

# Neighbourhood Social Change in West European Cities

Sixteenth to Nineteenth Centuries\*

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**Summary:** It is argued that both the tenacity of the neighbourhood and its adaptability were much greater than historians have tended to think, and that this was true not only during the *ancien régime* but also during the nineteenth century when the rate of mobility between towns and within towns reached enormous proportions. Demographic, social and cultural changes did not result in the destruction of the local community, but in its transformation, a transformation in which the growing need for reciprocity among working-class neighbours played a crucial role. The decline of more or less institutionalized forms of self-regulation went hand in hand with the construction by the lower classes of informal channels of social interaction based on local ties, which stimulated an active and participatory street life. Moreover, the tendency towards geographical segregation contributed to the development of a different collective sense of identity in working-class neighbourhoods, which added a new dimension to the concept of solidarity.

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## Introduction

Having neighbours is no longer considered by most urban dwellers in highly developed countries to be an essential part of their daily life. Of course, the “others” make their presence known, but they seldom penetrate the private domain. Even next-door neighbours are often aware of little more than each other’s existence. When contact is established, it is usually on a bilateral basis rather than with the intention of participating in a wider social network that can be characterized as a local community. Citizens who today speak about good neighbours in general point to the need to respect each other’s privacy. Social control by neighbours is hardly

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ever accepted. The advantages of good neighbourliness no longer seem to be regarded as sufficient to counterbalance the risks of meddlesomeness and “unequal exchange”. Indeed, as several sociologists have claimed, people can find the services they need and the relations they value elsewhere, at less cost and for less effort: an intense neighbourhood life has become a high-cost business and consequently is bound to die.<sup>1</sup>

Since relations between local residents are highly influenced by factors beyond individual freedom of choice, “the death of community life” has been the cause of much concern to social scientists for decades. The theories about *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* formulated at the end of the nineteenth century, and the concepts of depersonalization and mass culture that they inspired, fitted well with the conviction that the development of “modern” society accompanies the disruption of the primary groups within which people used to live their lives, with all the societal consequences that follow. According to the French sociologist Emile Durkheim, intermediary institutions between the state and the mass of individuals had to function as centres of social activity in order to prevent the occurrence of a total disintegration of society. There are many twentieth-century sociologists in Europe as well as in the United States who share this opinion, though their theoretical positions and the interpretations they offer are very different. In contrast to Durkheim, who saw no advantage in a reassessment of local communities, many of these sociologists pay particular attention to neighbourhood life.<sup>2</sup> The struggle for political stability and social integration is often what interests them most, but other arguments, too, are used to emphasize the importance of an active neighbourliness. On the one hand, there is a tendency to promote forms of local autonomy and self-government. On the other hand, the accent is on finding ways to augment the family’s and the neighbourhood’s potential for care, in order to replace the social provisions that the government is inclined to run down because of their rapidly increasing cost. This was Philip Abrams’ point of departure when he began a large-scale study of neighbouring and neighbourhood life in the 1970s. He argued that “a better understanding of what sorts of people were willing to give what sorts of help in what circumstances would contribute appreciably to society’s ability to develop alternatives to institutional care for the partially dependent. At the same time, a careful study of the forms and contexts of neighbouring would enlarge knowledge of the nature of social solidarity and community in modern industrial societies.”<sup>3</sup> In other words, the theoretical and the historical-sociological dimen-

<sup>1</sup> See the comments by F. Hirsch, *Social Limits to Growth* (London, 1977), pp. 71–83, concerning the “economics of bad neighbouring”.

<sup>2</sup> F. Bédarida, “La Vie de quartier en Angleterre: enquêtes empiriques et approches théoriques”, *Le Mouvement Social*, 118 (1982), pp. 10–17, gives a concise summary of the diverse hypotheses and approaches.

<sup>3</sup> M. Bulmer, *Neighbours: The Work of Philip Abrams* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 3–14 (the quotation appears on p. 7).

sions of the phenomenon of solidarity had to be analysed with a view to future social policy.

Abrams emphasized that the problem can only be adequately approached, first, when we know precisely about what we are speaking, secondly, when we can trace the changes to which neighbouring has been subjected in the long run, and thirdly, when we can indicate the specific historical and societal contexts within which various forms of solidarity (including active neighbouring) develop or remain constrained. So, in his view, historical research was an absolute necessity. In the book that appeared after his death, this dimension was, however, for the most part, ignored. This is not a reproach, for historians themselves have shown little interest in neighbourhood life. Though interesting studies of the character and the importance of urban neighbourhood communities in various periods have been published in the last few years, the gaps in our knowledge remain considerable. For this reason this article aims above all to focus historians' attention on an aspect of research that we believe will offer new perspectives, particularly concerning the development of social consciousness and collective identity. We shall concentrate on forms of social interaction based on ties of neighbourliness in West European cities during the early modern period and the century after 1750. We shall consider the broader historical context of such concepts as "community", "neighbouring" and "solidarity" in relation to long-term changes in social organization in order to avoid confusion among historians and sociologists about the meaning of these terms. We shall also suggest some hypotheses that could stimulate further research.

### Local autonomy

Although sociologists who analyse urban neighbourhood life are aware of the necessity to develop a historical perspective, most do little more than offer clichés. They are inclined, for instance, to rely on the traditional-modern dichotomy. Martin Bulmer defines traditional neighbourhood communities as "the densely woven world of kin, neighbours, friends and co-workers, highly localised and strongly caring within the confines of quite tightly defined relationships, above all the relationships of kin".<sup>4</sup> According to him, this traditional type of community was widespread throughout Great Britain before the First World War, when social legislation was still of little or no significance. The so-called community studies made in the 1950s proved, nevertheless, that "traditional" neighbourhood life in certain parts of London was still very much alive.<sup>5</sup> Even in the 1980s several researchers found similar examples, which they immediately

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, M. Young and P. Willmott, *Family and Kinship in East London* (Harmondsworth, 1972), ch. 7.

claimed were weakened versions of the traditional ideal type. The sociologists' point of departure remains that "traditional" neighbourhood life disappeared because it was linked to a situation of existential uncertainty and material misery. It should be replaced by a "modern" type of active neighbouring, one that can only be based on the aim "to mobilise old and new residents alike in order to protect amenities, enhance resources and, to a greater or lesser degree, wrench control of the local milieu from outside authorities and vest it in strictly local hands".<sup>6</sup> By using the traditional-modern dichotomy they in fact strip neighbourhood life of all its historical dimensions, despite what they claim to be their intentions. Everything that seems to contradict the most recent developments and particularly the developments they expect is reduced to the denominator of "traditional".

Historians who study urban neighbourhood life are often inclined to do the same. François Bédarida made a distinction between "un principe communautaire", characteristic of village communities and old districts of the city, and "un principe associatif", characteristic of modern districts of industrial cities. Ferdinand Tönnies' concepts of *Gemeinschaft* versus *Gesellschaft* and the theories of Durkheim, Max Weber and Talcott Parsons inspired Bédarida's approach, the aim of which is to map the sweeping social changes that have taken place in urban neighbourhoods since the 1950s.<sup>7</sup> It is doubtful whether a model based on the traditional-modern dichotomy will provide satisfactory answers. After all, some historians consider the middle of the twentieth century to have been a turning-point, while others argue that the decline of what they call "traditional" neighbourhood communities had already taken place by then. So definitions and periodizations differ widely.

Historians of early modern Europe have argued that the local community was already declining during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. According to Lawrence Stone, demographic growth, increasing geographical mobility and social polarization created problems that local communities were increasingly unable to solve on their own, which in turn stimulated the development of both the state and family life.<sup>8</sup> Yves-Marie Bercé claims that the process of state formation reduced feelings of insecurity and uncertainty; as a result scope was created for individualism on the one hand and, on the other, the maintenance of rigid local community norms was no longer necessary to guarantee the survival of society.<sup>9</sup> But whatever the causal relations they claim, both authors agree that the early modern period was characterized by the gradual weakening of local neighbourhood life in terms of sociability and solidarity based on social hetero-

<sup>6</sup> Bulmer, *Neighbours*, p. 95.

<sup>7</sup> Bédarida, "La Vie de quartier", pp. 18–20.

<sup>8</sup> L. Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500–1800* (London, 1977).

<sup>9</sup> Y.-M. Bercé, *Fête et révolte: Des mentalités populaires du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1976).

geneous networks. Recent studies imply, however, that the picture is much more complex.

Felicity Heal has demonstrated that English hospitality in the early modern period was gradually undermined by commercialization and growing social distance, social both in the countryside and in the cities. City governments continued to organize feasts and public entertainment, but they were less and less interested in the forms of integrative ceremonials that had played such an important role in the late Middle Ages. Although civic festivities and rituals were still considered to promote neighbourly amity and collective identity, they increasingly served the interests of élites, who now wanted to distance themselves from the populace and who also used the ideal of good neighbourliness as a rhetorical weapon whenever they thought it necessary to dissolve temporarily the sharp distinctions between social groups. The decline of private charity and the rise of institutionalized forms of public relief seem to point in the same direction, namely to an intensifying of the social gulf between the “better sort” and the poor.<sup>10</sup>

In his thorough study of social relations in Elizabethan London Ian Archer has also pointed to the fact that “community in the sense of people of different social status doing things together was being eroded”. Social and cultural polarization meant that the relationship between the well-to-do and their poor neighbours “was more consciously shaped by the extraction of deference in return for patronage, in particular through the exercise of poor relief”. The increase in social distance was also reflected in the growing reluctance of more wealthy parishioners to participate in shared recreational activities. This does not mean, however, that the local community collapsed. The obligations of neighbouring were still taken seriously. The vestries and the higher ranks of local government were, indeed, increasingly monopolized by the élites, but the middle order, especially artisans, continued to play an active role in parish and ward affairs, which offered them the opportunity to develop informal social networks. Although the aldermen’s deputies gained more and more power, the local communities remained self-regulating to a certain extent.<sup>11</sup>

Similar changes seem to have occurred in Dutch cities. People living in adjacent streets in the cities of Delft, Haarlem, Leiden, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht had set up *gebuurten* (neighbourhood communities) during the late Middle Ages to ensure peace and order in their immediate surroundings, to help one another at events like birth, marriage and death, and to organize feasts to strengthen mutual friendship. The members of a *gebuurte* chose their own *deken* (dean) and *hoofdmannen*, who had to ensure that mutual rights and obligations were respected and act as medi-

<sup>10</sup> F. Heal, *Hospitality in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 303–304, 333–336, 350, 393.

