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Primitive Revolt in the French *Banlieues*
Essay on the Fall 2005 Riots *

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Primitive Revolt in the French *Banlieues*

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The riots that followed the deaths of two teenagers in Clichy-sous-Bois on October 27, 2005, and that spread throughout the nation for more than three weeks marked the political and social landscape of France. They imposed, at least for a time, the presence of the “banlieues” on a public whose opinion of them was largely indifferent. As with each significant riot of the last twenty-five years, the French press and French society “uncovered” the underlying “web of problems”: social inequalities, unemployment, discrimination, racism, police brutality, and the formation of ghettos. With each riot as well, after the turmoil of the event and the return to order, after the calls for civil rest and voter registration, the question disappears little by little, and “society” turns away from a problem that is undoubtedly recurrent, but that it cannot come to “comprehend” nor master. And despite the significance of the mobilization of the French intellectual community through publications and colloquiums, a few months later, public opinion seems satisfied with the absence of a measure of the amplitude of the riots, with the silence of politicians and government, and with a restoring of order. Repression and silence seem to be the only “responses,” or absence of a response, that the riots have incited. For this reason, the amplitude of the event must be underscored. At the worst of the incidents, on November 13th, 11,500 police officers and security guards were mobilized. 217 were injured during these weeks. The French Federation of insurance companies estimates the overall cost of the destruction to be about 200 million euros, 23 million of which is due to the 10,000 cars that were burned. 233 public buildings and 74 private buildings were defaced or burned. The National Education (board?) counted 255 attacks on property or on buildings, most notably in the junior high schools, confirming that schools had been one of the primary targets of rioters. But gymnasiums, post offices, businesses, and places of worship were also hit. On the evening of November 30, the

Interior Minister brought in 4770 people for questioning, which resulted in 4402 detainees and the incarceration of 763 people.ⁱ

What happened during these three weeks of violence? Not one investigation into the heart of the riots has been completed. It is therefore by adopting an approach of “prudent ignorance” to use Stanley Cavell’s expression, by depending on the numerous pieces of information furnished by the press, especially the words of the rioters, that it seems possible to investigate the nature of the riots, their orchestration and their significance.ⁱⁱ In fact, the rioters were much less silent than many commentators report, even if they came out of a milieu where access to public and political forums is difficult, if not impossible. The riot allowed an expression, which the press widely communicated through numerous reports and interviews. But this expression is not part of the usual framework, particularly the instrumental or rational framework, of the political system or traditional military action. It was largely ignored in the numerous commentaries which in some ways “covered” the rioter’s voice, forbidding understanding of the rioters, indeed refusing to understand them. Without making the rioters the bearers of a social movement, without romanticizing them, it is at least possible to begin with a favorable outlook to try to understand them, to suppose that the voice of the rioters has a meaning, moreso than to seek to understand “why” the rioters made the choice of direct action and violence. This voice can also enlighten us on the “social significance” of such an orientation.ⁱⁱⁱ This supposes reading the riot as a form of collective and political action in order to then try to decipher the mechanisms and provide an interpretation of them.

1. *The Riot as Collective Action*

On October 16, 2005, in the Mas du Tareau neighborhood in Valux-en-Velin, two young men tried to escape a crime fighting Brigade on a stolen scooter. They fell. One of the two seriously injured his ankle and was hospitalized. A rumor started in the neighborhood: he was in a coma because of the police action. Fifteen years after the death of Thomas Claudio, in the same place and also following a police chase, riots broke out again. Disgraced and outraged, the “youth” affronted police for several nights. The sign of a constant tension, according to observers, between institutions and the population of the ghetto of Lyon, and an illustration of the “permanent battle with police” in which

the “youth” engage, the Vaulx-en-Velin riots of 2005 generated no particular “emotion” and gave rise to virtually no political interest, which sets them apart from those of 1990 that had constituted a considerable social event. In 2005, they are inscribed in a quarter of a century’s history of French ex-urban area during which time incidents and confrontations with the police have multiplied and “urban violence” has become banal. On April 1, 2005, in Aubervilliers, a young man on a scooter killed himself when trying to escape a patrol of the BAC. A riot broke out which lasted for several evenings. Cars and commercial warehouses were burned, the city property destroyed, and the “youth” affronted police. On October 27, 2005, in the La Duchère area of Lyon, ten cars were burned the day after the destruction of an apartment building in the presence of the Minister of Social Affairs and the mayor of the town. *“An act which seems purely ludic,”* according to the Mayor, *“with no other motive than to play on media attention.”* On October 27, 2005, when two young teenagers died during an attempt to escape a police inspection in Clichy-sous-Bois, an identical chain of events repeated themselves: the same night, incidents broke out in the commune. A silent march was organized, and calls for peace, respect and dignity were made by local authorities and families. Then, for many days, the affronts and the violence started up again before subsiding. Typical logic and sequences of events were broken when the riot entered into a phase of progressive extension, first reaching the towns of the Paris region, then those of France as a whole, and transformed into a political event. They reached a culminating point on the nights of November 7th and 8th, nights during which 1500 cars were burned and 274 communes affected the nation over. “Peace” was restored on November 17, albeit after three weeks of incidents, affronts and acts of violence.

As with all of the events, the Fall 2005 riots brought forth elements of continuity and of “novelty”. The repertoire of actions of rioters and the chain of events inscribe them in the continuity of riots that have surfaced in France over the last 25 years. In general, incidents with police, often the death of a resident of a neighborhood, generate an intense emotion which provokes incidents and affronts between the “youth” and police, the burning of cars, the destruction of public buildings, sometimes looting. Elsewhere, silent manifestations are organized and the victim’s family calls for peace and justice without managing to (find out why this happened). Then, after a few days,

emotions subside somewhat and peace is restored. Regularly, some of these riots become “events” in the political sense of the term: they spark emotion and debates that place the question of the “ghettoes” under one form or another in public discourse. Symbolically, at least, the rioters are the center of attention, without however managing to be understood: the meaning of the riot is the object of political and ideological discussion or debate brought about by political leaders or intellectuals who have little connection with the urban outskirts. The riots of Minguettes in 1981, those of Vaulx-en-Velin of 1990, and those of Toulouse-Le Mirail of 1998 have thus become large scale events. They have sparked numerous political debates, interventions by a diverse body of actors, campaigns in favor of voter registration, moral condemnations...The particularity of the 2005 riots lies not in their initial unfolding, all unfortunately very common, nor even in the fact that they became a political event, which had already been the case in the past, but in their expansion to almost 300 cities across the country, an expansion which is precisely what made it a large scale event and which, in a certain way, changed the nature of the riots. The 2005 riot, and that is perhaps its essential characteristic, was marked by its amplitude and ubiquitousness. It was not a local phenomenon. It was not limited to the hardest ghettos, having affected many cities “without a history.”^{iv} Whatever the reasons, and whatever the rioters wanted to express, they did it in the same manner in all of the towns involved.

