A COLONIAL INHERITANCE

**Maltese Perceptions of Work, Power and Class Structure
with reference to the Labour Movement.**

EDWARD L. ZAMMIT

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FOREWORD

I am delighted to write a brief Foreward to this book for two reasons. Dr Zammit has been known to me for many years as a successful graduate student in Oxford. Malta, of which he is a distinguished son, has a unique fascination for anyone interested in the industrial and political development of ex-colonial countries.

It can come as no surprise that the long history of Malta, so dramatically involved with the fortunes of the Christian era in its tension and contention with Islam, should continue to exercise a powerful traditional influence over the modernising movements of our own time. The contemporary visitor cannot but be struck by the enduring reality, behind the up-to-date facade of tourism, dockyards, automobiles and shops, of a Catholic civilisation directly inherited from medieval and Mediterranean Christianity. Churches and priests and monuments bear conspicuous witness to heroic deeds, piety, folk custom and bitter struggle for survival down the ages from the Knights of St John to the Second World War and to still more recent times.

Yet it may well come as a surprise to the reader to learn how much Dr Zammit is able to make of the interpretation of modern industrial and political trends within the framework of sociological analysis. And he does so by tackling directly the central question of how we are to explain the behaviour of people **now**. He considers one of the most famous of Karl Marx's simplifications - that "it is man's existence that determines his consciousness" - and assembles a compelling body of empirical evidence to show how this view must be modified, virtually to the point of reversed causality in the case of modern Malta. He demonstrates, in short, that a careful case study can sophisticate a broad generalisation.

From survey data Dr Zammit presents us with a graphic description of contemporary Maltese perceptions of the structure of power in Maltese society, the class system, and the organisation of work. Tradition is all pervasive. The long experience of national powerlessness from successive colonial dominations together with the paternalism and localism of the Mediterranean culture dominates the minds of the Maltese.

Nevertheless, this is no static society. Industrial development in a post-colonial regime goes on, and the Malta Labour Movement (MLM) is its spearhead. What Dr Zammit is able to discover is the pattern of change, including change in attitudes, which the MLM has been able to effect within the traditional framework. Most especially, his survey of the shop stewards in the drydocks brings out the extent to which innovation and social invention stems from the leadership of the MLM.

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All countries are, of course, unique. Malta has its own peculiar history and culture and one which is of small enough scale to be amenable to comprehensive appraisal by a single researcher armed with sociological insight and method. Dr Zammit is so equipped and has given us a vivid account of an ex-colonial country in rapid transition. It is not only that other developing countries can learn from the Maltese experience: it is also much to Dr Zammit's credit that his study also teaches both the developed and the developing countries some important general truths about how human beings interpret the past and shape the future.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The present study mainly consists of an abridged version of my dissertation entitled <u>Maltese Perceptions of Power, Work and Class Structure</u> which was submitted to the Faculty of Social Studies, University of Oxford, for my D.Phil in 1979.

There are many persons to whom I am indebted for helping me in various ways to carry out this study. Professor A.H. Halsey, my academic supervisor at Oxford has very kindly done more than his duty to help me – through his constructive criticism of my writing, his suggestions for improvements and encouragement during difficult periods. Dr Alan Fox has taught me industrial sociology and has offered useful comments on various parts of the text when still in preparation. Similarly, Professors Paul Streeten, David Boswell and Gerard Kester have read some early versions of the text and offered their criticisms. Needless to say, I take full responsibility for the deficiencies which remain.

I would also like to thank some of my students at the University of Malta who, under the direction of Mr Charles Pace, have volunteered to help me with the fieldwork phase of this study. In particular, I wish to thank Miss Mariella Galea who through her own choice of the Drydocks' shop stewards as the subject of her B.A. (Hons) dissertation, under my direction, has effectively acted as my research assistant in the supplementary survey.

Much of the work involved in summarising the original longer text to the present more manageable and other tasks related to publication in book form were performed by Mr Godfrey Baldacchino. Ms Edith Rizzo has kindly typed this version of the study.

I am also grateful to all the respondents who have kindly lent me their time and patiently answered the many 'pointless' and sometimes 'nosy' questions which I asked them. I thank the Drydocks and the General Workers' Union for their collaboration and the University of Malta for the financial support and facility to carry out this study and to publish it in its present form.

Finally, I dedicate this book to Carmen, David and Jonathan, my wife and children, towards whom my indebtedness goes far beyond what can ever be expressed in words.

Abbreviations and Terms Used

G.W.U.	–	General Workers' Union
M.D.D.	–	Malta Drydocks
M.L.M.	–	Malta Labour Movement
M.L.P.	–	Malta Labour Party
N.P.	–	Nationalist Party

– Main Survey: A sample of Maltese adult population
(cf. Appendix I)

– Workers' sub-sample: An extraction of workers from main sample

– Supplementary Survey: A sample of shop stewards and other
activists at M.D.D. (cf. Appendix III)

INTRODUCTION

This study explores social perceptions found within a small country especially those of power and authority relations surrounding work activities and their wider social bases.[1] It also examines whether any changes in these perceptions have taken place following a particular series of events. The specific conditions underlying such changes illustrate certain general principles and raise various questions with implications stretching far beyond the limited confines of the study. For these reasons, an attempt is also made to contribute somewhat to the substantial, if erratic, debate, about the developments of social class consciousness and, more generally, social imagery.

Ever since Marx's well-known, if controversial, idea that it is men's "social being which determines their consciousness",[2] social scientists and others have sought to test its empirical validity. The usual interpretation given is that men's social being refers principally to social class. In the light of Marx's overall theory, class formation itself depends upon the economic structure of society and particularly upon location in the system of production relations.[3] The accumulated evidence from various countries, however, casts doubt about the existence of a simple, deterministic link between class position and the emergence of class consciousness. In any case, few sociologists would nowadays dispute E.P. Thompson's contention that:

> "Class consciousness is the way in which (class) experiences are handled in cultural terms: embodied in traditions, value-systems, ideas and institutional forms. If the experience appears as determined, class consciousness does not."[4]

Yet the exact sources, roles, social bases and processes of these 'cultural forms' have proved elusive to researchers and remain shrouded in controversy.

Among the recent influential contributions to this debate there is David Lockwood's[5] who, elaborating on Elizabeth Bott's earlier hypothesis,[6] has argued that men's images or perceptions of the wider society vary according to the immediate work and community milieux of their daily lives. While the present study generally confirms that hypothesis, it attempts to elaborate on it. It is not simply the immediate work and community experiences which matter but the whole tradition prevalent in a society as it emerges historically. In another sense, moreover, this study also seeks to refine that hypothesis. For it appears to many Maltese that the process of change which their society has been undergoing at an accelerated rate, in recent decades, has rendered irrelevant many of their traditional social perceptions, meanings, beliefs and norms. Simultaneously, it is popularly believed that these traditional[7] perceptions are being supplanted by new ones. Men's changing ideas are not simply visualized here as being necessarily a consequence of their changing socio-technical environment as if people only played a passive part in it. This was often an implicit or explicit assumption made by several scholars both within and apart from the Marxist tradition.[8]

Men's perceptions of their own social environment [9] – both immediate and remote or total – are rather seen here as being mediated by other, subjective factors. This environment may be changed through men's conscious intentions, decisions and activities.[10] Prominent among these are the operations of a social movement – in the present case the Malta Labour Movement (MLM). Although such a movement, in time, may be incorporated into the 'environment', it may also be the instrument through which **new** ideas and initiatives are introduced by a charismatic leader. Thus special channels of influence become established through the movement's activities and its social networks. These can be constantly manipulated by a skilful leadership to fashion or re-model the movement's original objectives. A new element is thus introduced from above into the 'environment' which dramatically alters the established pattern of ideas and social relations. Its influence depends, of course, on the extent that people fall within the movement's sphere of influence. [11]

In Malta's case, the attempt by the MLM's leadership to change or reform traditional patterns of social behaviour in some important respects is quite evident. In such an instance, it becomes necessary to consider:

> "the role of ideas and ideologies in shaping actors' definitions of social reality." [12]

In particular, the circumstances within which men may change their perceptions merit detailed description. While some ideas may continue to reflect the traditional environment, others may become the main instruments of environmental change or indeed – as in the case of the 'Protestant ethic' thesis – may pave the way for such changes. Following Alan Fox [13] it will be argued in the course of this study that at the root of the apparent breakdown of traditional normative processes and institutions lies a shift in the social bases of 'power' and 'authority' relations – otherwise expressed in terms of 'trust' relations.

The Malta experience offers an interesting testing ground for these hypotheses. There are also practical considerations. As a small-scale, total society, it is a convenient location for small-scale social research such as could be undertaken by a researcher with very limited means and working more or less single-handedly. More significantly, this country has its own intrinsic interests. As a Mediterranean island with a long colonial experience, it manifests traces of a hybrid cultural tradition. As a newly independent country still striving for economic self-reliance, it illustrates some of the typical problems faced by 'developing countries' generally. On the other hand its relatively high educational and living standards along with its centralized system of administration and communication make it an interesting case of 'uneven development'. I shall therefore give an account of recent changes in social perceptions or consciousness in terms of a corpus of sociological theory dealing with such developments. This picture will be a highly selective one because according to my analysis of the Malta scene, the idea of 'powerlessness' and the 'traditional' adaptations to it must provide

the point of departure for any adequate understanding of the contemporary changes. More particularly, the role of the MLM and especially the roles of Drydocks shop stewards in these processes will be described.

The first part of this study presents an analysis of certain traditional and contemporary aspects of Maltese social life. This is mostly based upon secondary historical and documentary evidence. A number of 'traditional' Maltese responses to 'national powerlessness' are interpreted in the light of the concepts of 'alienation' and 'anomie'. Such responses or practical adaptations are the outcome of generations of past experiences. They incorporate the cognitive perceptions through which the Maltese people manage to cope with the social world and to make sense of it. Thus traditional experiences and social perceptions reinforce each other.

Needless to say, any serious usage of the concepts of 'alienation' and 'anomie' must resort to their original meanings by Marx and Durkheim. Some antecedent and subsequent additions, refinements and modifications of these concepts are also useful for an understanding of traditional Maltese perceptions. As a UNESCO study on "islands' ecosystems" states:

"Concepts of alienation and powerlessness that have been theoretically and methodologically developed within the context of urban ecosystems.....could be applied and empirically tested in simpler island ecosystem settings."[14]

This first part of the study also contains some factual data on the Maltese economy and society which may be unknown to the general reader. For instance, the frequent reference to "Malta's colonial past which stretches from time immemorial" requires some elucidation for anyone unacquainted with Maltese history although this is a known fact to every Maltese schoolboy. Likewise, it is important to know that throughout the present century less than ten per cent of the local work force worked as farmers and even fewer as fishermen. The vast majority worked in the dockyard and other defence establishments in the civil administration, in trade and commerce, as craftsmen and, more recently, in tourism and the manufacturing industries. Many others have emigrated and today there are reportedly more 'Maltese' living abroad, than there are in Malta itself. Two-thirds of the total population of 320,000 live in the conurbation around Valletta, the capital, which incorporates many towns and villages.

Malta, along with its smaller sister island of Gozo, covers an area of only 315 square kilometres. Centrally placed in the turbulent Mediterranean Sea, it has served as an important link throughout history between Europe and North Africa. After the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 it also provided a major landmark on the way to Asia. Other than its strategic position and its mild climate, Malta has hardly any natural resources. Even fertile agricultural land is rather scarce.[15] Consequently the country has depended on imports of food as well as of

other commodities for well over a century. Since 1842, the year of the first census, the population has grown 2.8 times its original size. With a population density of 1,020 persons per square kilometre, this is one of the most thickly populated countries in the world.

The first part of the study presents an account of the attempts by the MLM to break the traditional cycle of social perceptions and experiences. Yet whether or not such attempts are ultimately successful is an open question. For as the above quoted UNESCO report also points out:

"The lack of political autonomy intensifies islanders' sense of marginality, powerlessness and alienation vis-a-vis mainlanders, and focuses hostility toward the mainland. Sovreignity is not necessarily a cure for this complaint, however. The sense of powerlessness may be exacerbated by post-colonial nationalism and the attainment of political autonomy......The smaller the island, the more impotent its inhabitants, for factors of scale and isolation render it helpless against the markets, goods and tastes of the larger technological world." [16]

This question of shifts away from traditional perceptions – as a result of a social movement inspired 'from above' rather than responding to popular pressures 'from below' – is tackled in the second, empirical part of this study. There the current situation in the country at large is explored by means of an empirical survey investigation. Then, as a test-case, the ground covered in the main survey is again systematically explored among a small group of shop stewards. For if any change in perceptions is taking place at all at the grass roots level, it is most likely to emerge among these persons.

That the Maltese social structure is not conducive to the emergence of a radical or revolutionary consciousness soon becomes apparent to any casual observer. Any moves in that direction are more likely to emerge from above in line with the traditionally paternalistic pattern of social relations. [17] Such initiatives are for some time being made systematically by a social movement which derives its ideological impetus from its own leadership. Its objectives are pursued through a progressive, pragmatic strategy. Wherever possible, the established culture and institutional arrangements are re-interpreted or manipulated so as to promote the new goals. When this is impossible, the movement's total resources are harnessed into a battle against traditional institutions. Such was, for instance, the politico-religious dispute of the 1960's between the Church and the Malta Labour Party (MLP). This resulted in a more narrowly defined role for the church in contrast to its former dominant position.[18] Yet, there are also serious constraints which limit the movement's operations. Short of a lasting shift in perceptions among the membership, the movement's goals and activities are under constant threat of becoming diluted. So long as it depends upon its leadership for constant inspiration, it cannot rest upon a secure base. Hence the leader's main target is to implant a new set of perceptions through ideological persuasion. It is in this vital area

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that the movement's impact as a lasting instrument of social change is to be assessed.

NOTES

1. One major underlying theme running throughut this study is a crucial distinction between 'power' and 'authority' relations. This issue concerns the social legitimacy extended by subordinates who ultimately uphold the hierarchical structure of an organization or total society. By contrast, a 'power' relationship entails the subordinates' forced submission. The latter case is conducive to the 'normative conflict'. Cf. A. Fox: A Sociology of Work in Industry (London, Macmillan, 1971) p.34.

2. Earlier English translations of Marx's statement referred to men's "existence" rather than "social being" as the determining factor. A recent version suggests a wider interpretation of social environment including all factors making up social class. Cf. K. Marx: "Preface" to: Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy. Translated by N.I. Stone (Chicago, C.H. Ken and Co. 1911) p.15.

3. N. Abercrombie and B.S. Turner: " The Dominant Ideology Thesis", British Journal of Sociology, Vol.29 (2) (1978) pp.150-151.

4. E.P. Thompson: The Making of the English Working Class (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1975) p.10.

5. D. Lockwood: "Sources of Variation in Working Class Images of Society", Sociological Review (November 1966) pp.249-267.

   E. bott: Family and Social Network (London, Tavistock, 1968) pp.159-191.

7. As Lockwood notes, "this is a sociological rather than a historical concept..... rather than purporting to give a description of the working class at some particular point of time". D. Lockwood, op.cit. (1966) p.250. In the present context, the term is restricted to Lockwood's "deferential" and not to his "proletarian" type.

8. For instance, the 'embourgeoisement' theorists had suggested a 'technological determinism' which is not incompatible with Marxism. In their case, however, the effect of affluence upon the proletarians was expected to reverse the Marxist predictions. Cf. J. Goldthorpe,et.al.:The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure (Cambridge University Press, 1969) Vol.3, p.9; M. Mann: Consciousness and Action among the Western Working Class (London, Macmillan, 1973).

9. 'Environment' here refers to the 'traditional patterns of social behaviour' – principally the 'adaptations to powerlessness' – above which the leader of a social movement effectively rises and which he aims at changing or reforming. Meanwhile, the movement is not a completely 'new element' as it emerges within an existing structure and retains various parts of it. Both the 'traditional adaptations' and the operations of the MLM are elaborated in the succeeding chapters.

10. A similar suggestion is made in some of the papers presented at a recent symposium inspired by Lockwood's article (op.cit., 1966) and published by M. Bulmer(ed)

Images of Society (London, Routledge, 1975).

11. J. Banks: A Sociology of Social Movements (London, Macmillan, 1972) presents an interesting model for the analysis of these movements.

12. Cf. R.S. Moore: "Religion as a Source of Variation in Working Class Images of Society" in: M. Bulmer(ed) op.cit. (1975) pp.35-54. R. Scase: "Conceptions of the Class Structure and Political Ideology: Some Observations on Attitudes in England and Sweden". British Sociological Association Annual Conference (April 1973, mimeo)

13. A. Fox, op.cit. (1971). Beyond Contract - Work, Power and Trust Relations (London, Faber, 1974). A. Fox and A. Flanders: "The Reform of Collective Bargaining from Donovan to Durkheim", British Journal of Industrial Relations (July 1969) pp.151-180.

14. "Programme on Man and the Biosphere - Expert Panel on Project 7: Ecology and the Rational Use of Island Ecosystems" Final Report, Annex 5 (Paris, UNESCO, 1973) p.56.

15. H. Bowen-Jones et.al.: Malta Background for Development (Department of Geography University of Durham, London, 1962) p.230. R.G. Milne: "Unemployment in Malta, 1956-71",Journal of Development Studies, Vol.k2 (July 1976) pp.383-395.

16. UNESCO, op.cit. (1973) p.55.

17. This is reflected in the words of the National Anthem which run as follows : "Give, Almighty God, wisdom to its rulers. Render mercy to the owner and strength to the worker. Let unity and peace in Malta prevail".

18. Vassallo M. From Lorship to Stewardship: Religion and Social Change in Malta The Hague, Mouton, 1979.

THE SOCIAL-HISTORICAL SETTING

Until quite recently few Maltese seriously believed that their tiny island could ever achieve self-reliance.[1] In fact, even though political independence from Britain was formally granted in 1964, there are many who regard the economic reliance, first upon the British military presence[2] and, more recently, upon alternative sources of foreign assistance or cooperation, as tangible indicators of the island's limited independence. Malta's political and economic dependence upon foreign colonial powers stretches back throughout its long known history – undoubtedly to Roman times. Such experiences of dependence shared by successive generations of Maltese people – along with the realization of the physical limitations of their own country - have contributed towards the establishment of certain popular beliefs and deeply held convictions. These can be summed up as a general, fatalistic feeling of 'powerlessness' to influence the forces governing their lives or to change the natural order and sequence of these events.

A detailed exploration of Maltese social history is beyond the scope of the present study. Yet even a mere outline would illustrate how deeply ingrained are some of the normative and structural principles which continue to govern current patterns of behaviour in this society[3] – notably the 'adaptations to powerlessness' presented in the next chapter.

More importantly, the historical evidence substantiates the main hypothesis of this study – concerning an assumed relationship between men's current perceptions of power, work and the class structure and the traditional orientations held throughout men's wider social environment. What is feasible here is to describe certain aspects of the Maltese social structure and to refer to its historical background only where that is necessary to the description. As the focus of this study is on industrial life, there is a strong case for concentrating on the period of British rule over Malta from 1800 onwards. But some reference to the earlier periods are also necessary in order to make the contemporary scene intelligible.

Aspects of the Social Structure in Pre-British Malta

Malta's strategic position in the Mediterranean Sea placed her in the service of the dominant powers in the Mediterranean since an early state of its history.[4] Thus the fortunes of the Maltese were tied with those of their masters – wartime spelled abundance and peace brought decline in the economy. This pattern can be traced since the early Middle Ages when Malta was under Arab domination for 200 years,[5] through a succession of European dynasties – mainly Sicilian – till the 16th Century when the Knights of St. John took over.

Throughout all this period, the adaptive powers of the Maltese were

strikingly evident. The Maltese were a "servile population" with a rather archaic style of living which A.Luttrell has emphasized thus:

"Though control of the archipelago has occasionally changed rather suddenly, institutional and social changes have tended to drag slowly behind dramatic political changes. Island life is notoriously archaic, and in Malta, even the towns have been isolated from the mainstream of continental progress (which) has left the peasants working their lands in time-worn ways, to some extent immune from change. This time-lag runs right through Maltese history".[6]

These cultural lags which have re-emerged under various forms throughout history have contributed towards the normative pluralism which character-izes Maltese social life.

Understandably, 'national consciousness' was non-existent until the Arab rule when at last Malta acquired a certain identity - symbolized mainly by its semitic language - which separated it later on from its European overlords. At any rate, Malta eventually became established as an important outpost of Christian culture and commerce,[7] though it was also a poorly defended frontier station. As the European Christian culture and style of government[8] coexisted with the legacies of the preceding Moslem period, there were the foundations for normative pluralism.

Sporadic revolts took place throughout the Middle Ages against "foreign oppression and exploitation".[9] These episodes culminated in the Royal Decree of 1428 - which became regarded as the Maltese "Magna Charta" and was cited in support of the constant demands for self-government from Malta's subsequent foreign rulers.

The Maltese Universita played an important role in these revolts and petitions to foreign rulers right through the Middle Ages. It was important as an early nucleus of the local, elite class made up of bureaucrats,royal protegees and notables. It was dominated by an oligarchic group of Siculo-Maltese leading men.

"Some of these married into Maltese society and settled in palaces in Mdina, while others retained their Sicilian lands and connections..... Many became in effect Maltese, raised their sons as natives, and then supported demands that offices and ecclesiastical benefices be given only to indigenous Maltese." [10]

Thus out of these foreign-inspired class interests a certain political leadership emerged which expressed and inspired a Maltese proto-nation-alist sentiment which continued to make itself felt throughout the years to come. Thus a Maltese consciousness developed precisely out of the constant exploitation and neglect on the part of its foreign rulers.

Most of the population was scattered around the Island in a large number of isolated communities.[11] Raids from corsairs, plagues, famine

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and emigrations – all produced heavy demographic changes in such small islands.[12] For this reason, were it not for the presence of foreign settlers, no effective political leadership would have emerged.

During the Middle Ages, the Church in Malta had not yet achieved the dominant position which it later occupied. The chief Maltese leaders were rarely religious men. [13] Under the Sicilian crown the church was held in subjection. It was under the Knights, who were themselves a religious order, that the powers, privileges and immunities of the Maltese Church multiplied. The presence of multiple power centres and tribunals under the Knights, in such a tiny island, along with the legacies of cultural interaction with a succession of foreign dominators have added to the existence of normative pluralism which characterizes Maltese social life.

The main characteristic which stands out throughout Maltese history is a perceived inability on the part of the Maltese to determine the destiny of their own country. The foreign overlords and their associates occupied the top places of a stratified society which was established during the Middle Ages while the villagers were at the bottom. Such a hierarchy was paralleled in a popular religious view of the universe where even the saints were rigidly stratified according to ascribed criteria. Some of the rivalries and conflicts of interest which emerged between religious and secular leaders, as well as between individuals within each of these spheres, heralded later divisions in the Maltese social and political life.

Patronage, which flourished into a characteristic social institution from the time of the Knights onwards, was already well established in the Middle Ages.[14] By the beginning of the 16th Century, therefore, the general features of the Maltese social structure were clearly visible. These trends became accentuated during the 1530 – 1798 period when Malta was ceded to the Order of the Knights of St. John. Thus, for example, during the rule of the Knights, the presence of the Inquisitor, the Bishop and the Grandmaster, provided an excellent opportunity for the local population to exploit patronage to their own advantage.[15] The Church became an increasingly important institution:

"Churches became larger and highly ornamented, while religious festivals were marked by more elaborate services. Naturally, it was the larger villages which could provide best for this increasingly expensive complex-ity."[16]

Defence was organized in these villages under militia knights who acted as powerful local patrons. Their natural rivals were the parish priests and their clients. The competition for patrons and economic resources became intertwined with traditional issues of prestige and often expressed in terms of a fanatical allegiance to one's locality and its patron saint.[17] This polarization thus reflected the new stratific-ation system which was gradually superimposed on the older one. These issues continued to dominate Malta's intertwined local and national

political life for many centuries afterwards.[18]

The Knights' absolute powers effectively repressed any form of popular protest or representation and their indulgent resort to patronage which reached only a privileged minority offered no source of comfort to the villagers.[19]   A common reaction to unpopular measures was inevitably a repressed resentment.[20] In these circumstances the Church rose to a dominant position.   It filled the political vacuum created with the fading away of the medieval Universita'. [21]

The rule of the Knights in Malta came to an inglorious end when Napoleon took over the Island without any resistance from the locals – on the contrary a Maltese delegation made it clear to the Knights that they had no intention of resisting the French.   However, when the French took over and started acting despotically – especially when the churches were being despoiled – a Maltese rebellion was organized. It was the first successful 'national' uprising in modern Maltese history. When the besieged French garrison surrendered, the Maltese elites promptly asked for "British protection".   After some initial hesitation, the British established on the Island a defence base for their Mediterranean Fleet and a centre for entrepot trade with Europe and the Eastern parts of the empire.

British Colonialism and Contemporary Structural Features

The period of British rule over Malta,[22] stretching for a century and a half, is highly significant because during this time many aspects of Maltese social, political and economic life were transformed.   Yet in important respects the British simply took on the role which had been left vacant by the Knights.   Ironically, the Maltese leaders who had protested strongly against the Order's return, expected Britain to play that role.   They expected Britain to safeguard their interests, to revive the economy and to grant some form of representative rights,[23] but essentially they expected Britain to act as "il piu' paterno dei governi" as they recognised the British King as their new sovereign. These expectations partly explain why the British colonial administrators found little difficulty in suppressing any ideas of self-government and civil liberties nourished by a few "political agitators".[24]   As a result the European nationalistic movements of the period did not make any impact upon Maltese society – apart from a few cosmopolitan elites – until many decades later.   The new colonial administration succeeded in establishing itself because it rallied the support of the main traditional social institution – the Maltese Church.

The British followed the pattern which had been established under the Knights at a much more accelerated pace.   This was because they retained a narrowly defined aim towards Malta, namely, that of exploiting its strategic value.[25]   They sought to interfere in local affairs as little as possible – mainly when their strategic interests were at stake. Nevertheless since military efficiency partly depends upon civilian cooperation, the colonial administration could not often help getting

involved in managing local affairs. In so doing, they introduced various social and material reforms against the opposition of the conservative local elites. Other innovations, particularly on the ideological and political levels, generally entered Malta as a result of informal association between the Maltese and the British and continental persons they came into contact with, rather than by the design of the colonial administrators. These ranged from the demand for poltical autonomy to the setting up of trade unions and reformist political movements.

Under the British, the Maltese population trebled in size – from about 100,000 in 1820 to about 330,000 in 1960.[26] Population shifted from the countryside to the urban and suburban areas around the harbours. The dependence of the economy upon foreign sources continued to keep pace with the increase in population. The ability of government to provide direct and indirect employment became the determining factor in the living standard of the population as a whole. In fact this was another main tool at the disposal of the colonial administration through which it influenced the people's minds as it controlled their fortunes. This applied to civil servants, to industrial workers, and especially to those enlisted in the armed forces and in ancillary services. The enlargement of the Dockyard around Cottonera to cater for British naval repairs provided a unique concentration of industrial workers in Malta. It is popularly known as the "cradle of the Maltese workers' movement." [27]

The pattern of the British colonial policy in Malta was clearly indicated in the Royal Commission Report of 1812. The Commissioners decided that:

"The Maltese temperament was incompatible with an ordered system of representative government".

Such a 'conclusion' provided a convenient justification for colonial policy. It was prompted by the Commissioners' first-hand experience of fundamental disagreements, intrigues and personal rivalries among the Maltese leaders. Yet the memory of the effective, national resistance organized by the latter against the French – with all the odds against them – was vivid enough to belie that conclusion. In any case, "complete authority" was to be vested in the Governor aided by a small advisory council made up of Maltese and Englishmen selected by him. They also recommended that "The Roman Catholic faith was to be maintained and protected". In these respects the pattern applied in other British Crown colonies was being followed.[28] The civil administration was reorganized and Englishmen were placed at the head of every department. The Maltese were excluded "from all but the lowest offices". As a result of such measures the latter began to feel like "strangers in their own country".[29] On their part the English officials were often accused of "arrogance", "contempt", "insolence" and of "ambition to show their authority (towards) all classes of people".[30] The exclusion of Maltese from high positions in the military and dockyard establishments continued throughout the whole period of British rule, causing constant friction and resentment among ambitious Maltese

individuals, though the majority were generally complacent and submissive.[31] Gradually, however, a new middle-class of educated Maltese emerged. As these had been socialized in the British style of government and had developed pro-British loyalties, they could be relied upon to carry out "acceptable policies". Hence most of the administrative posts in the civil service were handed over to them. It was, in fact, the development of this new middle-class – as distinct from the traditional elite class – which contributed to the emergence of rival political interests and factions in the latter half of the 19th Century. These also continued to dominate Maltese political life throughout the greater part of the 20th Century.

The increasing dependence of the Island's economy upon military expenditure offered no stable means of livelihood but brought fluctuations according to the prevailing international situation and the strategic decisions taken by the Colonial and War Offices in London.[32] Meanwhile, throughout most of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries the social condition of the population was poor, often verging on starvation.[33] Reforms were not easy to implement. Not only was it difficult to raise money through local taxation, but the Maltese elites resisted any reform which would diminish their incomes, power or prestige. Accordingly they fomented popular discontent and raised a public outcry against any projected reforms. Such opposition was also aimed at extorting from the British government a measure of local autonomy by making Malta appear as ungovernable without their participation. In reality, however, the vast majority of the population was subservient and compliant to an extent that the British administrators were often puzzled by it.[34]

Therefore, apart from a few instances of organized opposition, the usual Maltese reaction to their powerlessness and dependence has been a general compliance. Several observers have noted their:

"quiescence and fatalism, the sense of inferiority and dependence arising out of the paternal tradition".[35]

Among the most deep rooted Maltese values are those of sobriety and thrift, **ghaqal** and **bzulija**. The alternation of prosperity and depression which have characterized Malta's economic fortunes for centuries, have brought home the importance of "saving for a rainy day". Undoubtedly, the Church has been instrumental in implanting and preserving such values, particularly in the villages where its influence is strongest.[36] Nevertheless, difficult circumstances often drove people to commit moral transgressions. For instance:

"when it came to a question of the 8th Commandment, poverty often defeated Canon Law in the struggle which took place in the minds of the Maltese, faced with complete destitution." [37]

Such acts became considered as semi-legitimate. Thefts became so common that police protection and legal redress became practically

useless. Offenders often threatened litigants and prosecutors with even worse retribution.[38] During the present century the police have become better equipped and organized so that their control over criminal activities is quite effective. Moreover, the general prosperity and availability of social services have reduced the need for widespread thefts. Public begging which was also widely practised in the 19th Century has also practically disappeared.[39]

Another characteristic Maltese response to their powerlessness, however, is still very much in evidence – the constant grumbling and other informal expressions of discontent which one hears in daily conversations on almost any topic of public interest. The Maltese have retained an unrealistic image of governmental power from their experiences under colonial rule. Their expectations have been fostered by local politicians in their electioneering practices.[40] Unrealistic expectations coupled with the absence of any formal channels of protest or representation convey an added significance to informal grumbling. The British colonial administrators, taking a sarcastic, superior view, had labelled it "Maltese **gemgem**"and their successors, the Maltese politicians in government, are equally intrigued by it.[41]

The Maltese language itself was obviously an excellent medium for grumbling against the foreign colonizers who were usually unable to understand it. It served as a safe outlet and a defence against foreign intrusions. More recently it has also served as a positive national rallying symbol through which what is typically Maltese can find its expression.[42]

In contrast, the Chuch was usually regarded as "the ultimate protector of the population".[43] Parish priests, in particular, became the undisputed leaders in the villages and anyone who aspired to local leadership cherished their support. For the most part, the clergy, like the other traditional elites, tended to suspect that any reform introduced by the British administrators would intentionally or as a by-product, threaten their social standing. The British managed to maintain good relations with the church as the only powerful organization●which could have offered them any effective opposition.[44] On the other hand, they chose to ignore or suppress any political agitation from secular quarters by appealing directly to the people's material interests. Any necessary changes were usually presented in the name of "reforms" and "progress". This was particularly evidenced by the political struggle stretching for half a century to introduce certain changes in the educational medium of instruction – particularly in supplanting Italian, the traditional language of the Church, Law Courts and the local elites, with English and Maltese. As Britain was a Protestant country, the Maltese Roman Catholic hierarchy was always on the alert against any attempt to anglicise Malta. The other elites saw their traditional social standing threatened by the emergence of a new, pro-English middle-class.