<sup>11</sup> I. W. Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 63–99.

ators in case of conflicts. The city governments valued the conciliatory role that local administrators played and acknowledged their authority as “peacemakers”. During the sixteenth century, however, social and cultural polarization resulted in a decreasing degree of participation in local government. In The Hague those heads of families who were unable to afford to pay a weekly contribution were excluded from electing the deans and *hoofdmannen*. Around 1600 the town clerk in Leiden noted that “the rich do not want to associate with the poor any more”; in other words, good neighbouring was on the decline. Herman Roodenburg has suggested that the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century *gebuurten* did continue to play an important role in the informal management of conflicts, but that their ability to regulate themselves in other matters was undermined. On the one hand, city governments assumed more and more functions. They deprived neighbourhood communities of all their responsibility concerning fire fighting and street cleaning. On the other hand, they made the deans and *hoofdmannen* of the neighbourhoods responsible for certain aspects of policing, such as registering strangers and monitoring the local poor, as a result of which local dignitaries were gradually perceived to be instruments of city government.<sup>12</sup>

In Paris, too, the autonomy of local communities was eroded. During the first half of the seventeenth century the policing of the city was still in the hands of local dignitaries, who were elected by all the prominent citizens of each of the city’s sixteen quarters. These citizens were responsible for ensuring the collection of taxes and the cleaning of streets, and public order was maintained by the city militia, which was 30,000 to 50,000 strong. As central government increased its control over the city, the power and responsibilities of local dignitaries were gradually restricted. By the middle of the eighteenth century the municipality had few functions of any importance, and the militia had been replaced by a police force. Continuing centralization put an end to all forms of local autonomy, which meant that a personal basis of power within the neighbourhood was no longer a necessary condition of obtaining political or honorary functions. Consequently, the local networks of patronage that the former dignitaries had cultivated disintegrated, and the neighbourhood communities no longer had semi-official channels through which to express their desiderata.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> H. Roodenburg, “‘Freundschaft’, ‘Brüderlichkeit’ und ‘Einigkeit’: Städtische Nachbarschaften im Westen der Republik”, in T. Dekker *et al.* (eds.), *Ausbreitung bürgerlicher Kultur in den Niederlanden und Nordwestdeutschland* (Münster, 1991), pp. 10–24. See also D. Haks, *Huwelijk en gezin in Holland in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw. Processtukken en moralisten over aspecten van het laat-zeventiende en achttiende-eeuwse gezinsleven* (Assen, 1982), pp. 60–64, and C. A. Davids, “De migratiebeweging in Leiden in de achttiende eeuw”, in H. A. Diederiks *et al.* (eds.), *Armoede en sociale spanning: Sociaal-historische studies over Leiden in de achttiende eeuw* (Hilversum, 1985), pp. 151–152.

<sup>13</sup> D. Garrioch, *Neighbourhood and Community in Paris, 1740–1790* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 209–217.



In some cities of the Southern Netherlands, neighbourhood communities apparently had greater autonomy than elsewhere in Western Europe, and they preserved this autonomy much longer, too. This was true especially in Ghent, where there had been *gebuurten* since the thirteenth century, each covering a single main road and adjacent streets and alleys. In 1777 there were no fewer than 211 *gebuurten*, each containing an average of forty-five to fifty households per *gebuurte*. All adult inhabitants were full members of their *gebuurte*, regardless of their wealth and standing. They met regularly in an inn at the invitation of the dean; the dean was elected from among the male heads of families, usually for three years, and he was the link with the city government: on the one hand, he represented the members of the local community and on the other hand, he was expected to inform them of the decisions of the authorities and to have these decisions carried out. It is not clear how representative the deans were and to what degree they served the interests of all members, but there can be no doubt that the *gebuurten* continued to manage many matters themselves throughout the early modern period, though from the sixteenth century onwards the aldermen increasingly supervised their functions and charged the *gebuurten* with all manner of tasks. At the end of the *ancien régime* the deans were required by the city government to organize the night watch, as well as to take command of fire fighting, supervise the maintenance of roads and waterways, take care of the street lighting, check the amount of grain each family had in times of shortages and make a list of houses where soldiers could be billeted when troops arrived, and so on. However, in the legal field nothing changed: as “peacemaker” the dean of a neighbourhood was still authorized to arbitrate in cases of disputes between neighbours and to fine those breaching community norms. These fines could be high when rude insults had been made or fierce blows struck. The aldermen only interfered when the dean was unable to arrange a mutual settlement. As intermediaries in conflicts between neighbours the deans proved to be irreplaceable. For this reason the French authorities soon recanted on a decision taken in 1795 to abolish the Ghent *gebuurten*. In 1804 the system of deans was reintroduced because it was thought they could make an important contribution to “the prevention of arguments and fights [ . . . ] and the restoration of order and peace by reconciling households and families that live in discord”. Their authority became completely undermined, however. It was only in minor disputes between neighbours that they were still permitted to interfere on their own initiative, and their intervention no longer had the force of law. From then on everything was based on goodwill. One could not speak of local autonomy any longer. City government took over all authority, and a professional police force was given responsibility for the maintenance of public order.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> E. Varenberg, “Les Voisinages de Gand”, *Bulletin de l'Académie royale de Belgique*, 2nd series, 35 (1868), pp. 364–386; P. Clacys, *Pages de l'histoire locale gantoise*, II (Ghent, 1888), pp. 34–52; G. van Severen, *Het gebuurte en dekenijeven te Gent, vroeger en nu* (Ghent,

The available evidence is not conclusive enough to permit us to say something about the chronological and geographical variations in neighbourhood autonomy in urban communities during the early modern period. It cannot be doubted, however, that changes took place. On the one hand, the degree of participation in local government by the less well-off diminished. It is possible and even very probable that the upper classes in the medieval neighbourhood communities had already set the tone, but it seems as if they considerably enhanced their position after that time. On the other hand, from the sixteenth century onwards local communities were subjected to stricter and external controls, as a result of which the authorities took over functions as well as imposing tasks. Nowhere else was local autonomy so restricted as in Paris. Here an extensive and professional police force was created; it was responsible for monitoring all aspects of daily life in the neighbourhoods. In cities where the aldermen continued to exercise power, however, certain matters were left to the discretion of local communities until the end of the *ancien régime*. This was especially true in the case of arbitrating in conflicts between neighbours. Because city governments did not yet have a police force in the real sense of the word, they were only aware of minor violations or conflicts through the representatives of local communities, and they were inclined to approve of, or even to support, interventions from below if these contributed to the restoration of public order and social peace. In spite of this, however, local autonomy was restricted everywhere. It was rare that city governments requested neighbourhoods to co-operate in administrative and political matters: they were simply charged with executing certain tasks.

Does this imply that urban neighbourhood life at the end of the *ancien régime* was of little importance? It remains to be seen. The decline of more or less institutionalized forms of self-regulation is not necessarily synonymous with disintegration: it can go together with the construction or further elaboration of informal channels of social interaction. We must therefore look at the evolution of the day-to-day functions carried out by the local community, while paying particular attention to the various ways in which social and cultural changes affected neighbourhood sociability and solidarity.

### Active neighbouring

According to Abrams the relative strength of local communities depends largely on the extent to which their individual members are willing and capable of offering mutual help, support and defence. For this reason he defines active neighbouring as essentially a form of community care,

1977); J. Decavele, "De gebuurten tot omstreeks 1800", in J. Decavele (ed.), *Gebuurleven en dekenijen te Gent, 14de–20ste eeuw* (Ghent, 1992), pp. 9–52.



emphasizing the social costs of such care. Altruism, he says, is not one-directional. It can only be understood in terms of reciprocity in human relations. Consequently the reciprocity principle has always functioned as the basis of active neighbouring: "Care was meaningful as an exchange rather than as a gift. The obstacles to neighbourhood care at the local level were to be found in the ideas of cost and benefit, and around doubts about the possible existence of a flow of help in which the individual could be recipient as well as donor. Unhelpfulness could be a defence against the perceived failure of reciprocity."<sup>15</sup> Abrams derived this idea from studies by various researchers, who, though their preoccupations differed, all came to the conclusion that human relations are seldom if ever based on giving alone, but on give and take, on social exchange.<sup>16</sup>

The crucial importance of the reciprocity principle is clearly shown in Michael Anderson's detailed study of family and kinship structures in nineteenth-century Preston in Lancashire. His central concern was the question of why working-class families could at one moment, but not at another, count on the help of family members or kin in cases of death, illness, unemployment and other major crises during their life cycle. He showed that what motivated mutual help was not pure altruism and that "family and kinship relations tended to have strong short-run instrumental overtones of a calculative kind".<sup>17</sup> This conclusion seems to support Abrams' and Bulmer's opinion that informal social networks based on family and kinship relations were dominant in what they call "traditional" communities. We might ask, however, whether this was not the result of changes in social organization that rendered maintaining reciprocal relations with neighbours less necessary. In other words, has the family under all circumstances been the most appropriate "instrument" for the construction of reciprocal relations? We can also ask whether, for the period studied here, neighbourhood communities did not have functions other than that of providing a social safety net. Whatever the case, the historical contexts in which reciprocal relations could develop and in which they decayed need to be considered. In doing so, it would be wrong to assume that what happens at the familial level is necessarily comparable to or synchronic with what happens at the neighbourhood level.

