what he had in his head or in his heart, which can't be separated from a kind of evolution. Who among us has not had to kill the Hegel or Marx in ourselves, and along with them the infamous dialectic?

Fourth volution, final figure of the dance for the moment, final betrayal. We must follow Hocquenghem's texts, his position regarding the FHAR and within the FHAR, as a specific group, the relations with the MLF. And even the idea that the splintering of groups is never tragic. Far from being shut up in "the same," homosexuality is going to open itself to all sorts of new possible relations, micrological or microphysical, essentially reversible, transversal, with as many sexes/genders [*sexes*] as there are arrangements, not even excluding new relationships between men and women: the mobility of certain s&m relations, the strengths of trans people, the thirty-six thousand forms of love according to Fourier, or n-gender people (neither one nor two genders).¹⁹ It is no longer about being neither man nor woman, but about inventing genders, which means that a homosexual man can find the pleasures a man would give him with a woman and vice versa. (Proust already countered exclusive homosexuality of the Same with this increasingly multifaceted and more "localized" homosexuality that includes all sorts of transsexual communications, including flowers and bicycles.) In a beautiful passage about transness, Hocquenghem speaks of a

transmutation from one order to another, as if from an intensive *continuum* of substances: “Not the middle between man and woman, or the universal mediator. . . . It’s one part of a world transferred into another like we pass from one universe to another universe parallel to the first (or perpendicular, or askew . . .); or rather, it’s a million inappropriate gestures, transferred features, events . . .”²⁰ Far from closing itself in on sameness of gender/sex, this homosexuality opens itself to a loss of identity [*loin de se fermer sur l’identité d’un sexe, cette homosexualité s’ouvre sur une perte d’identité*], to the “system enacted by non-exclusive connections of polyvocal desire.”²¹ At this exact point of the spiral, we hear how the tone has changed: it is no longer at all about the homosexual being recognized, and being posited as a subject endowed with rights (let us live; after all, everyone is a little homosexual . . . demand-homosexuality, recognition-homosexuality, homosexuality of the same; oedipal type, Arcadian style).²² For the new homosexual, it is about insisting on being this way, in order to be able to say at last: *No one is, it doesn’t exist*. You call us homosexuals, sure, but we are already something else. There is no longer a homosexual *subject*, but homosexual productions of desire, and homosexual arrangements that produce utterances, that swarm everywhere, s&m and transgender, in love relations as much as in political struggles. There is no longer a defeated divided Gide-subject, nor even a still guilty Proust-subject, even less the pathetic Peyrefitte-Self. We understand better how Hocquenghem can be everywhere on his spiral, and say all at once: homosexual desire is specific, there are homosexual utterances, but homosexuality is nothing, it is only a word, and yet let’s take the word seriously; we must pass through it, in order to restore everything that it contains of otherness—which is not the unconscious of psychoanalysis, but the progression of a future sexual becoming.

DUKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

Translator's Notes

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

- 1 Hocquenghem, *Homosexual Desire*, trans. Daniella Dangoor (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993). The other two are the novel *Love in Relief*, trans. Michael Whisler (New York: SeaHorse Press, 1986), and the posthumous novel *Amphitheater of the Dead*, trans. Max Fox (New York: Guillotine, 2019). A contentious text, *The Screwball Asses*, trans. Noura Wedell (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2010), has been available in English for some time, but Hocquenghem's partner Roland Surzur has definitively debunked it as a single-author text by Hocquenghem. The text was part of the famous jointly authored "Three Billion Perverts," an issue of Félix Guattari's *Recherches* journal (Hocquenghem and René Schérer, eds., "Trois milliards de pervers: Grande Encyclopédie des Homosexualités," special issue, *Recherches*, no. 12 [1973]). The "true" author is Christian Maurel.
- 2 Hocquenghem's title, *L'après-mai des faunes*, refers to Stéphane Mallarmé's poem, "L'après-midi d'un faune" ("The Afternoon of a Faun"), which also inspired a symphonic piece by Claude Debussy and a ballet by Vaslav Nijinsky (with collaboration from Jean Cocteau)—giving it a queer lineage. Instead of a literal translation of Hocquenghem's title, which would lose all of this resonance, I gave a more descriptive title to this collection of works that catalog the rise and fall of French gay liberation in relation to the May '68 uprising. Hocquenghem's introduction was also the title of his dissertation, "Volutions: La révolution culturelle en Europe" (Volutions: The Cultural Revolution in Europe; Université Paris VIII Vincennes-Saint-Denis, 1972). His director was François Châtelet (1925–85), who spearheaded the Philosophy Department at Vincennes alongside Deleuze and Michel Foucault. The dissertation was accepted as part of the '68 reforms, *sur travaux*, which meant it contained work previously written or published. According to Antoine Idier, there is no record of the defense or even the makeup of Hocquenghem's committee. Idier states that René Schérer claimed that in addition to himself and Châtelet, Deleuze, Olivier Revault d'Allonnes, and Jean-Pierre Colin were present. Schérer also said that Deleuze's foreword contained here came out of the dissertation defense. Antoine Idier, *Les vies de Guy Hocquenghem* (Paris: Fayard, 2017), 141–42.