The riot is thus a collective action. It does not stem from ordinary delinquency nor from a prolonged culture of violence. Even if it is accompanied by violence, destruction and looting, even if it is “unconventional”, that is to say that it unfolds outside of legitimate institutional mechanisms unlike a worker’s strike or a protest, it stems first and foremost from an understanding of social and political mechanisms which condemn the formation and orientation of social and collective movements. In other words, the riot belongs to the “normal” repertoire of political action.^v It thus leads to a perception of “ordinary” behaviors that stem from it and not the inverse. The worker’s strike allows us to understand the extent to which worker “breaks the law,” whether it be sabotage or refusing to work for example, cannot be reduced to a simple delinquency that is more or less anomalous. It was necessary, on the contrary, to inscribe them into a larger understanding and see in them one of the dimensions of class conscience (consciousness).

It is the same with the riots: they shed light on ordinary behaviors, individual or collective, violent or remarkably delinquent, which must also be understood as a product of it and not the inverse.

The riot possesses its own logic. It is the doing of the rioters whose behaviors, if judged by their recurrence and regularity, are strongly socialized. There has been a sort of riot “ritual” established in France since 1981. Cars are burned, sometimes buildings, schools or warehouses. The police intervene and confrontations take place several nights in a row, stones and Molotov cocktails on one side, tear gas bombs and nightstick beatings on the other. The violence is very controlled here and there: unlike British or American riots, there are no deaths, very few injured, and no looting, with rare exception. Firearms are not used and police seek to keep their distance to avoid direct confrontation. Violence is aimed primarily at private property (cars) and public property (buildings) along the close perimeter of the neighborhood affected. Peace is generally restored after a few nights of follow-up incidents, sometimes a few scuffles, sometimes many insults launched here and there and the arresting of a few dozen youth. These relatively “gentle” riots, which for rioters are sometimes akin to a game, are extremely frequent in the banlieue neighborhoods and happen repeatedly on more or less of a large scale, in a regular and identical manner: practically not a trimester goes by without a riot of this type in a neighborhood or two, and whatever the location of its outbreak, it always has the same characteristics. Beyond the violence utilized, the recurrence of the manner of action and of the unfolding of events makes for a sort of collective and political ritual. For nor are the rioters particularly silent. Through the journalists’ reports, they affirm their presence and give their “explanations” of the riot or express their sentiments on their situation. They cannot then be reduced to “dangerous classes” who are a menace to civilized society. Nor would they know to be the unconscious reflection of a situation of need/lack/want. In his work which has since become a classic, historian Eric Hobsbawm demonstrates that the riot has often been an effective means of collective negotiation for populations which are impoverished and deprived of access to conventional mechanisms of political action. This was the case, for example, in the world of the worker before the development of unions, in urban populations deprived of representation or even in community movements in developing countries.^{vi} The riot is the event of the “primitives

of the revolt” in the sense that it is an act of vengeance and politics of populations that the institutional system cannot or does not want to integrate, “primitives” who call on it for the values of this society against social order that they judge to be immoral and which at the same time reclaims their entrance into this social order, their recognition. The riot is a “primitive” political movement, void of ideology and rules, since the populations that bring it remain outside of and opposed to the “we” of institutions, but who, nonetheless, aim to provoke a “reaction” or “reforms” on the part of institutions. It is a “strategy” of overloading the institutional system on the part of populations who are alienated from it, overloading at the top by its strong moral dimension and at the bottom by its use of violence.

2. *Police, Injustice and Moral Indignation*

The riot is marked by above all by its anti-police dimension. It breaks out following incidents with police and aims at confrontation with the police. This was already the case in France in the 18th Century when arrests of beggars or interventions/interferences of the *maréchaussée* were frequently settled by quarrels and even riots.^{vii} In the 1960’s, most of the riots in the black ghettos in the United States happened following incidents with police, as in Watts in 1965 or in Detroit in 1967. The same was true in Great Britain in the 1980’s and 1990’s. In 1976, in the Notting Hill area of London, a riot broke out following an arrest. In 1985 in Tottenham, the death of a resident during the search of his house incited a riot. In 1992 in Bristol, the death of two young people attempting to escape police in a stolen car also unleashed a riot. The French riots of the past twenty years are no exception to this rule. On December 18, 1997, a young citizen of the Duchere area in Lyon, 24 year old Fabrice Fernandez, was killed in a police station by a police officer with an automatic rifle. A few days later, a silent protest took place in the neighborhood in his memory. His mother “preached ” to the “youth” present and called for peace but was unable to prevent violent incidents or confrontations with police from breaking out shortly thereafter, which degenerated into a riot. The chronicle of “ex-urban” riots in France is one of great regularity: at virtually the same time as the Duchère incidents, riots broke out in the Parisian suburbs in Dammarieles-lys. One year later, in the Mirail area of Toulouse, violent riots followed the death of

a young 17-year old man who was killed by police. The Clichy-sous-Bois riot of 2005 was set off by the same mechanisms: they were incited by the death of two young men trying to escape the police. The riot thus arises from a problem of social control: it is the protest or reaction to an attempt by institutions to repress or to control the behaviors of which the informal social controls of society do not manage to take charge.^{viii}

It remains that the incident, which can be more or less dramatic (sometimes a simple altercation with a police officer directing traffic suffices, as in Handsworth in 1985), would not be sufficient enough in and of itself to unleash the riot. In any case, it seems like the result of a local or national history marked by tension, violence, and opposition between the police and the population of the affected neighborhood more so than the product of ordinary “urban violence”. In the sixties in the United States and in the eighties in Great Britain, the official commissions had abundantly emphasized this dimension. The declining relations between police and the residents of the neighborhoods involved, the young men in particular, are considered to be one of the essential factors of the riots. It is still the same in France in 2005. The tension and the difficulties between the youth of popular neighborhoods, and in particular the youth belonging to ethnic minorities, are already a familiar story that have profoundly marked the social life in the “banlieues.” In 1980, the death of two young Maghrebis, killed by police in Strasbourg and Valenton had sparked the organization of protests against the excess of police as well as concerts. In 1983, the fatal injury of a youth of Minguettes in Vénissieux was the origin of the March for Equality. The long litany of incidents and deaths constitutes a sort of “identitary memory” of the neighborhoods, a memory of very degraded relations with police. As well, a quarter of a century later, the words of the young residents are almost identical, expressing the same sentiment of hostility vis-à-vis the police and the same sentiment of injustice. In the housing projects of Clichy-sous-Bois, the extremely numerous amounts of graffiti clearly state it without evading the subject: *“Fuck the police”, “Off limits to .”* The testimonies collected by journalists are also indelibly imprinted with the hostility towards and rejection of the police: *“Cops of the BAC are always looking for the use of force. They say “bougnoles,” “fuck your race”. The police here are of a new generation. For a simple identity check, they insult you daily. I was stopped by the RER because I had put my feet*

on the bench. OK, you should not put your feet on the bench. But just for that, the police officers called for backup. Three cars were waiting for me at the Raincy train station. The cops said to me: "why don't you stay in your trashy neighborhood?" tells a resident of the projects to the journalist who interviews him.^{ix} Whatever the "reality" and the "responsibilities" in the unfolding of the "incidents", the rejection of law enforcement and their methods, notably the weight that more or less systematic identity checks carry, constitutes one of the characteristics of life in the *banlieue* neighborhoods. The vast majority of residents of the areas are in agreement with this perception and share a feeling of understanding for this hostility towards the police frequently accused of being more likely to check and harass the youth of the neighborhood than to protect the population.