High mobility between towns and within towns is often given as one factor that would complicate or even prevent reciprocal relations between neighbours. Many researchers consider residential stability a necessary condition for the formation of informal social networks based on neigh-

<sup>15</sup> Bulmer, *Neighbours*, p. 10.

<sup>16</sup> See especially M. Mauss, "Essai sur le don: forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques", *Années Sociologiques*, new series, 1 (1925), pp. 30-186; A. W. Gouldner, "The Norm of Reciprocity: A Preliminary Statement", *American Sociological Review*, 25 (1960), pp. 161-178; P. Blau, *Exchange and Power in Social Life* (New York, 1964); Hirsch, *Social Limits*.

<sup>17</sup> M. Anderson, *Family Structure in Nineteenth-Century Lancashire* (Cambridge, 1971).

bourhood ties. Standish Meacham, for example, claims that working-class local community attachments in English cities did not become strong until the slow-down in urbanization led to lower rates of population mobility and greater residential stability in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>18</sup> The problem is not only that another historian, Martin Daunton, suggests that the vitality of street life in working-class neighbourhoods declined considerably in the course of the nineteenth century,<sup>19</sup> but also that scholars of the early modern period use the same argument to postulate that London and the large Continental cities were already characterized by a high degree of anonymity in the seventeenth century.<sup>20</sup>

Evaluating the so-called “privatization process” also poses a problem. Many authors argue that the growing importance of private life, in which the rise of the intimate family played a crucial role, gradually undermined neighbourhood life. The development of new, private, home- and family-oriented life styles was a long-term process, but after 1750 the process accelerated when it coincided with the growing separation of work and private life. An increasing number of families began to consider every interference from outside, particularly control from the community, as a violation of their privacy, which resulted in less social interaction among neighbours.<sup>21</sup> How can this view be reconciled with the findings of those urban historians who suggest that the public space in working-class neighbourhoods continued to have important social functions throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries?<sup>22</sup>

Equally unclear is what impact the withdrawal of the upper classes from certain districts of towns had. One may assume that the character of local communities changed to the degree that an increasing number of the élite and the middle order distanced themselves from the less prosperous groups of the population, not only culturally but also geographically. But did the poorer neighbourhoods lose their self-regulating ability because the basis of reciprocity grew weaker, or did the fact that they became more socially homogeneous result in the strengthening of local solidarity? Did they

<sup>18</sup> S. Meacham, *A Life Apart: The English Working Class, 1890–1914* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977), pp. 44–52.

<sup>19</sup> M. J. Daunton, “Public Place and Private Space: The Victorian City and the Working-Class Household”, in D. Fraser and A. Sutcliffe (eds.), *The Pursuit of Urban History* (London, 1983), pp. 212–233.

<sup>20</sup> P. Burke, “Some Reflections on the Pre-Industrial City”, *Urban History Yearbook*, 2 (1975), p. 19; P. Clark and P. Slack, *English Towns in Transition, 1500–1700* (Oxford, 1976), p. 142.

<sup>21</sup> R. Chartier, “Introduction: la communauté, l’Etat et la famille. Trajectoires et tensions”, in P. Ariés and G. Duby (eds.), *Histoire de la vie privée*, III, *De la Renaissance aux Lumières* (Paris, 1986), p. 410; P. Spierenburg, *De verbroken betovering: Mentaliteitsgeschiedenis van pre-industrieel Europa* (Hilversum, 1988), pp. 14–17, 314–317.

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, B. Bramwell, “Public Space and Local Communities: The Example of Birmingham, 1840–1880”, in G. Kearns and C. W. J. Whithers (eds.), *Urbanising Britain: Essays on Class and Community in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 31–54.

become more defensive or did geographical segregation in contrast result in a sharpened perception of social antagonisms as well as leading to the rise of new forms of conflict?

Since the problems are vast, fragments of the debate on informal social networks and local community attachments are widely scattered in the literature. We do not claim to have surveyed all the relevant studies. In this article we aim merely to offer a review of what is currently known about social neighbourhood change at the end of the *ancien régime*. Thanks to the detailed studies by Arlette Farge, David Garrioch and other scholars it is possible to draw some tentative conclusions for the eighteenth century, particularly concerning the meaning of street life in a rapidly changing society. Although most of the supporting evidence is circumstantial and not beyond dispute, it would seem, first, that high mobility within and between towns is not incompatible with the maintenance of reciprocal relations between neighbours and that broader community linkages in such circumstances were often more functional than familial networks. Secondly, the “process of privatization” by no means coincided with the decline of street life, and public space became even more important because, more than ever, those on lower incomes needed transparency in contacts with their neighbours. Thirdly, the local community did not lose its self-regulating ability because of the physical withdrawal of the upper classes; it succeeded in finding other channels and methods to discipline its members. And, fourthly, geographical segregation contributed to a certain extent to the development of a different kind of collective sense of identity in which neighbourhood ties and social ties coincided, giving a new dimension to the concept of solidarity. Each of these points needs some explanation.

### Migrants and reciprocal relations

In the light of recent research, the idea that migrants in the cities formed an unstable and disoriented group within the population during the period of the *ancien régime* and the nineteenth century has to be revised. The image of the isolated, abandoned immigrant does not reflect historical reality. Numerous studies have shown that most new immigrants could fall back on all sorts of “buffers”, i.e. informal social networks, in their search for employment and housing, and so on.<sup>23</sup> The data are too sketchy to permit us to say much that is conclusive about the possible variations which

<sup>23</sup> For references to the literature on this topic see J. Merriman, “Introduction: Images of the Nineteenth-Century French City”, in J. Merriman (ed.), *French Cities in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1982), pp. 32–35; J. H. Johnson and C. G. Pooley (eds.), *The Structure of Nineteenth-Century Cities* (London, 1982); R. Dennis, *English Industrial Cities of the Nineteenth Century: A Social Geography* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 250–287; M. De Metsenare, *Taalmuur: sociale muur? De negentiende-eeuwse taalverhoudingen te Brussel als resultaat van geodemografische en sociale processen* (Brussels, 1988), pp. 48–50, 59–60.

could occur in these networks. Ethnic background, regional identities, professional groups, familial ties and neighbourhood links are often mentioned in one breath.<sup>24</sup> However, on closer examination it is apparent that these buffers were not mutually interchangeable. Jeremy Boulton, for example, has pointed out that family members and kin in seventeenth-century London only played a limited role in assisting immigrants: "Close proximity to kin [ . . . ] was often only a transient phenomenon. The high mortality rates in London must have meant that, where parents and adult children both survived, close residence was perforce only temporary".<sup>25</sup> In other words, family members and kin could only function as a source of help when they were numerous enough and they formed an extensive local network; it was certainly not the rule during a period of mass immigration. This explains why reciprocal relations with neighbours were considered to be of prime importance. It is not entirely coincidental that in London as well as in provincial towns in the seventeenth century numerous immigrants were registered as "sojourners and lodgers". Lodging was not only financially profitable for both parties, it also formed the basis of reciprocal relations. The formation of complex households, even if only for a short time, increased the possibility of adapting to changing circumstances.<sup>26</sup> Taking in lodgers, therefore, remained common among the less prosperous groups of the population in later periods, when familial networks had become much more extensive.<sup>27</sup>

The example of Antwerp proves that reciprocal relations with neighbours played a crucial role in the survival strategies of lower social groups when the scope and the capacity of family networks were insufficient: during the first half of the nineteenth century, a period characterized by

<sup>24</sup> See, for instance, L. H. Lees, *Exiles of Erin: Irish Migrants in Victorian London* (Manchester, 1979); B. Fritzsche, "Das Quartier als Lebensraum", in W. Conze and U. Engelhardt (eds.), *Arbeiterexistenz im 19. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1981), pp. 92–113; L. P. Moch, *Paths to the City: Regional Migration in Nineteenth-Century France* (Beverly Hills, 1983).

<sup>25</sup> J. Boulton, *Neighbourhood and Society: A London Suburb in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, 1987), p. 258.

<sup>26</sup> S. J. Wright, "Sojourners and Lodgers in a Provincial Town: The Evidence from Eighteenth-Century Ludlow", *Urban History Yearbook*, 17 (1990), pp. 14–35 (and the literature cited there). See also L. H. Lees, "The Survival of the Unfit: Welfare Politics and Family Maintenance in Nineteenth-Century London", in P. Mandler (ed.), *The Uses of Charity: The Poor on Relief in the Nineteenth-Century Metropolis* (Philadelphia, 1990), p. 86.