Eventually, two camps emerged against each other in a long drawn-out battle which manifested far deeper divisions than implied by the

original issues. This language dispute symbolised what H. Frendo has typified as an opposition between a 'colonial dynamic' and a 'patriotic consensus'. The first comprised the principles of:

(a) **domination** of one society over another;

(b) **modernization** of techniques and living styles;

(c) the gradual **assimilation** of the colonized social, political and economic structure into those of the colonial country.

As a reaction to these policies, the second comprised:

(a) a demand for political and social **autonomy**;

(b) The assertion of **traditional** values and structure;

(c) organized **resistance,** often passive, through all means available including alignment with other foreign powers and symbols as a means of leverage to the overriding weight of the colonizer. [45]

Frendo has argued that these sets of opposed principles have inspired the formation and moulded the roots of today's main political parties in Malta.

The type of **'resistance'** which was commonly adopted by the average Maltese generally avoided a direct confrontation with the overriding powers of the colonizer. It was only on those rare occasions when a convergence of various issues was evident that some mass protests, or even riots, were organized. [46]

For the most part the British administration managed to keep issues apart and usually, to manipulate or exploit situations where the interests of one section of the population were opposed to those of another. In the case of the language controversy, for instance, the country became polarized into two opposed camps over issues of apparently minor importance. [47] The latent issues overshadowed by this controversy erupted twice into bitter politico-religious crises in recent history. These crises followed the entry into politics of a new coalition group or Compact Party with its social roots in both the working and the new middle class. Both of these classes had come into existence as a result of British colonial policies. [48] This 'party' began with Sigismondo Savona's Reform Party in 1891 and evolved through various permutations into the present-day Malta Labour Party. [49]

On the other hand, the present-day Nationalist Party has its roots in the Partito Anti-Riformista founded in 1884 by Fortunato Mizzi – having also passed through various developments. Such a polarization between two political camps first emerged in the 1830's and the issue concerned the most effective way of dealing with the British colonial

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administrators.[50] The Anti-Reformist side opposed any social and economic reforms introduced by the British administration until constitutional liberties had first been granted. The 'Reformist' side was ready to compromise autonomy on humanitarian and utilitarian grounds. The Anti-Reformist or Nationalist movement was made up of the traditional, professional elites often in alliance with the Church hierarchy. Behind them they rallied the majority of the deferential sections of the Maltese population. Thus, apart from combating the professional elites, whose privileges it sought to curtail, the Reformist movement became successively involved in clashes with the Maltese Church authorities. These were almost inevitable in Maltese society. Anyone aspiring to secularize or reform Maltese society had to limit the power of the Church, re-define its jurisdiction and curtail its privileges. Eventually the Reformist movement was also bound to clash with its previous ally, protector and source of its inspiration – the British colonial administration.[51]

The role played by the Church in Maltese politics is a natural consequence of the central part it played in social life as a whole. Dench argues that under the British, the Maltese:

"national church became projected into a new and more significant position as defender of the faithful population against an alien system of government." [52]

This role had essentially been played by the Maltese Church for several centuries, under the Knights, long before the arrival of the British.[53] The replacement of the Catholic Knights by the Protestant British added a new dimension. Besides, since vital economic and political activities were beyond the control of the local population:

"the energy and interest of the Maltese seem to have become displaced, as so often happens among powerless minorities, into religious activity and contemplation."[54]

Not only was it important to save one's soul through submission to established moral principles and participation in religious rituals as required by the Catholic Church anywhere. It also became important to contribute one's share to the parish church's physical aspect and the cult of its patron saint which is locally celebrated with great pomp annually. Class conflicts and political rivalries were likewise sublimated into an unending competition between **festa partiti**, often in the same village, each celebrating its own patron saint in the best way it could.[55] Local rivalries over the cult of saints were also often intermingled with national political contests. This was because in the absence of secular structures which could not emerge due to the colonial situation, a number of political and economic functions have been developed by the Church.[56] Moreover, priests often acted as their parishioners' patrons and intermediated for them with civil authorities and other influential persons.[57] Thus, under the British the Maltese Church, even more than it did during the Knights' rule, assumed the role of national protector of the local population, represented their interests, provided leisure and

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other expressive pursuits, ordered people's lives and commanded their loyalties. As Dench concludes:

"The central position of the church has for generations
channelled political debate into essentially symbolic and
unrealistic issues". [58]

It is in this light that the language dispute and the successive political-religious controversies need to be interpreted because the emergence of a new Reformist political movement effectively challenged the traditional authority of the Church. Ultimately, the Church, was directed into this role of authority by the circumstances of colonialism. These imposed strict controls in certain vital areas of national life and caused the Church to develop and encourage an indulgent, paternalistic attitude in local affairs. Thus paradoxically there was, under the British rule, a parallel development of both centralization and localism. Such opposite tendencies are still evident today. A recent Development Plan, for instance, stresses that "Malta has a greater degree of social cohesion and solidarity" than many other countries but also acknowledges the existence of deep internal divisions. [59] Such contrasting statements are often made and manifest dual normative standards of reference. The "ideal" and the "real" are worlds apart. [60] Maltese culture approximates what Parkin, among others, has called the 'subordinate value system' in relation to the 'dominant value system' which has been implanted by successive generations of colonial dominators. As he has observed:

"The subordinate class tends to have two levels of normative
reference, the abstract and situational.....The generation
milieu of these values is the local underclass community." [61]

The Maltese were powerless in tackling their own problems. All solutions were imposed upon them from above. They were compelled to adapt themselves even if this sometimes implied the transgression of traditional norms. When this happened, however, it was accompanied by strong public condemnations from local religious and community sources. This served as a means of protecting individuals and safeguarding traditional institutions. The incidence of prostitution which is a notorious form of Maltese criminality at home and abroad exemplified the types of dual constraints confronted by many Maltese. [62] Dench has attributed this to a:

"central dilemma in colonial Maltese society, revolving
around the discrepancy between an extremely strict
set of moral principles on sexual matters, and a practical
reality of extensive prostitution in the island, meeting the
needs of the large garrison."

He argues that this situation particularly manifested to the Maltese "their dependent status and inability to control their own lives". [63]

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A less noticeable yet equally deep-rooted response to colonialism is the widespread resort to patronage. This practice colours social interactions at almost every level. In spite of its universal condemnation as a corrupt practice, it is reportedly the most effective way of securing scarce resources ranging from a house to a telephone.[64]

In the colonial context, Malta itself was a client-state. Its economic and political dependence upon the mother country was well known.[65] Under British rule most economic activities – including employment opportunities - were under their direct control. Thus the colonial administrators had at their disposal an unlimited supply of patronage. When the administration of the civil service was passed on to a new class, these readily followed the patronage pattern, eventually joining the traditional professional, clerical and other influential persons. However, with the advent of representative government, most of the power passed into the hands of the elected deputies who needed the support of electors and who had much more to offer in return.

To the clients, patronage presents a possible way of coping with a generally difficult situation through the personal intervention of power holders. Patronage, of course, depends upon the inadequacy of formal institutional arrangements to provide for the needs of the powerless. To the colonialists patronage –though offending their declared paternalist principles and official policies - provided an important divisive function.[66] It served as an important concomitant to a nominally paternalist policy,[67] which aims at "a collective form of social organization" in which "all subordinates basically stand in the same relation to the paternalist".[68] The ideological basis which justifies paternalism as a manner of administration rests upon the care and relationships of parents towards their children in an ideal type of family. It ultimately rests upon an image of God as the "Father of all men". The model implies that:

"people tend to be treated as members of a group who share a
a similar position rather than as individuals who have unique
relationships with the paternalist.....benefits become common
to the whole group rather than varying from person to person,
and the customary regulation of relationships develops for all".[69]

Thus though in Malta paternalism and patronage were both used as essential tools for the colonial system, they ultimately militated against each other.

Recent Developments

In recent years there have been various attempts by colonial and local governments at reducing and possibly eliminating Malta's client state once and for all. Ambitious investment and industrialization programmes were promulgated, aimed at transforming the Maltese economy. This was the declared objective of a series of official reports and development plans since World War II.[70] These suggested ways of diversifying the economy in view of anticipated rundowns of British

service establishments. For these reasons there was a general conster-
nation each time such plans were contemplated. The plans also aimed
at raising the living standards of the population through education and
the establishment of statal agencies to replace the need for personal
favours.[71] In the opinion of some observers these attempts represent a
progressive trend towards "a modern, rational, bureaucratic and industrial
world" in which there is no need or even room for traditional patrons
and clients.[72] It is debatable whether these efforts are effectively
promoting a lasting form of economic and social 'development' or only
a 'modernized' form of neo-colonial dependence.[73] Development is
achieved through the contribution of the mass of the people who are
rallied behind a country's political leadership inspired by a local ideology.
Some theorists have attributed the failure to develop by third world
countries to a persistence of traditional thinking and to an absence of
a strong central government in such countries.[74]

Indeed what happens in many under-developed former colonies is
that their available political and intellectual leadership, their economic
elites and their dominant ideologies are only conducive to modernization,
i.e. neo-colonialism. Economic activities, particularly in satellite firms
owned by large, international companies which provide employment,
higher incomes and consumption levels, depend not on local sources but
on activities generated at the centre i.e. in the mother country. Never-
theless, as A. Black has recently argued, much depends upon the historical
conditions which produce the available leadership and ideologies in
particular former colonies. Any analysis involves:

"a clear specification of the particular, historically-
determined class structures and struggles through which
the system is actually worked out".[75]

A quick glance at the changing patterns of employment in Malta
in recent decades reveals that in this respect official planning has had
a remarkable degree of success. The hand-over of government controls
to local politicians proceeded apace with decisions to reduce British
military spending on the Island.[76] The threats of large scale redundancies
provided an ideal setting for workers to rally behind their leaders in
the Malta Labour Movement. The need to create alternative employment
for those who were losing their jobs with the Services also presented a
constant challenge to successive local governments to re-structure the
local economy.

As a result, whereas in 1957 there were 27 **per cent** of all the
gainfully occupied population employed with the Services, in 1979 there
were none. Simultaneously, the total working population had grown
from 85,600 to approximately 116,167 persons and unemployment kept
down to a 3.5% level.[77] The proportion of working men employed in
agriculture and fishing was 10% in 1957 and 6.1% in 1977. Meanwhile,
tourism and the manufacturing industry which in the 'Fifties had been
practically non-existent, became the pillars of the Maltese economy.
The Gross National Product increased from £M 43.5m to well over

£M 100m of which more than 50% were contributed by the manufacturing industries. Emigration which between 1948 and 1966 rarely fell below 5,000 persons annually, had also fallen well below the 2,500 levels envisaged in the (1973-1980)Development Plan. [78]

Thus during a relatively short period the Maltese economy has undergone a radical transformation and is well on the way towards the achievement of self-sustained growth. [79] Some economists have maintained that:

"the 'take-off' would seem to have occurred during the late 'Sixties". [80]

Undoubtedly it was during that period, soon after the attainment of independence, that many Maltese, particularly those engaged in the construction and property business, experienced a hitherto unknown prosperity. [81] It was during this period that the Gross National Product rose from £M 50.9m to £M 77.0m and reached a situation of full employment. [82] Parallel developments were, of course, also taking place in many other areas of social life. [83] Perhaps the most significant of these, for present purposes, was the fact that as living standards rose, so did people's aspirations. The mechanisms by which people feel relatively deprived when they see others with whom they favourably compared themselves acquire an advantage over them, are well known in reference group theory. [84] The social repercussions of the 'boom' of the late Sixties in a small, static society with a narrowly defined status system and a closely guarded salaries structure were far-reaching indeed. As Phelps-Brown has suggested:

"Most workers.....watch other men's pay rise relative to theirs; the sensitiveness of pay claims to changes in differentials suggests that actual immobility may be conditional upon the market having provided no sufficient inducement to move". [85]

On the other hand, traditional job insecurity, status and other considerations militated against the abandonment of civil service, drydocks and similar occupations in favour of much better paid jobs in tourism, construction and property speculation. The outcome was widespread discontent which was expressed in an unprecedented series of strikes and popular protests. The traditional relativities between incomes had been upset and many unions were attempting to restore the previous balance for their members through industrial action. The best known dispute was that involving the General Workers Union and Malta Drydocks concerning wages differentials between industrial and non-industrial employees. [86]

The table below shows the dramatic increase in the number of strikes and lockouts and the number of man days lost through strikes for the period 1965-1970. [87]

As G. Kester has pointed out, one feature of the industrialization

Year	Strikes/Lock Outs	Man Days Lost
1965	3	4,154
1966	9	11,599
1967	8	27,314
1968	18	58,333
1969	14	41,445
1970	35	148,000

policy adopted by Government, aimed at attracting to Malta foreign investment, was the deliberate avoidance of a uniform wages policy. Differential payment of employees was allowed to develop according to the employers' ability to pay. Negotiations were conducted at the enterprise level. In addition there were 28 different wages councils which determined by law the minimum pay, conditions and other fringe benefits for different branches of industry.

> "These differences....resulted in frequently shifting feelings
> of relative deprivation which in turn led to continuing waves
> of new demands." [88]

In the Government employment sector the situation became equally restless. Demands for wage increases constrained the Government, in agreement with all major unions, to set up a Salaries Anomalies Commission in 1967, whose tasks were to listen to all individual claims and to make recommendations for new adjustments. [89]

The work of the Anomalies Commission was extended to nearly two years – yet its final report only managed to resolve some anomalies while creating many others. A comprehensive solution proved elusive. In fact, the crisis in industrial relations only reflected the general unsettlement of Maltese society which had resulted from the structural changes of the last few decades and which reached their climax during the economic boom of the Sixties. Sociologists, following Durkheim, have applied the concept of anomie to describe such situations of 'unlimited' and 'unregulated' aspirations. Clearly, if true development had been effected in some areas, this was of a very uneven variety. These are the symptoms of a crisis in the social bases of authority relations "which regulate interactions between superiors and sub-ordinates as well as between social strata". [90] Important social changes had been

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ushered in during the Second World War and its aftermath. Several attempts had been made by the Church, colonial and local administrators to reconstruct Maltese society after that upheaval. Yet some processes which had been set in motion were irreversible. During the War, for instance, the social distance which had separated the Maltese and the British people had been bridged as both had fought side by side. As a result, Maltese society became wide open to outside influence. The process of secularization received an impetus from various inside and outside quarters. The main challenge to church authority ultimately came from the ranks of the Malta Labour Movement. As political power reverted to Maltese hands, there was no further social need for the traditionally defensive role of the local Church against the colonial power holders. The Church was thus left with a purely spiritual role – similar to that played by churches in other modern societies. Nonetheless, an adequate substitute for its traditional function as the central, integrative institution within Maltese society was not available. By challenging the Church, the MLM was effectively removing the traditional basis of authority relations in a society already under severe economic strain. Simultaneously it was challenging the dependence of individual clients upon patrons and the role of the country as a client state. Ultimately it was challenging any form of compliance with traditional paternalism.

NOTES

1. "It is unlikely that Malta will ever achieve true independence, owing, not merely to its small size, but also to the very nature of the place....(its) one supremely valuable resource – a secure natural harbour strategically placed." G. Dench: Maltese in London (London, Routledge, 1975) pp.9-10

2. The recent agreement for the stationing of British forces in Malta which was re-negotiated by the MLP administration in 1972, terminated in March 1979. In order to make up for the ensuing loss of revenue after the closure of the Base, the Maltese Government is still striving to obtain "guarantees" from neighbouring countries. These would consist of assurances and financial contributions towards Malta's new **"neutral status"**

3. As the research team from the Department of Geography of Durham University has observed: "In Malta we have in the course of our fieldwork, continually felt an extraordinary strong sense of continuity, an insistence that much which is contemporary can only be understood in terms of the past, and often of the remote past." H. Bowen-Jones, et.al., op.cit.,p.103.

4. The earliest known settlers, the Phoenicians, after 800 B.C. and their successors, the Carthaginians, used Malta as a transit point on their shipping routes. After the Roman conquest, during the second century B.C., Malta was incorporated into the Roman Empire.

5. Though essentially European, there are many traces of this arabic period in Maltese culture, e.g. the language, architecture and the seclusion of women. Cf. J. Boissevain and A. Bloch: "Two Essays on Mediterranean Societies".Papers on European

Mediterranean Societies, No.1 (Anthropological-Sociological Centre, University of Amsterdam, 1974) p.3

6. A. Luttrell: Medieval Malta: Studies on Malta before the Knights. "Approaches to Medieval Malta" in A. Luttrell (ed) (Rome, The British School at Rome, 1975) pp.14-15.

7. A. Vella, Storja ta' Malta (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1974) p.80. A. Luttrell, op.cit., p.30

8. A. Luttrell, op.cit., p.41

9. After 1300, "a clear pattern was emerging, the Crown conceded the islands to royal cadets or Sicilian magnates; the population, anxious to escape exploitation by rapacious and presumably absentee Counts, petitioned for re-incorporation 'in the demanium; the Crown conceded this request in perpetuity, but subsequently in a moment of weakness granted out the County once again."It was this practice which was considered particularly offensive by the Maltese and their leaders, because it exposed their total "powerlessness" in no uncertain manner. A. Luttrell, op.cit., p.45.

10. A. Luttrell,op.cit., p.68. Such developments parallelled the later influx of Sicilian political refugees in the 19th century many of whom inserted themselves into the upper echelons of the Maltese class structure, took an active part in political, cultural and economic affairs and inspired the demands for political freedoms from Britain through their leadership of the "Nationalist" Movement.

11. Cf. G. Wettinger: "The Lost Villages and Hamlets of Malta" in A. Luttrell (ed) op.cit.(1975) pp.181-216.

12. A. Luttrell, op.cit., p.53.

13. G. Wettinger: "Early Maltese Popular Attitudes to the Government of the Order of St.John" in: Melita Historica, Vol.VI (3) (1974) pp.255-278; p.260.

14. We know, for instance, that the practice of obtaining release from coastal guard duties was possible through the intercession of an influential person in the Universita' following an exchange of favours. This practice became so widespread as to seriously undermine security. A. Vella, op.cit., p.128.

15. In Malta, due both to its small scale and to its strategic requirements, the Grandmaster and the Bishop were bound to intrude into each other's domain. This situation had been partly engineered by Charles V who, when handing over Malta to the Knights, had stipulated that the Bishop, normally a Sicilian, had certain rights and privileges, including that of participating in the Order's Council. E.W. Schermer-horn: Malta of the Knights. Survey (W.M. Heinemann, 1929) pp.97-125.

16. B. Blouet: The Story of Malta (London, Faber, 1972) p.95.

17. B. Blouet, op.cit. (1972) p.97. G. Wettinger, op.cit.(1974) p.269.

18. Cf. J. Boissevain: Saints and Fireworks (London, London School of Economics,

1965). The prolonged **'language controversy'** and **'politico-religious disputes'** of recent times are best understood in this context.

19. The practice of patronage meant for them the constant extortion of gifts by the militia captains and their protegees or mistresses. Cf. G. Wettinger, op.cit. (1974) pp.268-269.

20. B. Blouet, op.cit. (1972) p.154.

21. G. Wettinger, op.cit. (1974) p.270

22. Malta became officially a British **"protectorate"** through the Treaty of Paris in 1814 but Britain had resumed control over the Island since 1800.

23. Dichiarazione dei Diritti degli Abitanti di Malta e Gozo (Malta, 1802).

24. As the Maltese leader Portelli submitted to the Austin and Lewis Commission (1836): "The Maltese under the government of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem were accustomed to repress the sentiments of liberty....." quoted by H.I. Lee: Malta 1813-1914, A Study in Constitutional and Strategic Development (Valletta, Progress Press, 1972) p.12. As Canon Don Francesco Saverio Caruana, one of the Maltese Generals during the French Blockade, informed the gathering of the Assembly in Mdina on 4 September 1798: "the ancient flag of Malta was nothing more than a historical reminiscence while what Malta then needed was the protection and aid of an existing power". Anon: Why Malta Chose Britain (Malta, Times of Malta, 25 June 1976) p.15 and (26 June 1976) pp.6-7.Such an attitude dominated the pattern of fatalistic dependence to British paternalistic colonialism for many decades afterwards.

25. Actually Britain was initially slow in recognising Malta's strategic value. Even Nelson considered it "a useless and enormous expense". Cf. H.I. Lee, op.cit., p.14. Subsequently, however, Britain's decision to retain Malta was based upon a re-appraisal of the island as a fortress in imperial defence. See H.I. Lee, op.cit.,p.16. In the same vein, Joseph Chamberlain stated in 1902 in the House of Commons: "We hold Malta solely and entirely as a fortress essential to our position in the Mediterranean. Not as an ordinary colony but as a fortress..... In a fortress anything like open agitation against the Government is a thing that cannot be tolerated on the face of it". Quoted by H. Frendo: The Maltese Colonial Experience 1800-1964 (Valletta, Libyan Arab Cultural Institute, 1977, mimeo) p.6. See also H.I. Lee, op.cit., p.217.

26. Since then it has remained roughly at the same level due to the general acceptance of family limitation and emigration.

27. As Frendo points out: "This fact is highly important in the country's social history during the colonial era, because the proletariat, on the whole, was favourably disposed towards the colonial regime, not so much because it agreed with its politics, but as a result of the fact that thousands of jobs were secured at a rate of pay which was not any worse, often rather better, than that paid to workers in private enterprise, on the farms, or indeed in the lower ranks of the Civil Service". H. Frendo: "En Route from Europe to Africa: Malta, Her People and History" (Malta, AZAD, 1978, mimeo) p.4.

28. The governorship of Sir Thomas Maitland, the man appointed to establish this policy in Malta, was "a continuation of the benevolent despotism of the grandmasters, but far superior to it as a system by reason of its efficiency and even less popular than it because of its essential lack of any real sympathy with the Maltese people". H.I. Lee, op.cit. (1972) pp.17-18.

29. Ibid. pp.19 and 237.

30. Ibid. pp.19 and 26.

31. Maitland actually disliked the **"cowed servility"** of the Maltese which was, ironically, provoked by the type of government he exercised over them.

32. As Busuttil points out: "The economy of the Maltese Islands under Britain took the form of an artificial cycle determined not by the vicissitudes of the market, but by the exigencies of military security. War marked the upswings of the Maltese economic cycle; the return of peace was always the harbinger of a downswing." S. Busuttil Malta's Economy in the Nineteenth Century (Malta University Press, 1973) p.1.

33. This has been blamed upon the colonial policy which "did not aim at securing the best interests of the Maltese, but of Britain in the fortress of Malta". H.I. Lee, op.cit. (1972) p.22. The official report of the 1838 Royal Commission also blamed the government for the poor state of affairs. "The Islanders", the Commissioners reported, "were in a most miserable condition. Due to official policy, the educated among them were a handful; the Nobles, formerly the backbone of Malta, were starving. The rest of the population fared even worse."Reported in S. Busuttil, op.cit. (1973) p.9.

34. In 1878, for instance, the Secretary of State, Sir M. Hicks-Beach, could only attribute "the absence of any complaint of oppressive taxation from the Maltese to their ignorance, when the burden of taxation did fall in undue proportion on the lower classes". H.I. Lee, op.cit. (1972) p.171.

35. M. Miege: Histoire de Malte (Paris, 1840) Vol.1, p.168. H. Bowen-Jones, et.al., op.cit., pp.112 and 334. C.A. Price: Malta and the Maltese (Melbourne, 1954) p.19.

36. These values contrast with the intemperance, lack of foresight and a **"make hay while the sun shines"** sort of attitudes which are characteristic of the urban working and lower classes elsewhere. On the other hand, values similar to the '**Protestant ethic**' are found in small, traditional communities.

37. C.A. Price, op.cit. (1954) p.19.

38. A detailed account of the way bands of thieves were organized was described by the Royal Commission of 1836. Moreover, thefts of public property were often not even considered immoral.

39. The numbers of **"professional"** mendicants were listed in the early censuses published in the 19th Century. C.A. Price, op.cit., reports that in the mid-1830's there were as many as 2,500 beggars reported in the villages alone. See also, H.I.Lee

op.cit. pp.45-46.

40. For instance the concept of **"il-Gvern"** (the Government) is often "vaguely referred to by many Maltese - particularly those living in rural areas - as a remote centre of authority which is endowed with every conceivable power and which is held responsible for many economic and social problems". H. Bowen-Jones et.al., op.cit., pp.158 and 344.

41. For example: Reno Calleja MP: "Undoubtedly the role of the present (MLP) Government has confirmed that the Maltese people are professional grumblers". **"Maltese Gemgem"** in il-Hajja (9.2.1973). See also: E. Mifsud: **"Who are the Grumblers?"** in L-Orizzont (29.11.1975). A. Darmanin, S.J.: **"Grumbling"** in Problemi ta' Llum (March 1978) pp.79-83; J. Boissevain, op.cit. (1975) p.7.; H.I. Lee, op.cit. (1972) p.21.

42. C.J.M.R. Gullick: Language and Sentiment in Malta pp.1-12. Cf. also C.J.M.R. Gullick: "Issues in the Relationship between Minority and National Language: Maltese Reaction to Non-Maltese Speakers of Maltese". Paper delivered at 1975 Meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology (mimeo). E.L. Zammit: "Adult Education: The Role of R.U.M." in: Journal of Educational Affairs. Vol.1 No.1 (1975) pp 40-45, p.43.

43. S.Busuttil, op.cit., p.9

44. As the maintenance of cordial relations rested on mutual consultations which to a large extent depended upon the personality of the local bishop, the British were keenly interested whenever the succession of a new bishop had to be decided. The various complications which this choice involved are illustrated by D. Fenech: The Making of Archbishop Gonzi (Malta, Union Press, 1976).

45. H.Frendo: The Formation of Maltese Political Parties D.Phil. Thesis (Oxford, 1976). L-Evoluzzjoni ta' Partiti Politici fil-Gzejjer Maltin 1880-1926 (Floriana Cultural Institute, 1977, mimeo).

46. The most spectacular riots occurred in 1919, when several sections of the local population, each of which had its own particular grudge, joined forces in spontaneous demonstrations in the streets of Valletta. Some Maltese were killed and many wounded when the British soldiers opened fire on the crowd. These riots are generally credited with constraining the British to grant a more liberal constitution to Maltese representatives democratically elected in 1921. Cf. H. Frendo: Ir-Rivoluzzjoni Maltija tal-1919 (Malta, A.C. Aquilina & Son, 1970).

47. Cf. Esposizione Documentata della Questione Maltese: (Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1930). E.Dobie: Malta's Road to Independence (University of Oklahoma Press, 1967) pp. 38-107. A brief account is also found in D.Austin: Malta and the End of Empire (London, F. Cass & Co., 1971) pp. 7-20 and in J.Boissevain, op.cit., (1965) pp. 9-12.

48. The "new middle class" was composed of pro-British importers, contractors and traders who flourished on the presence of the large garrison stationed in Malta and also of the civil servants and other employees in the civil administration. The "working class" was mainly composed of drydocks and other Admiralty employees who constituted the bulk of the industrial working force around the Grand Harbour.

49. H. Frendo, op.cit.(1976) and H. Frendo: Party Politics in a Fortress Colony: The Maltese Experience (Malta, Midsea Books Ltd., 1979).

50. H.I. Lee, op.cit. Chapter 5 pp.81-109.

51. After the failure of the MLP proposal to integrate Malta with the UK in 1958, the party has adopted an anti-British policy. Cf. Mintoff: "Isolation is no answer" in: Times (1968).

52. G. Dench, op.cit. (1975) p.11.

53. As David Martin has observed "a nation denied self-determination by another dominating society will either seek sources of religious differentiation, or use the pre-existing religious difference as a rallying point". Quoted by M. Vassallo: "Religious Symbolism in a Changing Malta" in: Contribution to Mediterranean Studies (Malta University Press, 1977) pp.232-249.

54. G. Dench, op.cit. (1975) p.11

55. J. Boissevain: Hal Farrug: A Village in Malta (New York; Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969) Chapter 7.

56. J. Boissevain, op.cit. (1965).

57. Patronage is also widespread in other Mediterranean societies. As an image of society it is parallelled in religious terminology with an image of God on top, as the Supreme Patron, followed by interrelated strata of patrons and clients in a hierarchy. Cf. M. Kenny: A Spanish Tapestry (London 1961). J. Boissevain has elaborated a model of Maltese social interaction based upon friendship networks and coalitions of patrons and clients in:Friends of Friends (Oxford, Blackwell, 1974).

58. G. Dench, op.cit. pp.12-13.

59. Development Plan for Malta 1973-1980 (Valletta, Office of the Prime Minister, 1974) p.205.

60. Cf. E.L. Zammit: Some Social Aspects of Maltese Development, Paper presented at a Seminar on "Development - The Maltese Experience" (Ruskin College, Oxford) and "Young Socialist League" (University of Malta, April 1977). Similar contrasts will be shown later in this study when respondents expressed a dual image of society: as "one harmonius family" and as "individual conflict".

61. F. Parkin: Class Inequality and Political Order (Suffolk, Paladin, 1975) pp.94-95.

62. E.L. Zammit: The Behaviour Patterns of Maltese Migrants in London - with Reference to Maltese Social Institutions (B. Litt. Thesis, Oxford University, 1970).

63. G. Dench, op.cit., p.107.

64. 'Patronage' or 'clientelism' is, of course, a typical asymetrical form of social relationship which often develops in situations of unequal access to scarce resources.