Hostility between police and the populace is an ancient and generalized reality. Institutional surveillance of forms of popular sociability often go hand in hand with misunderstandings, but more especially with acts of violence and a sense of identity that is very strongly imprinted with a lively defiance vis-a-vis the police. Reciprocally, the police is convinced of the violent and illicit character of numerous popular practices.^x In recent times, this hostility has mixed with the impression that beyond a control of popular sociability, police have been urged on by an explicit racism: *"They do not respect our children. I believe that it's because, in the neighborhood, everyone is black or Arab. There is racism,"* explains the security guard of an apartment building in Chêne-Pointu in Clichy-sous-Bois.^{xi} In fact, for about ten years or so, the number of incidents between the police and young "immigrant" Maghrebis or Africans have greatly multiplied. A statistical study on the evolution of "Infractions against agents of public authority," in other words for the essential police officers in a court in the Paris region, shows that among concerned minors/minors involved/such minors, 38% are of Maghrebi origin and 28% are of African origin, a proportion which has greatly increased since 1995. Moreover, the same study demonstrates a strong propensity of the courts to give the harshest sentences, especially prison terms, to the young Marghrebis, which translates into a "irrefutable and systematic discrimination."^{xii} The police practice direct discrimination towards young Maghrebis and blacks belonging to sensitive housing projects, a discrimination which feeds tensions and favors violence during interventions.

It is accented by the general impression of impunity from which law enforcement benefits, which can thus, in the eyes of the youth, deprive them of all rights and exert an uncontrolled power over them. *“The cops insult us in the street and smack us around in their cars when they arrest us.”*^{xiii} Incarceration through repeated and systematic checks of young Blacks and Maghrebis, either in the street or in stair wells, night patrols, detainings for not having identity papers or for a simple infraction and perhaps most especially police interventions “by force,” establish an almost permanent climate of tension. Very often, through the increased number of checks, the young people “know” the police officers almost personally, know those who are “good cops” and those who are quick to insult or hit with the baton and inversely, the police officers “know” the youth and invent a sort of violent and humiliating “game” with them, very often marked by explicit racism.^{xiv} In the United States in the sixties, the Kerner Commission had already underscored the importance of the antagonism between police and the Black youth of the ghettos and the weight of racism. The Scarman Commission would later make the same observations in the eighties in Great Britain. Incidents and confrontations seemed to so likely to police that they were able to count on the solidarity of their colleagues and benefit from a rather large impunity, and the youth felt supported by their equals and to a lesser degree the residents of the neighborhood. Racism, incarceration and police pressure ended in the creation of a sort of collective “us” on the basis of a common experience and of an opposition to a police “they.” Having suffered negative sentiments of contempt from racism and from the denial of rights, moreso than a positive identity, this “we” allies itself strongly with segregated urban territories, in the housing projects and in the neighborhoods much more so than with a popular culture that it is acting to defend. If the “ghetto youth” do not constitute one social or cultural category, they widely share feelings of suffering a common “treatment”, of living a common experience in the face of law enforcement. Police practices of incarceration and especially the exteriority of the institution in relation to affected neighborhoods, an exteriority which is reinforced through the suppression of police in proximity these last few years, consolidates even more this feeling of an especially iniquitous and above all indiscriminate, global treatment. *“Now, it’s them against us!”* declares a police officer in Clichy-sous-Bois.^{xv} The population on the whole, notwithstanding its ethnic and

geographic ties, feels directly concerned and targeted, the primary targets of a police force more prepared to incarcerate them than to reprimand “true delinquents.” The police force is perceived as an institution that works against the population rather than for its benefit. As studies of American ghettos have also shown, the residents of the neighborhoods in France accumulate so much experience and share evidence of a semi-permanent attaining of their interests and honor, there is not one reason to not perceive the police as an institution of oppression.^{xvi} *“The police are not there to protect us. They provoke us all the time. We are treated like bastards, like bougnoles. It’s only natural that the youth hates them. The girls as well as the boys...The other day, we were celebrating some children’s birthdays with a friend, we crossed the projects with them, the cops jumped on us. They turned their cars around, stopped, and started back on their way. It is unbearable.”*^{xvii} As well, despite very different social trajectories, a very strong segmentation of social life in the rough neighborhoods, and often tensions between different housing projects, this common “negative experience,” generates an “us” which manifests itself in opposition to the police, indeed permanent conflict with them.

The “we” thus “negatively” constituted by hostility towards the police is not void of significance. It is also largely structured by a feeling of injustice. It is a sort of “interpretive grid” of events and of the situation, each incident, each problem reinforcing it. The incident thus allows at once for the legitimization of the interpretation and for the victim's perception, and by extension the youth, and weakens the dominant interpretation, that of the police and authorities. *“As soon as there is a problem with the police, they always say: ‘After careful investigation, it’s your fault.’”*^{xviii} The incident also reinforces the feeling of an absolute and profound injustice since it violates the moral codes and the fundamental principals of the society and its institutions. The low changes in the face of oppression, the legitimacy of ordinary social control crumbles as Morris Janowitz observed after the American riots of the sixties.^{xix} A “framework of injustice” is thus a substitute for the “dominant framework” and opens the space of action. The “us,” the victim of injustice, suddenly has the capacity to surmount the legitimate authority of institutions that are the source of the moral outrage that they suffer. They also offer critiques of condemnation of this order. As Barrington Moore demonstrated long ago in his study on the formation of the worker’s movement in Germany, as with numerous

social movements and numerous riots, this change in the constitution of this identity “of injustice” constitutes the “heart” and the origin of the action.^{xx} The “ghetto youth” and the “category” “ghetto youth” are no longer then “delinquents” or “dangerous classes” but they are victims, daily victims of police harassment and racism suddenly brought out by the incident. In activating the “us” and forcing the change of the legitimacy of the imperative frameworks, the incident also renders the revolt both expected and legitimate. It also gives it a very powerful emotional tone.