DUKE

UNIVERSITY
PRESS

- 3 This volume, 12.
- 4 This volume, 12. Academic theory and political philosophy tend to enshrine the individual and align concepts with a singular name. Perhaps in this way, Hocquenghem's militancy disappears into the collective, which is a common element among anarchists whose names don't get solidified into a theory like Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, or Mao.
- 5 This volume, 12.
- 6 This volume, 12.
- 7 In Gilles Deleuze, *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953–1974*, ed. David Lapoujade, trans. Michael Taormina (Cambridge, MA: Semiotext(e), 2004), 284–88.
- 8 This introduction has also been translated at least twice into English: in *Baedan*, vol. 2, *A Journal of Queer Heresy* (New York: Contagion, 2014); and in Ron Haas, "Guy Hocquenghem's 'Volutions,'" *Radical Philosophy Review* 11, no. 1 (2008).
- 9 For some textual examples of current Black anarchist thinking, see Zoé Samudzi and William C. Anderson, *As Black as Resistance: Finding the Conditions for Liberation* (Chico, CA: AK Press, 2018); and Revolutionary Abolitionist Movement, *Burn Down the American Plantation: Call for a Revolutionary Abolitionist Movement* (New York: Combustion Books, 2017).
- 10 This volume, 117.
- 11 Idier, *Les vies de Guy Hocquenghem*, 132. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.
- 12 Hocquenghem began railing against this betrayal already in *Gay Liberation after May '68*, but continued leveling his critique until his death, as in his 1986 *Lettre ouverte à ceux qui sont passés du col Mao au Rotary* (Open Letter to Those Who Gave Up the Mao Jacket for the Rotary Club) (Paris: A. Michel, 1986). For another contemporaneous perspective, see Jacques Camatte, "May–June 1968: The Exposure," where he names Marxism as "repressive consciousness [conscience repressive]." Jacques Camatte, "May–June 1968: The Exposure," *Fifth Estate* (November 1978).
- 13 Eventually the FHAR split around experiences of misogyny involving the gay men, the emphasis on sex acts and desire over love and care, and the splintering into narrower groups. Hocquenghem writes about the FHAR meetings becoming the biggest cruising site in Paris, which for him was also a revolutionary act.
- 14 Hocquenghem wrote a fictionalized account of this relationship in *The Amphitheater of the Dead*. In *Les vies de Guy Hocquenghem*, Idier points out that Schérer had been excluded from the Communist Party in the 1950s due to his sexuality, a repeated phenomenon in the traditional leftist formations that led to the gay liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Hocquenghem and Schérer coauthored multiple texts, none translated into English, including *Co-ire*, which takes a frank approach to childhood sexuality as well as intergenerational relationships. There are important questions as well as periodic

scandals around the pedophilic nature of certain types of relationships and queer traditions, though many researchers are loath to explore these elements, except in distant times and cultures. Contrary to feeling like he was harmed, Hocquenghem maintained a relationship with Schérer (not always sexual) until Hocquenghem's death. In the 1970s, there was a political battle to lower the age of consent for homosexual acts from twenty-one (until 1974) and then from eighteen, since it was higher than the general age of consent (fifteen). This law served as a tool to criminalize queer sex. In *Gay Liberation after May '68*, Hocquenghem mentions youth sexuality and consent a few times, calling out the hypocrisy of expecting youth to be on the streets for militant movements without supporting their sexual autonomy but also critiquing groups like the FHAR for excluding "child lovers," a group that will never find "reintegration into the dominant morality" (this volume, 80). He treats trans people as another group that creates anxiety around inclusion/exclusion for militants, though there is no parallel with pederastic or inter-generational queer relationships. For further reading on the latter topics, see Kadji Amin's *Disturbing Attachments: Genet, Modern Pederasty, and Queer History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017), which historicizes Jean Genet's support of pederasty in relation to radical politics and movements, and also explores Hocquenghem's shortcomings.