<sup>27</sup> J. Borchert, "Urban Neighbourhood and Community: Informal Group Life 1850–1970", *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 11 (1981), p. 620, has remarked that during the last quarter of the nineteenth century most black labourers' families in Washington D.C. provided board and lodging to non-related immigrants not so much in return for immediate material benefits as with a view to mutual assistance in times of future need: "What alley dwellers did [ . . . ] was to expand the numbers of people that the family could rely on for support and in doing so gained greater assurance that some resources and help would always be available for emergencies. This process not only increased the potential earning power and helped to increase it, but it also provided a variety of services."

absolute impoverishment and massive immigration, community life in the ghettos became more important because at times of necessity fewer proletarians could rely on close or distant relatives.<sup>28</sup> The function of the neighbourhood as a source of informal support could not be taken over on a large scale by family networks until a considerable part of the urban population was more or less settled. This can be concluded from the recent comparison by Peter Willmott between the London district of Bethnal Green and the industrial town of Preston. Bethnal Green was characterized by rapid changes in the composition of its population around the middle of the nineteenth century and this hampered the formation of family networks; of the 1,000 households studied, only twenty-three contained a relative of another household in the same neighbourhood. In contrast, the growth of Preston's textile industry since the beginning of the century had led to chain migration making the formation of extensive and tight-knit family networks possible, where newcomers could integrate. In Bethnal Green these networks did not develop until the end of the nineteenth century, after which they became increasingly important: in 1950 90 per cent of the households had kin who lived in the same neighbourhood.<sup>29</sup>

This leads us to dispute Anderson's claim that neighbours were less important in mid-nineteenth-century Preston as sources of support than kin, because the former "lacked a firmly enough structured basis of reciprocity in a heterogeneous and mobile society",<sup>30</sup> by which he seems to suggest that geographical mobility obstructed active neighbouring. We believe that the causal relation is totally different: extensive and close-knit family networks reduced the need for reciprocity between neighbours, and vice versa.

This hypothesis is supported by Garrioch's study of neighbourhood life in Paris during the second half of the eighteenth century. Although Paris contained a great number of "strangers", and its population was characterized by a high degree of instability, immigrants found it rather easy to find acceptance in a neighbourhood community. Garrioch emphasizes the extreme sociability of Paris: "A sense of belonging and of community did not depend on long residence or on life-long familiarity with every aspect of the lives of friends and neighbours." The way newcomers were treated did not depend so much on their previous history and background as on

<sup>28</sup> C. Lis, *Social Change and the Labouring Poor: Antwerp, 1770–1860* (New Haven and London, 1986), pp. 150–162.

<sup>29</sup> P. Willmott, *Kinship and Urban Community: Past and Present* (Leicester, 1987), pp. 8–15.

<sup>30</sup> Anderson, *Family Structure*, p. 171. In a recent contribution ("Indicators of Population Change and Stability in Nineteenth-Century Cities: Some Sceptical Comments", in Johnson and Pooley (eds.), *Structure*, pp. 283–298) he takes a less categorical position and stresses that "we need to know much more than we have usually gathered in the past about neighbourhood activity space".

their personalities, behaviour and industriousness. In a certain sense the neighbourhood treated immigrants as people without a history; what was important was that they showed *now* who they were, that they proved themselves in their new environment.<sup>31</sup>

Though mobility within towns was sometimes high during the *ancien régime*, especially in the metropolises of London and Paris, it increased even more during the nineteenth century, both in Western Europe and in the United States. Some authors have argued that the frequent local moves of working-class families made active neighbouring impossible, at least in urban districts with a proletarian character.<sup>32</sup> Recent research, however, shows that intra-urban mobility took place within a limited radius and that most labourers changed their address but not their neighbourhood. They therefore continued to be residents of the same neighbourhood for most of their lives. Moreover, every neighbourhood had a large core of permanent residents, the “stayers”, who apparently acted as informal surveillants: they took care of the newcomers and showed them the way around, literally and figuratively. High rates of urban mobility were thus not incompatible with active neighbouring.<sup>33</sup>

Of course, all migration movements did not follow patterns that perpetuated the neighbourhood. Particularly in cases of large-scale movements of seasonal workers, informal social networks disintegrated after some time. Urban planning measures, especially those aimed at the large-scale slum clearance of the city centre, and sweeping changes in housing construction could also make it impossible to maintain or repair local community ties.<sup>34</sup> We cannot, for the time being, find out what the limits were. Whatever the case, the tenacity and the adaptability of neighbourhood communities were much greater than one might think, not only during the *ancien régime* but also in the nineteenth century, when migration within cities and between cities reached enormous proportions. One should note that we are dealing here with a certain type of neighbourhood life, one that might be characterized as street life. Although the social use of public space underwent major changes during the period studied here, many forms of social interaction between working-class neighbours continued to take place in the street because active participation in a wide scope of informal street activities was one of their survival strategies.

<sup>31</sup> Garrioch, *Neighbourhood*, pp. 227–228.

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, S. Thernstrom, “Urbanization, Migration and Social Mobility in Late Nineteenth-Century America”, in A. B. Callow (ed.), *American Urban History: An Interpretive Reader with Commentaries* (New York, 1969), pp. 263–273, and M. J. Daunton, *Coal Metropolis: Cardiff, 1870–1914* (Leicester, 1977), pp. 131–142.

<sup>33</sup> For general surveys of the literature, see De Metsenaere, *Taalmuur*, pp. 61–64, and S. Bleek, “Mobilität und Selbsthaftigkeit in deutschen Großstädten während der Urbanisierung”, *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 15 (1989), pp. 5–33.

<sup>34</sup> Lees, *Exiles*, p. 58; Garrioch, *Neighbourhood*, pp. 228–230.



### An active and participatory street life

Several historicizing sociologists and historians have suggested that in Western Europe public life and everything associated with it, including street life, gradually lost its meaning in favour of intimacy and homeliness from the late Middle Ages onwards. It started with the transfer of personal hygiene to non-public spaces, after which insanity, death and violent executions became private events removed from the public sphere. This process of "privatization" became more rapid around 1750, with the rise of the intimate family. People developed an increasing need for privacy, which was expressed in the use of separate bedrooms and in the separation of work activities from domestic affairs. It is claimed that this reevaluation of the private sphere coincided with the decline of the old neighbourhood communities and consequently with the decay of street life.<sup>35</sup> We do not deny the reality of the process of privatization, but we do have many doubts concerning the universal character of the tendency towards separateness. It seems more probable that the growing social differentiation manifested itself in this field, too, which is to say that the developments mentioned mainly concerned the élites and partly the middle classes. There are even good reasons to suppose that among the less prosperous the public sphere became even more important towards the end of the *ancien régime*.

Few historians have illustrated the power and vitality of street life in an eighteenth-century metropolis as vividly as Arlette Farge and David Garrioch. Farge's lively descriptions prove how transparent lower-class neighbourhoods in Paris were, at least for the residents. Her many convincing examples prove that people were constantly under the gaze of others, that nothing, or almost nothing, escaped the attention of their neighbours, and that everyone's behaviour was subject to public scrutiny.<sup>36</sup> This resulted, of course, from the high density of housing, which made it almost impossible to hide anything from one's next-door neighbours.<sup>37</sup> This transparency was also considered necessary, however, because for the less well-off participation in informal social networks was a *sine qua non* of survival, which in the first instance necessitated mutual trust, and therefore openness, which implied helpfulness as well as meddlesomeness. Since rent agreements, small loans and other business transactions were hardly ever

<sup>35</sup> The theoretical speculations of Norbert Elias often underpin such interpretations. See, for example, Spierenburg, *Verbroken betovering*, pp. 10–17, and P. Ariès, "Pour une histoire de la vie privée", in Ariès and Duby (eds.), *Histoire de la vie privée*, III, pp. 7–19. The ideas of Elias have also inspired R. Muchembled, *L'Invention de l'homme moderne: Sensibilités, mœurs et comportements collectifs sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris, 1988), though Muchembled provides some fundamental correctives to Elias' ideas.

<sup>36</sup> A. Farge, *Vivre dans la rue à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1979), and *La Vie fragile: Violence, pouvoirs et solidarités à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1986).

<sup>37</sup> D. Roche, *Le Peuple de Paris. Essai sur la culture populaire au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1981), pp. 100–130, 253–256.

written down among the lower classes, both parties had to be convinced that they would not be cheated. Openness and gossip formed the parallel and complementary lines along which relationships of trust could develop.<sup>38</sup>

The arrival of ever more immigrants increased the need for transparency. Given that the maintenance of relations of reciprocity means that everybody had to function as an “open book”, new immigrants had to conform to that expectation at all costs in order to be accepted by the local community; closeness and reservedness were easily interpreted as secretiveness. To buy goods on credit or to become eligible for various forms of assistance, they had to win the trust of others and hold out a prospect of reciprocal service. Consequently, a good reputation was of paramount importance and such a reputation could only be “made” in public, not behind closed doors or in a small select group – that was the privilege of the élites. Garrioch’s study proves to what extent reciprocity in lower-class districts was dependent on transparency and respectability: “For those who belonged to the community the way neighbours spoke of them and behaved towards them was a constant preoccupation. Because the neighbourhood, socially and materially, was central to people’s existence, the place they occupied in it was vitally important to them.”<sup>39</sup> In other words, everyone had to submit to social control by the local community. How people spoke about each other was of considerable importance. After all, honour and dishonour were not only moral categories, but qualifications that affected someone’s material status. The narrower the economic basis of a family, the less it could afford to neglect the scrutiny of others. Residents of lower-class neighbourhoods were therefore extremely sensitive to insults. They did not hesitate to complain against a neighbour who verbally insulted them or in some other way insinuated anti-social behaviour: it was only by publicly challenging the insult that one could clear one’s name. Even if it did not result in a court case, the conflict still had to be fought and settled publicly, in a way almost ritualistic and theatrical.<sup>40</sup>

How strongly the residents of working-class neighbourhoods felt about trustworthiness is evident from Thomas Brennan’s study of the causes of disturbances in public drinking houses in eighteenth-century Paris. These conflicts were not so much the result of drunken arguments or passionate

<sup>38</sup> See the remarks by J. R. Farr, *Hands of Honor: Artisans and their World in Dijon, 1550–1650* (Ithaca and London, 1988), pp. 161–162, 165–166.

