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Resistance to police authority in Brussels (1945-1975): the judicial construction of working-class violence

Résistances à l'autorité policière à Bruxelles (1945-1975) : la construction judiciaire de la violence populaire

Verzet tegen de politieautoriteit in Brussel (1945-1975): gerechtelijke aanpak van het geweld van de lagere volksklasse

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Resistance to police authority in Brussels (1945-1975): the judicial construction of working-class violence

Translation: Jane Corrigan

The study of the repression of resistance to the police in Brussels during the period between 1945 and 1975 invalidates the hypothesis of a phenomenon of rebellion among young people. The analysis of legal cases suggests that this resistance is the result of police interference in private conflicts. Men in their thirties who are most often from a disadvantaged background, frequent the public and semi-public spaces (street and pubs) of the urbanised municipalities of Brussels during their free time. Their involvement in violent interactions with their friends or wives – an assertion of their male identity or a release of physical energy – displeases authority figures, who convey middle-class standards of behaviour and intervene in an attempt to re-establish order. People with different ways of behaving clash in public as they try to impose their way of being. Police activity contributes to the criminalisation of working-class forms of social life and leisure.

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Introduction

1. The following excerpt from a statement (1961) provides an idea of the type of resistance (rebellions, insults and violence) to the police¹ in Brussels between 1945 and 1975, which we shall discuss here.

2. Police officer Guy D. declared:²

‘On 8 May 1961 around midnight, following an alert on behalf of an unidentified person, I went with my colleague Victor P. from our division to 7 Quai à la Houille, where two drunken men were fighting. At the scene, I saw the man named Lucien D. hitting the man named Simon F. in the face. The abovementioned colleague and I separated the two men. I dealt with Simon F., who was clearly drunk. He refused to give me his identity card and pushed me away violently. My colleague dealt with Lucien D., who showed no resistance. The patrol driving past saw that we were in difficulty and also intervened to help us. Lucien D. remained calm whereas Simon F. rebelled against the police officers and refused to show his identity card or to get into the police car. He struggled violently and let himself be dragged on the ground. He kicked and punched everything in his immediate surroundings. It took several police officers to immobilise him and to get him into the police vehicle to bring him to the police station. At the entrance to the police station, the person concerned continued to resist, in order not to be questioned by us in the state he was in. (...) Personally, I was not struck by him. The person concerned rebelled against me, but I was not hurt and will not report sick.’ Another special police officer declared: ‘I was on patrol when I passed Quai à la Houille and noticed that some colleagues were having difficulty separating two individuals who were fighting. (...) [We] helped them take

away the man named Simon F., who was clearly drunk, struggling, letting himself be dragged on the ground, and acting like a man who had lost control of himself. (...) The wife of the person concerned, Georgette L., whom we had not yet noticed, came up to us and said to her husband, “I’ve got the car keys and I’m going home.” Seeing that she was under the influence of alcohol, I immediately intervened, without – in my opinion and considering her reactions – applying the law. She, however, did not meet the required conditions for driving a vehicle, and I reacted wisely and preventively. This woman refused to show me her identity card and did not want to give me the keys to her car. I did not want to let her leave, feeling that it would have been dangerous to let her drive in the state she was in. Georgette L. turned round and declared once again, “I’m leaving and you won’t hold me back.” I took this woman by the arm and she turned round and slapped me quite violently in the face on the left cheek, causing my ear to ring. As it was clear to me that this woman intended to strike me again, I staved off her hand movement and slapped this woman before she was able to make a second attempt. (...) The woman went to the police station to lodge a complaint against me.’³

3. The research presented in this article constitutes the third stage in a large study on resistance to representatives of public order in Belgium (1880-1980) and more specifically in Brussels (1945-1975). It has already invalidated the hypothesis which is often favoured by researchers, regarding a young and collective phenomenon of rebellion, and has highlighted that resistance to police is mainly the product of individual conflicts between a police officer and a citizen. The latter is typically aged 25 to 40, and has a wife and children. Furthermore, the study of Brussels archives has allowed us to observe that resistance to the police is, in the vast majority of cases, the result of police interference in

¹ The penal code defines them in articles 269 to 282. See also ‘methodological introduction’.

² We have faithfully reproduced the statements, leaving any mistakes they may contain.