- 15 In his biography of Hocquenghem, Idier relates an anecdote about the response Hocquenghem got when he asked for an extra year of stipend for writing his thesis at the ENS in 1970. The director refused, telling him, "The state can't endlessly pay you to destroy it." Still, he was subsequently hired at Vincennes to teach a course named Revolution in the USA. Idier, *Les vies de Guy Hocquenghem*, 60.
- 16 Michael Moon, introduction to Guy Hocquenghem, *Homosexual Desire*, trans. Daniella Dangoor (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 10. I want to express my gratitude to Michael Moon, who was an early supporter of this project and whose inspiration and influence guided me.
- 17 Tim Dean, "The Antisocial Homosexual," *PMLA* 121, no. 3 (2006): 826–28. The classic reference texts are Leo Bersani's "Is the Rectum a Grave?" (*October*, no. 43 [1987]: 197–222) and Lee Edelman's *No Future* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004).
- 18 Quoted in Dean, "The Antisocial Homosexual," 827.
- 19 Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick also provides a warm overview of Hocquenghem's utopian liberationism in a late text, "Anality," in *The Weather in Proust* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), defending aspects of his project against a form of masculine protest embodied by Jeffrey Guss. Sedgwick, too, notes that Hocquenghem and his contemporaries always associated queer liberation with an antiracist, anticolonial, anticapitalist, antimisogynistic project, and these other "coalitionary" strands can fall off in the critiques of identity.
- 20 Amin, *Disturbing Attachments*, 16, 78–79, 95, 96, 189.

- 21 Amin, *Disturbing Attachments*, 79.
- 22 Jack Halberstam, *The Queer Art of Failure* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011).
- 23 Much of the legacy of French theory in general ends up performing a naturalizing move by shifting the critique from the realm of political or collective struggle to that of subjectivity. For more on the reactionary work of French theory, despite its aura of radicality, see Gabriel Rockhill, "The CIA Reads French Theory: On the Intellectual Labor of Dismantling the Cultural Left," *Los Angeles Review of Books*, February 28, 2017.
- 24 This volume, 57.
- 25 This volume, 57.
- 26 This volume, 57.
- 27 This volume, 56.
- 28 Fred Moten and Stefano Harney, *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study* (Brooklyn: Minor Compositions, 2013), 26.
- 29 Moten and Harney, *Undercommons*.
- 30 This volume, 116.
- 31 This volume, 116.
- 32 This volume, 1.
- 33 This volume, 112.
- 34 This volume, 6.
- 35 I give more detailed historical context in a footnote to the article, "Long Live Free Bengal," this volume, 136n23.
- 36 For analysis in this line, see Leila Shami, "The Anti-imperialism of Idiots," *It's Going Down*, May 4, 2018; and CrimethInc, "Why the Turkish Invasion Matters: Addressing the Hard Questions about Imperialism and Solidarity," October 12, 2019, <https://crimethinc.com/2019/10/12/why-the-turkish-invasion-matters-addressing-the-hard-questions-about-imperialism-and-solidarity>.
- 37 This volume, 31.
- 38 This volume, 31.
- 39 Ron Haas, "Utopia Aborted: May '68 in the Philosophy of Guy Hocquenghem," *Annual Proceedings of the Western Society for French History* 32 (2004): 417. For Hocquenghem, gay practices were revolutionary because of this clandestine factor, which created a space outside society. For similar writing in an American context, see Samuel Delany, who, in *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), famously laments the loss of the porn theaters in the redevelopment of Times Square in the 1990s and uses his experience to theorize another utopian form of public sex, consent based and protected against masculine violence, within a class analysis. Delany's descriptions of the relations between men across racial and class divides, as well as relations among people of different genders, contain the formation of other worlds that already exist in the transversal gaps of this world.