<sup>39</sup> Garrioch, *Neighbourhood*, pp. 16–55 (the quote appears on p. 33).

<sup>40</sup> Farge, *Vivre*, pp. 105–107, 110–123; D. Garrioch, “Verbal Insults in Eighteenth-Century Paris”, in P. Burke and R. Porter (eds.), *The Social History of Language* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 104–119; H. Lecharny, “L’Injure à Paris au XVIIIe siècle. Un aspect de la violence au quotidien”, *Revue d’Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, 36 (1989), pp. 559–585. See, too, in this context the important remarks by Farr, *Hands of Honor*, pp. 180–189, and Muchembled, *Invention*, pp. 218–222, 307–309.

disagreements, but of conscious moves to make a person suspected or to defend one's own honour. In most cases it concerned the notion of (un)trustworthiness: "A reputation for honesty for paying one's debts, or for working with the necessary skill and assiduity came up frequently as the prize for which men fought."<sup>41</sup>

Further, the inn was the central place where the norms and values of the local community were confirmed and tested. There is no doubt that those who frequented inns gradually became more socially homogeneous in the course of the eighteenth century: the élites and the more or less well-to-do citizens increasingly dissociated themselves from the populace by frequenting exclusive coffee houses and by organizing soirées at home.<sup>42</sup> There were many types of public drinking houses, but by the end of the *ancien régime* it was mainly the lower classes who frequented neighbourhood pubs. Moreover, they lived within five minutes' walk of them. In the neighbourhood pub, which in principle functioned as a neutral meeting-place, drinking was not an end in itself, but a means to strengthen informal social ties, to consolidate mutual relations, and to make or break a reputation. Drinking with others was of the utmost importance because participating in the ritual of buying others a drink and of being bought a drink demonstrated that one was accepted as part of a group and that one belonged to the neighbourhood community. Going to pubs was therefore a rational activity in terms of social exchange.<sup>43</sup>

Cultivating the private sphere and everything associated with it in the field of affective individualism for other reasons was unthinkable among the lower classes. The socialization of the youth mainly took place outside the home, more precisely in the street, which implied that norms and values were emphasized that were necessary for the continued survival of the local community. Jürgen Schlumbohm stresses, quite rightly, that during the *ancien régime* less well-off parents had little time for the education of their children and that, moreover, they were obliged to have their children contribute to the income of the family at an early stage; the effect of this was certainly not to encourage emotional ties. He makes a comparison with black ghettos in United States cities today in which peer groups play a much more important role in the process of socialization

<sup>41</sup> T. Brennan, *Public Drinking and Popular Culture in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Princeton, 1988), p. 63. See also T. Daussy, "Le Cabaret, lieu de sociabilité à Tourcoing (fin XVIIIe siècle – début XIXe siècle)", *Tourcoing et le Pays de Ferrain*, 1 (1983), pp. 25–37.

<sup>42</sup> In 1783 a French traveller remarked that the merchants of Ghent associated only with one another and with the nobility, and that none of them frequented the *estaminets à bière* any more. Derival (pseudonym of P. de Gomicourt), *Le Voyageur dans les Pays-Bas autrichiens*, V (Amsterdam, 1783), p. 12. This was also the case in other West European cities. Cf. Muchembled, *Invention*, pp. 269–271.

<sup>43</sup> Brennan, *Public Drinking*, p. 227. See also H. Soly, "Kroegloopen in Brabant en Vlaanderen, 16de–18de eeuw", *Spiegel Historiae*, 18 (1983), pp. 570–571, and for a later period M. P. Hannagan, *The Logic of Solidarity: Artisans and Industrial Workers in Three French Towns, 1871–1914* (Urbana, 1980), pp. 102–105.

than the family; the consequence is that "relations between parents and children are less charged with emotions, that the family is not so sharply isolated from the social environment, that children enter the street and peer groups very early and that this has considerable emotional significance for them". He does not go so far as to conclude that there was no parental love among the lower classes at the end of the eighteenth century, let alone that parents treated their children with indifference; but he does claim that there was never much room for the development of more emotional family relationships and that among working-class children group experiences were decisive in the socialization process: in the street, under the watchful eyes of neighbours, they learned what community life, solidarity and especially reciprocity meant.<sup>44</sup>

### Community pressure and external control

There is ample evidence to prove that the better-off distanced themselves, both culturally and geographically, from the lower classes in the course of the early modern period. According to some historians this process undermined and eventually destroyed community life, because the basis of reciprocity became much smaller and an increasing proportion of the population no longer considered social pressure exerted by the local community as a sanction. This last point is of considerable significance. Charivari in the late Middle Ages and in the sixteenth century can be considered an indication of successful self-regulation by local communities, whose members, regardless of their social position, subscribed to the same codes of behaviour, or at least had equivalent ideas about moral obligations.<sup>45</sup> This was no longer the case by the end of the *ancien régime*, in the big cities at least. The élites no longer took part in the activities of youth associations; they disapproved of all sorts of popular amusements, and they considered charivaris to be an intolerable infringement of their privacy.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>44</sup> J. Schlumbohm, "'Traditional' Collectivity and 'Modern' Individuality: Some Questions and Suggestions for the Historical Study of Socialization. The Examples of the German Lower and Upper Bourgeoisie around 1800", *Social History*, 5 (1980), pp. 71–103.

<sup>45</sup> See especially N. Z. David, "Charivari, Honor and Community in Seventeenth-Century Lyon and Geneva", in J. J. MacAloon (ed.), *Rite Drama, Festival, Spectacle: Rehearsals toward a Theory of Cultural Performance* (Philadelphia, 1984), pp. 42–57, and the contributions by A. Blok, M. Jacobs and G. Rooijackers to the special issue of *Volkskundig Bulletin*, 15/3 (October 1989): "Charivari in de Nederlanden. Rituele sancties op deviant gedrag".

<sup>46</sup> R. W. Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700–1850* (Cambridge, 1973); R. Chartier, "Dominants et dominés: du partage à exclusion", in E. Le Roy Ladurie (ed.), *Histoire de la France urbaine*, III, *La Ville classique, de la Renaissance à la Révolution* (Paris, 1981), pp. 180–198; J. Le Goff and J.-C. Schmitt (eds.), *Le Charivari. Actes de la Table Ronde organisée à Paris (25–27 avril 1977) par l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales et le Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (Paris, 1981); N. Pellegrin, *Les Bacheleries. Organisations et fêtes de la jeunesse dans le Centre-Ouest, XVe–XVIIIe siècles* (Poitiers, 1982); H. Soly, "Openbare feesten in Brabantse en Vlaamse steden, 16de–18de eeuw", *Het open-*

Yet, one cannot simply conclude that community life in general disappeared. No doubt a certain type of community life ceased to exist, one that had been based on a broad social consensus about values and norms. This does not imply that social interaction based on local ties within working-class neighbourhoods was weakened, however, let alone that it vanished. Geographical segregation was compatible with the active construction of other types of community, whereby the lower classes developed a more militant local culture by more clearly distinguishing between "them" and "us", the effect of which was to stimulate the emergence of new forms of solidarity. It is not pure coincidence that from the late eighteenth century onwards the old ritual sanctions like the charivari began to fulfil new functions and, particularly, to take on a political dimension: "The withdrawal of the elites from the local community and from the more boisterous forms of collective behaviour left the charivari the property of the lower classes, and this inevitably led to a transformation in the way the institution was used. It permitted an element of political satire which was not normally possible when those likely to be criticized were the organizers or prominent participants."<sup>47</sup>

The concept of "social drinking" also took on other connotations. The upper classes, the better-off, were not particularly bothered about drunkenness *per se*. What really concerned them was, on the one hand, that it was in the inns that the foundations were established or strengthened on which all sorts of mutual assistance were based, and, on the other hand, a buffer was established against social isolation; the counterpoint to this was the rejection of individualism. They considered the inn not only as a centre of possible subversion, because all sorts of fraternities were formed there that could serve as a platform for collective action, but also because the cultivation of an ethos of social exchange could hinder the development of a certain type of work ethic and hence threaten the inherent values of frugality and thrift.<sup>48</sup> The lower classes themselves transformed this rejection of their so-called antisocial behaviour into something positive: pub-crawls strengthened mutual solidarity, which was a fundamental characteristic of the life style of the lower classes, and it was an expression of their cultural identity. The fight against drunkenness was related to a particular definition of the "social problem", in which the upper classes took the inevitable excesses associated with pub-crawling as an excuse to stigmatize everything connected to frequenting pubs. However, as long as

*baar initiatief van de gemeenten in België: Historische grondslagen (Ancien Régime). Handelingen van het 11de Internationaal Colloquium te Spa, 1-4 sept. 1982 (Brussels, 1984), pp. 627-630.*

<sup>47</sup> Garrloch, *Neighbourhood*, p. 220. See also C. Tilly, "Charivaris, Repertoires and Urban Politics", in Merriman (ed.), *French Cities*, pp. 73-91, and C. Tilly, *The Contentious French: Four Centuries of Popular Struggle* (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1986), pp. 30-36.