Those who dispose of such resources put their dependents under a personal obligation, expect their esteem and services in return. While such relationships tend to predominate in Mediterranean and other 'traditional' societies, they are by no means confined to these. Recent reviews of such studies are found in: E. Gellner and J. Waterbury (eds.) Patrons and Clients (London, Duckworth & Co., 1977) and J. Davies: People of the Mediterranean: An Essay in Comparative Social Anthropology (London, 1977). Weingrod and Boissevain have shown the extension of patron-client relationships into the system of political parties. A. Weingrod: **"Patrons, Patronage and Political Parties"** in: Comparative Studies in Society and History (1968) pp.377-440. J. Boissevain op.cit. (1965 and 1974).

65. D.M. Boswell: "Patron-Client Relations in the Mediterranean with Special Reference to the Changing Political Situation in Malta". Paper presented at Conference on the Design and Analysis of Current Social Science Research in the Central Mediterranean (University of Malta, 1978, mimeo) pp.1-2.

66. As Catanzaro and Reyneri have pointed out: Polarization can generate conflicts only when a social group is in contrast with another, the members of which have similar occupational income and social status. Where class conflicts do not occur, we have a ruthless individualistic struggle to enter the employment benefit and security system. R. Catanzaro and E. Reyneri: **"Multiple Job Holding and Class Structure in a Southern Italian Town"**. Paper presented at Conference on the Design and Analysis of Current Social Science Research in the Central Mediterranean (University of Malta, 1978, mimeo) p.8.

67. "The principle of benefits shows clearly one of the most important aspects of clientelistic associations: paternalism". M. Caciagli and F. Belloni: "A contribution to the Study of Clientelism: The New Clientelism of Southern Italy". Paper presented at Conference on the Design and Analysis of Current Social Science Research in the Central Mediterranean (University of Malta, 1978, mimeo) p.2.

68. N. Abercrombie and S. Hill: **"Paternalism and Patronage"** p.414 in Vol.27 (1976) pp.413-429, British Journal of Sociology.

69. Ibid.

70. In addition to five development plans covering from 1959 to 1971, the most important reports were: W.E. Woods: Report on the Finances of the Government of Malta (London, HMSO No. 196, 1946). G.E. Schuster: Interim Report on the Financial and Economic Structure of the Maltese Islands (Malta Government Printing Office, 1950). T. Balogh and D. Seers: The Economic Problems of Malta (Malta Government Printing Office, 1955). W.F. Stolper, et.al.: United Nations' Economic Mission to Malta (United Nations, New York, 1964). Lord Robens, et.al.: Joint Mission for Malta Report (Malta, Department of Information, 1967). After its return to power in 1971, the Labour Government announced its determination to revise the Financial and Defence Agreement with Britain of 1964. A new treaty was signed with the intention of accounting for: "the financial requirements needed to enable Malta to achieve economic independence in the shortest possible time". Subsequently a new development plan was published with the aim of realizing this goal. Development Plan for Malta 1973-1980 (Malta, Office of the Prime Minister, 1974) p.4.

71. Boissevain has argued that these **"social and political"** goals were explicitly formulated by Labour Party development plans, whereas the previous Nationalist Party plans were merely interested in promoting economic growth. We sees in this change a logical sequence in "Maltese Perceptions of Progress and Development". J. Boissevain: "A Causeway with a Gate: the Progress of Development in Malta" in S. Wallman (ed): Perceptions of Development (Cambridge University Press, 1978) p.14.

72. J. Boissevain has expressed such a view in: "When the Saints go Marching Out" in E. Gellner and J. Waterbury, op.cit. (1977) pp.81-96. This view has been challenged by D.M. Boswell, op.cit. (1978) p.7.

73. **'Modernization'** refers to a diversification of the economic base and the consequent changes in living styles, consumption and employment patterns resulting from economic growth. Such processes can take place within a neo-colonial context of continuing dependence upon a **"mother country"**. On the other hand a truly **'developing'** country begins to generate its own wealth. P. Schneider, J. Schneider and E. Hansen: "Modernisation and Development - the Role of Regional Elites and Non-Corporate Groups in the European Mediterranean". Comparative Studies in Society and History (1972) Vol.14, pp.328-350.

74. N.J. Smelser: "Mechanisms of Change and Adjustment to Change" in T. Burns (ed.): Industrial Man (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1969) pp.43-68. Similarly, the **"end of ideology"** theorists have sought to explain the persistence of widespread industrial and class conflicts in Italy and France despite a developed industrial base in terms of **"extra industrial elements of society"** such as "issues concerning the place of religion and the traditional status structure". M. Mann, op.cit. (1973) p.11.

75. A. Black: "Tourism and Migration - Causes and Effects in Social Change". Paper presented at Conference on the Design and Analysis of Current Social Science Research in the Central Mediterranean (University of Malta, 1978, mimeo) p.4. For instance the Maltese tendency to hoard savings rather than indulge in conspicuous consumption makes sense when considered in the historical context of a siege economy, the influence of religion and traditional job insecurity.

76. One of the most important decisions was that stated in the Defence White Paper of 1957. The threat to close down HM Dockyard and other services establishments in Malta led to the downfall of the proposal to **'integrate'** Malta with Britain, subsequently to the Labour Government's resignation. Cf. "Defence: Outline of Future Policy" (London, HMSO Cmnd No. 124, 1957).

77. M. Bonello: "Changing Patterns and Policies in Employment in Malta". (Lecture delivered in Department of Economics and Social Studies University of Malta in April, 1978, mimeo). Economic Survey 1978 (Malta, Office of the Prime Minister, 1979).

78. E.L. Zammit: "Caratteristiche dell' emigrazione Maltese" in F.O. Buratto and M. Nikolinakos (eds.): L'Emigrazione dei Popoli Mediterranei e l'Europa (I.S.P.R.O.M. Firenze, Cultura, 1976) pp.203-218.

79. As a critic of recent policies adopted by the MLP Government admits: "The Maltese economy has changed from a **"fortress"** economy with almost 25% of its income derived

from military services in 1955, to a productive economy with over 28% of its income derived from manufacturing and only 5% of income derived from military services in 1974". M.M. Metwally: Structure and Performance of the Maltese Economy (Malta, A.C. Aquilina & Co.. 1977) p.51. Cf. also H.R. Jones: "The Economic Transformation of Malta in the 1960's - with particular Reference to Manufacturing". Scottish Geographical Magazine Vol.87 (2) (1971) pp.128-141. S. Busuttil: "Some Present Problems of the Maltese Economy" (Malta Development Corporation, 1969, mimeo). S. Busuttil et.al.: An Assessment of Industrial Development in Malta: A Cost Benefit Approach (Royal University of Malta, 1970).

80. M.M. Metwally, op.cit., ibid.

81. Of course it is debatable how much the tourist influx and the 'building boom' of the late Sixties were the result of "conscious development strategy and how much to unforeseen forces of outside demand". H.R. Jones, op.cit. (1971) p.130.

82. S. Busuttil: Malta Case Study - Socio Economic Aspects (Royal University of Malta, 1970) p.7.

83. S. Busuttil, op.cit. (1970) pp.15-23. Jean-Marie Miossec: "L'Espace Maltais: Evolution et Problemes". Bulletin Association Geographique Francaise No.427 (1975) pp.233-239. J. Boissevain: "Social Trends in Malta 1960-1974".Cobweb: Economic Journal Winter 1975) pp.7-13. A series of articles in the popular, left-wing daily, L-Orizzont - also published as a pamphlet - on the housing problem started as follows "A stream of sterling is entering the Island......In recent years a form of business has suddenly turned many people's heads upside down....." Qed Nohorgu jew Inberbqu Gid il-Maltin? (Valletta, Union Press, 1968) p.1.

84. R.K. Merton: Social Theory and Social Structure (New York, The Free Press, 1968) Chapters 10 and 11, pp279-440. W.G. Runciman: Relative Deprivation and Social Justice (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1972) Chapter 2, pp.10-41. As B. Wallis pointed out: "The notion of relative deprivation refers to a **felt** or **experienced** disparity between aspirations or expectations and realtiy i.e. to a subjective experience." B. Wallis: "Relative Deprivation and Social Movements". British Journal of Sociology, Vol.26 (1975) pp.360-363.

85. E.H. Phelps-Brown: The Economics of Labor (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1962) p.98.

86. Other disputes involved civil servants, teachers and most categories of Government employees, the U.K. Services and private industry. In addition there were public protests from pensioners, homeless families and university students.

87. Source: Department of Labour Reports 1965-1971.

88. G. Kester: Transition to Workers' Self Management (Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, 1978 mimeo) Chapter 2, p.16.Cf. also S. Busuttil, op.cit. (1969) p.4.

89. In its submissions to the Commission, for instance, the Society of Administrative and Executive Civil Servants had repeatedly pointed out as a **"basic absurdity"** the fact that "the salary exercise in Malta appears to have resolved itself into a race

where the one aim of all the runners is that of catching up and surpassing one of them". Consequently, they pleaded, "all that we seek is to catch up to some extent with the general level of salaries payable in the private sector in Malta. Far from Government being a leader in this respect, salaries in the upper strata of the Public Service have fallen alarmingly behind their counterparts in the private sector". Society of Administrative and Executive Civil Servants:Submissions to the Salaries Anomalies Commission (Malta, 1968, mimeo) p.20.

90. Widespread aspirations among workers for the more prestigious white collar jobs and professions - reflecting the predominance of middle class standards had prevailed for a long time. These aspirations were creating difficulties for Malta's industrialization drive. The Robens Mission had noted that "social pressures" exist on parents and adults generally to steer their children towards an education in some academic field in preference to......technical education and training. This attitude of mind is dangerous because it weakens the will to make Malta industrially robust... The choice for many will lie between being an unemployed white collar worker or a fully employed technician or craftsman". Robens Mission Report, op.cit. (1967) p.48.

POWERLESSNESS AND THE TRADITIONAL ADAPTATIONS

Introduction

Class consciousness implies some aspirations on the part of subordinates to membership into the dominant class from which they feel systematically excluded. It also usually implies a belief that collective action would give them a fair chance of limiting the prerogatives of the dominant power holders Their aim would be to secure a degree of participation in decision making. As the Maltese belonged to a different nationality from their colonial masters they could never fully identify themselves with them. Nor could they ever aim at challenging their vastly superior powers. Power, or rather the lack of it, was the crucial issue.

Powerlessness is a social situation over which the individuals whose lives are determined by it in important respects have no control. In Malta, this has been keenly felt in political and economic matters at the national level. This national powerlessness was psychologically compensated by a high emotional investment in local institutions which provided the populace with alternative sources of power and prestige. To some extent, these safety-valve institutions distracted people's attentions from the national struggles for control in vital areas which were beyond their reach.[1] The objective powerlessness in the Maltese context has also been accompanied by a subjective, normative acceptance of that condition. A few dormant, cultural aspirations for control, even in national areas, are not excluded, particularly during periods of unrest due to unusual economic hardships or obvious political repression.[2] The prevailing interactions between superordinates and subordinates tend nevertheless towards apparent authority rather than power relationships[3] In this sense, Maltese powerlessness approximates that condition described by Marx and other writers under the concept of alienation.

Powerlessness and Alienation

In Marx's view, the formation of social classes, class-warfare and forms of political, legal and ethical consciousness throughout history are related to successive forms of production. Periodically, a stage is reached where the productive relations in a given social system have no further room for development. They break apart as the **"exploited class"** revolts. Until then, man is estranged from the **"real foundation"** of society into the level of abstract thought. Alienation refers to this social phenomenon - the separation of man from himself and his neighbours.[4]

Marx has singled out various aspects of man's alienation: from his natural physical environment - including work, from his social environment and, as a consequence of these, from his own self.[5] When man has lost contact with himself and his own real interests, he has reached the highest possible degree of alienation. At this level, class consciousness

is inconceivable because the worker is not even aware of his alienated condition.

The historical evidence presented in the previous chapter suggests that the Maltese experience of national powerlessness can be understood in terms of alienation precisely because of the way in which the physical needs for subsistence, work and security have enabled the colonial power holders to promote an ideology of natural dependence upon them. This provided the main legitimating force behind the perpetual propagation of a subordinate value system among the local population. Consequently, the Maltese did not normally resign themselves to a lifetime of relative deprivation: As they were incapable of overcoming their powerlessness they responded in the form of instrumental adjustment or patterned adaptations.[6] These adaptations are often embodied in numerous proverbs and other traditional expressions of a **"commonsense philosophy of life"** which are well documented among working class communities. In this sense, therefore, alienation refers to a particular set of attitudes and behaviour patterns with which the Maltese respond to their objectively powerless condition – particularly in national, political and economic activities which relate directly to their own lives. The fact that historically there were few and isolated protests or even expressions of discontent against that condition only reveals the extent of alienation.

And yet, just as compliance, patronage and localism are typical of the Malta scene, so is a long tradition of political activism. Aspirations for a measure of political autonomy, though often implicit and dormant, were never completely suppressed particularly among the upper class of enlightened elites whose international family links and other reference groups provided them with a constant source for feelings of relative deprivation. As for the working class, the charismatic relations which traditionally binds them with their political leaders are indicative of the extent of their alienation.

Powerlessness and Anomie

The other sociological concept relevant to an understanding of Maltese powerlessness is that of anomie, described by Durkheim.[7] As with Marx, Durheim also saw a transformation in power and authority relations as a necessary pre-condition for a solution to the social problems of his age. Yet, Durheim was impressed by the condition of the:

"unregulated man who needs rules to live by, limits to his desires, **'circumscribed tasks to perform'** and **'limited horizons'** for his thoughts".[8]

Thus anomie refers to a condition of normlessness, one in which there are no rules for guiding behaviour, a situation characterized by the absence of a regulating value system.

The two sociologists ultimately held **"opposite and incompatible"** views of the relationship between the individual and society. However both concepts of alienation and anomie can be applied to the same

social situations at different levels of generality. These two conditions in Malta are not effects of the development of capitalist society or of rational, industrial organisations as depicted by the classical sociological theorists.[9] The symptoms have rather been a common feeling of powerlessness to control the economic and political fortunes on the parts of persons living in this society. This is accompanied by a series of patterned adaptive responses to such a condition.

Power relations refer to the absence of legitimate norms governing behaviour. Powerlessness is both a form of normlessness and of a lack of a sense of control; thus, it may be considered symptomatic of both alienation and anomie. Actual societies may manifest varying levels of each. As Lukes says:

"Some alienation must exist wherever there are reified social relations, socially given roles and norms; while anomie must exist wherever hierarchies disintegrate and social control is weakened".[10]

One well-known version of normlessness which applies to Malta is the situation described by Merton where there is a discrepancy between the culturally prescribed goals of a society and the institutional norms for attaining them.[11] In Malta, there has been, historically, a widespread conformity or, at least, compliance with colonial paternalist policies, based on the deeply ingrained conviction of powerlessness and dependence. This, however, is also accompanied by various other forms of adaptations. Such compliance in fact depends on power relationship which legitimates transgressions of the official norms whenever loopholes are detected. Thus a set of unofficial (or local) norms may coexist with the official (or national) ones providing institutional evasions. This is usually done by resorting to certain tactics: conflicting interpretations; emphasis on the particularities of individual cases; appeals to the conflicting goals. The resultant situation becomes effectively one of normative pluralism which is a form of anomie. It leaves scope for unpredictable behaviour which is problematic for colonial administrators, but which may be borne by the latter for the sake of avoiding an all-out confrontation.

Undoubtedly, apart from powerlessness, the Maltese traditional adaptations are also related to factors like the class structure, over-population and environmental constraints. Moreover, social institutions like patronage, religion and traditional local rivalries, once established, exert a relatively autonomous influence on social life. Yet, when the relative weight of such factors is considered, it can be claimed that powerlessness in the context of colonialism has effectively generated certain responses and that the overall situation manifests symptoms of both alienation and anomie.

The Maltese Adaptations

A modified version of Merton's anomie paradigm offers a useful guide to a categorization of the typical Maltese responses or adaptations

to national powerlessness. These patterned adaptations are:

1. Compliance with Paternalism

2. Individual Manipulation

3. Localism – Retreatism

4. Political Activism

These are typical categories and the expressed form serves mainly for analytical purposes. In real life, variations combining several of these categories together and manifesting various levels of intensity are likely to be found. In addition, the parts played by other variables, personality factors and historical circumstances should not be ignored. The adaptations are merely presented systematically at this stage as they provide some clues to the emergence of traditional social perceptions and of the ways these are socially sustained.

I. Compliance with Paternalism

Three types of compliant or conformist responses are discussed by Hopper and Weyman in their study.[12] The first two types entail a positive disposition towards society and its institutions. They are typical of persons who can comfortably fulfil their role expectations or who manage to overcome any obstacles which might stand in their way. Thus, they never feel deprived. The third type of conformist is one who, faced with impossible obstacles in satisfying his aspirations, reacts by effectively lowering his goals to a more realistic level – at least, temporarily.

As the historical evidence of the previous chapter has indicated, all these types of compliance are evident in Malta, but it is the third type which has prevailed among the working class.[13] At the roots of such widespread compliance there is a paternalist ideology whose function is that of providing normative justification to the established manner of regulating social relations; this is the dominant ideology which penetrates into the subordinate one. This does not necessarily imply the existence of an actual, paternalistic treatment of sub-ordinates by the colonial administrators; it is, in other words, often a convenient way of disguising exploitative relations. [14]

It is also true that the colonial powers ruling Malta generally permitted the Maltese to express a certain individuality in their own local, village communities. The Knights took pride in their paternal, protective role and so did the early British Governors on the island. Of course, when the demands of a fortress colony demanded drastic measures to be taken, little attention was paid to the discomforts which such measures might have caused the population. But in general the colonial powers were quite ready to allow local life to go on undisturbed. Patron-age links were exploited as a means of winning over the sympathies of many people. In addition, they often turned a blind eye to a certain

amount of pilfering of Government property. Various forms of customs evasion were left unmolested. Such minor lapses were permitted in order to avoid provoking a hostile reaction by enforcing the letter of the law.

It was partly as a result of these permissive policies that the dominant paternalist ideology in the national economic, administrative and political spheres could coexist with a relatively autonomous local life in the villages and in religious matters. In these areas prevailed a subordinate value system which acted as a defensive barrier against the national power structure. It was even quite unnecessary for the colonial power holders to seek the full legitimation of their subordinates because they could ultimately rely on the subordinates' inevitable dependence upon them for survival and defence. These basic needs overshadowed any aspirations the subordinates might have nourished for full national autonomy. Thus, an apparent form of legitimacy was nearly always maintained. As Abercrombie and Turner have stated:

"where the subordinate classes have been alienated from the means of production....the fact that workers have to labour to live will itself constitute a permanent pressure towards their co-optation". [15]

This co-optation is usually expressed in various forms of compliance.

All forms of compliance, however, are seldom completely successful adjustments in the long run. Eventually, people may seek alternative or subsidiary adaptations. In the Maltese situation, they are more likely to seek an adjustment to their powerlessness in partially conformist and divergent terms simultaneously. The aim of seeking such adjustments is mainly that of reducing or eliminating the feelings created by an objectively depriving situation.

2. Individual Manipulation

It has already been stated that the dominant paternalistic ideology and the policies of the colonial rulers created scope for pervasive practices. Individual manipulation refers to forms of this behaviour which are formally regarded as illegitimate but informally recognised as widespread and inevitable due to certain prevailing circumstances. The most typical manifestation of this adaptation in Malta is patronage. It is widely believed that if one wants to obtain a government house or a "good" job, merit alone is insufficient. It is also necessary to have patrons interceding on one's behalf.[16] Various attempts have been made by governments in recent years to limit this practice which have met with some success. Undoubtedly the basis of patronage has changed in recent decades,[17] but it consists essentially of a personal relationship between a patron and client. Unlike paternalism, it is an individualistic link, based on ascribed criteria and usually operates where there are functional gaps, in the social structure, the legitimacy of which it tends to undermine. It cannot be developed into a major institution because it depends on the inadequacy of the formal institutional frame-

work. It is thus highly symptomatic of an anomic social situation. Like paternalism, it depends on sharp inequalities of power and on competition over limited resources. Through patronage, individuals insure themselves against insecurity by providing a "down-to-earth insurance policy against uncertainty" arising out of "inadequately regulated situations".[18] Other instances of individual manipulation are indulgent attitudes to petty thefts and to various forms of customs evasion which have been referred to in the previous chapter. Conveniently, the private nature of such behaviour enables the pursuit of official economic and status goals in the normal way.

3. Localism – Retreatism

This term is being used here to denote another characteristic mode of adaptation to powerlessness. Retreatism is a conditional withdrawal from:

> "those social networks which approve the rational and
> systematic pursuit of long and short term ends and
> means". [19]

After withdrawing from the active pursuit of the economic and status goals which are the criteria of success in the wider (or national) society the retreatist adaptation provides the individual with an alternative status and normative structure. In Malta, this is reflected in the universal attachment of individuals towards their village, neighbourhood and families. These provide the main sources of status, identity and personal pride. Both village and family festivities find expression in religious symbolism.[20] In this sense, the retreat from socio-economic goals and means is not total and negative but only partial to a more narrowly confined boundary. Meanwhile, a certain minimum positive orientation to the goals and norms of the wider society is necessarily maintained. Hence, this adaptation combines elements of ritualism (or mechanism) with a conditional retreatism. At work, the ritualist accepts the power structure and with it his role demands and differential rewards. Subjectively, he is concerned with his reputation for respectability, dependability, honour, hard work, tidiness and being manly (irgulija). In general, these characteristics have been associated with "deferential, traditionalist workers" [21] and embodied in the subordinate value system. [22] Like the mechanist, the Maltese manipulator:

> "takes a perfunctory interest in his obstructed situation
> because he attempts to opt out of it in favour of
> alternative goals and their contexts". [23]

These are available in his own family and locality.[24] Thus, one's minimum or realistic work expectations and modest political aspirations – through cognitive dissonance – are compensated by an almost fanatical attachment to a defensiveness of local institutions. These processes are usually expressed and legitimated through religious symbolism.

Some modes of extreme retreatism or escapist solutions as in the
36

form of alcoholism, are of course also present in Malta. Other forms
of retreatism – like the M.U.S.E.U.M. Society whose members combine
a routinist approach to work within a marked religious perspective –
are more typical expressions of the Maltese way of life.[25] Emigration
is also a form of conditional retreat which has become institutionalized.
However, some of these modes present a potential threat to the mainten-
ance of the social structure. For this reason, emigration has never been
unequivocally accepted as a solution to the chronic problem of over-
population and unemployment. It has been regarded by its proponents as
a necessary evil, an 'exile' from the Maltese way of life, from one's
family and local community. Thus the extent to which the Maltese
social structure allows forms of retreatism is strictly circumscribed.

4. Political Activism

The social structure may be viewed by some persons as only responsive
to a counter resort to power. The typical activist is one who mobilizes
collective power in an open rebellion against the established power
structure. This action is aimed at the substitution of the existing goals
and norms by alternative ones. The timing, manner and the channels
may be entirely a matter of strategy and expedience. It can be decided,
for instance, that sustained, low-key pressures aimed at introducing
constant changes in the social structure almost imperceptibly, over a
long period of time can be as effective as sudden, violent upheaval. In
certain cases, this might be the only feasible possibility. The success
of such strategy depends on the activities of a disciplined organisation,
at the disposal of a strong leadership which avails itself of opportunities
to promote its goals. Normally, the success of political movements
partly depends on the convergence of common interests which various
actors can safeguard by joining forces against a common enemy. However,
a unifying ideology is an indispensable tool for sustained, collective
action. A common ploy is that of resorting to the established value
system – re-interpreting it and adapting it in part so as to sustain and
gain acceptance for the new social perceptions and relations.

The leader's inspiration and direction is essential. He coordinates
common efforts, selects objectives, maintains internal and external
communication networks and sustains morale at a high level. In Malta,
it is clear that due to historical-structural circumstances, the leader's
role is crucial for the establishment of a radical, political movement
and the introduction of new social perceptions. Thus, the social movement
receives its ideological inspiration from its top leadership – the ideas
themselves having usually entered Malta from abroad. As a '**radical
movement**' it aims at transforming the established social structure. It
needs to provide its followers with normative support as a substitute
for their withdrawal from their established social norms. Followers
need this support from the movement not only for the pursuit of its
goals but also for providing new "**leisure and friendship outlets**" which
can replace the previous ones. [26]

A constant demand for social reforms leading eventually to a trans-
formation of the traditional way of life has effectively emerged from

the MLM.[27] Whether it is succeeding in implanting a new set of social perceptions or at least modifying the established ones in any way, forms the subject matter of subsequent chapters of this study. Any such developments are of importance because they constitute a challenge to the traditional pattern of power relations and herald the emergence of a new authority or pattern structure pointing towards a cultural shift from a local to a national perspective.

These patterned responses or traditional adaptations to the condition of national powerlessness provide the framework for the Maltese sub-culture within which any new perceptions must be worked out. Thus, to anticipate somewhat the later arguments, it will be shown how:
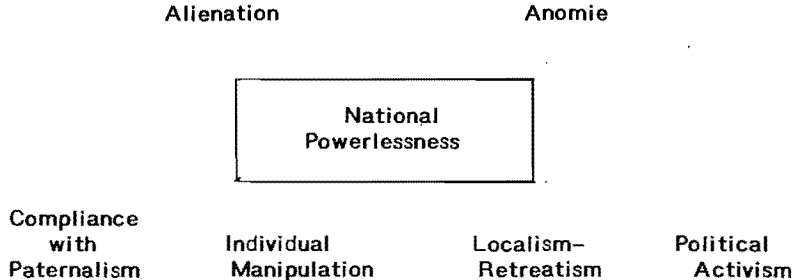
(a) the prevalent social orientation to work which emphasizes its security and dependence aspects, the deferential atti- tudes towards power relations and the widespread hier- archical image of the class structure are associated with a traditional compliant response to paternalism.

(b) a Maltese dilemma emerges: a widely expressed perception of work and class relations - often using religious and familial symbols - conveys an image of collective harmony, interdependence and an 'open' view of the class structure. This is accompanied by a deeply ingrained conviction of constant competition, resort to patronage and other 'dubious" initiatives. Such inconsistent perceptions are related to the individual manipulative form of adaptation with its semi- legitimate forms of behaviour.

(c) the limited instrumental, pragmatic expectations from work and the central interest in substitute goals like one's family locality are related to the localist-retreatist form of adap- tive response. One would expect the recent interest in national progress and social reform to be accompanied by a gradual weakening of localist bonds as a source of identity and central life interest.

(d) finally, in view of the expressed intentions and systematic attempts by the leadership of the MLM to implant new social perceptions as part of its activist programme, it is sociologically interesting to examine how far it is succeed- ing in implanting new perceptions both in the country at large and especially among its own rank and file.

In this chapter, the central condition of national powerlessness has been interpreted in terms of the sociological concepts of alienation and anomie. In the Maltese context, alienation refers to an illegitimate submission to power. It also refers to an inability on the part of individuals to perceive any way of controlling their own social relations. As a result, there is an apparent legitimacy based on dependence. On the other hand, anomie refers to a situation characterized by conflicting

loyalties, institutions and norms – such as Church and State, the local and the national spheres of social life. In addition, a superimposed normative structure ultimately rests upon a power relationship. Whatever legitimacy exists is therefore being derived from a concept of filial dependence upon a powerful, paternalist figure. This fundamentally lacks the full legitimation of the dependent party and so the situation is one of an illegitimate normative structure.

The varying level of legitimation among the Maltese population is also a function of their differential location in the class structure. In other words, some individuals have better means than others for the pursuit of normative goals. These disparities become accentuated during periods of rapid social and economic change such as those which characterized recent Maltese history. It will be seen in the next chapter that the MLM received its main impetus during periods of economic hardships. Of course, this usage of the alienation and anomie concepts is quite different from Marx's and Durkheim's though it is ultimately derived from them.

The various Maltese adaptive responses to national powerlessness are outlined in the following scheme:

Alienation			Anomie

National Powerlessness			

Compliance with Paternalism	Individual Manipulation	Localism– Retreatism	Political Activism

Traces of each of these responses can be found scattered throughout society in various combinations and degrees of intensity. Yet it is possible to identify situations where particular modes of adaptation prevail. Thus middle-class suburbanites are most likely to be compliant; business-men and other intermediaries tend to be individual manipulators; rural traditionalists and even many urban workers tend towards localism; industrial workers tend towards political activism – particularly of a reformist and possibly radical outlook.

NOTES

1. These are similar to what M. Mann, op.cit. (1973) p.17, has called "displaced expressions" of class consciousness.

2. Similar to the occasional outbursts in industrial relations from normally submissive workers. See for example: T. Lane and K. Roberts, Strike at Pilkingtons (Suffolk, Fontana, 1971).

3. Convincing arguments backed by historical evidence from various countries on the processes by which subordinates often legitimate 'injustices' and 'suffering' inflicted upon them through superior powers have been recently presented by Barrington Moore Jn.: Injustice - The Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt (London, Macmillan, 1978).

4. K. Marx: Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844 in T.B. Bottomore and M. Rubel (eds.): Karl Marx - Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1965) pp.175-179.

5. S. Lukes: "Alienation and Anomie" in P. Laslett and W.G. Runciman (eds.):Philosophy Politics and Society (Oxford, Blackwell, 1967) pp.134-156, p.137. A. Fox, op.cit. (1974)pp.221-222.

6. The process by which persons rationalize and adapt themselves to a depriving but unavoidable situation is amply illustrated and is known in psychological literature as the phenomenon of cognitive dissonance. See, for instance: C. Argyris: Integration the Individual and the Organization (New York, Wiley, 1964) p.70 and L. Festinger: A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance (New York, Harper, 1957) p.31.

7. Although many contemporary sociologists incorporate Durkheim's anomie concept as a special variation of Marx's alienation concept or vice-versa.

8. A. Fox, op.cit. (1974) p.141.

9. Unless the dramatic expansion of colonialism in the nineteenth century is seen as a by-product of international capitalist domination.

10. S. Lukes, op.cit. p.152.

11. "A high expectancy that socially unapproved behaviours are required to achieve given goals" R.K. Merton, op.cit. (1968) p.788.

12. Hopper & Weyman, British Journal of Sociology (26) (1975) pp.66-67.

13. Though the 'moderate reformist wing' of the Malta Labour Movement approximates the second type of compliant response (cf. Chapter 3, infra), another approximation to this type in Malta are the pro-English businessmen, civil servants and other "new middle-class" representatives whose economic status and power positions were directly or indirectly dependent upon the colonial administration (cf. Chapter 1, supra).

14. Pointed out by N. Abercrombie and S. Hill in "Paternalism and Patronage"; British Journal of Sociology Vol.27 (4) (1976) pp.413-439.

15. N. Abercrombie and B. Turner, op.cit. (1978) p.160.

16. See various publications by J. Boissevain, op.cit. (1965, 1969, 1974, etc.) on patronage in Malta. E.L. Zammit, op.cit. (1970) Chapter 3.