³ AEA, TCB, registry 6425, 1961.

situations of violent private conflicts (in families or between friends). The perpetrators of rebellion do not target the police specifically, yet, as the protagonists of private violence, they take it out on the police when they intervene in matters which – according to them – are none of their business [Skordou, 2010]. Furthermore, the analysis of the level of education of *rebels* suggests that they come from disadvantaged backgrounds. Although 6 out of 10 *rebels* are described as knowing how to ‘read and write well’, only 2.5% have received ‘developed’ education [Skordou, 2011:193].

4. This contribution to research on rebellion is aimed at supporting the hypothesis that – due to their presence in public space – the police meet with resistance when they intervene in the matters of a disadvantaged population.⁴ To this end, we wish to answer the following question: what do we learn about police surveillance from studying the resistance which they encounter? And, according to the vocabulary used by Q. Deluermoz [2009], what events and resistance does this ‘state presence’ create in the capital?

5. We shall focus on Brussels during the period between 1945 and 1975. The Thirty Glorious Years are interesting for the study of ordinary conflicts between citizens and the police in several respects. Firstly, they have hardly been studied in the past. Secondly, at the end of World War II, the police entered a stabilisation phase [Majerus & Rousseaux, 2004]. Finally, the years in question are not characterised by the same level of sociopolitical unrest as that seen in Belgium before the Great War although it is the capital which interests us, as it is the administrative centre of the government, where political authority is concentrated. As pointed out by R. Abs [1985: 9], a large part of the political and economic activity took place along the River Senne and a significant share of conflicts were likely to arise between the working population and the representatives of the police. Furthermore, during this period, the territory of Brussels experienced many socioeconomic

transformations. The nineteen municipalities were becoming increasingly urbanised and the Region reached a historic peak in population density. The many medium-sized companies established in the urban area employed 43% of the working population as workers and, thanks to the development of business, 33% of workers were employees. Furthermore, almost 20% of the workforce employed in the urban area did not reside there and therefore travelled to the city on a daily basis [Abs, 1985: 65].

1. Methodological introduction

6. This study intends to analyse the suppression of the rebellion phenomenon. This may or may not be defined from a penal perspective. The relevance of the dual definition is based on the difference between what the penal code defines as a crime against public order and the phenomenon created by the application of the code.

7. In the first case, we shall refer to the Belgian penal code of 1867 which dedicates Title 5⁵ to crimes and misdemeanours against the public order committed by private individuals. Articles 269 to 282 concern three categories of offence: rebellion (resistance), insults (verbal violence) and acts of violence (physical violence) against authority figures. These offences are defined by the quality of the victims targeted. The authority figures concerned are state officials, constable and police officers, administrative police officers and officials, and railway officers. They act on behalf of the state authority and, when they are ‘attacked’, they are targeted above all as representatives of this authority. We have chosen to study only resistance or violence towards police constables and officers. They represent the majority of cases reported and prosecuted and therefore allow conclusions to be drawn as regards the nature of ordinary rebellious conflicts.

⁴ Disadvantaged in terms of cultural and economic capital: working class according to O. Schwartz. According to the author, ‘the term “working class” may be associated with the idea of a worker whose only status is that of wage-earning producer: he is a subordinate in the factory and in the work unit; he is subject to the hazards of the job market; he is strongly excluded from the various categories of goods which constitute social wealth. Submission, insecurity and dispossession characterise – to different degrees – the working-class condition.’ [Schwartz, 1990: 63].

⁵ It is applicable for the entire period under study, apart from the abrogation of art. 270 concerning the rebellions against telegraph service officials in 1930.

8. The 'sociological' approach to rebellion is the object – and the product – of this study. We focus on the characteristics of actions of resistance to the police and of those who carry out these actions. This involves understanding the phenomenon caused by the application of the penal code. We favour a local definition of the phenomenon for two reasons. Rebellious events have different characteristics according to the place and period of their occurrence. They are thus studied differently according to the source of the analysis.

9. More precisely, we shall focus on the judicial construction of the phenomenon. The choice of the term 'judicial' is justified by the sources we have studied. We shall examine a sample of cases of rebellious acts which came before the criminal court of Brussels. These involved confrontations between citizens and representatives of public order which were the object of criminal proceedings, and reports of events disturbing the police and the judicial machinery. There are therefore many conflicts not subject to judicial control which are not included in this analysis. Due to the significant number of cases, we have decided to carry out an exhaustive analysis of a random sample of only 272 cases which came before the criminal court [Skordou, 2010].