3. *Mobilizing Emotion*

The death of young people at the site of police interventions always elicits strong individual and collective emotion and crystallizes the feeling of "us," victims of injustice, in opposition to a "them," an unjust police force. The incident "precipitates" the riot in times often marked by a strong tension. After each incident that calls for law enforcement, sometimes vigils, emotion then generates riotous action, action which first targets law enforcement. For a long time, historians have emphasized the centrality of these emotional dimensions in the unleashing and orientation of the riot.^{xxi} Emotion consumes the individual and unites the collective. It is the "glue" of the social community and that which mobilizes in the conflict, according to Randal Collins' expression.^{xxii} From that time on, it liberates potentialities for action. Through the emotion that is felt, the individual directly demonstrates his attachment to the "us" and the solidarity which connects him to those who share the same feeling, the same mindset. For a moment, he distances himself and forgets the stark triviality of his own reality in order to submit himself to a "force" completely outside of himself. Because of the riot, the affirmation of "self" melts into the affirmation of "we." The individual charges himself with an energy which allows him to move to action, a sort of electricity says Durkheim, an "emotional energy" which is also moral for him since it is strongly linked to the attachment to life or to respect.^{xxiii}

Very often, before or even during the riots, silent protests take place, moments of gathering or collecting symbols are put forth: the victims' parents, particularly the mother, religious and sometimes political authorities, encourage dignity and the surmounting of the chagrin through an excess of solidarity and of respect in the face of

the absurdity of the violence. In July 1988, at La Courneuve, the riots that followed the death of a young man killed by police at a barrage were marked by a silent march "to contain the anger" in the presence of the victim's family. In November 1995, the death of a young man killed by a police officer in a police station unleashed a riot at Laval. It was followed by a protest in the city streets to reclaim "justice."^{xxiv} In December 1997, at Dammarie-les-Lys, a silent march took place during the wave of riots that followed the death of a young 17 year old man killed by police.^{xxv} A few days after the incident at Clichy-sous-Bois, a silent march gathered 500 people in the city: the parents of one of the victims was at the head of the procession, his hands held by the father of the other victim. Behind them, came the friends of the two young boys, all dressed in white tee-shirts on which was written: "*Dead for nothing.*" The mayor of the city took the floor: "*For a few days, all eyes are focused on our town. Let's show that despite our pain and our anger, we know how to remain dignified.*"^{xxvi} The group united around the feeling of being a victim of injustice but also around the vindication of a moral superiority which the affirmation of dignity and solidarity translates. The family, the white _____, the denounced absurdity of the death of young people, the chagrin and silence opposes not institutions of social forces, but forces of death. The silent march stages the family, and particularly mothers, as in traditional community movements, just as the riot is brought by young people and quite often by "children" as was emphasized, more or less incredulously, by journalists and political leaders which uncovered therein one of the traditional characteristics of movements or the "poor" community movements, notably in Latin America. Agents on the margins of the political system, indeed, those furthest from political action and the most enclosed in "private" life, women and children, express in a certain way a sort of affirmation and fundamental protesting, that of "life," that most instrumental institutions are incapable of integrating, even of understanding and return incessantly to nonsense.^{xxvii}

The silent marches are, in some way, the inverse of and the complement to the riot. A very symbolic ritual, these are inseparable: they feed the rioters an "emotional energy" and assure a certain solidarity on the part of the group. "*We must be dignified. We are not here to destroy cars.*"^{xxviii} They confirm the fundamental moral code of the society and the group, violated by police absurdity and thus founds the legitimacy of their

anger: *"I am not a believer. You should not accept everything. I would just like to understand why the keufs did this."*^{xxxix} The "us" constituted by the negative experience of the police "them" grants itself a moral legitimacy which ends by opposing the social order "in general," beyond the forces of repression. It is as a "person," then, that the rioter affirms a right to existence against a deadly social order which denies him and impedes him from living. In the testimonies and statements, moral protest and the demand of respect are often accompanied by the impression of not being treated like a human being, of being reduced to a form of animality. Racism and police violence are directly at fault. For the youth, it is definitely their physical appearance that is at the origin of the treatment that police make them suffer. *"We are subjected to checks and insults for nothing. They treat us like beasts."* declares a "young rioter" of Sevran. *"We are not dogs, but we react like animals,"* says another in Aubervilliers.^{xxx} *"We had been driven to the post. Insults were fired. When I spoke of my rights, they told me: 'Shut your trap!' They used informal speech with me. We were treated worse than dogs."*^{xxxi} It is no longer necessary to make any particular religious source, not even a religious check of the riot. Besides they have shown themselves to be powerless at stopping violence, even to channel it, and have remained extremely silent.^{xxxii} But it does not stop anything: emotion is strongly linked to a moral vindication, that of human rights and the respect which is due his particularity.

Emotion and moral indignation reinforced by group solidarity give the riot its character and in large part explain its extension. The rioters, as in practically all of the riots, are not particularly delinquent, unemployed, or marginal. They are inserted into their milieu and belong to the average population involved even if they are younger.^{xxxiii} The American or English riots were also the doings of "ordinary people" and not necessarily the doings of the marginalized. The rioters of 2005 were not especially known by law enforcement agencies for previous delinquent activities, and they themselves were part of the youth of the neighborhood.^{xxxiv} In fact, the riot, even if sometimes accompanied by looting, does not follow a logic of appropriation. The rioters burned vehicles, warehouses, or schools. They were not looking to get rich and did not follow a delinquent logic. Similarly, for them, contrary hostile comments, the riot is not a game or place of purely person affirmation. Through testimonies, the logic of moving

to action is shown to be strongly marked by emotion and indignation, as if an "exterior force" had trained the rioters who, all of a sudden, practically never managed to give a "rational" and "individual" explanation of their engagement and behavior. *"When I saw the CRS in the housing project, and also a helicopter that was flying around the housing units, I said to myself: They want a war, they are going to get it. So I put on my ski cap, my scarf and I went out."*^{xxxv} *"It is unfortunate, but we have no choice."*^{xxxvi} *"I do it, and that's all."*^{xxxvii} *"We sprung into action in a way that wasn't very thought out."*^{xxxviii}

Before the judges that interrogated them when they were arrested, the rioters appeared incapable of finding a justification. Thus, deferred to a tribunal in Bobigny, Mickael, who nothing seemed to predispose to violence according to the judges and journalist explains: *"that if one should shoot a mosque, a mosque is a thing of God!"* and that he *"didn't think."*^{xxxix} Anthony, judged in Nanterre for having burned cars, is no clearer: *"I met two friends at the bus stop, we talked about what was happening in the ghettos...That day, I was really stupid."*^{xl} This is also why the rioters, ordinary people, benefitted largely from the "understanding" of populations in the affected areas. The population demonstrates a strong emotional solidarity with young rioters. In the testimonies gathered by journalists the idea often comes up that it is about children, "our children." The affront itself, the images of the riot and its proximity also feeds this emotional solidarity which is at the origin of "moving into action" exacerbates the emotional dimension of the "us" and accentuates the fusion of the "I" and the "we." *"When CRS was in the housing project, I really wanted to go in, to go there myself. But my mother did not want me to. I was in the window. I saw everything without being able to do anything. How revolted I was!"*^{xli}