17. J. Boissevain: "When the Saints Go Marching Out. Reflections on the Decline of Patronage in Malta" in E. Gellner and J. Waterbury (eds.) Patrons and Clients (London Duckworth & Co., 1977) pp.81-96. D. Boswell, op.cit. (1978)

18. N. Abercrombie and S. Hill, op.cit. (1976) p.421.

19. Hopper and Weyman, op.cit. pp.72-74.

20. J. Boissevain, op.cit. (1965 and 1969).

21. D. Lockwood, op.cit. (1966) pp.252-254.

22. F. Parkin, op.cit. (1975) Chapter 3.

23. Hopper and Weyman, op.cit. (1975) p.75.

24. However, whereas the "mechanist" divests his work role of all emotional involvement, the Maltese individual "manipulator" retains a minimum level of interest and legitimation in it. Rather than splitting "identity in two" like the "mechanist", it is social life itself which he regards as separated. On the one hand he accepts the "national" authority structure which regulates his work and other spheres of life, and on the other hand he fully participates in his "local" life which is the main domain of activities under his full control.

25. The M.U.S.E.U.M. Society is a christian working-class lay association whose mission is to teach religious doctrine and piety to children and adults. It preaches a rejection of worldly values, a passive acceptance of material hardships and particularly a subordination to paternal and ecclesiastical authorities. Members of this Society played an influential role of moderation among Drydocks workers in the early years of the Labour Movement.

26. Hopper and Weyman noted that their "rebellious" respondents "had so diffused their personal positions with those of large groups of other people, such as the 'working class', that they seemed to be unaware of their own personal discontents as a motive force for their actions" op. cit., p.74.

27. As seen in Chapter 1, supra., another form of activist response to national, political powerlessness has historically emerged from the traditional elites. A long series of outbursts and revolts - dating back to the Middle Ages - broke out among the population against the foreign rulers. These rebellions usually occurred during times of economic hardship for which the colonial policies were held responsible. The Maltese professional and landed elites often engineered such outbursts in support of their interests and demands for local political autonomy. This category of landowners, priests and professionals - by virtue of their high socio-economic standing - are the traditional leaders of Maltese society. Until the recent emergence of the MLM, with its roots firmly embedded in the lower strata of the population, these were the only spokesmen for the Maltese with the foreign administrators. It was from these sources, therefore, that political leadership first emerged. Yet, even in this case, they obtained their ideological inspiration from abroad.

THE MALTA LABOUR MOVEMENT:
DRYDOCKS, UNION AND PARTY

An important prerequisite which Marx has specified to the emergence of a class conscious proletariat is the concentration of a large mass of exploited workers organized in industrial work. This setting is said to be conducive to the development of a working class movement which could lead them out of their alienated state. The only industrial setting in Malta which offered such possibilities was, undoubtedly, the Drydocks. There, a workforce exceeding 5,000 workers worked under the constant threat of redundancy. Nowhere else in Malta had the local condition of powerlessness been more evident than in this leading industry where, under the Admiralty, no Maltese could ever occupy any post above that of local supervisor, regardless of ability.[1] It was there that Malta's leading Union (GWU) and the Labour Party (MLP) were formed. Even today, Drydocks workers reportedly form the **backbone** of the Union and the Party – the two of which are now statutorily united into one movement (MLM). Indeed, the Drydocks is aptly referred to by various spokesmen as the **"cradle of the Labour Movement"**[2] In this chapter, the parts played by the **'two arms'** of the MLM, the Union and the Party, will be reviewed. Special attention is devoted to the role played by Drydocks workers: As they are the protagonists of the movement, this attention is not misplaced.

Before the arrival of the Knights in 1530, some limited facilities for repairing vessels were available at Birgu. These were substantially expanded by the Order whose galleys and other vessels needed constant attention. Since then, the Drydocks has played a vital role in Malta's economy. By the time of the British take-over in 1800, the Island had a **"small but complete shipyard"**[3]

The extensive commitments of the British fleet in the Mediterranean called for further extensions in the 'Yard facilities. Five docks were constructed by the Admiralty over the years and a new giant dock has only recently been completed.

The varying total numbers of employees at approximately ten-year intervals are as follows:[4]

1896: 3,000	1928: 7,500	1959: 5,940
1906: 4,000	1939: 10,000	1969: 5,223
1918: 13,000	1949: 12,000	1978: 5,101

The Drydocks has traditionally provided the largest concentration of industrial workers in Malta. Its importance to the national economy emerges from the fact that it employs close to 5% of the gainfully occupied population. Besides, "the total wage bill of Malta Drydocks accounts for 8% of the aggregate employment income of the economy"[5] The 'Yard has also been an important source for highly trained manpower

in engineering and industrial skills.   These are important assets in a developing economy such as Malta's.

Not surprisingly, therefore, the situation prevailing at the Drydocks at any given time has its repercussions felt immediately throughout Maltese society.   Its high social visibility often transforms events there into the main political issues of the day.[6]   Particularly in the towns of the immediate vicinity, family life has been oriented on work at the Drydocks for several generations – just as the physical layout of the industry completely dominates the environment.   Concurrently, common symbols, values and norms have developed along with other characteristic social bonds of an occupational community. Such qualities, no doubt, were highly instrumental in the emergence and development of the Malta Labour Movement from amongst Drydocks workers. One main thrust to the emergence of this movement in the 'Yard was provided by the frequent threats of mass discharges of workers – along with other economy measures to the workers' detriment – which have characterized the Dockyard scene particularly since the end of the First World War. In addition, many superiors allegedly discriminated openly among workers – possibly in an effort to prevent a united opposition:

"When it came to dismissals those who were not fancied
by the supervisor, the inspector and perhaps the foreman,
went first".[7]

This method of fomenting divisions, however, did not prevent the effective organization of the workers, particularly when large scale dismissals were expected. It was in such a context that the Dockyard workers gained the reputation of being the most militant, organized, radical and united group of workers in Malta.   Numerous protests, demonstrations, public gatherings, industrial actions and outbreaks of violence have taken place over the years.

The first significant labour dispute in Malta broke out in May, 1917.   This dispute concerned steep rises in the cost of living for which a pitiful increase in wages had been granted.   A ten-day strike and a protest march in Valletta caused great consternation among civil and military administrators who had underestimated the workers' discontent.   A modest wage increase was achieved and the workers returned to work peacefully.

This was, above all a moral victory for the workers.[8]   They had managed just before the dispute to establish an organisation to safeguard their interests [9] and after this successful experience they gained confidence in resorting to industrial action in order to make their claims more forcefully known to their superiors.   It is commonly believed in Malta that as a result of their effective organisation, Drydocks workers, in spite of all their grievances, have managed to raise their wages and to better their conditions of work well above those of other workers in private industry.   As a result, Dockyard workers represent a local version of an "aristocracy of labour". Not surprisingly, Dockyard workers

reacted very strongly whenever they felt that their advantageous position over comparative reference groups of other workers was being eroded. Nevertheless, it was many years afterwards that the workers developed a sustained interest in collective unionization.

Soon after their first success, and particularly after the June 1919 riots, in which Drydocks workers figured prominently, the latter expressed the need for a better organization with its roots extending beyond the confines of their industry. In this undertaking they were aided by another Englishman [10] who helped them to reorganize themselves into three branches of one national association. As this new organization acquired a wider base than its predecessor, and as it was outside the jurisdiction of the Dockyard authorities, it was here that the idea of a national political party to cater for the interests of all the Maltese working class emerged. The formation of this new party – originally called the "Camera del Lavoro" and later the Malta Labour Party – took place in October 1920. At that time, various other political parties were taking shape in anticipation of the imminent elections under the first autonomous constitution of Malta.

In its electoral manifestos, the MLP promised the introduction of social services, educational facilities, public works and other social, legal and economic reforms. In general, it did well in the elections which preceded the Second World War. But it was only in the elections after 1945 that the Labour Party obtained a majority voting. This followed the setting up of a new powerful union in the Drydocks which eventually dwarfed all the others and extended itself to all categories of workers in Malta. The General Workers' Union was founded by Reggie Miller, along with a few other Dockyard workers, in 1943.[11] Its stipulated objectives were to:

1. increase wages;

2. introduce social benefits, especially sickness and old age benefits.

3. provide a better education for the workers' children.[12]

These professed aims were almost identical to those of the Labour Party at that time. Almost from the very beginning the GWU had a resounding success, although it was very difficult to organize the Maltese workers under wartime conditions. In fact, permission to hold the first meeting on 5th October 1943 was granted only after continuous harrassment and after a strike in which "Dockyard workers began throwing vehicles into the sea" as a form of indirect threat to the authorities. [13]

From then on, an informal alliance was formed by these two 'arms' of the Malta Labour Movement (MLM): the industrial and the political. Occasionally, they may have temporarily drifted apart but, during such periods, an influential nucleus of officials holding posts in each organisation came to the rescue and bridged any existing differences.

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And, in the process, any dissenters were, more often than not, sifted out. As a result, the MLM has emerged as a disciplined, unified force at the disposal of its leadership. Its efficient organisation has enabled the leadership to weather numerous storms and to steer it progressively towards radical ideas, values and policies. One would expect that some important changes in the social perceptions of ordinary individuals have followed these leads. And if any shifts from traditional perceptions are indeed noticeable, these are likely to be most pronounced in the Dockyard - the cradle of the MLM.

This Labour Movement emerged from the Second World War with a new vigour, under the inspiration of the then young Dom Mintoff. Its goals alternated between trade-unionistic in a conventional sense and political in so far as national constitutional or economic issues were often seen as intimately affecting the workers' interests. And as in most cases they were dealing with a far superior, distant, colonial power, the only effective way of getting attention was by taking drastic, violent action. Yet such measures were traditionally alien to Maltese cultural responses and were resorted to by most workers with reluctance. Though compliance with paternalism was the most wide-spread traditional adaptation, political activism became regarded as the only effective form of protest.[14]

One such strong reaction from the workers occurred in January, 1947, over the granting of a **'five-day week'**. A violent mob at the Dockyard could not be prevented from severely damaging the machinery, vehicles and offices. The workers, many of whom were injured in the scuffles, could only be controlled after they were addressed by their union leaders. The singing of the Maltese National Anthem in these circumstances gave vent to pent up grievances against their foreign superiors. It expressed their strong nationalist sentiments though, ironically, it was also an expression of traditional compliance.[15]

Actually, the turmoil at the Dockyard reflected the instability and uncertainties of the national economic and political situation. The newly elected Labour Administration was finding it difficult for lack of funds to implement its promises. These concentrated on the provision of employment and the introduction of social services which were badly needed. An influential section of the Party, under the guidance of Dom Mintoff, then deputy leader of the MLP, pressed for higher income tax levels and insisted on direct Marshall Aid to Malta from Britain in return for Malta's services during the War. The more moderate section of the Party, led by the Prime Minister, Dr Boffa was willing to compromise with Britain and adopt more modest reforms. Eventually, unity within the Labour camp could not be contained any longer. The Party was split over Mintoff's **"ultimatum"** to Britain;[16] the Party General Conference sided with Mintoff and Boffa left the Party to form one of his own. Gradually, the MLP under Dom Mintoff re-built its own base as most former members returned to its fold. As a result, it re-emerged stronger and better organized behind its leader. Henceforth, it also espoused more radical policies and pursued these more vigorously.

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On the industrial relations level, the situation at Malta Drydocks remained unstable for many years. The need was felt by many for some institutional machinery for resolving disputes. The GWU had been severely criticized in the British and Maltese press for taking industrial action during the war, and the Union agreed to suspend all such actions provided facilities for negotiation and arbitration were made available.[17] An Arbitration Tribunal was referred to in 1948, when the Dockyard salaries had fallen behind those paid by the Maltese Government and the offer made by the Admiralty fell short of the Union's expectation. The eventual award constituted a much higher salary increase than had been offered by the Admiralty. This was a morale booster for the workers' leaders who had successfully defended their case before an English tribunal.[18]

In 1952, however, the GWU decided to plead for a cost-of-living increase before a Maltese Industrial Arbitration Tribunal which had by then been set up. The Admiralty's refusal to accept the eventual award heralded a serious confrontation with the Union. The MLP offered its support to the GWU and a common action committee was set up. The issue soon became a national political battle between the Malta Labour Movement and the British Government.[19] A national protest campaign was organized and some scuffles with the police took place when some workers attacked the pro-English press offices in Valletta. The issue was finally resolved after a GWU delegation accepted an invitation to participate in discussions in London. But the event had underlined the closer relationships which were developing between the GWU and the MLP under Mintoff's leadership.[20] The radicals were now gradually dominating the Union just as they had earlier taken all key positions in the Party. Under Mintoff's inspiration, both organizations adopted militant policies and propagated militant ideas. As Mintoff himself threatened, the workers needed to resort to:

"violent action to secure their rights......The time had come
when the MLP needed not only to fight but to throw its own
martyrs into the arena, as other nations had done, who would
be prepared to die for their ideals".[21]

In 1954 Mintoff had foreseen that, as a result of modern strategic needs, the closure of the Dockyard might follow with the result of a national economic catastrophe. For this reason, when the MLP took office in 1955, it did so on a platform of integrating Malta with Britain. The MLP policy thus changed into a pro-British one. So, when the GWU called for a national rally and a protest march against the imminent discharges from the Dockyard, Mintoff advised the crowd against marching into Valletta. He claimed that he had been assured by the British Government that no irrevocable decision had been taken. The GWU Admiralty Section felt betrayed by the Prime Minister whom they accused of turning a national rally into a political meeting.[22] They issued a formal protest to the Prime Minister. Mintoff interpreted this as a vote of no confidence and tendered his resignation. This action resulted in street demonstrations against the GWU Section Committee. The latter sent a formal apology and Mintoff withdrew

his resignation.

Throughout this exchange, the moderate members of the GWU Section Committee suffered a severe loss of confidence among the workers. The most tangible result of this event was, therefore, that the GWU leadership learnt never again to question Mintoff's leadership in public or to pursue initiatives contrary to his own.[23]

Meanwhile a national economic crisis was apparently inevitable. The British Government was only promising to "keep the Drydocks occupied for three more years or so" and that "some economies would become necessary".[24] In spite of Maltese insistence, no further assurance were forthcoming from Britain. The local parliament unanimously passed a resolution declaring themselves free from any obligation towards Britain and its allies. The Prime Minister stated that he was ready to risk his Integration plans, declaring that "for us nothing is more important than the Dockyard".[25] The GWU continued to organize protest meetings, undertook industrial action and alerted the Trade Union Congress (TUC) and public opinion in the United Kingdom on the local situation. When finally the British Government announced its decision to **"hand-over"** the Dockyard, lock, stock and barrel to Messrs C.H. Bailey, a small British Shipbuilding firm from South Wales, the decision provoked a strong reaction from the workers. Violent confrontations took place on the 28th April, 1958 between the police under instructions from the British Governor of Malta on one hand and Drydocks workers and others behind the combined GWU ‧and MLP leadership on the other. The transfer was nevertheless effectuated and many workers received a notice of discharge from their jobs.

This led to perhaps the most serious violent reaction ever witnessed at the Dockyard. The police reinforcements could hardly control the workers with the aid of tear gas from assaulting the Admiral when he had appeared on the scene. Fires were started everywhere and a fire engine thrown into the dock. As Ellul Galea, an eye witness, reports:

"The surroundings of Docks No. 4 and 5 were in flames.
Mobile cranes, welding motors, trucks, planks and ships'
supports were on fire...while the crowd was devastating
the offices".[26]

These riots were widely reported in the British national press.[27] The following day, many Dockyard workers were prosecuted in Court, several of whom were fined and given prison sentences for up to eight months. After this outburst, however, the actual changeover on the following day was relatively quiet. The GWU reluctantly decided to comply with the new management in view of the lack of any alternative job opportunities. However, they warned Bailey that they would resort to industrial action in order to promote the workers' interests.[28] At this stage, it was quite clear that the radicals, under Mintoff's leadership had gained absolute control over union policy.

Having started on such an unstable basis of industrial relations,

Bailey's venture was doomed to failure. Besides, it soon became clear to Mintoff that the British Government was unwilling to subscribe to the full financial implications of integration while proceeding with the Dockyard discharges. He therefore turned unhesitatingly against Britain. Mintoff and the MLP administration resigned in June 1958 stating that in the circumstances they were not able to give assurance to maintain law and order. The Governor declared a public state of emergency which lasted for a few days. From then on, Mintoff lost no opportunity to foment public agitation and to mobilize mass resistance to the British authorities who imposed a brief period of direct role over Malta.

The unwavering support of the GWU in this and other incidents was vital for Mintoff. He had clearly announced his intention to work hand in hand with the GWU on the issue of threatened discharges to Dockyard workers. He also warned them that "any deviation from the policy of the party would mean no help from the MLP when it was needed". [29] Accordingly, the MLP and GWU were jointly responsible for the disturbances which followed.

There was, however, opposition to Mintoff's policies from other quarters. Relations with the Church had always been, at best, uneasy. And when the Church publicly condemned the violence to which the MLP and GWU were resorting as a means of combating the Dockyard discharges, relations took a sudden turn for the worse. This heralded the start of a bitter politico-religious dispute which lasted for a decade. [30]

At this particular stage in his career, Mintoff directed his attacks on that local institution which had traditionally accommodated British interests. In so doing, he was attacking the roots of traditional Maltese compliance with paternalism - as the Church had always acted as the main legitimizing institution. Thus, by challenging the authority of the Church, Mintoff was effectively challenging the very basis of authority relations throughout Maltese society.

This politico-religious dispute had a deep divisive effect upon Maltese society. [31] It has been shown that such divisions were extended even to Maltese migrant communities and their associations abroad. [32] It has also been argued that this polarization has brought into the open some deep divisions and muted antagonisms inherent in the Maltese class structure between a client category with established access to patronage networks and a relatively deprived, newly emergent powerless class. [33]

Mintoff's attacks were openly directed against the Church's inter-ference in politics. More significantly, he was attacking the Church's role as the central, integrating institution of Maltese social life. Hostil-ities from both sides were dragged on throughout two election campaigns and cost the MLP two consecutive electoral defeats. Finally, after prolonged discussions, an "armistice" was reached in 1969 stating that:

"In modern society it is necessary to make a distinction between the political community and the Church".

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The role of the church in public life has been further restrained through the 1974 constitutional amendments and through other measures introduced by the MLP administration since its return to power in 1971.

It was in such difficult circumstances that C.H. Bailey had assumed responsibility for the Dockyard from the British Government in 1959 and could only manage till 1963 when their contract was summarily suspended. Their first step was to fill most middle managerial posts with Maltese personnel. This was both necessary to fill posts vacated by the Admiralty's departure and to win over the confidence of a largely hostile and suspicious workforce and their Union. In order to break the Union's non-collaboration policy the conditions attached to each post were negotiated individually with the workers concerned.[34] Different salary scales were created varying up to hundreds of pounds from each other. The overall effect of these measures was generally to break the workers' resistance. For as Ellul Galea has noted:

"There were those who were clamouring for non-co-operation while at the same time competing for the best posts with the Company". [35]

Up to now, the GWU and the MLP had been adopting a rigid non-cooperative stand. But Bailey's policy of appeasing the workers raised many doubts in the MLM leaders' minds regarding the effectiveness of their stand against the Company. Indeed, in settling the first serious industrial dispute in 1960 which resulted in a substantial wage increase along with other benefits for the workers, the GWU's strategy towards Bailey was effectively changed: The Company had managed to draw the GWU to the negotiating table. But this was achieved at a heavy financial cost and, more importantly, through crucial restrictions of their own powers over the workers. In the process, the unstable pattern of labour relations which was to plague the industry for the next decade became established. [36]

It soon became apparent to shop-floor workers that if they put enough pressure on management, the latter would be constrained to consent to higher wages and better conditions of work. A more militant group of Union leaders and shop stewards, who would constantly keep management under pressure with higher demands, was subsequently elected to the GWU leadership. [37] From then on, management and Union were in constant conflict: the former accusing the Union of being politically motivated by raising unrealistic demands; the Union accusing the Company of creating unrest in order to cover up its failure to convert the Dockyard successfully into a commercial enterprise. [38] Between 1960 and 1970, there were no fewer than 31 industrial actions. A relatively peaceful period, between 1964 and 1967, followed Bailey's dismissal and the appointment of a Council of Administration supervising a well-known British Company which was contracted as a managing agency [39] and finally nationalization by the Malta Government in 1968. [40]

During 1967, two events again marred the relatively harmonious

relations which had developed at the Malta Drydocks.[41] The newly-elected Labour Government in Britain announced a new defence policy which hit adversely the remaining jobs with the Services in Malta. The other was the Arab-Israeli June conflict during which the Suez Canal was closed and the Drydocks found itself without any work almost instantly. In these crises, the GWU actively collaborated with the Nationalist Administration of the time in its attempts to recruit work for the Drydocks and to make representations to the British Government. Mintoff, then leader of the Opposition, refused to accompany the delegation to London or to collaborate with the Government nationalisation plans. Nevertheless, the GWU General Secretary, J. Attard Kingswell, joined the Nationalist delegation. He was subsequently accused of exceeding his council's instructions by signing an agreement for a phased rundown of the UK Services in Malta. This signalled a new division within the GWU leadership: A moderate section sought to promote the workers' interests as they saw them – even at the cost of some compromise collaboration with the Nationalist Government; an extremist section argued that the workers' real interests were best served by promoting policies in coordination with the MLP and by following the directives of its leadership. Once again the latter militant section gained the upper hand; consequently Management-Union relations at the Drydocks deteriorated rapidly. The Union made demands for wage increases which management claimed it could not meet due to the industry's economic situation.

A climax was reached in 1969 after management had agreed to a new higher salary structure for non-industrial employees. This agreement upset the established relativities between industrial and clerical workers and led to a series of industrial actions. As a result of an overtime ban and a strike paralysing key operations, the Drydocks was brought to a complete standstill. The situation in fact ripened to a seven-month deadlock, in many ways the most economically damaging industrial action in Malta's history. With the approaching elections and the prospect of a Labour Government returning to power, the GWU refused to negotiate any further even when "an attractive offer was made in February 1971".[42] In fact, the Labour Government was returned to power with the promise of Union participation in running the Drydocks, the GWU withdrew all industrial action. In sociological terms, this change heralded a search process for the establishment of new social bases of authority relations to replace the old power structure based on economic dependence and the pursuit of economic gains which had manifestly broken down.

Meanwhile the Drydocks crisis had become so serious that its problems could not be solved simply by calling off all industrial actions on the Union's part.[43] Even after enough work was provided to make full use of the 'Yard's facilities, the enterprise continued losing as much money as before. It was quite clear that a basic shift in the Union's former policy of confrontation had become necessary. As they had promised in their joint electoral manifestos, the GWU and MLP set up a new Board of Administration with equal Government and Union representation. The introduction of this initial system of workers'

participation had been envisaged as the main means of establishing the workers' trust in the **"workers' own management"**. The workers were also promised that the industry would be "handed over to them" as soon as it became again economically viable.

The workers' initial response, however, was disappointing. It appeared to many that the former militant role of the GWU was more becoming to its proper function than the new administrative role allotted to it by the **'workers' own Government'**.[44] Such a development was predictable in view of the strength of national powerlessness and compliance with paternalism. In fact, up to 1971, the MLM's greatest achievement had been that of harnessing the workers' adaptive responses into an explicit, powerful, protest organisation. That same movement, burdened with the full responsibilities of governing the country, needed to justify its new policies – through the establishment of a new legitimating ideological framework. An emphasis was placed upon the contrast between the workers' present self-sacrifice and self-restraint in pursuit of their own **'national'** interests and the past sacrifices and confrontations in pursuit of the interests of the colonial masters.[45]

The difficulties in implanting a new set of social perceptions are formidable because there are few traditional responses upon which to draw. The main pitfall lies precisely in the temptation for workers' leadership to adopt a paternalistic –restrictive role in the implementation of workers' participation and in the pursuit of anti-colonial, nationalistic policies. Such a role would most likely elicit once again a traditional compliant response from the workers. The pursuit of political and economic objectives might necessitate a blurring of, or even a deviation from, the original ideological objectives. Yet, it would be very surprising if no shift at all at the grass-roots, popular level were to accompany these efforts from the leadership. Indeed, one main aim of the subsequent parts of this study is to assess the extent to which the leadership of the MLM has managed to convert its followers to a new set of social perceptions. But before doing so, the ideas expressed by the MLM leadership on work, power and the class structure which are of immediate concern to the present study will be systematically reviewed in the following chapter.

NOTES

1. This policy prevailed until 1959. Cf. K. Ellul Galea: L-Istorja tat-Tarzna (Blata l-Bajda, Il-Hajja, 1973) p.146.

2. Cf. K. Ellul Galea, op.cit. (1973) pp.149-150.

3. As described by Captain Ball, R.N., Malta's first British Governor. Cf. B. Blouet, op.cit. (1972) p.129.

4. Sources: K. Ellul Galea, op.cit. (1973) p.617 and Malta Drydocks Corporation Annual Reports.

5. E. Ellul: Industrial Relations at Malta Drydocks – Economic Aspects. B.A. dissertation (Dept. of Economics, Royal University of Malta,1972, mimeo) p.9.

6. Even today changes in the work load at the Drydocks are regularly reported in the national press. As Ellul Galea states "any event at the Yard – big or small, suddenly attracts the public's attention, the press, business, parliament and Government – the whole community. This will continue as long as the Yard remains the axis of our economy". op.cit. (1973) p.131.

7. Ibid.

8. H. Ganado: Rajt Malta Tinbidel (Blata-1-Bajda, Il-Hajja, 1974) Vol.I, pp.201 and 211.

9. The "Dockyard and Imperial Government Workers' Union" was founded at the Drydocks in 1916. This was led by Henry Ear, an Englishman posted in Malta, but the members included some prominent followers of Manwel Dimech (See Chapter 4, infra).

10. Matthew Giles intended to affiliate the Maltese union with the Workers' Union of Great Britain. This was the main purpose of his visit to Malta in 1920.

11. Miller the founder of the GWU started as Secretary of the "Dockyard and Imperial Workers' Union" founded in 1936. He also edited "The Mill" the Union monthly. He left it in order to found a "Society for Dockyard Clerks". For this he was criticised as follows: "And now another so called Union leader, its own ex-Secretary to wit, is trying hard to break it up for reasons no one can understand. K. Ellul Galea, op.cit. p.153. Indri Cilia, a co-founder of the GWU recalls how the idea of a general union occurred to Miller: "Though we hardly represented 200 clerks, we had not achieved much with our union. But if we could unite the workers of all classes from all over Malta – that would be another matter." I. Cilia; Il-Haddiem Malti fis-Snin imghoddija (Valletta, Union Press, 1974) p.8

12. E.C. Koziara, op.cit. (1975) p.26.

13. I.Cilia, op.cit. (1974) p.9

14. K. Ellul Galea, op.cit. (1973) p.271.

15. See the final note to Chapter 1, supra.

16. Mintoff insisted on sending a letter to the British Government demanding its acceptance of direct Marshall Aid to Malta by the end of the month. Otherwise "a national referendum is to be held in order to determine whether Malta is to remain in the Commonwealth or request the United States of America or some other power which offers economic aid in exchange for the use of Malta as a base". Anon: Il-Qawmien tal-Haddiem Malti, (1971) p.118.

17. E.C. Koziara, op.cit. (1975) p.26.

18. The workers' case was presented by the GWU General Secretary, R. Miller and

the Admiralty Section Secretary Mr E.C. Tabone. The latter was also General Secretary of the MLP at the time. In fact many of the important posts in the GWU and the MLP were occupied by the same persons.

19. The Coalition Government of the time under Dr Borg Olivier, also issued a protest to the British authorities but refused to follow the MLP suggestions to curtail NATO activities on the Island.

20. Il-Qawmien tal-Haddiem Malti, op.cit. (1971) pp.152-4.

21. Mintoff's address to the MLP General Conference on 11th May,1952.Ibid. p.155.

22. In fact many sections of the population had joined the Dockyard workers in their protests against discharges. These included the Nationalist Parliamentary Opposition, the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy and various professional associations.

23. E. Dobie, op.cit. (1967) p.181. It appears that Miller, the GWU Secretary, cautioned against violence as this created the opportunity for Britain to withdraw civil liberties. His advice went unheeded. Ibid. p.183.

24. From a communication of the Rt. Hon Lennox-Boyd, Secretary for the Colonies to Hon. Dom Mintoff, Prime Minister of Malta on 28 November 1957. Cf. K. Ellul Galea, op.cit. (1973) pp.350-351. E. Dobie, op.cit. (1967) p.180.

25. Malta Legislative Assembly - Session held on 30 December 1957, quoted by K. Ellul Galea, op.cit. (1973) p.351. E. Dobie, op.cit. (1967) p.181.

26. K. Ellul Galea. op.cit. (1973) pp.392-4.

27. K. Ellul Galea, op.cit. (1973). The Daily Telegraph: "Workers riot in Malta" (28 February 1959) in its front page headlines stated: "Dockyard: Admiral Stones: Cars and Warehouses fired. Mintoff Agitation Blamed by Government". On the same day "The Daily Express" reported: "Malta Dockyard Workers on a Rampage. Mob attacks Admiral. Stones fly as crowd closes on him".

28. K. Ellul Galea, op.cit. (1973) p.390.

29. E. Dobie, op.cit. (1967) p.198.

30. The details of this controversy have been widely reported in the many pamphlets newspaper articles and other publications by both sides involved. The overall implications are discussed by J. Boissevain, op.cit. (1965).

31. J. Boissevain, op.cit. (1965) p.140.

32. E.L. Zammit, op.cit. (1970) pp.165-245.

33. Ibid.

34. E. Ellul, op.cit. (1972) p.11.

35. K. Ellul Galea, op.cit. (1973) p.398.

36. The Union leaders soon learned the importance of overtime work in the ship-repairing trade and directed workers to refuse overtime work. The Company reacted by discharging the 900 workers involved. This led to a general strike and, after the mediation of the Admiralty, to Bailey's withdrawal of the discharges. Thus the Union having established the voluntary nature of overtime work, acquired the use of an important weapon - that of issuing an **"overtime ban"** which paralyses the Dockyard without loss of the workers' basic wages and the necessity of subsidising the strikers. After this experience the Union often resorted to this effective directive to Dockyard workers. E. Ellul, op.cit. (1972) p.14.

37. E. Ellul, op.cit. (1972) p.14.

38. The consequences of such mutual "low trust relations" which management and Union manifested towards each other have been depicted by A. Fox op.cit. (1971) pp.50-54, and op.cit. (1974) pp.248-296. The suspicion with which each party regards its opposite leads to a misinterpretation of each other's "real intentions". This provokes a cumulative series of counter measures with heavier blows being inflicted at each round.

39. Messrs Swan Hunter and Wigham Richardson Ltd. Peace was achieved by rectifying through negotiations with the Union many of the anomalies which had been created during Bailey's management.