10. In order to understand what the source of the cases dealt with represents within the huge number of cases submitted to the public prosecutor's office, we have based ourselves on a brief study of the prosecution registers from the Brussels public prosecutor's office. The prosecution registers, available for the period between 1946 and 1966,⁶ reveal the nature of the cases which are submitted on a daily basis to the public prosecutor's office, as well as their treatment under criminal law. We have examined the cases submitted during the first week of June and the first week of November (in order to neutralise a possible effect of the season on the acts), over a period of five years. We have used 1947 as our starting point and, by applying a five-year interval, we end the study with 1966. This investigation reveals that resistance to the police which was the object of a police or gendarmerie statement went before the magistrate in 50% of cases on average.

More precisely, this amounted to 46% of cases in 1947, 37% in 1952 and 64% in 1957. In 1961, this rate remained unchanged until it fell to 46% in 1966 (last year for the availability of registers). These data confirm that the decision to study cases from the criminal court of Brussels allows us to carry out a qualitative analysis of a significant part of the phenomenon of rebellious acts.

2. The method of intervention of the police

11. As a reminder, this study is aimed at analysing the object of police surveillance and the phenomenon it produces. In this context, the first pertinent element is the method of intervention of the police. Given that we are studying the cases which have been dealt with, it is important to know the plaintiff.

12. In the introductory excerpt, the first police officer declared that he intervened 'following an alert on behalf of an unidentified person', whereas the second police officer wrote: 'I was on patrol when...'. We have analysed the first police statement in each file in the sample in order to determine the most frequent methods of intervention used by the police. We observed that 50% of police officers were on duty and on patrol when they had to intervene in a situation which turned into a rebellion. If we add to this significant share the cases in which the police officers were on duty at the police station (6%) or engaged in traffic control (5%) and in transporting accused persons (2%), no less than 63% of resistance to the police or gendarmerie occurred in places which the police officers went to on their initiative and for reasons related to their duties. However, 29% of cases occurred because a private individual (witness or victim) requested the police (by telephone or by going to the police station). The remaining 8% of cases occurred when a police officer was carrying out a capture order or when an off-duty police officer witnessed an offence and asked his colleagues to intervene.

⁶ For the present study, we used files of cases dealt with between 1945 and 1975. However, for the succinct study of prosecution registers from the public prosecutor's office, we limited ourselves to the available sources between 1946 and 1966.

Figure 1: distribution of resistance to the police in a 24-hour period and scene of the conflicts, Brussels, 1945-1975 average (Source: author's sample taken from the state archives in Anderlecht, cases dealt with in the Brussels criminal court).

3. The temporality of events

13. In the above excerpt, the police officers arrived 'around midnight' at the location of a brawl which evidently started during a moment of relaxation. We have studied the moments during which the events took place: of the 248 cases (for which we know the time of the conflict with the police), 66% occurred during the evening or the night (between 6pm and 5.55am), compared to 34% during the rest of the day (figure 1).

14. The majority of events therefore appear to have occurred during non-working hours when people were with their families, involved in leisure activities, relaxing and 'socialising'. The police officer thus appeared – once again according to the vocabulary used by Q. Deluermoz – as a spoilsport who contributes to the production or amplification of tensions during moments 'outside the usual framework of urban life' [Deluermoz, 2009: 449].

4. Geography of rebellious acts

15. The territory studied corresponds to the administrative district of Brussels-Capital (art. 61, law of 26 July 1971), which includes the Region's 19 municipalities. This does not exactly correspond to the judiciary district, but the number of cases which took place outside the space under study is limited.

16. The central and highly urbanised part of the municipality of Brussels-City (pentagon and extensions corresponding to the current European Quarter and Avenue Louise), accounted for 37% of the cases of resistance to the police (92 events). The neighbouring municipalities surrounding the centre accounted for 51% of conflicts. 35 events occurred in the northeast, in Schaerbeek and Saint-Josse-ten-Noode.

17. In the southeast, where the municipalities of Ixelles and Etterbeek have been urbanised since the 19th century, 30 events were recorded. In the southwest, Saint-Gilles and Forest account for 34 events. These municipalities have two faces, with residential and green neighbourhoods as well as urbanised and commercial areas. In the working-class