Strongly expressive and brought about by moral protest, the riot of Clichy-sous-Bois would have probably been stamped out with the erosion of emotional energy. But the police repression and particularly the tear gas bombs in front of the Bilal mosque of Clichy-sous-Bois on Sunday, October 30, in addition to the declarations of the Interior Minister publicly denouncing the "riffraff" and the "hoodlums" a few days earlier, gave him the necessary ammunition. As always, the propagation of the riot is of an emotional nature. It progresses by the diffusion of emotion and its concentration on points of fixation that allow it to be generalized. Well before the invention of radio, of television,

or even of newspapers, riots were propagated in this way, as was the case in Sicily and Tuscany in February 1848 or during the Great Scare in France in 1789 to take a few famous examples, not to mention the Jacques revolt in 1358.^{xliii} The riot propagates itself when it meets favorable terrains, when individuals and groups demonstrate feeling and share the same griefs of living the same experience and the same moral indignation. The generalization of the riot does not follow a process of imitation or concurrence which is fed by television, nor even by contagion, but a process of diffusion that modern media is content to accelerate but of which they are not at the origin. The attempt at the mosque and the insults of the Minister in some ways "generalized" the feeling of "us" and its opposition not only to the "them" of police but of the social order. They confirmed the feeling of injustice and amplified the general emotion by "vindicating" in a certain way the moral outrage, by cynically affirming to violate the fundamental values of society. *"By attacking the Mosque, they attacked a place of worship. One cannot pardon this act. That is the bottom line. And no one said anything! That means that we are left for dead. All that we ask is that they apologize."*^{xliiii} The individual experience then becomes one of collective domination, of a shared contempt and an outrage which directly reaches the person. *"It is not for them that I revolted...But simply so that they respect us. I accuse the state of having put us in this state."*^{xliiv} The declarations of the rioters are unequivocal. They illustrate the moral protest against the police violence and the proposals that legitimize it. *"It is not right to surveil followers in the midst of prayer. They are dirtying our religion."*^{xliv} *"There was no need to treat us like riffraff and send the police to us."*^{xlvi} The vindication of respect and attention to dignity are traditional characteristics of diminished and marginalized populations. For the rioters, the words and attitude of the Minister of the Interior furnished a condensing of lived humiliation and activated the demand for respect. *"We have no more revolt than hate...since we are riffraff, we are going to give this racist something to 'cleanse à la Karcher' with. Words hurt more than blows. Sarko must resign. As long as he does not apologize, we will continue."*^{xlvii} All during the events, the Minister thus crystallized the rancor and incarnated, for rioters, a system of an order that not only marginalized them, but humiliated them as well. *"It is shameful on the part of a Minister to treat youth like riffraff. We are French like everyone else. We pay taxes and we _____ to find work. What he said, I call an abuse*

of power. This guy, he's an aggravator of violence." _____ a young unemployed man of the same neighborhood.^{xlvi} Urban riots rarely spread past the local level. But in 2005, the amplitude of emotion sparked by the death of two very young people, to which was added the attack on a symbolic site and the insults of the Minister of the Interior, engendered their extension. *"We had death against the police and against Sarko who sparks too many provocations."*^{xlix} From this point of view, the Minister and law enforcement officers played a role in the political operation, allowing the generalization of a local conflict and unleashing a phenomenon of identification and solidarity.

Strongly expressive and brought about by indignation, the riot was not void of meaning. It seemed, on the contrary, to manifest a sort of excess: the rioter was opposed to an order that he judged deadly and vindicated a proper moral "us." He does not have the least impression of doing something immoral, quite the contrary. That is also why the riot is vindictive as such: *"We are not thugs, we are rioters. We gather everyone to make our revolt known."*^l The revolt is legitimate. It seems like the affirmation of a moral collective, brought by "young" people, adolescents taking risks, fed by the chagrin and the dignity of mothers staged at the silent marches. It is the affirmation of a right to existence, a call to solidarity and to the unity of the social community. But it differs from a strike or a manifestation in that it does not view a social adversary and does not bring negotiable vindication. In other words, it overloads the social and political system by its moral dimension and by the use of violence to question a deadly and cynical order that impedes life.

4. Violence and "Rationality"

Traditionally, social movements and collective protests question the balance of power or the distribution of resources. In democratic countries, they organize along institutional channels, and even conflicts marked by the more or less violent use of means, remain largely encapsulated and limited by the acceptance of these conventional rules. Entering into the conflict and its development paradoxically supposes an access to institutional channels that allows for the construction of action and the formulation of vindication. The riot deviates, however slightly, from this schema. Brought about by populations with limited resources and largely excluded from access to political

mechanisms, it brings civil and social order into question. But it nonetheless remains a political action: as noted by F. Piven and R. Cloward, the weakness of institutional participation of the poor makes it so that the only "contribution" to social life that they can suspend, (much as a worker blocking lines of production), is that of peace and civil life, by participating in the riots. Violence and public consternation are their only possible and effective means of combat.^{li} Even if it only follows the weakening of mechanisms of social control or an abrupt loss of legitimacy, the riot would not then be reduced to delinquency. In the absence of political mechanisms, the rioter "expresses" his feelings about the social world and attempts to put them into the public forum. Destroying private or public property makes things more clear, as Lee Rainwater has emphasized about the American rioters of the sixties: "The larger the damage in terms of financial costs of looting and fires, the more things were clarified."^{liii} For the rioter, the riot is a means of entering or imposing his presence in the public space. Deprived of access to this space and perhaps above all, deprived of representation, violence becomes for them a means of "forcing entry," of existing. *"It's the only way of making them speak of us. But we know very well that there will not be one single camera around when everything calms down. We will no longer exist."*^{liiii} It's also the only way to obtain "benefits." In fact, the riot, for the population involved, cannot appear totally irrational: beyond entering the public forum and ephemeral recognition, it allows for the obtaining of benefits. In his study of the history of political violence in the United States, William Gamson showed that riots end up unleashing substantial gains for the populations involved and that it is thus a strategy of social protest which is perfectly efficient.^{liv} In France, to stick with the population of the *banlieue* housing projects, the riots of Minguettes in 1981 or those of Vaulx-en-Velin unleashed measures in favor of dilapidated neighborhoods, whether it be measures of prevention or of fighting against youth unemployment rates, operations and renovations of the neighborhoods, or, later, town politics. It is the same on the local level. Violence often seems a rather large, efficient means to obtain benefits from diverse institutions. In these neighborhoods, the "pressure" put on the social worker in daily life in order to obtain aid or a service or local interest resulting in hiring or the distribution of services or aid, when it is not jobs, for social service departments or municipalities, are daily and permanent practices used with

a certain degree of success. *"When people are scared, political leaders pay attention, they reflect on the situation and end up proposing solutions."*^{lv} *"People want to attract all eyes to themselves. They say to themselves: "If we panic, then, they will not forget us, they will know that we are a sensitive area."*^{lvi} If there is an "emotive" rationality of the riot, there then exists an instrumental "rationality" that is not negligible. And, in fact, if the riots of 2005 did not elicit measures of ampleur, they were certainly followed by numerous public meetings, by promises of aid made nationally and locally to the residents of the neighborhoods, and above all, by the reestablishment of subsidies to local associations, which the government had previously suppressed.