40. K. Ellul Galea, op.cit. (1973) pp.586-7. E. Ellul, op.cit. (1972) pp.18-25.

41. As the Dockyard became known after the 1968 Nationalisation Act.

42. Ibid. pp.29-30. E. Ellul op.cit. (1972) pp.29-30.

43. Lord Robens, Chairman of the Joint Steering Committee commented on 30 January 1971: "The question.....is nothing less than a national disaster which will have severe consequences for the future". K. Ellul Galea, op.cit. (1973) p.588. Between its nationalisation in 1968 and 1971 the Drydocks had been forced to borrow public funds up to £M9 (million) due to industrial unrest. Clearly the labour disputes at the Dockyard were hampering the country's development targets. E. Ellul, op.cit. (1972) pp.30-35.

44. G. Kester: Workers' Participation in Malta - Issues and Opinions (Malta, Royal University of Malta, 1974) pp.80-82. An account of more recent developments in workers' participation in the Drydocks is presented in Chapters 7 and 8 infra.

45. This entailed overcoming the deep rooted, national powerlessness. The constant tensions and occasional rifts between the **moderate** and the **militant** sections of both Union and Party reflect the uncertainties of coping with this powerlessness. Currently in Malta these roles are reversed so that the former **moderates** now urge independent union action in the traditional way whereas the former **militants** now stress full collaboration with the MLP Government.

NEW PERCEPTIONS FROM A CHARISMATIC LEADER

The roots of the reformist tradition within the MLM stretch far back to its origins in the nineteenth century. Although the Party was not formally constituted until 1921 – and the Union until a much later date – the MLP was the natural heir of the Reformist Party which had been set up by Sigismondo Savona in the nineteenth century[1]. Savona had advocated a policy of collaboration with the British Colonial administration of Malta among the local representatives in the Council and generally supported the various reforms which were proposed by the official side appointed by the British Governor. These reforms were often opposed by the Anti-Reformist Party, the predecessor of the modern Nationalist Party, who saw them as a British attempt to change Maltese traditions, steal away their own privileges and status and mitigate any anti-British feelings among the population. A confront-ation developed each time new taxes were proposed. The local British administrators were usually reluctant to throw the burden of proposed Maltese reforms on the British Treasury and often had no choice but to tax local elites. Thus the latter had much to lose through the reforms which they consequently resisted.

On the other hand, the new middle class whose prosperity depended upon the British and who had developed strong pro-British sentiments had every reason to support these proposed reforms. Quite understandably, educational reforms turned out to be the hottest issue, for the obvious long term effects on people's ideas, values and allegiances which educational policies have. But every reform which involved expenditure or threatened traditional values and customs was hotly debated and vigorously resisted. In its appeals to the electorate, the Reform Party capitalized on this fact and accused the other party of ignoring people's needs, of being concerned with cultural and symbolic issues at the expense of realistic solutions to real problems. Meanwhile, the Reform Party posed as the champion of the poor, hard-pressed population. Its appeal was strongest among the industrial workers of the Dockyard and the Cottonera area and when it evolved into the MLP, it effectively developed into a pragmatic, working-class party. Its preoccupation with the everyday needs of the population also attracted to its ranks a small number of intellectuals who were keen on promoting Maltese language and literature. Even more than religion, the language had been a main characteristic which identified the Maltese people from its colonial rulers. Many writings of these intellectuals were inspired by the nationalistic movements which dominated Europe during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. An early obscure Maltese writer, Mikiel Anton Vassalli (1764-1829) has been recently acknowledged as the forerunner of the MLM.[2] This man is credited with having been among the first to address the Maltese people as a nation and consequently, as fully deserving the rights and international status which merited other nations. He insisted with the Knights on the right to establish a Maltese 'auberge' and to make the Maltese eligible to joint the Order as Knights. He also recommended peaceful negotiations between the Order and Moslem States so that trade and commerce would

flourish to Malta's benefit. It seems that his political ideas and activities caused him much personal hardship. His activities against the Order brought him life imprisonment. Later he also fell out of favour with the French and subsequently clashed with the Maltese Church for translating a Protestant English version of the Bible into Maltese – thus aiding some sporadic attempts to anglicize Malta[3]

Another intellectual precursor of the MLM was Manwel Dimech (1860-1921) whose teachings, writings and political activities brought on him also the condemnation of Malta's civil and ecclesiastical rulers[4] Many of his ideas, including the setting up of an independent Maltese republic, as well as his ideas on religious freedom, were officially incorporated into the MLM ideology and programmes half a century later. He is usually considered as the father of radicalism within the MLM. Dimech fought vigorously for social reforms including a better distribution of wealth, a fair system of taxation, social benefits, workers' education, shorter working hours and equal pay for women. He was a champion of Maltese culture, language, customs and history. Nowadays, many of his ideas have become universally acceptable, but in his time, they earned him the condemnation of the dominant local and colonial elites. His ideas were seen as a threat to their traditional status and power:

> 'He saw, at a time when Malta was such an important military base, that the British Imperial Government would never preju-dice Britain's interests by granting too much local autonomy. The Church, he thought, was also interested in maintaining the 'status quo', and so, hand in hand with the Imperial Govern-ment, it fostered among the people interest and rivalry in such harmless things as festas'[5]

The excommunication, various other forms of opposition and finally exile, to which Dimech was subjected on account of his activities, practically suppressed an association which he had founded and dispersed most of its members. Yet some of his followers and their successors continued to form a small but influential minority of extremists within the MLM. Thus his ideas are kept alive.

Dimech clearly had a charismatic relationship with his followers. [6] Some of them prominently display his pictures in their homes, surrounded by flowers, up to this day. His sayings are deeply implanted in their minds and his relics treasured with a religious devotion. A traditional hero-worship can be clearly detected within the MLM and has been extended to a series of its leaders – including Savona, Strickland, Miller and Boffa. Yet Dimech's magnetic personality and the commit-ment which he elicited from his followers were only surpassed in scale by Dom Mintoff at a much later point in time and in very different circumstances. Though there is within the MLM an institutionalized tendency for a charismatic paternalist role as leader, the extent to which this function is developed seems to depend upon the personal qualities and strategies pursued by the individual leader as well as the social circumstances of the time. Among the values and perceptions which Dimech implanted among his followers there were some which

were later developed by Mintoff. Apart from his ideas on Maltese nationalism, social equality and the improvement of the ordinary workers' lot, these included the idea of mobilizing the under-privileged into a political force.

When the MLP was formally established in 1921, keeping in mind the fate of Dimech and his followers, its founders declared expressly their intentions to abide by the social teachings of the Church.[7] The Party also followed a policy of collaboration with the British colonial administration in exchange for moderate reform legislation. It even formed a "compact" with the Constitutional Party under Lord Strickland who staunchly defended British Imperial policies against the Maltese Nationalists. And when Strickland quarrelled with the Church, the MLP shared its condemnation. Mintoff took over the leadership of the Party in a typically aggressive manner from the former Prime Minister Sir Paul Boffa. In so doing, he also managed to split the party as well as return it back to power under a new radical image after a lapse of six years – in 1955.[8] From then on he became the main source of its ideological inspiration. His leadership is still unquestioned because through his strong personality, intelligence, cunning and personal acclaim, he completely dominates all sections of the party down to its rank and file.[9] One of the main aims of the second part of this study is to examine how far he is also succeeding in implanting 'new' social perceptions among the people at large.

Mintoff never missed any opportunity of laying blames on the clergy for his Party's electoral defeats both after the split with Boffa in the early 'fifties and even more so during the politico-religious dispute of the 'sixties. Prior to 1971, he claimed that were it not for the priests' condemnation in the confessional, and later by their official imposition of mortal sin, he would have always achieved clear political victories.

> "This, he knew, would keep alive in the minds of workers
> the suspicion and dislike of the clergy aroused during the
> years 1927-1933, and as a result their allegiance to the
> MLP would be strengthened and the influence of the clergy
> weakened ".[10]

A shrewd tactician, Mintoff has constantly proved himself to be a master in the art of political opportunism – often ready to compromise but never losing sight of long-term objectives. These are constantly being pursued. His strategy both in his "fight for independence" from Britain and in his dealings with the Church and other local institutions has been the following:

> "The Malta Labour Party.....have the duty to employ the
> tactics offered by the opportunities of the moment ".[11]

Were it not so, Mintoff would never have managed to realize what he did due to the hostile reaction which many unpopular decisions evoked from one section or another of the population.

Apart from depriving the clergy of much of their former power and status, his main achievements since regaining office in 1971 are impressive by any standard. These include: the successful revision of the 1964 Defence and Financial Agreement with Britain, the Constitutional Amendments, the withdrawal of British Forces from Malta – and the consequent termination of the Island's military role, the achievement of economy viability for the Drydocks, the nationalization of banking and broadcasting services, the "reforms" of higher education, the total control exercised over wage increases, Union demands and industrial action. Each of these issues was hotly debated and could have brought about his downfall. Yet he has managed to overcome all obstacles through a mixture of political manouvres and regular appeals directly to his party supporters. The presence of a well-disciplined party and union behind him, through thick and thin, has proved to be an invaluable asset. He has achieved this supremacy through the policies followed after the Boffa split and especially as a by-product of the politico-religious dispute of the 'sixties. It was then, that many moderates or persons having mixed allegiances were forced out of the Party. As he later put it "we have gone through a baptism of fire". [12]

Undoubtedly Mintoff is regarded by his followers as a charismatic leader. He often spells out ideas, policies and goals which are alien to them and yet, hardly anyone dares to question him. Experience has shown his followers that he is usually far ahead of them. In his addresses he makes an effort always to "speak their language" by presenting arguments which draw on their familiar frames of reference. Thus he makes free use of religious symbols, biblical imagery and Maltese traditions, as persuasive tools. On their own parts, his followers regard him as a man "sent to us from God".[13] The way his supporters greet him and speak about him is highly reminiscent of the traditional ways in which the Maltese speak of their village patron saint: an object of pride and sacred veneration.

Mintoff resorts to many techniques to get what he wants ranging from fear to example, from admonition to persuasion. Yet he ultimately maintains his power through his direct links and appeals to the Party rank and file and simultaneously keeping a certain distance from his immediate aides and subordinates. He conveys the impression of having a clear vision of what he would like Maltese society to be:[14]

"The Malta Labour Party want independence in all earnestness not only because a nation bereft of the right to choose its own destiny is not worthy of its name, but because in the long run independence offers the means that would enable this nation to continue to exist". [15]

Since taking office he has also constantly attempted to establish a new social basis of authority relations which would unify Maltese society under his own leadership. While his ideological appeal has remained unequivocally aimed at the working-class, he has progressed from an emphasis on class and industrial conflict to equality and workers' participation. In practice, however, he does not allow ideology to impede economic progress.[16] In fact, he regards the achievement of

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economic independence as a first priority which supersedes all others.[17] He insists on the need for self-restraint now in anticipation of future rewards. 'Abundant fruits' are to be reaped by future generations.

The influence on men's ideas and perceptions which Mintoff has promoted throughout his long public career cover a very wide field indeed. His speeches at political mass meetings often exceed one hour. These meetings, usually well attended, provide an opportunity for the usual manifestations of solidarity from the crowd in a festive atmosphere. But after Mintoff's appearance, the audience soon settles down to a class-room atmosphere and he assumes a teacher's role – instructing and admonishing his audience as much as rallying their enthusiastic support. Maltese audiences have been socialized for many generations to hearing long sermons in church. But in this case, one can also easily recognise on the faces the personal admiration, high esteem and filial devotion towards their charismatic leader. The vast majority of the audience attending such meetings clearly belongs to the lowest social strata – almost entirely composed of manual workers and their families. The other MLP supporters are more likely to read Mintoff's words in the papers or hear him on television, but do not generally attend public meetings. Mintoff also "addresses the Nation" once or twice a year on radio and television and he speaks at a number of seminars and conferences organized by the Union and Party. All his statements and broadcasts are followed closely by most Maltese. His actions, words, plans and even undisclosed intentions are a favourite topic of discussion and speculation. Analyzing his character and personality has almost become a national pastime.

In the remaining part of this chapter, the social perceptions of work, power and class structure which Mintoff has publicly promulgated, will be reviewed. Special attention will be devoted to his recent pronouncements when his intentions have become more and more explicit.

(a) WORK

Since Mintoff's re-election in 1971, the emphasis on the supremacy of work over all other activities has become one of his constant themes. In contrast to his predecessors in office who had a more relaxed attitude, he himself offers a living example of hard work and drives civil servants to work harder and harder. This emphasis has been accompanied by attempts to raise the social esteem of humble, manual work. Malta's new Constitution, passed by Parliament in 1974, proclaims the country to be 'a republic based on work".[18] This statement, the opening words of the Constitution, was intended to dispel any idea that the country depended upon 'property ownership". [19] But while obviously singling out manual work as the main object of his attention, Mintoff's conception of work incorporates all 'workers":

"We are a Union and a Party who are there for those who work. A Union of all workers: some with their hands, others with their minds, with the pen, some play musical instruments, while others sing – all work".[20]

Throughout the 1971 electoral campaign, Mintoff had insisted that "Malta was sick" and that only he could administer the right medicine:

"Our Party was the only one which had democratically stated before the election that we won't give away any sweets to the people but work and seriousness"[21]

Work is the only way to obtain good results:

"There is only one way by which poverty can be reduced and the country can prosper. This is achieved by higher productivity on the part of each one of us. In order to succeed we need more **bzulija**, more discipline and more **ghaqal**"[22]

Financial and other forms of incentives are also offered in order to encourage people to work harder:

"Who works hardest receives most in return. The lazy ones get nothing"[23]

The main value of hard work which Mintoff has promoted is precisely that of "serving one's country". He has often insisted that:

"If the Maltese work without grumbling, Malta would be healed of its disease"[24]

He has expressed the hope that:

"A new generation is growing up with this doctrine of serving the nation and not with the previous doctrine 'Blessed are the lazy ones'....Malta has learnt that in order to survive it has to work..... "[25]

This is the new motive for which disciplined work efforts must constantly be devoted. From now on, "every minute must be worked"[26] Explaining why the unemployed workers, who were recruited into special 'work corps', were placed under military discipline he stated:

"They will be disciplined because otherwise there can be no progress"[27]

As a result of the recent reforms in higher education, when even Sixth Form students have become 'student-workers', he has extended the experience of work to the younger generation. Thus the emergence of a 'fully independent' Malta is depicted as:

"the only European nation built by the working class – whereas all others were founded by the bourgeoisie"[28]

(b) POWER

If there is one idea that Mintoff has promoted both by word and deed, it is precisely that the Maltese people "have to fight" in order to

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achieve what is theirs "by right". He often maintained that:

"Since the very first days of Britain's occupation, over 150
years ago, the British Government turned the island
into a fortress and the life of the islanders was manipu-
lated and channelled to serve this aim".

This total dependence had removed the ability of the Maltese to
"rebel seriously" and fight for their rights.[29] He passionately wished
to see the British leave for, in his opinion, they had:

"destroyed Malta, polluted her, they've done the worst
thing they could do to her, for they've removed its back-
bone and every aspiration to have a soul and be like
other nations".[30]

As already indicated, since being returned to power in 1971, he
had pursued a foreign policy which affirms Malta's independent, national
status. As he explained at the time:

"When Labour came to power six months ago, the
master and slave relationship came to an end. We shed
our inferiority complex and we ceased to be **the locals**
in the eyes of Britain. We are a people with as much
dignity and as much self-respect as all other peoples
and we intend to keep it that way".[31]

He erased the former Mutual Defence Treaty with Britain because
he claimed that:

"our identity was destroyed through total exploitation....
Even our religion had become neo-colonialist".[32]

After the conclusion of the 1971 Treaty which enabled British
servicemen to remain in Malta for seven years at a much higher annual
rent, the British forces were finally withdrawn. Great celebration
were organized marking the event, in March 1979. Meanwhile, Mintoff
has tried hard to establish a new international non-aligned role for
Malta. Its neutrality and economic well-being would be guaranteed by
European and Arab States. Malta would thus serve as a 'bridge'
between the two continents and the Mediterranean turned into a **lake
of peace.** This ultimate goal is the same one which he had pursued
twenty years previously through the proposal of integration with Britain
– that of a "fraternal association on the basis of equality", as a
means of securing:

"the right of the Maltese people to a dignified status
of full citizenship and economic betterment".[33]

In the domestic sphere, Mintoff has actively promoted since 1971
a policy of workers' participation in industrial relations which replaces
the former one of confrontation between Union and Management. It
has been suggested that Mintoff sees his own public role as the personal

embodiment of the Maltese workers, as their chief spokesman as well as their leader.[34] Through the MLP government and the G.W.U., the Maltese workers are thus said to be in full control of the country. Mintoff's decisions are their own because they are taken in their ultimate interests. As he explains:

"We believe that if the worker wants to secure his own
rights, he must try to be constantly in control, otherwise
he won't get anything". [35]

For this reason:

"the worker must learn to take part in decision-making
as well as to shoulder responsibility for his actions.....
otherwise he never learns. Take a young child, if he
falls from a chair and feels no pain, he ends up falling
from a roof, gets killed and is none the wiser". [36]

Yet, it will be argued later on in this study that among the main motives behind his industrial relations policy - at least in the short run - are the economic benefits resulting from the avoidance of damaging industrial conflicts. The achievement of national, economic self-sufficiency through the workers' self-sacrifice and higher productivity takes priority over other goals. For this reason, he has prevented any real challenge to his industrial policies to emerge from any quarter. He has even bound the GWU into a formal marriage with the MLP through which the Union has become merged with the Party, binding the membership to national budgetary policies decided after joint consultation at the top. Meanwhile the Government ensures that, through social legislation and progressive taxation, no one suffers any undue hardships. For if:

"undue privilege and social injustice persist, development will
only accentuate inequalities and social unrest will eventually
jeopardise all economic gains". [37]

Mintoff's expressed attitudes towards other power centres within Maltese society are equally determined. While acknowledging their rights to exist and to practise their roles within certain prescribed limits, he loses no opportunity to denounce them in public. In this way he "maintains a safe distance" from any potential challenge to the MLM. Yet, he has also resisted attempts from certain radicals within the MLM to suppress their opponents. In spite of frequent verbal onslaughts on the Courts and the legal profession, government direct intereference has been minimal; and the Church has continued, on the whole, performing its activities unmolested though no opportunity is lost by him to expose its faults, attack it and belittle its social contribution.[38] More than a simple desire on his part to wage a war of attrition for past misdeeds,[39] these are his continuing attempts to promote new social bases of authority relations by simultaneously attacking the existing power centres and exposing them to public scrutiny or even ridicule.

(c) THE CLASS STRUCTURE

As a declared socialist, one of Mintoff's main long term objectives is that of eradicating 'class' differences. With this aim in mind he has pursued a deliberate policy of gradually narrowing income differentials. The top salaries of company executives were lowered when their companies were nationalised so as to conform with Government salary scales. A policy of granting annual cost of living increases and bonues by a flat-rate rather than by a percentage rate is followed. These measures have had the effect of narrowing wage differentials "from fifteen times to only five times" as much as the lowest income.[40] A national minimum wage and a national pension scheme have been established and various other forms of social assistance provided. Mintoff and other MLP spokesmen constantly make comparisons between the present conditions of Maltese workers and how they used to be in the past:

> "When some beggar used to go knocking on the door of a
> rich lady, she simply told him 'God help you!'" [41]

Mintoff constantly reassures his followers that 'Government is determined to create an egalitarian society".[42] Nevertheless, this does not mean the complete levelling of incomes but rather "the removal of privileges".[43] It means particularly equal opportunities for all:

> "We do not say that (the rich and the workers) will become
> alike – but we shall give the same opportunities to everyone".[44]

Yet there is one aspect of class differences which Mintoff is especially determined to eradicate, namely, that of snobbishness and similar forms of social exclusiveness which are still noticeable in Malta. On these matters he uses very strong language as they seem to carry for him an added emotional significance. In fact, these aspects seem to lie at the root of his simple division of Maltese society into the rich and the workers:

> "The first President of the Maltese Republic comes from
> Laqxija and the first Prime Minister from Bastjun".[45]

This demonstrates that:

> "If there is one thing which must stop once and for all,
> it is this – that when a worker passes by a rich man,
> this one says 'yuq – what a smell!'".[46]

Mintoff has systematically tried to raise the social standing of manual workers and to publicly deride the status-conscious rich. In this crusade, he is merely expressing a widespread opinion among Maltese workers as will be shown subsequently in this study. As he explains:

> "The Labour Government has always stated that those who
> work with their hands are esteemed as much as those

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who work with the pen ". [47]

In a similar vein he has spoken against status distinctions between workers pertaining to different trades and levels of skill. Admonishing Drydocks workers against restrictive practices, he stated:

"What kind of spoiling is it – that when a fitter drops some oil at work he needs a labourer to wipe it up? Nobody must shy away from using a broom....A fitter must also do the work of a labourer when he has no other work to do. Even I, a Prime Minister, have come here to do your Union's work.....and if need be I'll come to sweep with you as well ". [48]

One of the stated aims behind the debatable reforms in higher education is that:

"When the workers' children go to University they do not detach themselves from their former background – but remain workers ". [49]

Another aim of these reforms – along with the promotion of trade schools – is to restrain people's ambitions for professional and clerical status. These have reached unrealistic proportions in recent years and threatened to disrupt the social structure. The idea is to limit University entrance to a pre-set level and to allocate the students' time equally between work and study periods, thus giving everyone a direct experience of manual work. This is part of Mintoff's attempt to reinstate a new social basis of authority relations and to replace the old unrealistic normative standards. He explains that:

"If one is competent to become a carpenter, one should not be forced to become a lawyer....But in order to do so there must not be a wide disparity between a carpenter and a lawyer ". [50]

But in spite of Mintoff's attack on class and status differences, he is careful to distinguish these reforms from a radical overthrow of the existing social order. He constantly points out that it is in the workers' interest to bring about such reforms. For he argues: "There is no necessary law of progress ". [51]

In short, Mintoff's stated social ideal rather than the complete removal of the class structure, envisages "a truly open society " where:

"whoever works hardest receives the most, who is lazy receives nothing ". [52]

The social objective envisaged in the Development Plan was that of society as:

"a single whole and all parts..closely related to others.... The ultimate objective of development must be to bring about a sustained improvement in the well-being of all ". [53]

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One result of socialist efforts has been that of:

"bridging the gaps that existed between the various social
groups...........a deep sense of social cohesion has been
instilled in Maltese society".[54]

The Development Plan reiterates Mintoff's ideal in several references
to the "fair distribution of available national resources", the "elimina-
tion of undue privileges" and the "recognition of equal opportunities"
for all individuals. The message is that the policies of reform and
progress are ultimately assessed along these lines. Once these goals
are achieved, the persistence of class inequalities does not appear as
problematic any more. In fact, there is even some evidence that Mintoff
even has a secret admiration for the abilities, industriousness and
initiatives of "serious capitalists".[55]

As long as they do not evade taxes they too have an important
contribution to make in his vision of a socialist society. Meanwhile it
is essential for these, as it is for all sections of Maltese society, to
submit themselves to "the people's will" expressed through its leader.
Everyone must pull his weight for the common cause:

"When Moses escorted his people from the Egyptian bondage
for forty years in the desert, everyone knows how bitter
was the price the people had to pay to achieve their free-
dom".[56]

NOTES

1. As argued by H. Frendo, op.cit. (1979). Cf. also Chapter 1, pp.29-30 supra.

2. Mintoff's address to Annual General Conference of Young Socialist Union,
L-Orizzont, 17.3.79. Cf. also Balta-1-Bajda Mass Meeting, L-Orizzont, 28.4.79

3. M.A. Vassalli's life is still shrouded in mystery as a study of his political
career has not yet been made. A sketch of his life can be found in R. Mifsud Bonnici:
Dizzjunarju Biblijotekarju Nazzjonali (Malta, Department of Information, 1960)
pp.507-8. See also A. Cremona: Vassalli u Zmienijietu (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin,
1975), A. Vella: Storja ta' Malta (Malta, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1979) Vol.II, pp.354-
359.

4. E. Dobie, op.cit. p.81: "a tragic figure....literally obsessed with a desire
to help people of the lowest class raise themselves....soon he became completely
reckless, attacking the existing order and flaying without mercy the British Govern-
ment, the Church and religion. As a result he did more harm than good to a budding
Maltese workers' organization".

5. P. Xuereb: "A Maltese Revolutionary", Sunday Times of Malta, 2.7.72, p.11

6. The notion of 'charisma' is here used in the Weberian sense which, as Donald
McRae has recently stated: "is not casual but a precise and technical extension....

of a meaning where no precise term had previously existed". The Times (London) 4.12.75.

7. "There was, in fact, a number of priests on its committees and subsequently Mgr. M. Gonzi, the former Archbishop of Malta, was its elected representative on the Senate".

8. D. Mintoff: Malta's Struggle for Survival (Malta Labour Party Publication, 1949) p.52.

9. Mintoff's success as leader of the MLP is reflected in his successes at the polls. Ever since 1945 when he started contesting the elections in the first and second electoral divisions, he has achieved a regular increase in the number of votes cast in his name. In 1950 he obtained the highest number of votes ever achieved on the first ballot. He broke his own record in 1971, again in 1976 and again in 1981. In other elections (1947, 1951, 1953, 1955 and 1962) he achieved the highest numbers of votes cast in these elections. L-Orizzont 23.9.76.

10. E. Dobie, op.cit., p.154.

11. D. Mintoff: Priests and Politics in Malta (Malta Labour Party Publication, 1961).

12. Address to Annual General Conference of Young Socialist Union, L-Orizzont, 8.3.76. J. Boissevain, op.cit. (1966) has noted that during the politico-religious conflict the number of persons with mixed allegiances was reduced to a minimum. The majority were forced to take sides.

13. As stated by the GWU President in a public meeting in Blata-l-Bajda on 27 April 1979. Cf. Il-Qanzha, May 1979, p.6

14. See for instance: D. Mintoff: "Isolation is no answer" in The Times (London) 26.10.68 p.11 "The day is drawing nearer when Malta will be set free to embark on a new social and economic life which will change this island into a haven of peace" See also D. Mintoff: "A New Plan for Malta" in: Malta Demands Independence (Malta, Labour Party Publication, 1959) pp.99-102.

15. D. Mintoff: Priests and Politics in Malta (Malta Labour Party Publication, 1961).

16. Minister Sant, the former Secretary of the GWU Metal Workers' Section which represents the Drydocks' Workers has publicly admitted in a TV debate transmitted on 7 February 1976, that the Drydocks seven month long strike, prior to the 1971 election, had contributed to the subsequent MLP victory at the polls. He stated: "I am proud of the help I gave the workers in their fight for higher wages. Then workers had to fight for their rights, unlike today. This action has contributed to put the Government of the time out of office and to put in the workers' government".

17. For this reason he has labelled the "independence" from Britain obtained by the Nationalists in 1964 as "a farce" - compared to the attainment of full independence in 1979 - with the final departure of British Servicemen.

18. Constitution of the Republic of Malta (Malta, Department of Information, 1974) I (1)

19. Valletta Mass Meeting, L-Orizzont, 30.4.74

20. Ibid.

21. Mintoff addressing the Annual Conference of Socialist Youths, Il-Hajja, 5.2.73

22. "Opening Address to First Session of the Fourth Parliament" (Valletta, House of Representatives, 24.11.76) p.23.

23. It-Torca, 31.12.72

24. Valletta Mass Meeting, Il-Hajja, 1.6.72.

25. MLP Annual General Conference, Il-Hajja, 14.5.73.

26. Valletta Mass Meeting, L-Orizzont, 30.4.74.

27. MLP Annual General Conference, Il-Hajja, 14.5.73

28. Blata-1-Bajda Mass Meeting, L-Orizzont, 28.4.79.

29. Malta Demands Independence (Malta Labour Party Publication, 1959).

30. Parliamentary answer, Il-Hajja, 30.12.71. See also: D. Mintoff, How Britain Rules Malta (1960).

31. Parliamentary answer, Malta News. 30.12.71

32. Speech delivered in The University of Athens, L-Orizzont, 9.4.76.

33. Malta Demands Independence (Malta Labour Party Publication, 1959).

34. Cf. P. Serracino Inglott: "The 'M' System" in Illum (March 1976) where he compares Mintoff's socialism with that of Mao and Gaddafi.

35. Valletta Mass Meeting, L-Orizzont, 30.4.74

36. Address to MLP Extraordinary General Conference following the 1976 General Elections.

37. Development Plan for Malta 1973-80 (Office of the Prime Minister, 1974) p.50.

38. Its status and duties, as the official religion of Malta, and religious instruction in all State schools, are guaranteed in the new Republican Constitution. Cf. 2 (1), (2) and (3)

39. E.A. Mallia, Mintoff's War of Attrition (Times Higher Educational Supplement, 1978).

40.   Such a claim, often made by MLP spokesmen has recently been verified by J. Farrugia: Occupational Categories and Wages In Malta. B.A. Dissertation (Malta, Old University, June 1979).

41.   Valletta Mass Meeting, L-Orizzont, 30.4.74

42.   Address to MLP Annual General Conference at Freedom Hall, Marsa, L-Orizzont, 22.7.74.

43.   End of Year Address to the Nation. Delivered on Television and Radio Malta on 31 December 1975.

44.   Address to MLP Annual General Conference,L-Orizzont, 22.7.74.

45.   A reference to two working class areas in Birkirkara and Cospicua, where Sir Anthony Mamo, the first Malta President and Mintoff himself, were born. Birkirkara Mass Meeting, L-Orizzont, 28.12.75.

46.   Valletta Mass Meeting, L-Orizzont, 26.4.76.

47.   Cospicua Meeting, Il-Hajja, 18.7.74.

48.   Cospicua Meeting for Drydocks Workers, Il-Hajja, 16.3.73

49.   Address to Annual General Conference of the Young Socialist Union, L-Orizzont, 17.3.79. See Parliamentary Debate. Reported in L-Orizzont, 28.6.78.

50.   Parliamentary Debates. Reported in Il-Hajja, 24.7.74 and 28.6.78.

51.   Parliamentary Debate. Reported in Il-Hajja, 22.2.78.

52.   Valletta Mass Meeting, Il-Hajja, 1.6.72.

53.   Development Plan for Malta 1973-1980, p.50. In a parliamentary reference to the new Constitution which was being contemplated, Mintoff depicted the MLP as a "party of evolution and not of a revolution". L-Orizzont, 18.1.74.

54.   Supplement to 1973-1980 Development Plan   (Office of the Prime Minister, November 1977) p.4.

55.   Mintoff has often distinguished between "serious industrialists" and the others represented in the Chamber of Commerce. Cf. MLP Annual General Conference, It-Torca, 16.4.78

56.   1976 End of Year Message broadcast on Television and Radio Malta.

PERCEPTIONS OF WORK

Introduction

The overriding importance of work in people's lives is quite evident. So is the need for focussing on it in any study of social perceptions. Work influences not only the life-styles which people lead but also many of their ideas, values and norms. For these reasons, sociologists have developed various theories about work including its social orientations and the relations between men's experiences of work roles and their social perceptions. Among the main aspects of work experiences there are self-employment or employment under the direct dependence of others, manual or non-manual kinds of work, levels of skill or expertise, superordinate or subordinate work roles and finally work carried out in large, complex organizations or that undertaken in small concerns. In particular, one's location in an industrial organization is said to offer good indication of work behaviour, the social environment of work and, arguably, even one's ideas, values and norms.