	events (n)	events (% of total)	events / 1000 inhab.	street (%)	pub (%)	employee (%)	manual worker (%)	women (%)
centre	92	37	1,06	62	18	24	33	15
northeast <i>Schaerbeek, Saint-Josse-ten-Noode</i>	35	14	0,25	49	26	22	37	30
southeast <i>Ixelles, Etterbeek</i>	30	12	0,20	47	23	24	45	18
southwest <i>Saint-Gilles, Forest</i>	34	14	0,32	47	21	21	60	14
west <i>Anderlecht, Molenbeek</i>	28	11	0,18	68	11	25	34	19
north <i>Berchem-Sainte-Agathe, Ganshoren, Koekelberg, Jette, Laeken, Haren, Neder-Over-Hembeek, Evere</i>	15	6	0,08	-	-	-	-	-
east <i>Woluwe-Saint-Lambert, Woluwe-Saint-Pierre</i>	8	3	0,11	-	-	-	-	-
south <i>Uccle, Watermael-Boitsfort, Auderghem</i>	4	2	0,03	-	-	-	-	-

Table 1: Distribution of resistance to the police within the Brussels urban area, 1945-1975 (source: author's inventory taken from the state archives in Anderlecht, cases dealt with in the Brussels criminal court).

and industrial municipalities in the west of the capital (Anderlecht and Molenbeek-Saint-Jean), 28 events were recorded and prosecuted.

18. Finally, the phenomenon of resistance to the police was hardly seen at all in the north of the urban area (Berchem-Sainte-Agathe, Koekelberg, Jette, Laeken, Haren, Neder-Over-Hembeek and Evere), the east (Woluwe-Saint-Lambert and Woluwe-Saint-Pierre) and the south (Uccle, Boitsfort and Auderghem) (with 15, 8 and 4 events respectively for each group of municipalities). The green outskirts of the urban area were scarcely affected by this phenomenon. The city centre and surrounding municipalities therefore constitute the main scene of the condemned resistance, accounting for 88% of the occurrences of the phenomenon under study.

19. By comparing the demographic data (resident population) for the municipalities in the central part of the urban area and the number of rebellious conflicts in each zone, a clear overrepresentation of the phenomenon in the centre of Brussels is observed. This observation allows us to relativise the absolute figures and to consider the demographic decline of the centre of the urban area. From 184,838 inhabitants in 1947, the population of the municipality of Brussels-City decreased by 14,349 inhabitants in 1961 and by 26,650 inhabitants 24 years later. A decreasing trend (less striking) was observed in the southeast of Brussels (Etterbeek and Ixelles) while the northeast and the southwest of the district maintained an almost stable number of inhabitants. Finally, the demographic increase in the east of the district was spectacular: the combined population of Woluwe-Saint-Pierre and Woluwe-Saint-Lambert increased from 44,799 in 1947 to 88,476 inhabitants in 1971. Furthermore, the sociologically selective character of the emptying of the city centre is well known, and in particular the pronounced socio-spatial polarisation to which it contributed [Keesteloot and Loopmans, 2009]. From the 1950s, the neighbourhoods in the centre, as well as the western part of the inner ring (the poor area) were home to more inhabitants with low incomes and to working-class populations, in particular following the periurbanisation of the most well-to-do populations.

20. The observation of the high concentration of rebellions in the centre of the urban area, even though its population is decreasing, supports our hypothesis: the disadvantaged populations from the working

class who live, work and spend their free time in these central municipalities are more often the object of police checks.

Figure 2: Share of people charged with rebellious acts, within the total population, 1945-1975 (source: author's sample taken from the state archives in Anderlecht, cases dealt with, and 196 population census).

5. The scene of the conflicts

21. The files allow an examination of the specific nature of the places where the rebellions took place within the five areas. The analysis lists streets, bars, private dwellings and means of public transport. Streets constitute the main scene (62% of all cases) of violence between representatives of public order and citizens, followed by bars with 21%. In the southeast area, most of the other events took place in private dwellings, whereas in the southwest the events occurred mainly in public transport (trains, buses, trams).

22. As suggested in the study by P. Poncela [2010: 18] regarding individuals who spend time in the streets, the importance of these places may be explained by the fact that '(...) people who need the street most are those who have limited access to private spaces, such as home or places of work or leisure activities (...)'. These people experience a chain of consequences due to their vulnerability: being underprivileged means having less space for respite and relaxation, which thus leads to increased use of exterior spaces (street and pub) and to associated behaviour such as public drunkenness and brawls. These people are therefore exposed to more control, leading to situations of rebellion.