But unlike conventional movements and protests, alienation from mechanisms of representation and of treatment of conflicts impedes the construction of "vindication" and the formulation of precise demands. Riot violence then stems from a forcing of "recognition" of our citizenry that is not open to "negotiation." The gains obtained are never enough to slow never ending demands that are constantly renewed, not only upon police contact, but also upon contact with a good number of institutions. The lived situation, marked by racism, unemployment or poverty, largely feeds this sensation and as a consequence, justifies the revolt. In the 19th century, riot violence of workers was so strong that they managed to organize unions and enter into the political arena. They had a tendency to disappear when the workers were recognized as social agents and could organize themselves, as forms of industrial democracy were put into place.^{lvii} In the 1960's, riot violence of residents of American ghettos was largely linked to their incapacity for access to the political system. The leaders of the Civil Rights Movement had very little connection with this population. This violence declined as soon as access to the political system improved for these populations, lending more efficiency to their action.^{lviii}

The rioters of 2005 also belong to marginal populations, those kept outside of the political system. As with these populations, they also end by keeping themselves aside, by vindicating their distance. The residents of the "sensitive neighborhoods" often manifest a profound disinterest for political issues, even a hostility for political leaders. They consider the political system as belonging to the society that excludes them and "raicalizes" them. They thus reject a system, to which not only do they not have access,

but that they hold responsible for their situation. This is what explains, after each riot, the calls for voter registration, and the minimal success of campaigns to promote civic activity. In the end, the riot is extremely efficacious: it does not purport to enter into a game and into a universe that individuals do not control, in which they are often humiliated, and that does not allow them to obtain visible benefits. The failure of preceding generations and their incapacity to penetrate a very closed system confirms and reinforces the mistrust, increases the desire to maintain distance, and justifies the search for other modes of action.^{lix} *"You are talking about taking a step, but it is useless. We have had papers for generations but we are not French like the others."*^{lx} The riot is a sort of short circuit: within an instant, it allows for the surmounting of obstacles, to become a recognized actor, even if in a negative, ephemeral, and illusory way, and to obtain "benefits" or to hope for some, without being able to control or even to negotiate the recognition or the potential benefits.

Generally, it is the ensemble of institutions, and not only the police and the political system that are questioned and rejected as a strange world that marginalizes populations, in the same way as unemployment and racism. The words repeated on the school are a noteworthy illustration of this: *"In any case, do you wish that we do otherwise? Out of the 100 cvs that I sent, I had three interviews. Even with the _____? they hold me back. School serves no purpose. That is why we burn them."*^{lxi} The lived situation more so than the experience of a domination, feeds the solidarity and the understanding of the population. The whole social system thus ends by being perceived as an instrument of relegation, of exclusion or enclosure, lock up or even of repression, like the police. *"I am 25 years old and when I go out at night, my mother is scared, she tells me to be careful with the police. They speak of forbidden towns, but they do everything so that we do not go out of them. We are penned in here."*^{lxii} Maybe even more so, in the same way as the police, it is lived as a system in which intrinsic racism impedes life and destroys the individual. *"If I could, I would leave as I am rotting in place..."*^{lxiii} Riot violence is thus inscribed in a lived "situation" dominated by distance from institutions, the feeling of "racial" exclusion by discrimination, segregation and racism and the weakness of levels of life that the rioter cannot manage and cannot come to translate to vindication.

But the "legitimacy" of the violence, notably with respect to the school, does not hold only to the lived situation or the fact that this institution, like law enforcement, betrays its own values. It is also fed by the population's dependence on its esteem. As with all impoverished populations, marked by political disenfranchisement, the population of the *banlieues*, and perhaps even more particularly the young rioters, live a very strong dependence on outside of forces and institutions that are exterior to them. *"We have the impression that we are closed up in here. And it is not we who have the keys. It's them..."*^{lxiv} The "them" refers first of all the politicians, but also to social services and to the educational system. It refers to a double feeling of powerlessness, a powerlessness which is due to the superimposition of poverty and racial and social exclusion. *"We are poor in our ghetto!"*^{lxv} Otherwise stated, the residents of the ghetto have the feeling of not having the necessary resources or forces to regulate their problems themselves or even to impose solutions. They are dependent in their daily life and in their personal activities. They are as well in the political arena: they can unleash a reaction from the body politic, but they hardly have the capacity to steer it. They wait for the politicians to act on their behalf, they themselves being incapable or feeling too "small" to act. It is also this dependence on the politicians that explains in large part the focus on politicians, (here the focus on a negative leader) and the willingness to obtain a reaction from them. *"That is going to perhaps make them understood to government officials..."*^{lxvi} A bit like for the little French peasant analyzed by Marx or the Parisian "people" at the moment of the Revolution, or even for the American rioters of the sixties, the use of violence and of the riot appears at once as a perfectly rational strategy of pressure and as the inverse of the absence of an autonomous agent, a strong dependency in vis-à-vis a system to which access is forbidden.^{lxvii} The rioter is thus defined at once by his exteriority and his dependency. He is an "excluded" member, the victim of a system that rejects him, discriminates against him, and in the end "impedes him from living." But he is also a "poor" person, a "small" person who lives by means of a strong dependency, notably a political dependency, vis-à-vis this same system and this same society.