<sup>48</sup> H. Medick, "Plebeian Culture in the Transition to Capitalism", in R. Samuel and G. Stedman Jones (eds.), *Culture, Ideology and Politics. Essays for Eric Hobsbawm* (London, 1982), pp. 84-112.



the pub functioned as a centre of an active neighbourhood life, all attempts to control it were bound to fail.<sup>49</sup>

The negative attitude of the lower classes towards the struggle for individual mobility, which the middle classes considered a panacea, has to be seen from the same perspective. Ellen Ross has pointed out that around the turn of the century those living in London's working-class districts still valued the cultivation of group values and the extension of relations based on reciprocity. They were convinced that "there was more promise in the resources of the neighbourhood than in the chimera of individual mobility", as the files compiled by external social workers show. In concrete terms this meant that "the street" could "consume" any surplus built up by a family and that considerable pressure could be put on those thought to have savings. Some contemporaries spoke admiringly about this mutual support, but others characterized it as "a tax levied by the poor on those who are slightly better off"; in their opinion this "sharing and dividing" in no way led to frugality and thrift, the conditions necessary to improve one's lot in life.<sup>50</sup> However, working-class families rejected such an "ideal" because their survival chances were greater when the neighbourhood community functioned better.

Caution is required in using terms like "proletarian culture" and "becoming middle class". Thrift, frugality, moderation, zeal and the like are not universal categories. In some historical and social contexts they can be part of proletarian strategies of survival, and in other circumstances they can just as well be characteristic of the middle classes. It is therefore very important in analysing social-political interventions to consider whether such forms of intervention could or could not be integrated into informal reciprocal relations; otherwise it is not possible to understand why they were accepted by the target group at one time and rejected at another.<sup>51</sup>

The necessity to strengthen informal social links, to maintain reciprocal relations, explains why the lower classes valued respectability so much: the positive and negative moral sanctions enforced by the local community had such important material, as well as emotional, consequences that they were as concerned about their reputation as the élites and the middle order were, though there were major differences in the social construction of honour and dishonour. Given that families who were talked about because of the misbehaviour of one of their members risked being shunned by their neighbours and refused help in times of need, they were very

<sup>49</sup> C. Lis and H. Soly, "Policing the Early Modern Proletariat, 1450-1850", in D. Levine (ed.), *Proletarianization and Family History* (New York, 1984), pp. 212-213 (see also the literature cited there).

<sup>50</sup> E. Ross, "Survival Networks: Women's Neighbourhood Sharing in London before World War One", *History Workshop*, 15 (1983), pp. 4-27.

<sup>51</sup> C. Lis et al., *Op vrije voeten? Sociale politiek in West-Europa, 1450-1914* (Leuven, 1985), pp. 34-36, 124-127, 200-204.



sensitive to the social pressure of the local community, which would not hesitate to organize demonstrations of collective public censure. From the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, such actions were attempted increasingly often. In Paris the police were given extensive powers to interfere in street activities and to arrest participants in popular rituals that might lead to violence. It cannot be doubted that the growing external control that could be perceived in all major cities undermined the old self-regulating mechanisms of the local communities, and legal sanctions gradually became more important, displacing the role of moral sanctions. However, the force of social interaction based on local links should not be underestimated. Recent studies show that local communities succeeded in establishing new, informal means of self-regulation and that their relations with the police were not unambiguous: the police did not only perform the functions envisaged by the élites and particularly the middle order.

Garrioch has shown that local communities in Paris at the end of the *ancien régime* still had a firm grip on their members; heavy pressure was still being exerted to force people to conform to collective norms and values. The daily defence, literally as well as figuratively, of family honour and the street fights that sprang from all sorts of arguments do not indicate the failure of neighbourhood life by any means, as some authors have remarked. On the contrary, "they served to strengthen it further, for people's behaviour followed clear patterns and rules which permitted the expression and resolution of grievances with the minimum of damage both to them and to the group". Where possible, problems – even those concerning estranged relationships within a family – were brought before a "street tribunal", in which some residents acted as witnesses for the prosecution or for the defence and others as judges. The rise of the bacchanal or *tapage* also proves how important public opinion was for residents of lower-class neighbourhoods. It was the individual's imitation of the charivari, during which the person – usually a man – who felt hurt or aggrieved created a disturbance at the door or window of his opponent until he retracted his words or compensated him for the damage. Children played an important role in all these street actions: they said anything that came to mind that they had heard in the neighbourhood, and in this way they affirmed the values of the community.<sup>52</sup>

How significant social pressures were can be seen from the fact that wage labourers and artisans felt obliged to take firm action against those members of their own family who had caused such a scandal that relations with the neighbours became jeopardized. The number of requests made by families who wanted relatives imprisoned for misbehaviour even rose spectacularly in the large cities of Brabant and Flanders towards the end of the *ancien régime*. Although most conflicts that gave rise to such a

<sup>52</sup> Garrioch, *Neighbourhood*, p. 41.

request occurred within the nuclear family and the applicants almost always lived with the person against whom the complaint was being made, the local community played an important role in cases of imprisonment that were initiated by wage labourers or artisans. Neighbours seldom took the initiative, but applicants were very explicit about the pressures under which they acted: they argued that they had to take drastic measures in order to avoid the risk of isolating themselves; neighbours made it clear to them that they could no longer rely on their help while those living with them continued to annoy others. Neighbours intervened at all possible stages preceding imprisonment. They took action when a woman was maltreated by her husband too often, especially when the “quarrelling” threw the whole street into uproar, or when an undesirable character threatened to lead their children astray. They did not hesitate either to utter their disapproval when a young prostitute drew attention to herself too obviously, or when she solicited married men from her own neighbourhood, or when her activities disturbed the peace of the night. The family involved was disgraced through gossip and, if this had no effect, by explicit insults. The purpose of these activities was to show that the limits of tolerance had been exceeded and that the person to whom they were directed had to be expelled.

The increase in the number of requests for imprisonment indicates on the one hand a decline in the limits of tolerance and on the other hand the growing inability of the neighbourhood community to control undesirables through other, less drastic means. During the last decades of the eighteenth century broad sectors of the population were confronted with a decline in social mobility, a loss of status, and even absolute impoverishment. The timing, the scope and the intensity of those processes varied between cities, but survival strategies were tested significantly everywhere. For wage labourers and artisans this meant that they had to work harder than ever in order to prevent either their collective social decline, or the slide into the horrifying depths of destitution. This led them to set high standards for themselves and for others, both for members of their own family and members of the local community. The problem was that impoverishment and the processes of proletarianization on the one hand led to increasing conflicts within the family and on the other hand to the decline of tolerance both within the family and in the community. As their material conditions deteriorated and their sense of vulnerability grew, the less well-off experienced the breaching of social norms and values increasingly as threats to reciprocity and thus as a form of unacceptable behaviour. They were therefore more inclined to rebuke and to discipline those who failed to observe these social norms. In short, those living in working-class neighbourhoods became less tolerant as it became increasingly necessary and difficult to function as a collectivity.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> C. Lis and H. Soly, *Te Gek om los te lopen? Collocatie in de 18de eeuw* (Turnhout, 1990). In eighteenth-century Paris, too, neighbours played an important role in cases of

Therefore, among the lower classes a request for the imprisonment of kin was not exclusively a family matter, one that followed from the process of privatization, as some authors claim;<sup>54</sup> it was a collective action. By acting as witnesses for the prosecution neighbours were saying in effect that the limits of what constituted acceptable behaviour had been exceeded and that imprisonment was the only way to restore peace and order within the family as well as within the local community. By imprisoning the wrong-doer his family could clear themselves and become reconciled with the community. They demonstrated thereby their acceptance of the norms and values of their social group, their respect for the interests and feelings of others, that they shared their views about what constituted acceptable behaviour, and that they themselves were innocent and consequently had the right to understanding and support.

Yet the more frequent use of this disciplinary instrument reflects the growing inability of local communities to solve their problems themselves; it demonstrates that informal attempts to mediate were less often successful. The explanation for this has to be sought in the fact that they were generally unable to handle conflicts stemming from shifts in the balance of power within the family; more so, because the changes in the pattern of relations between married people and between parents and their children were defined by societal developments which perforce had a structural character. For this reason the pressure to intervene was gradually transferred to the problem family itself, which was forced to rely on an external authority, particularly the power of the judiciary. In other words, it was not only that more drastic means had to be resorted to, more formal procedures had to be followed to make "pacification" possible.

Moreover, the evidence we have suggests that towards the end of the *ancien régime* it became more difficult to settle violent conflicts between neighbourhood residents by means of the street tribunal; victims therefore increasingly needed the assistance of the police. Precisely because the lower classes were so concerned about their honour, violence was a fundamental component of their way of life. They could not afford to neglect insinuations or smears, let alone direct insults, especially if they were made in public; for this reason most fights took place in the street, in the inn or in the workshop.<sup>55</sup> The fact that during the second half of the eighteenth century more and more wage labourers and artisans who got involved in such conflicts complained to the police about their adversary – almost

imprisonment. See A. Farge and M. Foucault, *Le Désordre des familles. Lettres de cachet des archives de la Bastille au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1982), pp. 35–37.