It is now established in sociological studies that there is an inter-action between work situation and social consciousness. One of the basic premises of Marxism is that work situation affects social conscious-ness. However, the emergence of social consciousness may be hampered by "uneven development". In a country there may be development in some spheres, even to a level attained by the more industrialized countries, while other spheres remain lagging behind.

Weber was equally aware of the importance of work in generating certain subjective attitudes though his central concern was with the ways through which legitimation in structured situations is maintained. Marx's and Weber's leads are followed by those who study job satisfac-tion in relation to the socio-technical environment of work in industry or who associate aspects of the work situation with the emergence or non-emergence of working-class consciousness.

Several studies have concentrated upon the impact of the work situation on man's perceptions. By work situation they mean the whole socio-technical environment. Kohn and Schooler have discovered that:

"the substantive complexity of work directly affects adult personality",

and that there is a strong, reciprocal relationship between

"occupational conditions and psychological functioning".[1]

All this may even permeate the worker's leisure, as Fox observes:

"Work is a major formative experience which can either promote or limit man's growth in ways which affect the whole man and which therefore shape his life out-

side the job as well as within ".[2]

Many variables influence job attachment or detachment. Beynon and Blackburn note that even the:

"Structure of work groups, together with the structure of managements, is seen to vary with the technological requirements of the productive process ".[3]

Likewise, Blauner has found that the type of industrial setting also influences which aspect of alienation predominates, whether that of powerlessness, meaninglessness, isolation or self-estrangement.[4] This is one possible explanation why workers express such high levels of job satisfaction, as reported in various studies including the present one.[5]

Work perceptions may also be influenced by subjective sources that do not arise from the objective work situation, such as people's definitions of their experience and subsequent performance at work. Societal values may in turn facilitate this process, as demonstrated in Weber's classical study on capitalism. However, it is very difficult to isolate the cultural factors that influence these societal values. Moreover, contrary influences may exist within a single society, as Fox notes:

"Within contemporary industrial societies can be detected traces of conflicting meanings of work simultaneously coexisting ".[6]

These may include both extrinsic and intrinsic expectations. Through the widely used 'action approach' sociologists study the impact of the individual's definitions upon work expectations and behaviour. High aspirations may be latent or suppressed while levels of expressed satisfaction may merely reflect the mechanism of cognitive dissonance.

Much of the type of consciousness prevalent among the workers has its origins in the working-class sub-culture within which they are socialized. This is sometimes known to incorporate within it a 'dual consciousness'. At a certain level, there is a subordinate value system which upholds a deferential, "pragmatic acceptance"[7] of the dominant class position and of their own relative powerlessness. At another level, there may be a partial rejection of that position. Thus in Malta, the traditional manifestations of compliance, manipulation and localism may coexist among the working class. Formal acceptance is often accompanied by informal rejection. The workers' dependence upon power is tempered by a poorly integrated institutional and normative setting which enables workers to develop their own collective retreats.

The mere fact of dependence can, in particular instances, be so overpowering as to extinguish any trace of "low priority aspirations" for intrinsic job satisfaction.[8] The pre-occupation with security, so characteristic of Maltese workers, is largely determined by labour market factors. Thus follows an attitude of job dependence.

As the experience of work 'affects the whole man' its impact

extends to man's perception of the total social world including class identity. This follows both from occupational status ranking and from particular role demands. One might expect closely supervised men to value conformity for themselves and for their children and to see the world in ways "that make conformity seem necessary and appropriate".[9] Given time, these ideas and values become incorporated into the working-class community and its own distinctive sub-culture.[10]

Work also has an influence on community participation as demonstrated by Wilensky.[11] He found out that those with "orderly careers" and therefore with favourable work experiences participated more than other workers in community activities. But these represented only a minority of his sample. The general trend was towards:

"careers which do not necessitate wide community
participation and their retreat from work will be
accompanied by a withdrawal from the larger
community life".[12]

The resultant picture drawn by Wilensky of "alienated" and "anomic" workers is in sharp contrast to the one depicted by Dubin where:

"the workers' refusal to regard work as a 'central life
interest' (is regarded) as a justification of that
situation".[13]

The action approach provides 'the other side of the coin'.[14] An adequate consideration of the implications of the work **experience** suggests that there is a two-way, dialectical process in operation. New experiences may put to the test old perceptions and these may change accordingly. Furthermore, prior orientations to work influence job selection, expectations and subsequent performance. Social orientations are themselves limited by class perspectives. Inkeles has shown, for instance that while men:

"of a higher class position judge jobs by intrinsic qualities
men of lower class position, more by extrinsic character-
istics".[15]

High, secure wages may cause 'affluent workers' to express satisfaction with their work. Yet this does not constitute their "central life interest".[16] In times of full employment, however, they are predisposed by their particular backgrounds to prefer certain jobs rather than others. Yet an adequate assessment of the various sources of work orientations and of their impact on behaviour is a complicated task and in this respect some existing studies on work orientations are disappointing.[17] As Mann points out:

"differential orientations of a very general kind do seem
to affect worker behaviour - the problem is to establish
the relative importance of those compared with other
factors".[18]

The specification of sources of workers' perceptions of their situation necessitates an exploration of their reference groups and normative constraints.[19] These include the total social background and the whole series of latent roles that workers bring to their work.[20] Such factors interact with the actual experience of work, which itself moulds expectations – this is one of the main points emerging from this study. And expectations are limited by the options available within the local labour market, though through their relations with fellow workers within the work group and through Union action, the workers can exercise some control over both work and market situations.

Any rigid separation between work and non-work which is superimposed is not likely to be found in actual situations. One would normally expect work experiences and cultural influences to reinforce each other, but one cannot **a priori** assume this to be the case. As Fox cautions, though the workers' sub-culture is a:

> "produce distilled from generations of experience.....the sub-culture may be sufficiently strong in some situations to take an autonomous life of its own which make it...... indepedent of the nature of job design".[21]

On the basis of these studies it is possible to draw some general conclusions which are pertinent to the analysis of the empirical evidence presented in this chapter. Men's work perceptions are expressed in the working-class sub-culture. This is the product of the overall experiences in the overlapping work and non-work environments. Particularly important are the experiences of control or dependence and these, in turn, depend on the perceived opportunities available within the labour market. Expressions of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction and the reported aspirations for extrinsic or intrinsic values are to be interpreted accordingly. In this chapter, Maltese workers' values and work satisfaction were related to their experiences and to the traditional sub-cultural environment which embodies many generations of learned responses. In particular, some important differences emerged between the perceptions of manual and non-manual workers. However, both showed a great preoccupation with job security which reflects past experience of chronic unemployment. This produced a sense of alienation or powerlessness which superseded any ambition for 'work as it might be'.[22] Yet the other aspects are not to be ignored, particularly in the case of Drydocks workers. Various extrinsic and intrinsic work rewards are discussed – the latter in terms of both immediate and ultimate meanings. To some extent these reflect the influences of the new perceptions which are systematically propagated by the MLM. Among these one should particularly note the notion of national progress, that may provide a source of intrinsic satisfaction for unskilled workers performing repetitive, humble and disagreeable tasks, if they:

> "are conscious of contributing to some transcendental cause with which they feel able to identify".[23]

This is not the only case of a value spread by the MLM, as will be seen from this chapter. While variations between the perceptions of

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manual and non-manual workers reflect the impact of the **traditional** socio-technical environment or total work situation on men's perceptions, the general trend of these perceptions also reflects the changes in the environment resulting from the planned operations of the social movement to which they belong. These rarely emerge from the grass-roots – in fact, in the past they were imported into Malta from abroad. Once introduced, however, many new customs and ideas are rapidly assimilated and spread to the remotest parts of the island, producing an impression of a modern, flexible society characterized by a remarkable uniformity in artistic tastes, living standards and social aspirations.[24]

The Employment Situation

The Maltese employment situation has for generations been subjected to severe fluctuations. The successive periods of economic booms and depressions which have characterized recent Maltese history[25] were unpredictable and uncontrollable, being dictated as they were by the changing needs of an imperial strategy with worldwide commitments. Throughout the nineteenth and most of the twentieth century, the Maltese economy – particularly from its employment aspects – became heavily dependent upon the strategic value which was placed periodically upon the Island by the colonial policy makers. Naturally, the needs of the Maltese were hardly taken into account.

Most Maltese workers thus came to accept periodic unemployment as an inevitable, though unpalatable, part of their lifetime. This was found to have its repercussions on the type of social orientations towards work which emerged in Malta. Unemployment generates insecurity and fatalism about one's future.[26] This may be expressed in traditional proverbs and popular sayings like "Expect the worst so that you won't get disappointed" (**Ahseb il-hazin biex it-tajjeb ma jonqosx**). Likewise, the most traditional virtues among Maltese workers are **ghaqal** (combining a quiet cautious submissiveness with sensibility, self-restraint and thrift) and **bzulija** (a natural inclination for working hard). As a practical rule, Maltese workers when young are taught to follow the working example of the ant, which is a common insect in Malta and which is observed busily hoarding its food throughout the endless summer months in preparation for the coming winter.[27]

The orientation to work held by individuals within a particular social institution usually stems from various sources. It may not merely reflect actual experiences but also commonly held ideas and values within a sub-culture. Nevertheless, the experience of work provides a necessary though not completely sufficient an explanation of men's orientations towards work. And as such, it deserves attention in its own right. The aim of the remaining parts of this chapter are:

(a) to give a descriptive account of the Maltese perceptions and orientations in relation to work, as evidenced in the two surveys.

(b) To relate these perceptions to two principal sources – namely to the individuals' general work experiences –

and to the traditional responses prevalent within the
Maltese workers' sub-culture – in the light of socio-
logical theory and other empirical evidence from abroad.

(c) To compare the results of the two surveys and examine to
what extent the new perceptions and ideologies propagated
by the MLM have influenced – as should be expected –
the views of the Drydocks shop-stewards.

Work Experience, Job Recruitment and Attachment

Job recruitment is normally dictated by the exigencies of one's
position in the labour market. The reasons why a person "selects" a
particular job may, of course, be very different from those for which
he stays in it or moves to another. Work orientation, therefore, is
the result of the cumulative impact of changing circumstances, personal
experiences, decisions and adjustments which are made throughout a
career?[28] Such commonly shared experiences then become part of the
working class sub-culture. Hence individual work experiences provide
a useful starting point for analyzing work, power and class perceptions.
The current occupational experience of respondents in the workers'
sub-sample are as follows: [29]

TABLE 5.1

Non–Manual (32%)	Professional	10.4%
	Clerical, Supervisory and Businessmen	21.6%
Manual (68%)	Skilled	20.0%
	Other tradesmen[30]	8.8%
	Unskilled	28.8%
	Farmers and Fishermen	5.6%
	Unemployed	4.8%

(N = 125)

Those respondents who are under 40 years of age tend to have
more "desirable" jobs (i.e. non-manual and skilled) – reflecting the
higher educational standards and increased opportunities for these
types of work in recent decades, which was not the case for the
older generation. Fewer than one out of every two respondents (43.8%)
have worked at their present jobs more than ten years, while one
third (32.8%) have worked there for a period of less than five years.
In fact, only 4.5% have never left their first job; 61.8% had to find
alternative employment due to redundancy or dismissal; while only
33.7% had the opportunity to move to jobs better than the first one.
Most respondents regard the temptation to leave one's job in exchange

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for a better job elsewhere as a rare and risky luxury. This attitude is epitomised in two often repeated proverbs: **Ahjar ghasfur f'idek milli mija fl-ajru** (Better a bird in hand than a hundred in the sky) and **Ghal kull ghadma hawn mitt kelb** (There are a hundred dogs for every bone). Thus the security of a government job is something to be treasured, and not to be done away with lightly.

When asked to indicate how they had obtained their first jobs, a few respondents[31] suggested that these were obtained as a result of a systematic exploration and a weighing of their prospects through a thorough search of opportunities in the labour market. Most found it through recommendations from third persons who had a better knowledge of the options available, or from friends, priests, teachers or other trusted persons. Most of the professionals, skilled tradesmen, and self-employed followed in their father's footsteps, often after their parents' material help. Even in the case of the highly prized government jobs, which were usually obtained through public examinations, parents, friends and other trusted persons played an important part.

A similar trend was noted in the case of the Drydocks supplementary survey. Almost all respondents who were over 30 years of age (thirteen = 78%) recalled a large scarcity of job opportunities at the time they started their apprenticeship. Clearly, the only comparable alternative at the time, in terms of security and wages, was direct employment with the Maltese government.

However, the choice of work at the Dockyard was in most cases also the result of a direct and deliberate aspiration. As one respondent stated:

"It was considered as something special to work at the Dockyard".

57% of the respondents joined the Dockyard because they consciously chose to do so. Only three men (13%) admitted that they joined the Dockyard purely due to a lack of alternatives. The others (30%) appeared indifferent at the time regarding particular employers or types of work. It seems that it proved to an attractive outlet from school, for which they felt no inclinations. They preferred "working for money" and the example of their friends who were already working reinforced this feeling. Family pressures and, more frequently, family links played an important part in the choice of those who opted specifically for the Dockyard. It is clear, also from the responses of the main survey, that, throughout Malta, the importance of family and friendship networks in obtaining jobs cannot be minimized.[32]

The question of job selection leads to the related question of job changing, already hinted at above. Maltese workers are not generally keen on changing jobs unless they have to. In the whole workers' sub-sample, about half (50.4%) preferred to stay where they were. When asked what work they would prefer to do if given the chance to move to something else of their own choice, half of the workers' sub-sample (50.4%) stated that they would prefer to remain where they

were. Among the 30 non-Government employees, however, the percentage of would-be movers is much higher, (83.4%). This suggests that many more workers would be ready to move to another type of work if better conditions, pay and security than those offered by Government were conceivable. [33]

In the supplementary survey, as many as fourteen workers (61%) had at one time considered leaving the Dockyard. Apparently the reason was because of the dangers and hardships that the work entails. Yet, a closer inspection reveals that these respondents are not so weakly attached to their place of work after all. Undoubtedly, their first contact with the "grim industrial environment" was a tough experience for most of them and this manifested itself as a wish to leave the Dockyard – in fact, three of them actually sat unsuccessfully, for Government examinations in order to change their employment.

The overriding problem for Maltese workers is job security. Most of them have at one time or another experienced unemployment (68.4% of the workers' sub-sample in the main survey). Often the question of security is so important as to overshadow other rewards and discomforts connected with work.

When asked hypothetically to state whether they preferred a Government job or one with a private employer only 5.5% of the respondents opted for the latter. These justified their statements by pointing out that "Government simply cannot employ everybody" – an opinion which the present Labour Administration has tried hard to foster – and that, as a result of Labour legislation, many conditions are essentially the same for both categories of workers. Nevertheless, only a further 4.9% (8) would consider taking a job in private industry even if it were better paid. The vast majority (89.6%: 147) would therefore prefer a Government job and most of these (97) would do so because this is, again, the most secure type of employment available.

A similar attitude to job attachment was noticed among the Drydocks shop-stewards. However, it is the lack of comparable alternatives elsewhere that generates this attitude – though in time it leads to a sense of resignation with one's situation, as expressed in one response: "I've got used to it here".

As before, job security features high in the priorities of these workers, as stated by a 23-year old engine-fitter who was obviously frustrated in his work situation due to the impossibility of using his advanced technical knowledge:

   "I would like to leave the 'Yard but it is too risky,
    because I have a great deal of security here".

Here security takes also a more abstract psychological sense: the Drydocks has become a second home and a way of life for these workers.

The Meaning of Work

The importance which Maltese workers attach to job security has been explained with reference to the common experience of unemployment in the past and the physical and psychological hardships which accompanied it. Likewise, it is the persistent image of that experience which colours the social values of work and its rewards. The spontaneous answers to the direct general question, "Why does man work"? are as follows:

TABLE 5.2

Reasons for working

To meet the financial needs of one's family Not to become dependent upon others	79.5%
To have the traditional virtues of honour, **ghaqal** and **bzulija**	14.5%
For nothing - work is only hardship	3.8%
DK/NA	2.2%

(N =186)

Clearly, therefore, work is spontaneously regarded as being linked to meeting economic needs and aspirations. The respondents' inclusion of their families among their "financial needs" was meant to dispel any impression of greed and egoism on their part. This contrasts with the reported instrumental orientation which motivates the Western affluent worker. The Maltese accent is on work as a means of subsistence and self-reliance. Nor are the two main responses mutually exclusive. Evidently the value of work as a means of survival is given top priority when that aspect seems under threat. Once that is secured however, other aspects assume greater importance. In this sense the spontaneous answers are also indicative of the respondents' order of priorities. While this scale of values predominates among all categories of workers, the "economic self-reliance" aspects are more pronounced among manual workers and the values of **ghaqal** and **bzulija** among respondents with non-manual work experience. These are shown in Table 5.3

Evidently, non manual workers can more readily take subsistence for granted.[34] The same trend is reinforced by the social background of the respondents, as can be seen in Table 5.4

Likewise, among the better educated respondents, those with higher incomes and who are regular church-goers - while always mainly

TABLE 5.3

Work Values held by worker categories

Work Values	Worker Categories (%)	
	Non-Manual	Manual
Economic self-reliance	67.5	84.7
Honour, **Ghaqal** and **bzulija**	30.0	12.9
DK/NA/Other	2.5	2.4
	(40)	(85)

TABLE 5.4

Work values and social background [35]

Work Values	Social Background (%)		
	Manual	Mixed	Non-Manual
Economic Self-reliance	82.9	75.5	66.7
Honour, **Ghaqal** and **Bzulija**	16.2	18.9	33.3
DK/NA/Other	0.9	5.7	0
	(117)	(53)	(9)

focusing on the financial subsistence aspects of work — there are relatively higher proportions than among other categories who single out the other values of work. These findings also suggest that among those respondents who through various characteristics and experiences represent the central value system of Maltese society — or at least among those respondents who because of their educational training and work situation can express themselves better in the established, middle-class terminology — there is relatively higher appreciation of the other values of work.

In order to probe further into these aspects the original question was re-phased as follows: "Apart from earning a living, what else does a man work for "? Their answers, shown in Table 5.5, represent a much wider distribution of interests and work values.

TABLE 5.5

Other reasons for working

Ghaqal, honour and **bzulija**	29.6%
Self-development; learn new skills	22.3%
More money, "lay something aside "	12.2%
"Meet other people "	12.9%
"Nothing but hardships "	10.7%
"Contribute to national development "	2.2%
DK/NA	10.1%

(N = 186)

Predictably, among all categories of workers the traditional values of **ghaqal,** honour[36]and **bzulija** this time receive the highest rating. Also significant are the intrinsic values of learning new skills, gaining new experiences and so developing one's talents – particularly among the non-manual and skilled respondents. Another type of reward mentioned is that of meeting other people, sharing experiences and helping to solve common problems.

Finally, for a quarter of the sample, work is again associated with more money and the added security which it offers or, indeed, with "nothing but hardships ". The emphasis on the extrinsic values of security, income and satisfying social relationships reflects the impact of various socializing agencies – including the experience itself of work and unemployment. Yet, these are not necessarily the only values for which workers would or should aspire. It is certain that the Maltese condition of powerlessness has been, by its very nature conducive to compliant and localist forms of adaptation, but it has also led to political activism[37] The possibility that other, dormant aspirations may be held by the respondents cannot be excluded, though these may be low in their order of priorities. In other words, even among those who fail to perceive any other positive value for work apart from the financial one, there may be some latent aspiration for intrinsic values. It is significant that these responses tended to come from the uneducated, inarticulate, unskilled manual workers who also found it difficult to answer meaningfully many of the open-ended questions in the questionnaire.

In spite of this, no fewer than 54.1% of the main sample perceive some kind of intrinsic work value whether in the form of self-develop-ment, traditional values or a personal "contribution towards national

development ". The fact that only four respondents (2.2%) referred to this latter value suggests that this new perception of work divulged by the MLM has still not developed at the grass roots of Maltese society.

It has been argued that the emergence of political activism inspired by the MLM leadership constitutes an important response to traditional powerlessness and to establish a new basis of authority relations. However, no mention of "control" over the work situation or of power relations as an intrinsic work value came out of the respondents. Because of the central importance of these aspects on work satisfaction[38]a specific sub-section is reserved for them later on in this study.

A similar trend emerges from the Drydocks sample. The necessity to work for survival, which is given top priority, need not exclude intrinsic satisfaction. As one worker explained:

"It is true that I work to earn money, but I feel contented that I can contribute my share ".

However, work is often accepted only as a necessary fact of life. This is indicative of an attitude of resignation rather than contentedness.

To the question, "Why does man work? ", seventeen respondents (74%) felt that the prime reason for an unattractive activity like work lies in its financial rewards, especially to meet the family's financial needs as in the main survey. Because of this, two men (9%) considered work as a moral duty. This concern with the family as the ultimate end for work may be pursued to such an extent that it "spills over" the activity of work itself. This confers on work an added, intrinsic meaning which transcends the actual tasks performed.[39]

Partly for this reason, work is considered by most (14 - 61%) as a blessing for which one should be thankful.

To the same question, another individual replied that work gives one the opportunity of self-fulfilment. To this is allied a condemnation of laziness, expressed in such statements as "work gives man an aim in life ", "a man who does not work is no man at all " and significantly, "the country cannot afford to support idlers ".

Thus, it would be an invalid conclusion to declare that these workers are purely extrinsically oriented. It will also be shown later on how Drydocks workers derive a certain satisfaction from their work activity, particularly from the sense of control and pride which their skilled activities offer and even more from the ultimate ends for which these are carried out. Further evidence in support of this is provided by the fact that thirteen workers (56%) assert a sense of accomplishment and feel satisfied when looking back at their activities:

"At home, I often say to myself, 'I succeeded in that task, and it did not give me so much trouble'. "

Job Satisfaction

In answer to a general question "are you contented with your present work?". 91.2% (114) of the workers' sub-sample expressed some positive degree of "contentedness".[40] These are broken down below according to the type of work, and it can be seen that non-manual and skilled workers express generally higher levels of "contentedness".

TABLE 5.6

Contentedness with one's present work

Contentedness	Worker Categories (%)		
	Non–Manual	Skilled Manual	Unskilled Manual
Very contented	61.5	50.0	37.1
Quite	30.7	41.6	45.7
Not so	7.6	8.3	14.2
Not at all	0	0	2.8
(N)	(26)	(24)	(35)[41]

Perhaps a better indication of the level of contentedness with the actual work experience of the workers in the sample can be found in their answers (where applicable) to the question: "Where would you like your eldest son or daughter to work?". The answers are:

TABLE 5.7

Desired work for eldest son/daughter

Desired work	Worker Categories (%)		
	Non–Manual	Skilled Manual	Unskilled Manual
Non–Manual	73.6	55.0	52.3
Skilled	26.3	45.0	38.1
Unskilled	0	0	9.5
(N)	(19)	(20)	(21)

As only sixty of the one hundred twenty five workers interviewed expressed some kind of work aspiration for their children these results are only tentative. However, they suggest an indirect verdict on their own work situation. A preference for non-manual types of occupation is shown among all categories of workers accompanied by a disregard for unskilled manual jobs.[42]

These answers, therefore, suggest serious limitations to the impressive positive degrees of contentedness expressed by these workers. Although more workers are contented with the work actually available to them, this positive disposition does not extend to the general desirability of their active work as opposed to other possible types of work.

Likewise all those who expressed a positive level of contentedness with their work were asked what work they would select for themselves if they had every opportunity at their disposal. Less than half (49.1%) would opt for the same work they now have. Unskilled manual workers in particular, would prefer to do something different.

Parallel answers were given to the same question in the Drydocks supplementary sample.

To the question "are you content with your job?" 19 (82%) replied in the affirmative, thus:

TABLE 5.8

Degree of contentedness with one's job

Very contented	6 (26%)
Quite contented	13 (56%)
Not so contented	4 (17%)
Not at all	None

About their aspirations for their children, nineteen men (83%) claimed that they wanted their children to be "better than me" emphasising the need for education and the opportunities which it opened up (opportunities which they themselves did not have). Sixteen respondents saw the ideal job as a professional one (35%), or as a white-collar occupation (35%), while only the three unskilled workers (13%), of all the workers interviewed, would be content with a skilled manual job for their children, possibly at the Drydocks. All this shows the limitations of these workers' expressions of satisfaction with their job.

With respect to what job they would choose if they were completely

free, seventeen workers (74%) stated that they would not go for their present jobs. Eleven of these opted for a white-collar or a professional job. Only two men (9%) affirmed that they would again choose the Dockyard. Moreover, seventeen respondents (70%) declared that they would not go on working at the Dockyard were they to win the National Lottery. Thus the other evidence is seriously undermined.

The apparent ambiguity between the two answers can be clarified in terms of cognitive dissonance theory. Workers, when declaring themselves satisfied, have in mind only a very limited view of the extent and type of rewards which work can offer them in practice. They have therefore learned to be satisfied with their lot. Logically enough, these same "satisfied" workers assert that they would ideally not prefer to go for the same job again.

Meanwhile, it is useful to explore further the complicated question of job satisfaction. This is, of course, closely linked to work values. If a particular aspect of work is valued highly, satisfaction or dissatisfaction is measured according to the extent that the work experience enables those values to be realized.

Admittedly, as Fox and others have pointed out[43] one cannot gain much useful information about the workers' real levels of work satisfaction from general "sponge" questions. Workers may be satisfied with, for instance, pay, security and status but dissatisfied with work-mates, work activities, superiors, future prospects, etc. Nevertheless, in the absence of any other national study on the subject, it was necessary – in a study concerned with general social perceptions rather than job attitudes as such – to verify whether the established trends in other countries apply to Malta as well.

Indeed, overall levels of satisfaction in various countries for all categories of workers are impressively positive. The same trends have also emerged in this study. The workers' statements emphasising the worth of their work are also indirect expressions of self-respect. Undoubtedly, work is a buttress of the individual's identification or self-image. As such, admitting dissatisfaction with work for whatever reason is tantamount to lowering one's self-esteem. It is also reasonable to assume that at least some respondents give a too rosy picture of the situation – one depicting wishful thinking rather than what is actually the case.

All respondents in the workers' sub-sample were then asked to indicate "those aspects of their work which they like (and detest) most". Not surprisingly, the respondents' sub-cultural expectations – notably the traditional preoccupation with security – and differences in the work situations – notably manual and non-manual work experiences – overshadow the importance of various other factors in the ways they assess their satisfaction and dissatisfaction at work.[44] To the positive part of the question, the preoccupation with security outweighs so much all the other aspects that these are considered necessary and therefore acceptable. Their work roles confer their social identity and this is experienced in such expressions as "It's my

life " or "It's my bread — my trade. I've got used to it " ("Dak il-hobz tieghi, is-sengha tieghi. Hekk jien imdorri u joghgobni "). All workers, especially the two manual categories, express a great awareness of the social identity, feeling of security and general usefulness which their work bestows on them. Non-manual workers, however, exhibit a comparable tendency to rate highly their actual tasks. Presumably non-manual workers take extrinsic satisfaction for granted and so aspire to "higher order needs ". The high personal identification with their work roles and tasks expressed by both white collar and skilled manual workers (80% and 82.2% of the workers respectively) contrasts with the lower level expresed by unskilled manual workers (56.1%) and by the much higher proportion of these (34.7%) who could or would not pin point any aspect of their work which they like. These trends are shown below:

TABLE 5.9

Most liked Aspects of Work

Work Aspects	Worker Categories (%)			
	Non-Manual	Skilled	Unskilled	Total
"My life "	42.5	50.0	44.9	⏤ 45.6
Actual tasks	37.5	22.2	12.2	23.2
Other rewards	7.5	8.3	8.2	8.0
DK/NA	12.5	19.5	34.7	23.2
(N)	(40)	(36)	(49)	(125)

To the negative re-phrasing of the question, the physical working environment (dangers, dirt, hours etc.),[45] and the social environment of work (including relations with superiors),[46] emerged as the two problem areas. Others mentioned the intrinsic hardships, monotony and lack of challenge which their tasks involve. Moreover, a sizeable proportion do not find anything distasteful about their work; though they may not particularly like their job, they "hate idleness ". Significantly, many of these are unskilled, manual workers.

Perhaps these negative aspects are more revealing than the positive aspects because they express actual problems encountered by the respondents at their work. Workers normally tend to take the positive aspects for granted. What they are most aware of are their problems — though eventually they adapt themselves· to them. The results are cross-tabulated in Table 5.10

As manual workers — particularly the unskilled — normally work

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TABLE 5.10

Most Distasteful Aspects of Work

Work Aspects	Worker Categories (%)			
	Non-Manual	Skilled	Unskilled	Total
Physical environment	l5.0	33.3	38.8	31.2
Social environment	52.5	19.5	18.4	29.6
Monotony, hard work	10.0	19.4	12.2	15.2
DK/Nothing	22.5	27.8	30.6	25.0
(N)	(40)	(36)	(49)	(125)

under more unpleasant conditions than the non-manual, they tend to find their physical working environment much more "distasteful" than the non-manual. The latter, on the other hand, because of their job situation, training and social background are more often preoccupied with relativities, status, seniority, promotion prospects and the like. Hence they are more likely to find themselves in role conflicts and to experience direct industrial competition, rivalry and hostility from their colleagues. In this sense, they find their social environment problematic and develop attitudes which militate against the emergence of a powerful, collective unionism or of perceptions of class conscious-ness.[47]

Extrinsic and Intrinsic Values

The Drydocks survey was more specific with reference to the importance of the different job aspects. In reply to a direct question about these, 8 workers (35%) pointed to intrinsic job aspects while 15 (65%) manifested concern mainly with extrinsic job rewards, among which security, wages and conditions of work appeared to be the overwhelming considerations. Each of these will be briefly considered in turn.

The overriding importance of security has already been discussed above. 96% of the shop-stewards interviewed (22) rated their job at the Dockyard as one of the most stable in Malta, beyond comparison. For, "Malta can never survive if it allows the Dockyard to close down" because ".....Government would be burdened with the responsibility of finding alternative employment for all those people who would otherwise go on the dole".

Therefore, for these workers, security is not really a problem. In this sense they can afford to raise their aspirations for other demands.

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The workers' dissatisfaction with their present payment for work is evidenced by the fact that twelve respondents (52%) maintained that their type and quality of work merited higher financial rewards. In this context there was often an implicit comparison with higher income and status groups. Fifteen men (65%) felt that professionals and white-collar workers were paid too much:

"The work of white-collar employees is not as important as
manual work. We call them pen-pushers. They are necessary,
but if there was no manual work, they would be completely   ·
useless".

This attitude by the Drydocks industrial workers reflects the history of unrest prompted by the "parity" dispute vis-a-vis the non-industrials. Manual workers are very conscious of the recent achievement of parity in the wage structure.

"The work of a clerk does not demand any particular skill.
This is what we fought about - because they earned £M5
more than us".