In all, a rapid comparison with the experiences of the American and British rioters allows us to clarify, however minimally, the French riots of the end of 2005. Four similar

factors can be brought into examination: 1.) The riots spring up in urban areas where a population lives that is particularly marked by poverty and racial discrimination, even if, as in the French and British cases, they are not an event unique to ethnic minorities. They are also the product of a long social history. 2.) They have a very marked anti-law enforcement dimension. They are practically always unleashed following incidents with the police, and the action of the rioters, beyond destruction and eventual looting, seeks confrontation with law enforcement. Here again, they constitute a culminating point in a situation of particularly degraded relations between the police and the population. 3.) The rioters are most often young men or young boys, but they do not belong to an especially delinquent and marginal minority in the neighborhood, and they benefit from the tacit support or the understanding of the residents. 4.) The riots are practically always the event of a population that is kept outside of the political system. They have a strong protopolitical dimension. The riot is thus not simply the product of a social situation of poverty. It is not the simple fruit of unemployment. Besides, the rioters, who for the most part are very young, were not unemployed. They were more often confronted at school or excluded from school, than confronted in the job market. The destruction of and fires to schools were much more numerous than the attacks against businesses or warehouses. As always, "people rebel against institutions associated with their daily activity."^{lxviii} And it is obviously the police who concentrated the essential animosity of the rioters, but also the school. The riot is also not the simple product of "racial" exclusion. Even if urban segregation and discrimination reinforces the isolation of the population and strongly feeds the constitution of an "us," the rioters have not put forth forms of ethnic, religious, or racial identification. It seems more so that it is the combination of powerlessness, linked to the weakness of the level of life and the absence of personal perspective, linked to the exclusion and the discrimination, which is at the source of the riot action. In the words of the rioters, the feeling of "*not being able to live one's life*" due to a lack of resources and an institutional system that "racializes" and maintains them apart seems omnipresent. It is certainly more marked with young boys, more concerned again by their absence of perspectives than the older generations, who suffer a more affirmed racism and who can certainly find an "excitement" or "intense vitality" in the direct action of the riot, however small this sentiment might be. To

powerlessness and exclusion is finally added dependency: the rioter is dependent on institutional systems to which he does not have access. It is for this reason that he seems so often "without voice." He seeks to obtain benefits without being able to construct vindication: he exerts a violence of which the result will be beyond his control, in the "good will" of institutions or in the capacity of political agents to implement.

The riot, seen through the words of the rioters, thus places us here and there in the institutional and political system. The riot is very clearly infra-political, marked by the incapacity of a population that is impoverished, marginal and "racialized" to access a political system and by the dependency vis-à-vis this system. Violence is at once a means of rational and efficacious pressure and a means of protest against an "unlivable" situation. But the riot is also very clearly supra-political. It appeals to the fundamental values of society, leans on the affirmation of the moral superiority of an "us" victim of injustice and of racism, and there again on the rejection of a deadly system, because it impedes life. The riot is in some ways an attempt of overloading the system from the top and from the bottom, an attempt fed by an "emotional energy" and which quickly tires itself out and is founded on the vindication of the "rights" of the individual. The rioters are not "revolutionaries" or militants. They are not the agents of a social movement. But they are also not individuals motivated by their barbarous instincts or the simple reflections of an anomalous situation or of "unemployment." The rioters "speak" also. They act. Their action is not "irrational" and deprived of meaning, as those who are hostile to them believe. They do not bother "civilization" and, in large part, they know what they are doing. And paradoxically, they have spoken much more than a political world which has remained extremely silent, with the exception of the calls to order of Law and the denouncing of the "asocials" by the extreme left. They seek to escape the "emptiness" of the ghetto that destroys their individual life and to escape the political void in which they are kept that impedes coherent, integrated action. Faced with their racial exclusion, with their poverty and with the violence that they suffer, they oscillate between the moral affirmation of their right to existence, their right to life, and the use of a destructive but rational violence from which they hope to find an opening or recognition of the system. They balance between the moral call to "us" and "solidarity," a call which seeks to "encompass" the ensemble of society and the rage against this same

society. They are not social agents, but "primitives of the revolt," to borrow the expression of Eric Hobsbawm, in its double sense of the "brut" and the direct aspect of their motivations, defending his "right" to life as a person, and of the rudimentary aspect of their methods of action, direct and violent action. But they are also "primitives of the revolt" because their moral protestation and their situation cannot be translated or vindicated, due to the closure of the "republican" political system that keeps them obstinately hostile and closes them into the marginality and the exclusive rapport with the norm, forbidding them to be agents.

*Translated by Lachelle R. Hannickel

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ⁱ *Le Monde*, December 2, 2005

ⁱⁱ Stanley Cavell, *Le déni de savoir dans six pièces de Shakespeare*, Paris, Le Seuil, 1993.

ⁱⁱⁱ Aviad Kleinberg, *Histoire des Saints. Leur rôle dans la formation de l'Occident*.

Paris, Gallimard, 2005, pp.112-113 and p.117. Kleinberg states that, "(the question of?) knowing why an individual chooses" to act in one manner or another is different than the question of "understanding what the social significance is" of his choice and action. Moreover, he adds, "no one knows the precise combination which pushes people to action..."

^{iv} In the Paris region, towns such as Sèvres, Suresnes, Antony, and Villeneuve la Garenne were stages of incidents. See "Urban Violences: cities without contaminated histories." *Le Parisien*, November 4, 2005.

^v We can refer to the "classic" study of George Rudé on the riots in the French Revolution: George Rudé, *La foule dans la Révolution Française*, Paris, Maspéro, 1982.

^{vi} Eric Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movement in the 19th and 20th Centuries*. Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1959.

^{vii} Historian Jean Nicolas counts 494 riots over the course of the century that happened following the arrest of beggars. See: Jean Nicolas, *La rébellion française. Mouvements populaires et conscience sociale, 1661-1789*. Paris, Seuil, 2002, p. 354 and following.

^{viii} On this theme and the American ghettos: Lee Rainwater, "Open Letter on White Justice and the Riots", In: Peter H. Rossi, dir, *Ghetto Revolts*, New York, Transaction, 1970.

^{ix} *Libération*, November 5, 2005.

^x On this theme: Gary T. Marx, *Protest and Prejudice: A Study of Belief in the Black Community*, New York, Harpre & Row, 1967. On a more historical note see: Robert Muchembled, *Culture populaire et culture des élites dans la France moderne (SVème-SVIIIème siècle)*, Paris, Flammarion, 1978 and more recently : *La société policiée. Politique et politesse en France du SVIe au XXe siècle*, Paris, Le Seuil, 1998.

^{xi} *Le Monde*, October 29, 2005.