<sup>54</sup> A. Farge, "Familles: l'honneur et le secret", in Ariès and Duby (eds.), *Histoire de la vie privée*, III, pp. 596–607.

<sup>55</sup> B. Garnot, *Le Peuple au Siècle des Lumières. Echec d'un dressage culturel* (Paris, 1990), pp. 71–74. See also the unpublished doctoral thesis of A.-M. Roets, "'Rudessen, dieftent ende andere crimen'. Misdadigheid te Gent in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw: een kwantitatieve en kwalitatieve studie" (University of Ghent, 1987), pp. 269–276, and appendices 102–103, 128–130.

always their neighbour – is, we believe, not so much an indication of growing aggression, but the result of the declining ability of the local community to restore peace itself. Whatever the case, recent research has shown that in such matters the police were more inclined to settle disputes by mutual agreement, to reconcile those involved, rather than to act in a repressive way. Even in France, the police were not simply an instrument of the authoritarian state. Nicolas Delamare, who published his famous *Traité de la police* between 1713 and 1738, compared a police commissioner to a tribune of the people in ancient Rome: he had, above all, to be a peacemaker, a paternal mediator, whose main aim was the moral improvement of the lower classes. Whether in practice the police commissioners of Paris carried out their task in a purely repressive way or used their men and means to pacify working-class neighbourhoods is less clear than people have hitherto supposed.<sup>56</sup>

The working-class were not always hostile to the police: they tried to co-operate when conflicts risked escalating out of hand or when they believed incorrigible troublemakers deserved punishment. This is demonstrated by the many cases brought before the courts in nineteenth-century London by labourers who hoped the threat of a period in prison would make unmanageable co-residents, relatives or neighbours easier to live with.<sup>57</sup> In addition, fragmentary data imply that the local community considered it legitimate to call on the police when informal attempts to settle a conflict had failed; they expected the police would help them work out the best way to handle such a case. To a certain extent, therefore, the local community considered the police as a natural extension of the street tribunal and one that could be used to pursue their own goals.<sup>58</sup> In this respect, the function attributed to the police by the lower classes, a function they carried out to a certain extent, did not differ radically from the role that the deans in Ghent had in the handling of conflicts.

The gradual shift from a situation in which the local community controlled its own affairs towards formal methods of managing conflicts, methods borrowed from the élites, had important consequences, however. By depending more often on the police and the courts, the lower classes not only gave public authorities the opportunity to prevent and to neutralize possible threats to social stability, it also strengthened and legitimized

<sup>56</sup> A. Farge and A. Zysberg, “Les Théâtres de la violence à Paris au XVIIIe siècle”, *Annales, Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 34 (1979), pp. 984–1015. See also S. L. Kaplan, “Note sur les commissaires de police à Paris au XVIIIe siècle”, *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, 28 (1981), pp. 669–686.

<sup>57</sup> J. Davis, “Prosecutions and their Context: The Use of the Criminal Law in Later Nineteenth-Century London”, in D. Hay and F. Snyder (eds.), *Policing and Prosecution in Britain, 1750–1850* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 413–419.

<sup>58</sup> R. Phillips, *Family Breakdown in Late Eighteenth-Century France: Divorces in Rouen, 1792–1803* (Oxford, 1980), pp. 129, 180–187; Garrioch, *Neighbourhood*, pp. 45–48; Brennan, *Public Drinking*, p. 39; P. Peveri, “Voisinage et contrôle social au XVIIIe siècle: les Cartouciens sous le regard des honnêtes gens”, *Mentalités*, 4 (1990), pp. 101–102.

institutions that had their own logic and dynamism. It is true that they used the language of authority to achieve their aims; in this they were extremely selective and only adopted elements from the official discourse that suited them. However, this does not detract from the fact that, unwillingly and as a result of their own powerlessness, they promoted external forms of intervention that aimed to impose new forms of control and discipline in order to strengthen the "local state".

### The politics of neighbourhood community

Although the withdrawal of the élites created problems for the residents of working-class neighbourhoods, it also enabled them to develop informal community networks based both on local and on social ties. There is insufficient evidence to permit us to make general statements about the relations between active social participation among working-class neighbours and the growth of working-class collective action but what there is suggests that in the large cities of Western Europe at the end of the *ancien régime* local communities often formed social and cultural frameworks within which politically conscious crowds were formed.

Edward Thompson and other scholars have emphasized that in the eighteenth century crowd or mob actions cannot be considered primitive or prepolitical events. Not only did participants often show their solidarity and consciousness, the use of street violence had moreover its own logic, its own dynamism and, especially, its own efficiency.<sup>59</sup> One should not overestimate the importance of the apparently spontaneous and even chaotic character of such movements: "The absence of any formal organization and the apparent impromptu nature of their actions were exceptionally well adapted to an environment of power that precluded most alternative forms of direct action against the authorities." In other words, as James Scott claims, spontaneity, anonymity and a lack of formal organization do not reflect the inability of the lower classes to sustain coherent collective action, but "a popular tactical wisdom developed in conscious response to the political constraints realistically faced". The social coordination that crowd action necessitated was provided by the informal community networks that linked the members of the subordinate group. The neighbourhood could be one of those networks.<sup>60</sup>

There are many indications that point to the strong sense of collective identity felt by residents of the working-class neighbourhoods at the end of the *ancien régime*. Individualism was certainly a characteristic, but it was manifested essentially within the framework of an active neighbour-

<sup>59</sup> E. P. Thompson, *Customs in Common* (London, 1991), pp. 57, 63, 65–71. See also W. Reddy, "The Textile Trade and the Language of the Crowd at Rouen, 1752–1871", *Past and Present*, 74 (1977), pp. 62–89.

<sup>60</sup> J. C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance. Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven and London, 1990), pp. 150–151.



hood. As Colin Lucas remarked: "For the individual the community constituted a defense and a tribunal; and, by thus regulating itself, the community was able to conserve and perpetuate itself."<sup>61</sup> It is precisely this consciousness of communality within socially more homogeneous neighbourhoods that rendered formal organizations with leaders superfluous: popular collective action was based on informal networks that guaranteed anonymity.

This is important in interpreting the dramatic political events of 1789 and the following years.<sup>62</sup> Studies of the composition of revolutionary crowds prove that neighbourhood communities formed the framework within which numerous protests began and in which these protests were shaped. The participants of these various crowds generally came from very specific neighbourhoods. For example, about 70 per cent of those who stormed the Bastille were residents of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine.<sup>63</sup> What seems at first sight to have been an amorphous crowd turns out on closer inspection to have been a collectivity. Lucas is right in saying "that the eighteenth-century crowd enjoyed a particular, functional relationship with its community and that it characteristically remained rooted in locality and neighborhood". As a crowd the neighbourhood communities seldom acted blindly. Its victims were generally individuals who had violated accepted norms and values. This was also true for most protests aimed at the authorities: usually specific, selected figures of authority were attacked, those whom the participants regarded as having acted unfairly and whom they consequently branded as poor administrators. The local communities were therefore by no means politically inert. By occupying public space they forced the government to take their demands seriously and by doing so defined the limits of power: "Through the crowd, the people regulated, checked, and ultimately limited (albeit loosely) the exercise of state power in matters that directly affected the details of their lives."<sup>64</sup> In this respect the activities of the crowd were not limited to purposeful and rational protests but also included political demonstrations.<sup>65</sup> These actions would have been unthinkable without a firm basis

<sup>61</sup> C. Lucas, "The Crowd and Politics between *Ancien Régime* and the Revolution in France", *Journal of Modern History*, 60 (1988), p. 430.

<sup>62</sup> G. Lefebvre, "Foules révolutionnaires", in G. Lefebvre, *Etudes sur la Révolution française* (Paris, 1934), pp. 371–392; G. Rudé, *The Crowd in the French Revolution* (Oxford, 1959); C. Lucas, "Résistances populaires à la Révolution dans le sud-ouest", in J. Nicolas (ed.), *Mouvements populaires et conscience sociale* (Paris, 1985), pp. 473–485. See also R. Cobb, *The Police and the People: French Popular Protest, 1789–1820* (Oxford, 1970), p. 245.

<sup>63</sup> R. Monnier, *Le Faubourg Saint-Antoine, 1789–1815* (Paris, 1981), p. 122.

<sup>64</sup> Lucas, "The Crowd", pp. 429, 437.

<sup>65</sup> According to R. M. Andrews, "The Justices of the Peace of Revolutionary Paris, September 1792 – November 1794 (Frimaire Year III)", *Past and Present*, 52 (1971), pp. 56–105, the sansculotte movement should be situated in the context of the neighbourhood rather than in that of the workplace. See also in this context S. Kaplan, "Les Corporations, les 'faux ouvriers' et le faubourg Saint-Antoine au XVIIIe siècle", *Annales, Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 43 (1988), pp. 373–374.



of support, and in particular without an active neighbourhood life, in which the inn functioned as a nerve centre; the inn was not only the main point of unauthorized assembly for the lower classes, but also the social site *par excellence* for the development of a distinct culture and pattern of discourse.