- 40 This volume, 92. This uselessness is part of Edelman's elaboration of queer-ness as the "death drive" of society in *No Future*.
- 41 This volume, 97.
- 42 This volume, 37.
- 43 See, for example, James Penney's scathing assessment of Hocquenghem in *After Queer Theory* (London: Pluto, 2013).
- 44 This volume, 97.
- 45 This volume, 97, 98–99.
- 46 See Halberstam, *Queer Art of Failure*, for a possible lineage to the act of quitting.
- 47 Anonymous, "Against the Gendered Nightmare: Fragments on Domestica-tion," *Baedan 2: A Queer Journal of Heresy*, 4–5.
- 48 "Against the Gendered Nightmare," 41.
- 49 Combahee River Collective, "The Combahee River Collective Statement," in *How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective*, ed. Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2017), 15.
- 50 Combahee River Collective, "Statement," 18.
- 51 Combahee River Collective, "Statement," 23.
- 52 This volume, 90.
- 53 See Idier, *Les vies de Guy Hocquenghem*, 139.
- 54 When I say *gender abolition* I mean the destruction of the gender binary as a coercively assigned, policed typology of bodies that devolves from a hierar-chy of masculine domination, compulsory heterosexuality, colonial rule, and anti-Blackness. It doesn't preclude the lived experience or expression of gen-der, whatever that would mean outside of this power structure.
- 55 This volume, 111.
- 56 Hocquenghem, *Homosexual Desire*, 150; translation modified.
- 57 This volume, 110.
- 58 Hocquenghem wasn't alone at the time in seeing transness as the horizon of queer liberation. Mario Mieli's 1977 book, *Homosexuality and Liberation: Ele-ments of a Gay Critique*, trans. David Fernbach (London: Gay Men's Press, 1980), also envisions transness as the endpoint of liberation.
- 59 This volume, 111.
- 60 This volume, 2. Hocquenghem likely picked up the term *transversalism* from Guattari's notion of *transversality*, which was his modification of the psycho-analytic idea of *transference*. Guattari used the term to describe groups that were "more open, less hierarchical" (Eugene B. Young with Gary Genosko and Janell Watson, *The Deleuze and Guattari Dictionary* [New York: Bloomsbury, 2013], 148), which opens it to the anarchist inflections I am picking up in Hoc-quenghem. Of course, it has a mathematical connotation, as a description of intersection—an idea we have already discussed.
- 61 This volume, 5.
- 62 This volume, 91.
- 63 This volume, 116.

- 64 But Hocquenghem also disavows a group like the Revolutionary Effeminists, who split with US gay liberation in order to become “traitors to the class of men” (Steven F. Dansky, John Knoebel, and Kenneth Pitchford, “The Effem-
inist Manifesto” [1973], in *Burn It Down! Feminist Manifestos for the Revolution*, ed. Breanne Fahs [New York: Verso, 2020]). For Hocquenghem, this tendency, also present in other feminist movements, clings to a gender essentialism that he rejects and, like a liberal white guilt that sheds useless tears over anti-Blackness, only gives voice to “the guilty conscience of being male and not female. . . . We are men and therefore oppressors; how can you forgive our nature?” (this volume, 114–15).
- 65 C. Riley Snorton, *Black on Both Sides: A Racial History of Trans Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017), 5, 57.
- 66 Saidiya Hartman, *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Riotous Black Girls, Troublesome Women, and Queer Radicals* (New York: Norton, 2019), 9–10.
- 67 Samudzi and Anderson, *As Black as Resistance*, 131.
- 68 This volume, 117.
- 69 This volume, 12.

FOREWORD

- 1 The FHAR is the Front homosexuel d’action révolutionnaire, or Homosexual Front for Revolutionary Action, a radical gay liberation movement started in 1971, with Hocquenghem as one of the most notable members. The FHAR was born in the wake of the events of May ’68 and inspired by the MLF, Mouvement pour la libération des femmes, Women’s Liberation Movement.
- 2 *For ever* is in English in the original.
- 3 “Volutions” is the title of Hocquenghem’s introduction, which, along with the last chapter, makes the most comprehensive theoretical and political statement of the book. I leave *volutions* untranslated, since it is combined with various prefixes to form *revolution*, *evolution*, and so on. It has the sense of turning or spiraling.
- 4 Deleuze refers here to Hocquenghem’s public “coming out,” in an interview in which he details his mother’s reaction to his sexuality: “La révolution des homosexuels,” *Le nouvel observateur*, January 10, 1972. She responded in the magazine the following week, on January 17, 1972. This made Hocquenghem the first French person in the twentieth century to publicly come out in the press.
- 5 *Flux* is an important term for both Deleuze and Hocquenghem, indicating the movement of reality outside, through, and around the categories imposed on it by philosophy, capitalism, society, and so on. I keep the Latinate term rather than using the English word *flow*.

