

WITH A FOREWORD BY
GILLES DELEUZE

TRANSLATED BY
SCOTT BRANSON

GAY LIBERATION AFTER MAY

/68

**GUY
HOCQUENGHEM**

GAY LIBERATION **AFTER MAY '68**

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Lauren Berlant, Lee Edelman,
Benjamin Kahan, and Christina Sharpe

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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.

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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

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 [*volutés*] 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 flag 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