The fact that informal community networks enabled the development of social solidarity, which offered both a structure and a cover for resistance, explains why the state and the city governments did everything they could to impose standards of “decent behaviour” on the residents of working-class neighbourhoods from the early nineteenth century onwards. In this, informal community sanctions and the use of public space were important targets. Attempts to transform “communal” space into “socially neutral” space and to transfer recreational activities from the street towards venues that were specialized and could be monitored were aimed at undermining the community’s ability to regulate local space according to implicit agreed standards.<sup>66</sup> The clearance of slums and the demolition of those urban areas with numerous yards and alleys after the middle of the nineteenth century enabled policy makers to “open up” local communities; new housing projects were designed in such a way that public spaces offered little scope for social interaction.<sup>67</sup>

Both the public authorities and middle-class reformers were aware of the fact that the tenacity of working-class communities was rooted in a militant local culture and that the creative dynamics of that culture had to be restrained in order to neutralize opposition. Although their attacks on popular entertainments were inspired by various motives, including the moral improvement of the lower classes and the enforcement of labour discipline, the containment of working-class social protest played a key role in their condemning and forbidding such activities.<sup>68</sup> This was also the principal motive behind persistent attempts to subject pub owners and their patrons in working-class neighbourhoods to more strict controls. It was the politicization of pub life rather than alcoholism that was condemned. The pubs of the lower classes that became centres of discussion about labour conditions and political activities were a threat to public order and social stability. This explains why “most instances of the closing of cafes or pubs occurred not when riotous drinking got out of hand, but when it became evident that people in the cafes were sober, angry, and talking”.<sup>69</sup>

Given that reciprocal relations were the foundation of local community

<sup>66</sup> M. J. D. Roberts, “Public and Private in Early Nineteenth-Century London: The Vagrant Act of 1822 and its Enforcement”, *Social History*, 13 (1988), pp. 290–294.

<sup>67</sup> See, for example, M. Bosch and G. Jagt, *Al is de Krim nog zo min . . . Geschiedenis van een Enschedese volksbuurt, 1861–1934* (Hengelo, 1984), pp. 108–109.

<sup>68</sup> F. Hearn, *Domination, Legitimation and Resistance: The Incorporation of the Nineteenth-Century English Working-Class* (Westport and London, 1984), pp. 108–109.

<sup>69</sup> R. Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (New York, 1977), pp. 214–215. See also Scott, *Domination*, pp. 64, 120–122.

networks, middle-class reformers considered these relations to be the greatest obstacles to an effective cultural offensive. They therefore gave the highest priority to measures and projects that could contribute to breaking group-oriented actions and thinking. In their opinion emancipation was inseparably connected to self-help and self-education, both oriented to individual mobility. Considerable attention was therefore paid to ways in which workers could be encouraged to save: on the one hand, frugality and foresight were to lead to the improvement of one's personal destiny, and on the other hand, it was to undermine social solidarity by tying working-class families to the economic and political institutions of the middle classes. The struggle for a more rational philanthropy, which implied the growing supervision of the lives of the poor, must be considered from the same point of view. The most important aim was to impress a new economic morality on the poor and, particularly, to make clear to them that saving was an alternative to the demoralizing dependence on public relief and that mutual assistance resulted in nothing more than the continuation of mutual dependence.<sup>70</sup>

No doubt some of the social and political strategies employed by public authorities and the middle-class reformers were congruent with the aspirations of some of the urban proletariat, and consequently affected their values and patterns of behaviour. However, the question remains to what extent those groups were representative and what effect their changing attitudes had on other sections of the working class, and to what degree community ties were affected by all this. The evidence collected by Bill Bramwell concerning the active construction of working-class communities in nineteenth-century Birmingham suggests in any case that there were "notable continuities in working-class values and behaviour, with little marked change in their overall attachments to respectability, and it warns against giving shifts in respectability an undue degree of interpretive weight". Throughout the nineteenth century Birmingham's local communities continued to be of considerable significance in promoting a sense of social relevance among the working class, including giving people a sense of importance, status and success in their own neighbourhood.<sup>71</sup> This conclusion is supported by the assertions of numerous contemporary observers and investigators, who suggest that the residents of working-class neighbourhoods were fully conscious of the threat of the growing weakness of community ties and that they did everything to maintain them; they often had considerable success in doing so. The attempts of external forces to promote individual mobility at the cost of neighbourhood exchange were not very effective, because this form of social solidarity was crucial in the

<sup>70</sup> Lis *et al.*, *Op vrije voeten*, pp. 157, 162, 178–179, 185–186 (with additional references). See also J. De Belder, "Situering van het arbeiderssparen", in E. Witte and R. De Preter (eds.), *Samen sparen. De geschiedenis van de spaarbank Codep en haar voorlopers* (Leuven, 1989), pp. 15–31.

<sup>71</sup> Bramwell, "Public Space", pp. 39–40, 54.

battle for survival. Help from neighbours not only often proved to be more immediately effective than formal relief or philanthropy, the reciprocity that was inherent in informal relief moreover diffused the act of giving.<sup>72</sup> Cultural practices like gossip, blame, public ridicule and street demonstrations remained focused on preventing forms of internal differentiation that could harm the solidarity of the community. Working men or women who saved risked being subject to sanctions if this was interpreted as an attempt to evade neighbourhood sharing. Reprisals were also taken against all those who gave the impression that they did not fully subscribe to the values and norms of the local community or who tried in some way or other to distinguish themselves from their neighbours by certain forms of behaviour.<sup>73</sup>

Of course, there were cultural and other divisions within the proletariat, and these divisions could be very deep, even in apparently homogeneous working-class communities.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, "the vitality and conviviality of much working-class street life could cement a sense of shared identity and common interests among the working class – thus enhancing the potential for class conflict – but could also provide the working class with mutual support and consolidation which might diffuse such potential".<sup>75</sup> In other words, there is no direct relationship between community ties, collective actions and class solidarities. Some social historians argue that the development of trade unions and other forms of conscious self-organization among nineteenth-century workers reflected the weakness rather than the strength of community ties and that solidarity at the local level was only a stage on the way towards the final achievement of class consciousness in the real sense of the word.<sup>76</sup> They may be right, but this does not mean that social interaction based on neighbourhood ties was not an enabling factor. This solidarity of working people outside the work sphere, and the communal significance attached to day-to-day social experiences that were permeated by collective action and thought, formed fertile ground for the growth of a "hidden transcript" that enabled certain forms of resistance, without which class formation would have been

<sup>72</sup> E. Ross, "Hungry Children: Housewives and London Charity, 1870–1918", in Mandler (ed.), *Uses of Charity*, pp. 166–175. See also Heal, *Hospitality*, pp. 359–370; Archer, *Pursuit of Stability*, pp. 94–97; J. M. Bennett, "Conviviality and Charity in Medieval and Early Modern England", *Past and Present*, 134 (1992), pp. 37–40.

<sup>73</sup> Bosch and Jagt, *Al is de Krim*, p. 77; Ross, "Hungry Children", p. 169; Bramwell, "Public Space", p. 41. See also the useful comments by R. Sennett and J. Cobb, *The Hidden Injuries of Class* (New York, 1972), pp. 207–210; O. Schwartz, *Le Monde privé des ouvriers: Hommes et femmes du Nord* (Paris, 1990), p. 65; Scott, *Domination*, p. 65.

<sup>74</sup> See, for example, A. Campbell, *The Lanarkshire Miners: A Social History of their Trade Unions, 1775–1874* (Edinburgh, 1979).

<sup>75</sup> Bramwell, "Public Space", p. 32.

<sup>76</sup> D. F. Crew, "Class and Community: Local Research on Working-Class History in Four Countries", in K. Tenfelde (ed.), *Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung im Vergleich* (Munich, 1986), pp. 282–283. See also C. J. Calhoun, "Community: Toward a Variable Conceptualization for Comparative Research", *Social History*, 5 (1980), p. 114.

unthinkable.<sup>77</sup> It was not only the workshop that determined the degree to which working people succeeded in developing organizations of their own, a collective identity and forms of social protest. Informal networks outside the sphere of labour could contribute to class consciousness as well. Jean-Paul Burdy is right to claim that “class identity is, no doubt, a function of labour and the position in the production process, but it is also formed within the residential sphere: as a result of life-styles, cultural attitudes, ideas and value systems, which in certain periods are shared by a majority of those in a group.”<sup>78</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Scott, *Domination*, pp. 119, 190–192. See also E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (Harmondsworth, 1966), pp. 471, 611, 719, and M. W. Steinberg, “The Re-Making of the English Working-Class?” *Theory and Society*, 20 (1991), pp. 177, 191.

<sup>78</sup> J.-P. Burdy, *Le Soleil noir: Un quartier de Saint-Etienne, 1840–1940* (Lyon, 1989), pp. 233–234. See also the comments by J. Foster, *Class Struggle in the Industrial Revolution* (London, 1974); Fritzsche, “Das Quartier”, pp. 105–106; E. Accampo, “Entre la classe sociale et la cité: identité et intégration chez les ouvriers de Saint-Chamond, 1815–1880”, *Le Mouvement Social*, 118 (1982), pp. 51–52, 54–55; Y. Lequin, “Les Citadins, les classes et les luttes sociales”, in G. Duby (ed.), *Histoire de la France urbaine*, IV, *La Ville à l’âge industriel* (Paris, 1983), pp. 527–531; B. Fritzsche, “Mechanismen der sozialen Segregation”, in H. J. Teuteberg (ed.), *Homo Habitans: Zur Sozialgeschichte des ländlichen und städtischen Wohnens in der Neuzeit* (Münster, 1985), p. 165; Bleek, “Mobilität”, pp. 32–33; B. Altena, “Een broeinest der anarchie”. *Arbeiders, arbeidersbeweging en maatschappelijke ontwikkeling: Vlissingen, 1875–1929* (Haarlem, 1989), pp. 500–501; Schwartz, *Le Monde privé*, p. 73.