23. The location of pubs experienced a slight change between 1950 and 1969, with a decrease in number since the war, without disappearing. 'Pubs are still – more than groceries – a function which is concentrated in the city centre, following the increase in the number of workplaces (offices), above all being a place for relaxation and evenings out in the city centre' [Grimmeau & al., 2007]. The importance of pubs as scenes of rebellious conflicts is explained first of all by the combination of drinking and talking, which allows a distancing from the realities of being disadvantaged. As underlined by O. Schwartz [1990: 331] '(...) at the pub, time is given rhythm only by two great pleasures: drinking and talking. (...) It is not only the alcohol which places the outside world at a distance – it is also the conversation. (...) The appeal of these places is due to the vagueness of social ties and the setting aside of major constraints.' Furthermore, drinking in pubs is cheaper than having one's own wine cellar. Domestic and export beers are cheaper than wine or spirits; the sale of the latter was forbidden in pubs by the Vandervelde law of 1919. As observed by J. Delcourt and G. Lamarque [1960], a combination of conversation and drinking suits the fatigue at the end of a working day. Pubs therefore have the status of public sphere where the Brussels urban working class continues to assemble.⁷

Figure 3: Distribution of pubs in the Brussels Region, 1969 (source: Grimmeau & al., 2007).

⁷ 'Finally, the places with the greatest level of resistance may be even smaller, such as bars and other establishments where wine is sold. These places are separate from the urban space, half public, half private, marked by a specific type of sociability, and are a recurring scene of the most difficult interventions, even if the help of a police officer is requested or if he is there as a client.' [Deluermoz, 2009: 449]

24. Like the geographic distribution of rebellions, the scene of conflicts points to an intervention by representatives of public order in the matters of the working class, with the events occurring in the neighbourhoods they live in and the places they frequent.

25. The strong presence of alcohol is associated with the high level of representation of streets, pubs and bars as the scene of rebellious conflicts. Three elements must be highlighted. Firstly, the national legal statistics underline the fact that people charged with rebellious acts and voluntary bodily harm were also charged with 'drunkenness' (alcohol consumption – criminalised or not – is significantly present among those charged with offences which fall into these two categories in legal statistics). Furthermore, the study of cases from the criminal court of Brussels from 1945 to 1975 show that slightly less than half of the people charged with rebellious acts were declared by the police to have been 'under the influence of alcohol', and slightly less than a third were charged simultaneously with public drunkenness or drink-driving. Finally, the analysis of incriminations by the criminal court reveals that the clauses incriminating public drunkenness and drink-driving were used in 26% of cases as motives for legal proceedings. Furthermore, in 86% of cases, the trial judge – following the initial statement made by the police or gendarmerie – applied laws on drunkenness.⁸ These elements indicate the strong interdependence of the two types of offence at judicial level. They also reinforce the hypothesis that police surveillance in Brussels takes the working-class public during their leisure time as its object, which becomes clear due to the occurrence of events in the neighbourhoods and places frequented by them during non-working hours.

6. The characteristics of the 'rebel'

26. As mentioned above, the main perpetrators of rebellious acts were 'settled' in their private and professional lives, over the age of twenty-five (61% were aged 25 to 44), married or divorced and had children.

27. We observe that 40% of the people charged (for acts which occurred in the central part of the urban area) were manual workers and were concentrated in the southwest area. Employees (23%) were equally represented in the five areas, whereas shopkeepers (representing 8% of the cases analysed and slightly overrepresented in the city centre), drivers and artists represent a small percentage of the sample. Housewives represent 7% of the sample. Finally, people with a university degree represent a negligible percentage in all areas. The high level of representation of workers in the cases studied is in keeping with the preceding observations and reinforces our idea: police intervention in the geographic territories and public or semi-public places frequented by working-class populations encounters resistance. Furthermore, Brussels constituted the first industrial centre of the country during the 25 years following World War II and therefore attracted workers who came to work in industry [Vandermotten, Leclercq, Cassiers, Wayens, 2009].

28. 82% of the *rebels* were men who were often involved in a row before police intervention. Although women represent a bigger share in the northeast area of Brussels, their overall presence is not very strong.

29. Two elements must be highlighted with respect to male working-class violence. The first concerns the phenomenon of male and public violence as an assertion of manliness. This originates in the demonstration of dramatised violence in the street, which is an attempt to convince the population of a man's respectability and honour [Vrints, 2009]. In this context, the presence and intervention of the police 'changes the balance between formal and informal sanction' [Deluermoz, 2009] and constitutes a source of humiliation in working-class neighbourhoods.⁹ The link between manliness and bravery clearly does not concern the middle class, as they consider public violence to be vulgar and unacceptable. The police 'convey middle-class standards of behaviour' [Vrints, 2009] and clash with the working-class population, who demonstrate working-class behaviour in public.