It appears that this dispute expressed a dormant but deeply ingrained feeling of relative deprivation on the part of industrial workers. But it seems equally clear that the MLM leaders exploited this situation to the hilt in order to rally the workers behind them.

This general discontent with wages is even more pronounced in the few cases where the workers had experienced work in a foreign country:

"Our wages are miserable when compared to those in
England. Besides, they do not do half the work we do".

A substantial group of workers seemed to feel that the reward was not commensurate to effort. Fifteen of them (65%) stated their belief that work (in general) should be rewarded in line with the amount of responsibility and effort (tbatija) it comprises, rather than on any other criterion.

Eleven workers (48%) expressed some degree of satisfaction with their wages, but the general atmosphere in the area of financial rewards was one of dissatisfaction. Drydocks workers exhibit a high wage consciousness. This is understandable in the light of the recent history of industrial disputes there, which focussed almost exclusively on payment and working conditions.

Satisfying social relationships are another potential source of motivation to work. The pattern of responses indicates that although work is associated with a considerable degree of comradeship and fellow-feeling, only very rarely does it lead to deep and lasting social relationships. On their tasks most workers are alone or in small groups of two or three. All workers report almost unlimited freedom in chatting and joking with their mates at work, and 12 (52%) point out that they

have one or two "close friends" at the Dockyard. But only 6 (26%) ever share planned leisure activities with their work-mates or entertain them at home. This, of course, may be partly due to the informal friendship pattern generally prevailing on the Island, - particularly among the working class.[48] They see each other so often that they rarely need to organize formal get-togethers. In fact, 17 respondents (74%) perceive a high degree of co-operation with and among their fellows at work:

"The workers are very united. When you need assistance everyone is ready to help you. They will immediately forget that they might have had words with you only some time before ".

This is in marked contrast to what two workers who had worked abroad said about the foreign work environment:

"No-one would bother to stop or to help you if you are unable to lift a pipe or piece of machinery which is too heavy for you. Here it is different ".

Co-operation is very important for these workers, but close inter-action is potentially disruptive. Twelve workers (52%) envisaged the possibility of having to leave their present job if relations with work mates became unbearable. But, on the other hand, 14 men (61%) appeared certain that, were they to find themselves in a similar job with different workmates, they would not be upset - "one soon gets used to new friends ". But even they admitted that:

"Life would be very difficult here if there was no co-operation between us ".

This does not imply that competition, manipulation and latent jealousies are absent. In a context of scarce resources and closely knit networks which transcend economic and class boundaries, such rivalry is traditional and inevitable. This is basically the reason why friendship, co-operation and community feeling at work have few implications of any high level of solidarity and class consciousness among the labour force at the Dockyard. Workers are united through constant physical proximity and through the sharing of a common way of life, but are divided in a suppressed but unending struggle for prized, limited resources.[49]

Dockyard workers are undoubtedly aware of these undercurrents though few come to the point of openly admitting as one worker did, that "in general here everyone is after his own interests ".[50] These points will have to be explored further, particularly in the discussion of the workers' attitudes towards the Union.

Ship-repairing is not an ordinary kind of job. It carries with it a certain amount of pride and almost personal concern. Indeed, Drydocks workers are very conscious of the skill, precision, importance and responsibility of their particular tasks. 19 men (85%) felt they were

allowed enough scope for trying out their ideas while at work, though to varying degrees. Only 2 workers (9%) commented that they experienced monotony at work due to the kind of task they were performing. A ship-painter even admitted the need "to implement one's ideas at work, otherwise there is no scope in doing anything". This shows that even semi-skilled workers recognize the need for freedom in decision-making. "One has to put into good use both one's imagination and one's experience - this is not learnt from books, for every ship has a different design", said a very skill-conscious gear-cutter.

Time pressures of the kind which result from the assembly line production of standardized products which entail repetitiveness and mechanical movements are practically non-existent. Sixteen workers (70%) who answered the question "While at work, does time pass fast or slowly"?, were unanimous that time tends to fly not crawl at work - and there is no disagreement between skilled and unskilled workers. On the contrary, for many of them time tends to stand still only when they are idle.

Nineteen workers (83%), in reply to a close-ended question, claimed they found their work "interesting most of the time". Only two young men, who exhibited strong economistic tendencies, found work mostly a dull experience. They gave an impression of disillusionment with their superiors, to whom they attributed stifling of personal initiative. Clearly there is a strong relationship between interest in work and opportunities for autonomous decision-making. These points will be pursued further on in this study.

Practically every worker (21, i.e. 91%) replied to the question "What value do you feel your work has in the total functioning of the Dockyard"? in the vein: "If it weren't for my kind of work, the 'Yard would not be able to function". Again on this point, there were only slight differences between skilled and unskilled workers - even two unskilled workers[51] consider their work as "very important" to the Dockyard.

Probing further on the aspect of the importance of their work within a larger context, an open-ended question was asked about the workers' rating of the importance of their work in comparison to the total services performed within Maltese society. Here, replies were slightly hesitant and the men became rather self-conscious. Twelve (52%) stated that their work was "quite important" to the community while 10 (43%) maintained it was "very important". Only one respondent stated flatly that his work has "not much" importance to society. The overall importance and the nobility of work as man's personal contribution to national progress - an idea propagated by the MLM - is thus firmly implanted in the workers' minds. The success of their enterprise is seen as an important contribution to the MLP administration and that is linked to Malta's national progress. Their work forms an important part of progress both at the Drydocks and at the national level.

Another aspect of the intrinsic value of work tasks is the sense

of responsibility perceived by the individual. Only 5 shop stewards (22%) state that they do not feel much responsibility at work; the other eighteen feel it a great deal or, at least, to a reasonable degree. It is significant that those who answered negatively included all the labourers and a welder who, unlike the other welders, had no supporting trade. The prevailing attitude among this small group was that there are other people whose job it is to be responsible, "so why should I bother? ".

Clearly the prevailing atmosphere is one of considerable pride in one's work, particularly amongst tradesmen. Dockyard workers are evidently very conscious of the fact that it is their high level of workmanship which accounts, in the main, for the 'Yard's recent progress. And they also feel that their activities contribute to sustaining the largest enterprise of the Island, and surely one which attracts constant attention from the public eye. Moreover, the Dockyard contains by far the biggest concentration of skills in Malta. And we can mention also their awareness of their being potentially the major political power group within the MLP. Accordingly, most workers (74%) reply in the affirmative to the question "Are you proud of your work?" And this percentage would even be higher if the word "pride" did not, for some, carry some socially undesirable connotations.

The last aspect to be considered is that of employment dependence – the question is: how far do the rewards, particularly the intrinsic ones, tie the workers to their present employment?[52] Are they dependent upon the Drydocks or can they find an equally attractive alternative employment elsewhere?

As already stated, unrivalled opportunities exist for skilled workers at the Drydocks, offering both extrinsic and some intrinsic rewards. Being the Island's principal industry, it receives a lot of attention, particularly during periods of Labour administration. These and other historical factors make the Drydocks workers the Maltese "labour aristocracy". Accordingly, 16 respondents (70%) logically consider the Dockyard as better than most other firms and only 5 men (22%) regard it as being as good as any.

In addition, the social and physical environment makes possible a freedom of movement and frequent exchanges between workers that are not likely to be found elsewhere. In fact, 10 respondents (43%) have great misgivings about the problems they expect to encounter were they to shift employment. In a smaller environment with closer supervision they would risk losing those evasions and other defences to which they have become traditionally accustomed.

For the older workers, it is not formal benefits or welfare schemes that attach them so much to their employment, though they are quite appreciated. A 39-year old shipwright (who had spent four months in Libya working on a break-water and who swore he would never experience again such an inhuman environment) expressed their attitude in this way:

"Even if I were to win the Lottery, I could never leave the
Dockyard because I would miss it too much – I feel very

much part of this environment ".

On the other hand, the younger workers tend to be more directly concerned with incomes. Nevertheless, among all workers – young and old – the element of job security is justifiably given top priority.

Employment dependence is also linked to the perceived opportunities for alternative employment within the labour market. Asked about the difficulty of finding another job, 10 respondents (43%) claimed that this was easy, while only three (13% – including an unskilled worker who had experienced a period of $4\frac{1}{2}$ years unemployed) considered it rather difficult.

However, these answers cannot be accepted at face value. It may boost a worker's self-confidence to assert:

"Of course, I could find another job with my skill, if I really wanted to ".

Even working abroad may be mentioned as a possibility. But it is another thing to be actually faced with making such a weighty decision. Though it may accrue benefits to the individual, it may also upset one's whole life. Moreover, the general awareness of high unemployment elsewhere in Malta and in many other countries discourages them from taking "risks ".

Perception of Income Relativities

It is often argued by contemporary observers that modern affluent workers are increasingly adopting a privatized instrumental or extrinsic orientation towards work and that they are becoming almost exclusively concerned with financial rewards. It has been shown that Maltese workers generally – and Drydocks workers in particular – still nourish intrinsic kinds of rewards, though their traditional preoccupation with security overshadows all other work aspects. Yet in Malta there has been a noticeable increase during recent decades of feelings of relative deprivation among various categories of workers, as can be seen from the salaries "anomalies" dispute during the 1960's, and the Drydocks parity dispute before the 1971 elections.[53] The MLP Government of the seventies has reorganized the civil service and parastatal grades in an attempt to attain a more equitable income distribution according to the "principles of social justice ". Its taxation and wages policies have the same declared aim. Moreover, the industrial relations framework (plant-level collective bargaining; the presence of multi-unionism, often related to the manual, non-manual distinctions; and the existence of 28 Wages Councils catering for specific categories and imposing different conditions of work) is yet another factor that has contributed to the recent increase of concern with income relativities and differences. [54]

Undoubtedly, the link between work and income is firmly established in the minds of all workers. Even professional jobs or vocations normally have the added incentives of "adequate salaries " attached to them.

In Malta, as a result of the traditional insecurity surrounding work, there is a constant rivalry between individuals and groups for all scarce resources – contributing even more to the widespread interest in income relativities.[55] Nevertheless, this situation is generally overshadowed by an orderly, progressive image of class and power relations, where social justice dictates the relative merits of unequal positions and occupations.

The question of perceived relativities between wages is, of course, central to the present study in view of the close links between money, work, power and social class. The issue of perceived income distribution is thus central to any discussions of class formation and the emergence of class consciousness.

In order to explore the perception of income differentiation in principle, the respondents were asked whether they consider it right to have differences in income or whether everybody should receive the same amount irrespective of what he does. 21% of all respondents in the main survey were in favour of the latter alternative. 70% accept income differentials in principle, either without qualification or accepting them if they are based on one's contribution, effort and ability. It is significant that acceptance is lower among manual workers (70.6%) than among non-manual workers (90%),[56] as shown in the following table:

TABLE 5.11

Acceptance in principle of Income Differentials

Degree of Acceptance	Worker Categories (%)		
	Non-Manual	Manual	Total
Unqualified acceptance	55.0	47.1	44.6
Qualified acceptance	35.0	23.5	25.2
No acceptance	7.5	18.8	21.0
DK/NA	2.5	10.6	9.2
(N)	(40)	(85)	(186)

Most respondents, however, added that income differences should not be too wide. In particular, the traditional superiority of non-manual over manual occupations is no longer acceptable for both categories of workers. Only 29.6% of the whole sample accepted without qualifications that non-manual workers should be paid more than manual workers. This trend was more evident among non-manual workers than among manual workers – 20% of whom replied that the contrary should be the case. Other workers felt that they could not give a simple answer

because, according to them it depends on the amount of skill it involves. The total responses are as follows:

TABLE 5.12

Desired Income Differentials

Degree of Relativities	Worker Categories (%)		
	Non-Manual	Manual	Total
Non-Manual more than Manual	22.5	37.6	29.6
Both equal	40.0	17.6	26.9
Manual more than non-manual	.0	20.0	12.9
Depends on training and skill	30.0	24.7	22.6
DK/NA	7.5	7.1	7.9
(N)	(40)	(85)	(186)

Thus a shift can be observed away from the traditional relativity between non-manual and manual work which reflects the wider appeal of the principle of equality, the higher value of manual work stressed by the MLM ideology and the various parity claims by the GWU and other unions.

A series of questions were then asked in order to obtain some rough but objective estimate of the extent of relative acceptance or deprivation concerning income relativities among various categories of workers. For this purpose all respondents were asked to state whether they considered the income obtained by various selected job occupants as being excessive, just right or inadequate to meet the recipients' needs and efforts. The results show mixed feelings but rather less than the expected levels of acceptance of the prevailing income relativities.

Table 5.13 indicates that only an overall average of 53.9% consider the incomes of others as being just right. The highest perceived "just" incomes are those of skilled tradesmen and civil servants – the two groups normally well organized and catered for through union negotiations. Very few consider businessmen – particularly importers – and professionals – particularly lawyers and medical practitioners – as being underpaid: as many as 45.5% on average consider them as earning "too much". On the contrary, hardly anyone considers labourers in private industry as being overpaid – 59.6% consider them paid "too little". In the case of the respondents' own income – which presumably serves as their

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TABLE 5.13

Income Evaluation

Income of selected job occupants	Evaluation of Perceived Income (%)			
	Too Much	Just Right	Too Little	Total
One's own income	1.7	48.7	49.6	(121)
Industrial (private) labourer's income	1.4	39.0	59.6	(141)
Government labourer's income	2.6	50.3	47.1	(155)
Skilled tradesman's income	6.7	75.0	17.1	(119)
Government civil servant's income	3.8	78.0	18.2	(132)
Businessman's income	45.5	43.1	10.4	(144)
Professional's income	45.4	46.7	7.9	(152)

reference point – there are almost as many who believe they receive a "just" income as there are who feel they deserve a higher one. Therefore, the overall impression is that there is no broad-based acceptance of the perceived current income distribution. This is not to say that there is a keenly felt resentment either. In fact, many people who expressed the opinion that professionals earned too much money did so with certain reservations because – they often pointed out – professionals have studied hard in order to "get where they did", and that their mental work is "very important" and "very demanding". Likewise, in the case of businessmen, many reflected that "in business you take what comes" (fin–negozju daqqa tajba u daqqa hazina) and "whoever was not successful has gone bankrupt" (min ma rnexxiex falla). Typically, the insecurity of the business world outweighs the prospects of making good money.

In general, wage restraints and price controls are generally considered necessary, the former because "Malta is a poor country" and still developing, and the latter in order to safeguard the interests of ordinary clients and customers. Many respondents feel that, though still far from the ideal, the labourer's lot is not too bad nowadays when compared with what it was in the past. In general these responses manifest a notion of social justice which is composed of both traditional and new social perceptions.

NOTES

1. M.L. Kohn & C. Schooler: "The Reciprocal Effects of the Substantive Complexity of Work and Intellectual Flexibility: A Longitudinal Assessment" American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 84 (1) (1978).

2. A. Fox, op.cit. (1971) p.11

3. H. Beynon and R.M. Blackburn: Perceptions of Work - Variations within a Factory (Cambridge University Press, 1972) p.2.

4. R. Blauner: Alienation and Freedom: The Factory Worker and his Industry (Chicago University Press, 1964).

5. A. Fox, op.cit. (1971) Chapter 1 and op.cit. (1976) p.45. Through the mechanism of "cognitive dissonance" persons adjust their aspirations to what is realistically possible. Yet even these "can also speculate about the world as it might be - or might have been".

6. A. Fox. op.cit. (1971) p.10.

7. M. Mann: "The Social Cohesion of Liberal Democracy" American Sociological Review, Vol. 35 (1970) pp.423-439.

8. Some industrial psychologists propose a universal innate needs hierarchy whereby the satisfaction of basic needs is necessary for demand of higher needs to arise. According to Maslow, "physiological" and "safety needs" (e.g. security, stability) must precede needs for "belongingness". A.H. Maslow: Motivation and Personality (New York, Harper and Row, 1954).

9. Ibid., p.671

10. A. Inkeles: "Industrial Man: The Relation of Status to Experience, Perception and Value" American Journal of Sociology, Vol.66 (1960) p.18. This notion refers to "a distinctive set of meanings shared by a group of people whose forms of behaviour differ....from those of the wider society". B.S. Turner: Exploring the Industrial Subculture (London, Macmillan, 1971) p.1. Furthermore "individuals can become committed to either or switch from one to the other as alternative reward potentialities emerge". N. Bonney: "Work and Ghetto Culture" British Journal of Sociology, Vol.26 (1975) p.444.

11. H.L. Wilensky, op.cit.

12. Ibid. p.135-6

13. A. Fox, op.cit. (1974) p.43.

14. Two main directions taken by researchers who adopt an "action approach" can be identified. The first focuses on "the typical 'projects of action' which individuals and groups pursue in the organisation - implying an interest in relatively enduring collective aspirations and perspectives". The second focuses on "the vicissitudes of the 'subjective careers' of the organisation members - with detailed analysis of the transformation of definitions of self and situation".

A.J. Elger: "Industrial organizations - A Processual Perspective", quoted in D.P. Weeks: "Organizations: Interaction and Social Processes" in People and Organizations (DT 352, Unit 7) (Open University Press, 1974) p.17.

15. A. Inkeles, op.cit. (1960) pp.1-31

16. J.H. Goldthorpe, et.al., op.cit. (1968-69)

17. W.W. Daniel: Journal of Management Studies, op.cit. (1969) and (1970). See also: "Understanding Employee Behaviour in its context: Illustrations from Productivity Bargaining" in J. Child (ed) Man and Organization (London, Allen & Unwin, 1973) pp.39-62

18. M. Mann, op.cit. (1973 (b)) p.47.

19. J.H. Goldthorpe and D. Lockwood: "Affluence and the British Class Structure" Sociological Review 2 (1963) pp.133-163, and D. Lockwood: "The New Working Class" European Journal of Sociology, Vol. I (2) (1960) pp.248-259.

20. A. Gouldner: "Organizational Analysis" in R.K. Merton et.al. (eds): Sociology Today Vol. II (New York, Harper & Row, 1959).

21. A. Fox, op.cit. (1971) p.16.

22. These processes are documented in Barrington Moore Jn. op.cit. (1978).

23. A. Fox. op.cit. (1976) pp.41-42

24. In this respect the Malta Development Plan states: "The compactness of institutions, the political and social awareness of the people and the ability to adapt speedily to new circumstances give Malta an enormous advantage over bigger but much more heterogeneous communities". Development Plan for Malta 1973-1980, op.cit p.21.

25. Cf. Chapters 1 and 3 supra.

26. S. Parker: "The Effects of Redundancy" in G. Esland et.al. (eds): People and Work (Edinburgh, Holmes, McDougall and Open University Press 1975) pp.88-99. M.J. Hill et.al.: Men out of Work (Cambridge University Press, 1973) pp.94-109.

27. Actually the ant's repetitive, uninspiring, tedious and submissive routine tells us a lot about the kind of work expectations which are upheld in Malta. A similarly popular example is that of the bee.

28. As Silverman notes about the "Chicago School": "people's view of themselves and of their situation is the outcome of an ongoing process...always in the act of 'becoming' as successive experiences shape and re-shape a subjective definition of self and of society" (1972) pp.184-5.

29. The manual and non-manual occupational categories are used for analytical purposes of the "main survey" data as the broad indicators of differential work experiences and hypothetically, of related social perceptions. In Malta, this distinction is still widely regarded as the key factor around which many other

characteristics revolve. This opinion is borne out by many of the present survey findings. This does not, however, detract the thrust of the main argument that other "environmental" factors have a more decisive impact on men's perceptions. Cf. Martin and Fryer, op.cit. (1973) pp.175-181. W.G. Runciman, op.cit. (1966) pp.372-375. For an opposite view, based on U.S. data, CF. G. Mackenzie (1973) pp.123-136: cf. also G. Mackenzie, op.cit. (1975) pp.180-185.

30. This category includes self-employed tradesmen and small shop-owners whose social standing, expertise and lifestyles are closer to those of other skilled manual workers than non-manual workers.

31. Due to the differential time lag, many of the "older" respondents could not recall accurately all the circumstances surrounding their first employment. This introduced a bias in favour of the non-mobile and "younger" respondents. Hence no reliable figures can be given regarding the precise weight to be allotted to each factor. Only the general tendencies and impressions can be presented on this matter.

32. J. Boissevain: Friends of Friends - Networks, Manipulators and Coalitions (1974), adds to this picture and presents a general interpretation of Maltese social life from this angle.

33. The traditional scarcity of jobs and high unemployment levels generate a certain reluctant predisposition among workers even to consider the possibility of leaving the security of what is known for the lures of the unknown. Such an alternative is almost exclusively found in Government employment for those not there already. Government jobs are almost universally regarded by Maltese workers as stable, secure, relatively well-paid and easy.

34. No significant difference emerged on this point between male and female workers, or workers and non-workers.

35. All respondents were asked to specify the work of their grandparents, parents, brothers and sisters. As seven of them "did not know" this, N = 179.

36. The value of "honour" here refers to personal reputation of integrity as a man (ragel ta' l-unur) in addition to the economic dimension of self-reliance or dependence upon others.

37. Cf. Chapter 2, supra.

38. Cf. Blauner (1974) pp.478-481.

39. This sounds like Marx's hypothesis in reverse. Cf. Naumova (1971) p.268, who argues that in Soviet society, workers derive intrinsic satisfaction from routine, unchallenging, work because they are doing it for the common good.

40. The difficulties involved in measuring shop-floor job satisfaction are formidable. See, for instance, G.N. Soutar and J.R. Weaver: "The Measurement of shop-floor job satisfaction: The convergent and discriminant validity of the Worker Opinion Survey" in Journal of Occupational Psychology, 1982, Vol 55, p.27-33. The simple, direct method adopted in the present study aims at finding out the respondents' overall self-assessment of their own work experiences rather than at an

objective measurement of their job satisfaction. This, along with the other aspects explored, may indicate the persistence of traditional adaptations, cognitive dissonance or the shift to new perceptions at the grass roots.

41. The remaining four employees expressed no opinion.

42. Cf. Steward & Blackburn (1973) pp.16-18.

43. Cf. Fox, op.cit. (1976) pp.35-36. Blauner, op.cit. (1974) p.474.

44. For a similar conclusion see; R.J. Centers and D.E. Bugental: "Intrinsic and Extrinsic Job Motivations among Different Segments of the Working Population", in:Journal of Applied Psychology (1966) Vol.50, pp.193-197.

45. Only three workers singled out their wages as their "most distasteful" work aspect.

46. As only a few workers singled out "relations with their superiors" as their most distasteful part of work, these are now included under "social environment". A fuller treatment of this important aspect is reserved for the next sub-section B.

47. Cf. D. Lockwood: The Black-Coated Worker. G. Bain et.al.: Social Stratification and Trade Unionism (1973) argues that in Britain these attitudes are now changing.

48. This reflects the paradoxical character of social relationships in Malta generally. A well-known saying goes: **Hbieb kulhadd u hbieb hadd** (Friendly with all but no close friends at all).

49. One instance of such competition is the recent dispute which boilermakers have had with other tradesmen – namely shipwright/welders – over a re-distribution of tasks.

50. **"Fil-maggoranza hawnhekk kulhadd jigbed ghal rasu".**

51. A cleaner and a ship-painter.

52. The overdrawn argument whether "work" or "non-work" constitutes the workers' central life interest, is here deliberately avoided. It was argued earlier that most workers feel "bound" or attached to their work and the reasons given for this professed dependence are both extrinsic and intrinsic job factors.

53. Cf. Chapter 1 about the industrial relations climate in Malta during the late 1960's and Chapter 3 on the dispute in Malta Drydocks.

PERCEPTIONS OF POWER

Introduction

An overall impression obtained in the previous chapter is that there is no broad-based acceptance of perceived current income distribution. This can be considered as a departure from traditional adaptations in work perceptions – following the lead provided by the MLM and reflecting other environmental factors. With almost one-fifth of the main sample rejecting the very principle of income differentials, it would be interesting to find the extent of legitimation of the prevailing power structure both at work and in society at large. The current Maltese perceptions of power and authority relations are empirically explored in this chapter. As in the previous section, an attempt will be made to relate these perceptions to the respondents' broad work experiences and to the values and traditions of the wider society. This will then lead to a discussion on whether some recent innovations or ideological appeals made by the current MLP administration– including workers' participation, socialism and "the building of a socialist generation" – indicate any changes in the respondents' perceptions. It is also worth exploring whether such perceptions are an outcome and an expression of a situation characterized by traditionally dormant, repressed or otherwise concealed antagonism.

Management – Worker Relations

The prevalent general impression of perceived relationships between management and workers is that of a harmonious collaboration among unequal partners for the achievement of common goals. This is similar to the relationship one expects to find among members of the same family or team-mates in a football match. This impression emerges from the answers to the questions:

"How do you regard management-worker relations - as two teams set against each other or as members of the same football team? Do they normally work hand in hand?

The responses, broken down by occupational categories are tabulated in Table 6.1.

These results indicate that only 10% of the non-manual workers and 11.8% of the manual workers do not explicitly reflect the ideally harmonious view of management-worker relations which is embodied in the dominant value system.[1] Indeed, the figures would lead one to expect that a substantial number are unaware of even potential areas of conflict. However, it would be surprising if the traditionally established pattern of ideal management-worker relations - here depicted as compliance to paternalism - is not found to have shifted noticeably.

A series of further questions was aimed at exploring the respondents' perception of management. To the question "Who should ideally be in

TABLE 6.1

Do management and workers normally work hand in hand?

Opinions	Worker Categories (%)		
	Non-Manual	Manual	Total Sample
Yes	90	88.2	88.2
It depends	7.5	2.3	4.3
No	2.5	1.2	1.1
DK/NA	0	8.3	6.4
(N)	(40)	(85)	(186)

charge of discipline at work?" only 22% (41) of the respondents in the total sample suggested that discipline should be entrusted to a joint participative body composed of representatives of both management and ·workers. The vast majority of the respondents (78% - 145) feel that this should remain entirely the right of the manager or owner of the enterprise. When asked to indicate whether "An enterprise can be managed entirely by the worker", only 10 respondents (5.4%) agreed while the majority (78.5%) - 146) do not think that workers can manage on their own since there is always the "need for someone in charge". However, many of these did stress the need for good will, cooperation and readiness to compromise on both sides. The frequent lack of a competent, dedicated and impartial management was also deplored. Others complained of the workers' limited educational training, their lack of honesty, of ambition and of awareness of common interests – implying that even if workers' control were ideally preferable it is certainly impracticable at present.

These answers revealed that very little direct challenge to the traditional managerial prerogatives exists in Malta. However, along with the ideally harmonious image of management-workers relations in general, there is also a realistic awareness of the practical problems and conflicts which are bound to arise.

Similar attitudes are held by the Drydocks shop-stewards forming the supplementary sample. In reply to the question "Do you think it possible for a company to be self-managed, or managed in any other way than by traditional management?" Twenty-one respondents (91%) believe that the presence of traditional management, though often resented, cannot be dispensed with. However, 3 among these respondents see joint control as the most practical system. Typical attitudes expressed were the following:

"One cannot do without the leader. He is sent by God, and

will maintain his position for as long as is necessary"

for

"Workers on their own would be unable to do anything
constructive"

and

"It is not the worker's role to deliberate; this is management's
job, and the workers should only be informed every now and
then. The worker is either going to work or he is going to
take the responsibility of bringing work – contracts for the
Dockyard".

It emerges from these interviews that the traditional image of
management as being responsible for planning, organisation and decision-
making is as yet unchallenged. Along with this, in practice, workers
retain a "conjunctive" rather than an "integrative" model of industrial
relations.[2] Such a perception retains intact the customary relationships
of superordination and subordination.

It is likely that this kind of perception of managerial roles is a
result of the trade union tradition within the Dockyard. Collective
bargaining strategy is strongly entrenched and the formal introduction
of workers' participation has not yet replaced former attitudes and
expectations. The natural reaction over rewards in respect to a superior
power is seen as a bargaining relationship. Management-worker roles
are seen to be necessarily opposed – though interdependent, they pull
in opposite directions because they are ultimately seen to represent
different interests. This view is expressed by the majority of respondents
who comment that the Union "cannot serve God and Mammon".

A 23 year-old engine fitter, who approves of self-management
only in theory, declares with conviction:

"The interests of management are one thing, and those of
workers are another......they are 180 degrees opposed.
There must be a compromise and this is what the Union
does".

Yet, the actual day to day relations between workers and manage-
ment are on the whole very cordial. Even relations with immediate
supervisors are quite satisfactory, "not too rigid". The 23 year-old
engine fitter even admits "I get along with my supervisor better than
I do with anybody else". Only one worker spoke of a previous clash
with his departmental manager which led him to ask for a transfer.
This cordiality springs both from the constant need for shop-stewards
to negotiate with management and more basically from the fact that
managerial prerogatives are practically unchallenged from the rank and
file workers. In principle, the relationship is perceived as one of
legitimate authority rather than power.

However, a closer inspection reveals that much of the social distance, awe and dignity of management which were so evident in the days of the Admiralty have now disappeared with the change-over to Maltese civilian management. The change meant a loss of the management's former power and status. For this reason, although there is no ideological challenge to managerial prerogatives, it still has to grapple with the problem of legitimacy. Most workers in the 'Yard vividly recall the difference from the Admiralty days. An elderly electrical-fitter admits succinctly:

"In those days we were all terrified. One was afraid of the inspector, afraid of the manager, afraid even of his own friend at times. At that time, anybody could report you. Nowadays, there is not so much tension - if you are not at your work and happen to be seen by your foreman, he will close an eye. Before, it was not respect but fear. Today, it is more a question of respect".

Many workers cynically recall how many promotions to present-day management were given during the "change-over period".[3] The new management also had to face the new problems of a commercial ship repair yard for which it had no experience or preparation; the boiler-maker was clearly embittered by his own experiences of incompetent authority:

"The worst thing I can imagine is when somebody gives you orders, and you know that he is wrong. Then you will experience a personal conflict for you wish to obey, while knowing at the same time that you are doing the work badly, and eventually will have to do it from scratch".

Management's standing reached its ebb during the critical period of strikes prior to the 1971 elections and particularly in the months immediately following those elections. Many managers hesitated in enforcing discipline on the many workers who were prominent canvassers and proteges of members of the new Labour Administration. The shop stewards became practically the only persons left who could effectively control many of the workers - at least until the recent election of workers' committees. As the official Union policy became identified with that of the new Administration, management came to rely increasingly upon the cooperation of the shop stewards in order to carry out all necessary but unpopular policies. In fact, several shop stewards found themselves with conflicting allegiances and complained:

"Why do the chargemen have to rely on us to communicate unpopular decisions to the workers? Our job is to represent them and not to do management's jobs!"

The next question concerned specific issues on problem areas between management and workers. The respondents in the workers' sub-sample were asked to indicate the "problematic issues" which in their opinion tend most to materialise. The issues mentioned, of course,

cover a wide spectrum. But predictably, the most frequently mentioned concerned the extrinsic aspects of work: money, conditions and the various ways of going about one's job (64.6%). What is significant about these responses is the workers' acknowledgement that conflicting interests and roles are an inherent aspect of work relations between employers and employees. The other respondents indicated as problem areas the lack of good will, effort and insubordination on the part of workers (17.7%) or the inaptitude, pride and rigid attitudes towards subordinates on the part of employers (17.7%).