- 6 Deleuze uses the word *sexe*, which I translate here as “genital,” “gender,” or “sex,” depending on the context.
- 7 *Anular* is Hocquenghem’s spelling of *annular*, which means “ring-shaped,” but which Hocquenghem uses to describe the “group mode” of the anus, “a circle which is open to an infinity of directions and possibilities for plugging in, with no set places. The group annular mode (one is tempted to spell it ‘anular’) causes the ‘social’ of the phallic hierarchy, the whole house of cards of the ‘imaginary,’ to collapse” (*Homosexual Desire*, 111). In other words, homosexual desire is not oedipal but instead “is the operation of a desiring machine plugged into the anus” (111).
- 8 Pierre Klossowski (1905–2001) was a French writer and translator who wrote about the Marquis de Sade, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Charles Fourier, among others. The source of this reference is unknown.
- 9 Deleuze is referring to three famous French homosexual writers. André Gide (1869–1951), who received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1947, and Marcel Proust (1871–1922) are perhaps the best-known French modernist writers, both of whom wrote about homosexuality. Roger Peyrefitte (1907–2000) was most celebrated for his first novel, *Les amitiés particulières* (1943), or *Particular Friendships* (a term referring to close relationships between men in seminary). This novel describes homoerotic encounters in boarding school. He was a proponent of relationships between older men and younger men (teenagers).
- 10 Deleuze is referring to William S. Burroughs (1914–97), Beat-associated author of books such as *Naked Lunch*, *Queer*, and *The Soft Machine*, which Hocquenghem references obliquely in “Volutions,” and his son, William S. Burroughs Jr. (or III) (1947–81), who also wrote novels.
- 11 Tony Duvert (1945–2008) was a French novelist, well known in the late 1960s and 1970s, who wrote about homosexuality, sexual relationships between adults and children, and (critically) of the bourgeois family and child-rearing. In the 1980s, he withdrew from public life, specifically as tolerance for his sexual views waned.
- 12 Hocquenghem, *Homosexual Desire*, 11; translation modified.
- 13 This is a misremembered quotation from *Homosexual Desire*. The translation reads: “It is incomprehensible that the gay movement should be closely connected with the ecological movement. Nevertheless, it is so. In terms of desire, the motor car and family heterosexuality are one and the same enemy, however impossible it may be to express this in political logic” (142).
- 14 This volume, 92.
- 15 Hocquenghem, *Homosexual Desire*, 51; translation modified.
- 16 This volume, 86, 92; emphasis added.
- 17 This volume, 90.
- 18 Hocquenghem attended the École normale supérieure, one of the elite universities of France.
- 19 I am translating *sexe* as “gender” here, since it appears Deleuze is referring to

nonbinary gender. Above, I include both “sex” and “gender,” as Deleuze catalogs acts and identities in both registers. Deleuze also references Charles Fourier (1772–1837), a utopian socialist who influenced Hocquenghem. See Hocquenghem’s coauthored piece with René Schérer in this volume (32).

20 This volume, 110.

21 Hocquenghem, *Homosexual Desire*, 131; translation modified.

22 *Arcadian style* refers to the Arcadie Club, France’s first homophile organization, predating the radical FHAR. Deleuze is referring to an assimilationist gay politics.

VOLUTIONS

1 “Les lauriers sont coupés” is a phrase in an eighteenth-century children’s song and accompanying circle dance, “Nous n’irons plus au bois” (“We will go to the woods no more”). The song ends with the withering laurels already beginning to regrow. The phrase was also used as the title of an 1887 novel by Édouard Dujardin, which is sometimes considered to be the first novel to use stream of consciousness narration.

2 “Dress rehearsal” translates *répétition générale*, which contains the idea of repetition.

3 William Laws Calley Jr. (1943–) was a US Army officer convicted in a court-martial for murdering twenty-two unarmed South Vietnamese people during the Mỹ Lai Massacre in Vietnam on March 16, 1968. Over five hundred civilians were killed during the massacre. The trial took place in 1970, and his conviction led to widespread opposition. He was the only Army officer convicted for his role. He was initially sentenced to life imprisonment at Fort Leavenworth; in an appeal in 1971, President Nixon had him removed to house arrest at Fort Benning. The sentence was next reduced to twenty years and in 1974, his sentence was reduced to ten years, making him eligible for parole. This decision was overturned, and the sentence reinstated, but he was still paroled immediately.

4 *La matraque*, or police baton, was a symbol of state violence during May. See Kristin Ross’s discussion of “matraquage” in *May ’68 and Its Afterlives* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 27–39.

5 Adolphe Thiers (1797–1877) was a French politician who served as second elected president, and as first president of the Third Republic. During the Paris Commune in 1871, he built up army forces at Versailles and eventually led them to retake the city.

6 Pierre Vianson-Ponté (1920–79) was a French journalist. Hocquenghem is referring to his article of March 15, 1968, “When France Gets Bored,” which some took to prefigure the events of May ’68. The title echoes a pronouncement made about the July Monarchy before the 1848 Revolution.