⁸ Articles 1 and 14 of the A.L. of 14 November 1939, in application of the law of 7 September 1939 on public drunkenness.

⁹ 'The intrusion [of the police officer] may or may not be justified, and may or may not lead to an arrest; it constitutes a sort of humiliation which is particularly intense in the context of the street, especially in a society in which honour plays an essential role.' [Deluermoz, 2009: 443]

30. The second element – based on the study by O. Schwartz – concerns violence as a release of physical energy. According to him, the need for physical conflict is not always a way to restore one's honour, but is sometimes simply a way to release physical energy. This need to release tension physically shows itself in several ways, 'through a Stakhanovist commitment to work, agonistic behaviour and drunkenness' [Schwartz, 1990: 299], which are different expressions of the same model referred to as *the uninhibited display of strength* [1990: 299]. Furthermore, as we saw in our sample, drunkenness characterises a great majority of cases of conflicts with police.

31. This violence is situated at the crossroads of gender and class (more specifically, material conditions – above all with respect to work – which characterise the working class), and is also expressed within marriage. Here, a logic of honour reasserts its rights, as underlined by O. Schwartz: 'There is a contradiction in the way families function, whereby the actual running of domestic affairs is feminine and the fiction of authority must be masculine' [1990:425]. A. Vrints also notes that 'the principle that a man was allowed to use force to impose authority over his wife when she did not fulfil her (domestic) duties (with regards to him), was an important exception to the rule that a man could not hit a woman without the risk of damaging his reputation.'¹⁰

32. It is surprising to note the frequent involvement of representatives of public order in such situations. The case established by the Brussels public prosecutor's office regarding marital violence committed by Simon F. against Georgette L. illustrates this. The brief summary of their history of violence is as follows. Georgette declared that her husband was addicted to alcohol and that he beat and threatened her. She made several complaints about him to the police which were never followed up. It was only after the conflict between her husband and Lucien D. that Simon F. was charged. This matter led to a statement regarding insults to a police officer made by Georgette L. and to the sentencing of Lucien D. for assault and battery against Simon F. This is – to

say the least – a surprising way of redefining private violence, which is not disturbing enough to justify a trial unless a representative of public order is involved as a victim.¹¹ This example of specifically male violence aimed at a woman may therefore be the object of a police check when it is visible. Thus, marital violence may degenerate into a rebellion or even be replaced by the latter.

Conclusion

33. The study of the suppression of resistance to the police in Brussels during the period between 1945 and 1975 corroborates the abovementioned hypothesis that – due to their presence in the public space – the police meet with resistance when they intervene in the matters of a disadvantaged population. The combined frequent use of public space by working-class populations and the violent characteristics of this use lead to a higher representation of certain profiles in the source of the study.

34. Firstly, the conflicts arose in places where police officers were carrying out duties and patrols. More specifically, the centre of Brussels and the surrounding urbanised municipalities – inhabited by workers with modest incomes and frequented during free time – were the scene of the great majority of conflicts. Furthermore, the specific settings for rebellions were streets and pubs, both of which have the status of working-class public spheres. The consumption of alcohol in pubs or in the street is a significant factor prompting the rebellions which occurred especially at night.

35. Secondly, the profile of the '*rebel*' is that of a man in his thirties with a wife and children and a stable job. Most of the time he has a low level of education and has a working-class background, and was involved in a row before the arrival of the police and the start of the rebellion. The row and the public demonstration of violence are the result of

¹⁰ Op.cit., Vrints, 2009.

¹¹ A sample of cases of marital violence which have been redefined as resistance to authority will be the object of a future study.

an assertion of his manliness and working-class culture, which clashes with the middle-class culture conveyed by the police officer. The latter often comes from a disadvantaged background as well,¹² but represents an order which opposes the release of repressed physical energy.

36. Finally, two populations with different codes of behaviour confront each other and try to dominate in the public scene. 'State presence' [Deluermoz, 2009] clashes with working-class society, which – through 'cultural continuity, autonomy and social function' [Vrints 2009: 99] – remains faithful to violent means of communication and the occupation of these spaces. It produces the criminalisation of what Scott Haine refers to as 'folkloric forms of expression and café life'.

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¹² As regards the working-class social origin of police officers, see Keunings, L., Rousseaux, X., Majerus, B., 2004 as well as J. Klein, 2010 and B. Weinberger, 1995.

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