- ^{xii} Fabien Jobard, “Sociology politique de la racaille”, in: Hugues Lagrange and Marco Oberti, dir, *Emeutes urbaines et protestations. Une singularité française*, Paris, Les Presses de Sciences Po, 2006, pp. 59-80.
- ^{xiii} Aziz, 20 years old, quoted in a report in the Figaro newspaper. *Le Figaro*, November 14, 2005. In its 2004 report, the National Commission of Deontology of Security emphasizes as well that the feeling of impunity is one of the causes of “police error.”
- ^{xiv} Testimonies on police interventions in ghettos and analyses of relationships between the youth and police have increased. See for example: Michel Kokoreff, *La force des quartiers. De la délinquance à l’engagement politique*, Paris, Payot, 2003, p.144 and following. Marwan Mohammed, Laurent Mucchielli, « La police dans les quartiers sensibles : un profond malaise. » In :Véronique La Goaziou and Laurent Mucchielli, dir, *Quand les banlieues brûlent...Retour sur les émeutes de novembre 2005*. Paris, La Découverte, pp.98-119.
- ^{xv} *L’Humanité*, November 5, 2005.
- ^{xvi} Ulf Hannerz, *Soulside, Inquiries into the Ghetto Culture and Community*, Berlingska Boktryckeriet, Lund, 1969, p. 165. Along the same lines, see: Kenneth Clark, *Dark Ghetto*, Paris, Payot, 1966, p.45.
- ^{xvii} Testimonies of young women from Montfermeil: *Libération*, November 12, 2005.
- ^{xviii} Sahra, Montfermeil, *Le Monde*, November 12, 2005.
- ^{xix} Morris, Janowitz, *Social Control of Escalated Riots*, Chicago, University of Chicago for Policy Studies, 1968.
- ^{xx} Barrington, Moore Jr. *Injustice, The Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt*, London, MacMillan, 1978.
- ^{xxi} George Rudé, *op. cit.* Elsewhere the term “popular emotions” is used to designate the riots.
- ^{xxii} Randall Collins, “Stratification, Emotional Energy, and the Transient Emotions,” in: Theodore D. Kemper, ed, *Research Agendas in the Sociology of Emotions*, Albany, SUNY Press, 1990, p.28.
- ^{xxiii} For a recent discussion of these aspects based on Durkheim’s sociology: Randall Collins, *Interaction Ritual Chains*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2004.
- ^{xxiv} *L’Humanité*, November 3, 1995.
- ^{xxv} *Le Monde*, July 19, 1988 and *Le Monde*, December 25, 1997.
- ^{xxvi} Refer to the report in *Le Monde*, October 29, 2005, and the report in *L’Humanité* of October 31, 2005.
- ^{xxvii} On this point see: Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots.* Lonon, Arnold, 1983, or Alain Touraine, *La Parole et le Sang, Politique et société en Amérique Latine*, Paris, Odile Jacob, 1988.
- ^{xxviii} “Le Chêne-Pointu entre rage et recueillement,” *Le Monde*, October 29, 2005.
- ^{xxix} *Le Monde*, October 29, 2005.
- ^{xxx} Respectively: *Le Parisien*, November 4, 2005, and *Le Monde*, November 8, 2005.
- ^{xxxi} Fahmi, 17 years old, La Courneuve. *Jeune Africain Intelligent*, no. 2340, November 13, 2005.
- ^{xxxii} “Quand les ‘frères musulmans’ tentent de ramener le calme.” *Le Monde*, November 2, 2005.

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- xxxiii See: Anthony Oberschall, *Social Conflict and Social Movement*, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, 1973.
- xxxiv *Le Monde*, November 26, 2005. “*Il s’agit...de jeunes rencontrant plutôt moins de difficultés familiales et davantage scolarisés. La majorité d’entre eux sont inscrits dans des formations professionnelles, souvent en apprentissage.*”
- xxxv Aziz, 20 years old, Bobigny, *Le Figaro*, November 14, 2005.
- xxxvi Rachid, rioter in Aubervilliers, *Le Monde*, November 8, 2005.
- xxxvii Dramam, 17 years old, rioter. Aulnay, *Le Parisien*, November 5, 2005.
- xxxviii Momo, 16 years old, La Courneuve, *Le Figaro*, November 14, 2005.
- xxxix *Le Parisien*, November 5, 2005.
- xl *La Croix*, November 9, 2005.
- xli Sabrina, 17 years old, Les Bosquets, Montfermeil, *Libération*, November 12, 2005.
- xlii On the rural and urban riots in Europe and their diffusion to the end of the Middle Ages: Michel Mollat and Philippe Wolff, *Ongles Bleus, Jacques et Ciompi, Les revolutions populaires en Europe aux XIVe et XVe siècles*, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1970. On the American riots: Morris Janowitz, *op. cit.*
- xliiii Rachid, young rioter, Clichy-sous-Bois, *Libération*, November 5, 2005.
- xliv *Le Monde*, October 29, 2005.
- xlv Youssef, 25 years old, Aubervilliers, *Le Monde*, November 8, 2005.
- xlvi *Le Monde*, November 4, 2005.
- xlvii *Libération*, November 3, 2005.
- xlviii *Libération*, November 3, 2005.
- xliv Kays, Bobigny, young rioter, *Le Figaro*, November 14, 2005.
- ¹ Youssef, Aubervilliers, *Le Monde*, November 8, 2005. On this dimension of the American riots, see in particular Ulf Hannerz, *op.cit.* pp. 172 and following.
- ^{li} Frances F. Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Poor People’s Movement: Why They Succeed, How They Fail*, New York, Vintage Books, 1977.
- ^{lii} Lee Rainwater, *op. cit.*
- ^{liii} Draman, 17 years old, Aulnay, *Le Parisien*, November 5, 2005.
- ^{liv} William Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest*, Belmont, Calif., Wadsworth, 1990.
- ^{lv} Farid, Aubervilliers, *Le Figaro*, November 14, 2005.
- ^{lvi} Eric, 34 years old, Montfermeil, *Libération*, November 5, 2005.
- ^{lvii} For the English case and the passing from dangerous classes to working classes, particularly through strikes following the riot, see: Gareth Stedman Jones, *Outcast London. A Study in the Relationship Between Classes in Victorian Society*, London, Penguin, 1971.
- ^{lviii} Anthony Oberschall, *op. cit.* Doug McAdam, *The Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1982.
- ^{lix} Olivier Masclat, *La Gauche et les exclus, enquête sur un rendez-vous manqué*, Paris, La Dispute, 2003.
- ^{lx} Resident of Clichy, 40 years old, *Le Monde*, November 2, 2005.
- ^{lxi} Nadir, 24 years old, Aubervilliers, *Le Monde*, November 8, 2005.
- ^{lxii} Mohammed, 25 years old, Clichy-sous-Bois, *Le Figaro*, November 28, 2005.
- ^{lxiii} Mamadou, Saint-Denis, rioter, *Le Figaro*, November 14, 2005.
- ^{lxiv} Skarj, Clichy-sous-Bois, *L’Humanité*, November 5, 2005.

^{lxv} Young rioter of Sevrans, *Le Parisien*, November 5, 2005.

^{lxvi} Young rioter, Aulnay, *Le Monde*, November 4, 2005. For an analysis of relationships of dependency of the “ghetto” population and politics in the United States in the fifties: Herbert Gans, *The Urban Villagers. Group and Class in the Life of Italian-Americans*, New York, The Free Press, 1962.

^{lxvii} Karl Marx, *Le 18 Brumaire de Louis Bonaparte*, Paris, Editions Sociales, 1976.

Richard Cobb, *La protestation populaire en France, (1789-1820)*, Paris, Calmann-Levy, 1975. Robert Blauner makes similar observations concerning American ghetto revolts in the sixties: Robert Blauner, “Internal Colonialism and the Ghetto Revolt,” *Social Problems*, vol. 16, no. 4, Spring 1969.

^{lxviii} Frances F. Piven & Richard A. Cloward, *Op. Cit.*