No major variations in the identification of extrinsic issues existed between manual and non-manual workers. However, the former were much more inclined to put the blame on the employers' shoulders while the latter on insubordinate employees. These responses need not reflect the problem areas at the respondents' own work-site but their perceptions of those issues on which disputes between workers and management generally flare up. Nevertheless, one would expect their own specific circumstances and experiences in the labour market to provide them with special vantage points. These help to explain the differential verdicts given by manual and non-manual workers.

The harmonious, cooperative image of management-worker relations implied by the football team analogy which most respondents uphold, is constantly under threat. This is so because this image is continuously tempered by their expressed recognition of potentially conflicting interests. Industrial disputes occasionally erupt on matters regarding extrinsic aspects of work particularly in the private sector where the GWU has generally retained its old role. In other words, this ideal harmony is often manifest as a mere hope which can only be realized through collective efforts.

When asked what, in their opinion, ought to be done in order to solve these "industrial problems", the need for greater efforts aimed at securing consensus, understanding and mutual tolerance by the parties involved was stressed. The implication is that, unless such efforts are made, the ideally harmonious relations between management and workers would come under serious threat.

Yet, this need not suggest a direct challenge to the traditional managerial prerogatives. In fact, when asked whether they would like to see managerial powers increased, remain as they are, or have them reduced, very few of the workers' sub-sample expressed the desire to reduce managerial powers. Once again manual workers were somewhat less keen on managerial powers than non-manual workers, even if more than a third of the former hesitated to commit themselves one way or the other.

In general, therefore, most Maltese workers consent to managerial roles, provided that management conforms to the traditional, paternalistic pattern which they have grown to expect as a right. Such a consent is based on the realistic assumption that the workers' submission constitutes a necessary inescapable element of work, just as in the case of interpreting workers' expressed contentedness with their jobs.[4]

TABLE 6.2

Desired Managerial Powers

Desire Expressed	Worker Categories (%)		
	Non-Manual	Manual	Totals
Same and/or increased	67.5	50.5	56.0
Reduced	15.0	12.9	13.6
DK/NA/Other	17.5	36.6	31.4
(N)	(40)	(85)	(125)

This also suggests that any alternative work, equivalent in security and other respects to the one they have but without any necessary submission to managerial powers, would be considered preferable. In other words, expressed work satisfaction, family image and acceptance of managerial powers is tempered by a realistic awareness of conflicting interests inherent in the relationship. Furthermore, such managerial powers are only "accepted pragmatically".[5] In fact when asked whether, if given the chance, they would remain in their present job where they "work as employees" or leave in order to "work on their own", the vast majority of all the workers interviewed would prefer the latter option. Their responses are shown below.

TABLE 6.3

Preference for or against self-employment

Preference Expressed	Response (%)
Prefer self-employed	77.6
Prefer to work as an employee	17.6
DK/NA/Other	4.8
(N)	(125)

These responses were cross-tabulated by employment category. This confirmed that among all employees, whether manual or non-manual

the majority would prefer to work on their own without having to submit themselves to any superior.[6] This is an interesting result considering the loss of seniority, pension and promotion prospects and other discomforts which might be involved.

One is therefore led to conclude that in so far as there is little direct challenge or even expressed resentment of managerial prerogative, the Maltese workers interviewed generally manifested a deference towards those in superordinate positions which comes very near to the traditional adaptation of compliance to paternalism. But though there is an acceptance of management as a necessary part of the work situation, this stems from a perceived necessary dependence upon superior powers. And their dependence provides the basis for a pragmatic acceptance[7] as most workers would ideally choose to be their own masters. Alternatively, they would prefer Government employment where, in addition to the attractions of security, wages and conditions of work, there are standard, impersonal procedures and relations with superiors which offer employees potential evasions from their superiors' glances and intrusions. The problems which inevitably crop up due to inherently conflicting interests, can best be solved through goodwill, collaboration and tolerance on management's part and through self-discipline and a greater sense of responsibility on the workers' part. In spite of the diffuse opinion that both workers and management are ultimately members of the same family, such an image does not preclude the incidence of quarrels and rivalries. As many explained proverbially, "the bittermost quarrels are those between brothers" **(l-ikbar glied hu ta' bejn l-ahwa)** and such family disputes usually occur over the division of financial and property interests. Similarly, the workers' portrayal of harmonious, family relationships between workers and management as a normal ideal is consistent with occasional abnormal outbursts into industrial conflicts. During such outbursts – in strikes, for instance – many tensions which are normally suppressed or which find expression only in individual evasions, grumbling and sporadic individual protests, are channelled by effective leadership into organized power struggles, usually through union action. It is then that the superimposed harmonious model suddenly collapses into one of an oppositional relationship sustained by a polarised "us – them "perception.

Similar ambivalent feelings towards management were expressed by Drydocks shop stewards. These add up to a curious mixture of respect and submission with an aggressive-defensive pursuit of self-interest. To be sure, they generally portray their work atmosphere as free and relaxed. Powerlessness or lack of control over work does not present particular problems to these workers. Nineteen men (83%) report that during most of the time they are free to set their own work-pace, with few imposed restrictions. Only rarely do they feel obliged to accelerate their work, and this usually occurs when a ship approaches its set delivery date – for on such occasions, "a lot of important people come to watch us work".

There were however two exceptions – two men who both perceived a constant atmosphere of unnecessary pressure and tension. A 57 year-old electrical fitter (the oldest respondent) had spent 38 years

at the Dockyard and had experienced all the conflicts and changes which took place over the years. He feels that the ordinary worker is necessarily handicapped when confronting his superiors. In his own words:

"everybody is terrified here because your superior is
constantly at your shoulders. How can you even expect
to work at your own pace?"

Likewise, a 31 year-old boilermaker manifests a certain disillusion with the way things are generally run at the Drydocks, and with the slip-shod manner in which work is carried out. He describes the actual work activity as "haste, panic, carelessness and danger. It does not make to talk about setting one's own pace".

However, these are not typical attitudes at the Drydocks today though there is general agreement about the "excessive discipline" and "fear" which prevailed before the enterprise was transferred from the Admiralty to commercial work. In fact most respondents reflected the official view that many Drydocks workers do not work hard enough and are too insubordinate. "Everyone here does what he likes". This is possible because "the boss himself closes one eye" most times.

In these circumstances, eighteen workers (78%) expressed a belief that it was on them that the final result of their efforts depended. A number, however, mentioned obstacles caused by lack of adequate tools and machinery and dependence on other workers. These amount to problems of insufficient co-ordination and organisation of different activities. A typical expression was that of a highly skilled worker, a gear-cutter, who remarked:

"The quality of your work is within your control, provided
you have the right tools. If you don't, it will take you
ages to complete whatever it is you are doing".

Perceived Union Role and Workers' Participation

The traditional Union role as a conflict organisation has been partly credited with sustaining an "us – them" perception of management-worker relations, in spite of the harmonious image of these relations upheld by the dominant ideology of the wider society. This same ideology ironically also provides a "fraternal" justification for collective organisation, cooperation and action. When asked:

"How can the Maltese workers effectively manage to
secure their common interests – such as improving
their living standards and working conditions – whether
through collective or individual action?"

The majority of the workers interviewed (82.4%) opted for collective action. Only 10.4% opted for individual action, the remainder being undecided. Yet, as will be seen later, this is no denial of the practical

effectiveness of individual avenues for social advancement nor of the respondents' readiness to resort to them when such enemies are available.[8] The response does clearly indicate that the presence of Unions and their roles in collective bargaining have become established on the national, and particularly on the enterprise level.

Unions are generally accepted as necessary and functional institutions in places of work both by management and workers.[9] But since the return to power of the MLP in 1971, with the introduction of workers' participation, the Union has experienced a consequent reversal of its former policy and, with it, the difficulties of adjustment and of legitimization of its new role.

It appears that most of the respondents' allegiance to Union policy is a calculated one and cannot be taken for granted. When asked:

"In the event of an industrial dispute on any issue between
Union and Management, which side are you likely to support?"

Few profess any instinctive sympathy with the managerial viewpoint. But there are as many who state that they would suspend their judgement in order to examine the actual circumstances of the dispute. Even manual workers are only slightly more inclined to accept Union directives unquestioningly:

TABLE 6.4

Likely support in event of an Industrial Dispute

Support Expressed	Worker Categories (%)		
	Non-Manual	Manual	Total
Union side [10]	40.0	44.7	44.8
Management side	0	4.7[11]	3.2
Depending on circumstances	60.0	50.6	53.6
	(40)	(85)	(125)

These responses clearly offer no guide to the workers' behaviour in the event of a Union directive in the course of an actual dispute. On such occasion, apart from the issue itself, workers come under various group pressures to join their colleagues in support of a common cause. On the other hand, the figures may be indicative of a loss of faith in Union efficacy and a withdrawal of legitimacy. The reason for this is perhaps found in the absence of a clear Union lead in response to a felt need for representation. Although there may be legitimation problems, most respondents in the workers' sub-sample do

not yet feel alienated from the authority structure of the Union – notably, from that of Malta's principal Union, the GWU.

The workers interviewed were asked a series of questions in order to assess their attitudes towards Union structure. The following replies were given to the question:

"Who really controls Union policy – the general membership through their representatives or some internal Union cliques?"

TABLE 6.5

Opinions	Response (%)
The workers' "elected leaders"	58.4
Internal Union cliques	37.6
DK/NA/Other	4

(N = 125)

A substantial number of workers regard Unions as organisations which are not really controlled by the general membership but by the full-time officials. An even larger number of respondents, however, see Union leaders as genuinely representative of their rank and file and mainly engaged in pursuing their welfare. There is therefore no widespread resentment of the Union policy makers. The responses also shed some light on the respondents' attitudes towards participation in management, which is current Government policy to avoid industrial strife and as a means of raising productivity; the substitution of "membership control", as stated in the above question, by "workers' leaders", in many of the responses, suggests that most workers instinctively assume that decision-making is a leader's task and they do not expect him to delegate this task to his followers. The workers' paternalist outlook towards their superiors thus extends to their Union representatives as well. Once again legitimacy seems to rest on a traditional basis.

The Drydocks shop-stewards reflected the feeling of ambivalence characteristic of the perceived relations towards employers and Union leaders which emerged from the workers in the main sample. But as men whose role involves them in close contacts with both the full-time Union officials and with shop floor workers, problems on legitimation would be manifested more clearly in their opinions.

The role of the Union as an important defence of the workers' interests was here even more pronounced. Seventeen stewards (74%) believe that Union energy should be concentrated on the securement and betterment of the extrinsic aspects of work. This objective corresponds with the workers' orientation to employment. Considerable

reservations were expressed with the new managerial responsibilities which their Union has assumed since the introduction of Workers' Participation. They claim that workers expect the Union to defend their material claims and, in particular, to ensure job security. Voiced expressions include:

"The Union should fight for the workers' rights....the Union
should look after the workers' interests, not after those
of management.....it is the workers' right to have his claims
supported, for this is what he pays Union dues for........
the Union's only function is to mediate between workers
and management.....the Union must protect the worker and
struggle to obtain the things he depends on....there are no
limits to the assistance which the Union owes workers. This
is the reason for which it is supported".

On the other hand, workers' participation implies that management and worker roles overlap to some extent. This demands new role perceptions on the part of management and Union leaders. In fact, shop stewards are experiencing a basic dilemma of role-conflict. They are responsible for carrying out what they consider to be purely manage- ment functions - like, for instance, encouraging higher productivity, improving the quality of work and discouraging idle time. Workers are seen to demand nothing other than the satisfaction of their material wants while the Union now expects the shop stewards to perform a mediatory role. The participative system has apparently placed stewards in an embarrassing situation:

"The workers' problems seem to be our responsibility rather
than those of the chargeman or foreman. Sometimes, a
worker feels he is being oppressed by his chargeman and
it is up to us (shop stewards) to convince him that his
work is important".

Six of the interviewed shop stewards manifested an awareness of this role-conflict. The rest of the shop stewards also perceive their Union role as diametrically opposed to that of management or, at any rate, as being very clearly distinct from it. This attitude is well illustrated by the following remark:

"The Union should stick to an impartial point of view.
Otherwise it will be to the detriment of one side or the
other.... "

The shop stewards were then asked to mention various tasks which would be included among their Union's major roles. Only two men (9%) pointed to the area of participation in decision making. Nevertheless eighteen men (78%) replied in the affirmative to the general question: "Do you think the Union should involve itself directly in participation?"

The interpretation of these results is based on the instrumental value attached to participation by the workers. Union representation

may be considered as an added safeguard ensuring that no decisions are taken against workers' interests. The Union on the Council is not seen as performing the same functions as that of management. It is rather perceived as a watch dog on management. It is seen to be a defender of the workers' interests from the inside. Its concern, according to the shop stewards, on the Council, should be mainly with the traditional areas of safety, job-security, wages and benefits. Such a concern is what really justifies Union involvement at Council level. Union participation in other matters, such as discipline or the signing of works contracts is not totally excluded, but given secondary importance:

"The Union is one branch and management is another
branch......the Union is not meant to sit at a table
deliberating, although it should keep an eye on what-
ever goes on at the Board level".

As the Union now has to carry the burden of management and see things from a wider perspective, it is often felt by some stewards that their claims are not being given sufficient attention. There are doubts as to whether the Union can perform efficiently its functions of mediation and representation, unless it does not maintain a sharp delineation between its managerial and representative roles. There is sometimes downright scepticism expressed regarding Union competence in carrying out its difficult dual role within a participatory structure. According to the Union Secretary:

"Many are saying that the Union is asleep...they
don't know what we've been doing behind the scenes"[12]

For the same reason, some stewards are critical of the political affiliation of the GWU with the Labour Government. Most preferred not to commit themselves on this issue but one of the respondents stated:

"There should be no ties between Government and Union –
the Government is our employer and the Union looks
after the workers. They should not put themselves on the
same platform. One should be on one side, and the other
should be on the opposite side".

It may seem strange that so much criticism of workers' participation should be raised precisely in the industry where it has reached its most advanced stage and where, as a result, the workers have acquired new powers. Yet, participation was introduced from above as a solution to social, industrial and economic problems. Besides, the Drydocks is an industry where traditional Union policy was most strongly established Consequently, workers' critical attitude is almost inevitable. What is of particular interest is to observe how people's perceptions may be influenced in their long term development, following the initial euphoria and subsequent disenchantment with participation.

Notions of Participation

Workers' Participation has become official Government policy since 1976. The present administration intends to turn Malta into a Socialist Society and workers' participation at top levels of administration and at lower levels through workers' committees forms an important part of its policy. No official blue-print on how such a policy is to be implemented has been published and many variations exist in practice. However, the most advanced and widely publicized case of workers' participation at the Drydocks may serve as a model to be followed eventually elsewhere.

As stated above, workers' participation has been generally introduced as a means of solving economic difficulties. The envisaged goal was that of reaching a higher productivity and the maintaining of industrial peace.[13] When profits were made, the workers were sometimes given financial bonuses and other incentives. These advertised the benefits of "working in one's own interest". Labour spokesmen have often referred to the introduction of workers' participation as a main goal of Socialism. As the Prime Minister stated publicly about the Malta Drydocks:

> "We wanted to give Malta a big example of what is
> socialism......Our dockyard has a great and attractive
> future because it is socialist".[14]

Nevertheless, for most workers, participation mainly represents a means of achieving the traditional, extrinsic work goals of raising wages and improving conditions of work.[15] The attraction of participation is precisely that such substantive goals can be achieved peacefully, without having to resort to industrial conflict with all the costs which it involves. To this extent, the practical interests of both Government and individual workers converge. As a result, workers' participation becomes acceptable, in principle, to both parties. It may even strengthen further the traditional pattern of paternalistic authority relations rather than pose any serious challenge to managerial prerogatives, a possible consequence of industrial conflicts. Meanwhile, a Union which actively and directly participates through its own officials in management must constantly guard against being suspected of betraying its traditional role. On their own parts, the GWU officials often contend that through participation they are actually securing their members' interests more effectively.

When the workers in the main sample were asked whether they were aware of any developments in workers' participation, seventy-six (60.8%) claimed to "know about" its introduction. Most of these, in fact, mentioned more than one specific instance where participation was being implemented. The workers in the main sample were then asked whether they approved of Union involvement in management: ninety-two (73.6%) approved of this in principle because, they believe, the Unions can thus intercede better on their behalf. This again suggests that participation is mainly perceived by the workers as having instrumental work value – that of advancing their incomes and conditions

of work. It is in terms of such tangible results that the participatory experience is assessed in the short run.

However, workers' participation seems to fall short of workers' expectations precisely in these instrumental respects and many respondents expressed misgivings about the way participation is actually working out. This is borne out by the following replies which were given to the question:

"What effects is this new system having on the workers' lives?"

TABLE 6.6

Perceived Effects of Participation	Response (%)
Not much difference in practice	56.0
Improved wages and working conditions	19.2
Workers more respected and better informed	10.4
DK/NA/Other	14.4

(N = 125)

As can be seen above, slightly more than half the workers interviewed do not consider workers' participation to be having any practicable difference in the workers' lives. 29.6% of the workers' sub-sample perceive some positive effects of the new system. This view expressed by a substantial minority suggests that some openings in the traditional ideological set-up may be in process after all. Indeed, the mere fact that the idea of workers' participation is still very much alive and possibly gaining ground after several years of experimentation suggests that there may also be other imperceived effects for those promoting it. But ostensibly, the majority of the respondents expressed disappointment in the experience.

This confirms in many ways the results of a survey conducted by G. Kester in 1973 in four local participative enterprises.[16] Workers' participation appears to be welcomed in principle as a potential means of securing peacefully what the worker has always wanted from work. However, misgivings are generally expressed with the ways it is actually functioning. It may lose much of its initial attraction as it becomes experienced merely as a means of raising productivity, legitimizing managerial power and allocating a new role for the Union. Any ideas of power sharing remain lost in the ideological rhetoric and come to mean little for ordinary workers. Participation is already meant to be an important part of an overall design for the country[17] but, in spite of many references to power sharing, the short-run meaning of particip-

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ation appears to be:

> "to assume responsibilities.... to participate in new form of
> dialogue between workers and management. This will help
> to establish an easier flow of communication between the
> two sides, a better understanding of their separate positions
> and a deeper sense of motivation in the attainment of the
> overall targets. The encouraging experience which has been
> gained by workers' participation in the Malta Drydocks can
> .....lead to greater efficiency and to higher levels of pro-
> ductivity. This is essential at a time when the nation is
> bracing itself for the challenges ahead.... "[18]

In short, the message to the worker is: "Self-sacrifice now,
enjoy the fruits of self-management later". Quite clearly the Government
is severely handicapped in its attempt to introduce workers' participation
and build socialism while struggling to re-shape the country's economy
during a critical period of world recession as the 1970's.

The shop stewards' notions of participation were explored in
some further detail. An attempt was made to find out what exactly
stewards – and to an extent the workers – understand by participation
and how they define it. Replies to the question – "What do you
understand by workers' participation?" were rather vague and it was
evident that workers found it difficult to describe participation as a
meaningful concept. One respondent, a 38 year-old electrical fitter,
frankly admitted:

> "I do not know what it really means. I have attended
> several seminars but still I have not learnt exactly
> what participation is all about".

It is true that most workers reply positively to the direct question
"Do you agree with participation?", but this may not reveal much
about the way they assess actual participation at the Drydocks. In
fact, the general assessment of their experience is either one of
indifference or, more often, of disillusion. Even those few respondents
who expressed a positive orientation towards participation, pointed
mainly to the greater productivity and economic solvency of the enter-
prise, rather than to any form of change in worker-management roles.
Some recurring comments were:

> "Participation is all right ideally, but it is not right for
> workers to interfere too much. Here, at the Dockyard,
> the workers have not changed - they are not any more
> involved than before".

> "I don't approve of participation within the Dockyard.
> The worker should be given his work, do it and get
> paid - no more no less".

> "It has not changed anything here. Participation does not
> affect the worker. He just does what he is told, he does

not give orders ".

These attitudes are mainly related to two factors: an instrumental valuation of the concept and a low propensity to participate together with a traditional attitude towards authority.[19] These will now be taken in turn.

I. Values attached to Participation

A question was asked intending to discover the values which are associated with participation. It revealed that eighteen of the shop stewards (78%) regard participation in instrumental terms. These see its chief value in its ability to raise the level of productivity and, consequently, their earnings. As a 24 year-old welder asserted:

"Participation is when everyone gives his share of work.
It is only thus that one can get all he can ".

Only three respondents (13%) consider participation useful in improving worker-management relations. The remaining two workers (9%) associate participation in decision-making with a heightened cause of responsibility on the workers' parts. None regard it from the perspective of restructuring worker-management roles.

Clearly, Drydocks workers do not value participation as an end in itself but as a means. They appear generally confused about the concept and, at best, they have merely channelled the idea in line with their basic instrumental orientation to work.

2. The Propensity to Participate

In reply to the question – "Would you prefer to work in a firm where you are paid higher wages without having the opportunity to participate or where you are paid slightly less but are able to particip- ate? " – Twelve (52%) of the shop stewards avowedly prefer to work with participation rather than "slightly higher wages ". The majority of the stewards, therefore, expressed a desire to participate. However, replies to a later question which clarifies explicitly the distinction between consultation only, information only and direct participation are less determined. Fifteen respondents (65%) revealed a preference for consultation or information only while only six men (26%) reaffirmed their desire for a direct say in decision-making. These responses make more sense when we remember that the instrumental advantages of a participatory system can be achieved through consultation, whereby managerial authority is not challenged.

The propensity to participate depends not only upon general attitudes and values but, perhaps more significantly, upon the workers' perceived avenues for participation. In the opinion of six shop-stewards (26%), the only tangible effects of the participative system are increased production and economic viability, while nine others (39%) claim they are not aware of any significant outcomes of participation. There exists a problem of communication between the workers and their

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elected representatives[20] – which is quite predictable in an enterprise employing over 5,000 workers. This also affects the workers' perceived capacity to participate. Eighteen respondents (78%) affirm that the proper channels by which workers can voice their ideas and make suggestions are either unaccessible or inexistent. An engine-fitter attributes this impasse to bureaucracy:

> "There is too much red tape and if you try to approach anyone with some suggestions, he will tell you to go to someone else".

And an electrical fitter, one of the oldest respondents, concluded:

> "I do not think anybody ever lends an ear to the little worker. Those on top have always had this overbearing attitude towards us.....by speaking up myself, I could never change much".

Thus, in spite of participation, it appears that Drydocks workers still do not perceptibly hold the powers which the official participative system claims to give them. Eighteen respondents (78%) in fact agree that the decision-making processes are still seen as being taken "at the top"; they are a remote happening and are viewed by workers as being unrelated to their needs, desires and ideas. In this respect, the stewards' role is still vital because most respondents indicate that grave communication gaps between shop-floor workers and Council members are the main area of dissatisfaction.

The rather brief period of participative experience at the Dockyard is a main factor which contributes to the low propensity to participate. But an even more important factor is the deep-rooted rivalry between individuals, between different trade groups and, particularly, between manual and non-manual workers. Such rivalries – often a product of former colonial policies – even rendered collective organisations and action difficult. Such tendencies now militate against the development of positive attitudes towards cooperation and joint decision-making: An atmosphere of latent hostility, self-interest and relative deprivation between trades does not allow the concept of participation to make much sense. The disillusion with participation which many respondents attribute to a lack of communication is only a side-issue. More deeply, the workers' disillusion results from the unchanged nature of their attitudes towards each other.

An iron-caulker presented a coherent picture of the way partici-pation has been experienced at the Dockyard. He commented:

> "It has made no difference to the workers for they say whether I do things right or not, what matters is that I get my wages, so it is all the same to me............ At the Dockyard there are too many differences between trades, in output, conditions, responsibility, danger...... it is difficult for the worker to understand participation for he will tell you - leave me alone - why don't you look at what others do?".

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Participation, which is basically a negation of individualism, and which seeks to narrow down the distinction between worker and manager, has been introduced in an enterprise where workers are reluctant to restructure roles, re-define status and where competition has even provided the impulse for collective action organisation.[21]

Notions of Socialism

The Government has endeavoured to establish socialism in various areas of Maltese life and abroad through various legislative measures and political initiatives. Its aims has been the narrowing of income differentials and the setting up of a welfare state, along with the introduction of workers' participation. A new constitution has been proclaimed which describes Malta as "a democratic republic based on work".[22] There is no secret made of Government's long term aim of revolutionizing the power structure of Maltese society by progressively eradicating all traditional "undue privileges" and establishing "a new social order".[23] All this is publicized under the overall banner of socialism.

In the light of these developments, all the respondents were asked to indicate what they understood by socialism and what, in their opinion, was the best achievement of the present Labour Administration. Apart from the intrinsic interest of such questions which show how these developments are actually interpreted by the people, they help to reveal the respondents' images of the power structure of the wider society which socialism professes to challenge or reform.

Unfortunately, the response level to this question was disappointing and the results may only be considered tentative. However, an analysis of the non-response reveals that these tend to be: Respondents with a lower-than-average educational background and level of occupational skill; full-time housewives; the older respondents; middle-class respondents especially those with Nationalist Party political leanings.

The former could not express their views because the less educated are less articulate and so relatively ill-equipped to give a meaningful answer. The latter felt that expressing themselves might betray their personal political leanings, something others would consider as an unnecessary risk.

The most popular notion of socialism which emerged from the responses is that of 'social reform'. The notion is related to a concept of 'social justice' which basically reaffirms the state's obligation to provide social services, insurance and other benefits for the "weak, old and needy". Equally important is the recognition of the social dignity and the provision of equal opportunity for all workers. However, ideas about a radical re-distribution of power and power-sharing do not figure prominently in the responses.

A few other respondents associated the notion of socialism with the (positive) policies pursued by the Labour Administration – including the nationalisation of commercial banks, radio; television and civil aviation – or even with Christ's social teachings. On the other hand,

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an equivalent minority associate socialism with communism and perceive it as a negative threat to religion and "our traditional way of life". These responses are shown below:

TABLE 6.6

What do you understand by socialism?

Expressed Notions of Socialism	Responses (%)
Social Reform	28.4
Social Threat	10.8
Other[24]	10.8
DK/NA	50.0

The respondents were then asked – "which policies of the present administration – which officially calls itself socialist – merit your highest approval?" This question was intended to reveal whether the respondents equate MLP policies with their notions of socialism. In their responses, the majority (66.1%) singled out those policies aimed at improving people's material living conditions. These include wage increases, social security benefits, the creation of work opportunities for the unemployed, housing projects and other social reforms. Only 11.3% of the respondents mentioned the national political, economic and foreign policies to which the Socialist Administration gives priority in view of its full independence objective. Once again, the notion of any radical redistribution of power in any sector of society is prominent in its absence.

Such responses suggest that the respondents give priority to those policies which intimately affect their own lives in a material way. Such socialist aspirations as egalitarianism and sharing in the power structure of Maltese society are not for them matters of highest concern.

Demands for a radical redistribution of the power structure must be accompanied by a vision of the existing power centres as illegitimate and repressive. Yet, the total lack of such demands from subordinates who are actually located in a power relationship does not necessarily imply the existence of a legitimate authority structure. It may simply be a reflection of psychological adjustment by these same subordinates to an overpowering situation or by the success of the power holders in retaining the existing power structure by winning over support and controlling all protest avenues.

In view of the respondents' expressed attitudes towards management and of their harmonious images of work relations – upheld by traditional

ideas and values – it was considered quite unlikely that they would express any outright rejection of the traditional power centres of Maltese society. Therefore, in order to get some indication of current perceptions, they were asked to indicate the extent of agreement or disagreement with two statements. These concerned two powerful and prestigious institutions of Maltese society – the Law Courts and the Church. The questions were:

"Do you agree or disagree with the statement that 'Justice[25] generally sides with the rich and powerful' ?

The answers were as follows:

TABLE 6.7

Statements on Traditional Power Centres

Scale of Agreement	Responses (%)			
	'Justice'		'The Church'	
Agree fully	9.1	36.0	6.5	28.0
Agree	26.9		21.5	
Disagree	29.0	43.0	33.9	58.6
Disagree fully	14.0		24.7	
DK/NA	21.0		13.4	
	(N = 186)		(N= 186)	

Predictably, the responses show that most disagreed with both statements – particularly with the one critical of the Church where there is a majority disagreement of two to one.[26] Clearly these two institutions still carry a broad base of legitimacy, though this is held more by non-manual than by manual workers. And yet, considering the traditional situation which prevails, it may be considered surprising that as many as 36% of all respondents associate the administration of justice – and 28% associate the Church – with "the rich and powerful". These again tend to be mainly manual workers. This work category contains many inarticulate members, unable or unwilling to express themselves particularly when confronted with abstract thinking. But this same category contains a minority which consistently questions managerial prerogatives and rejects the principle of income differentials.[27] In these respects, at least, they reflect the new perceptions propagated through the MLM whose social base is firmly within that category. This also suggests that there may be a gradual breakway process from the dualistic perceptions of job satisfaction and of work relations,[28] which have been partly associated with the historical condition of national powerlessness.[29] In other words, as that social condition

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recedes, the traditionally dominant value system and the subordinate one may meet and merge, resulting in a more genuine or legitimate set of social perceptions, even if still remaining within a paternalistic framework.

In more general terms, one may again conclude that power perceptions usually tend to reflect the established social background. New experiences, like workers' participation or other socialist policies tend to be assimilated within this established pattern. However, some important variations exist between the perceptions of manual and non-manual workers. These suggest that the long-term developments in perceptions may be more uncertain. The respondents' perceptions of the class structure of their society may provide a further clue to such future developments. These class perceptions will be analysed in the next chapter of this study.

Search for Legitimacy

At this stage it is useful to review the relevant sociological literature on the perceptions of power and authority relations for a better understanding of the data which follows.

Among the environmental factors shaping power perceptions, there is the experience of subordination which characterizes in various ways the work situation of most employees. This experience tends to "spill-over" from work into non-work activities influencing men's ideas, values and norms in general. There exists a highly diffuse experience of repetitive and simple work tasks, often performed under close supervision and which offer little scope for initiative and discretion on the workers' part. Consequently, the role occupant perceives superordinates as behaving as if they believe he cannot be trusted.[30] As a result, an atmosphere of mutual distrust and a calculating power rather than authority relationship is the likely outcome.[31] Thus the system of authority relations within such organisations is constantly under threat. Of course, workers normally adjust their aspirations down to a realistic level and trade off intrinsic deprivations for extrinsic rewards. They may even develop a liking for what has been described as the traction aspects of routine work.[32]

However, the basis for stable relationships is located within situations of perceived legitimate authority. Any serious threat to such relations may eventually lead to the breakdown of the entire structure of social relationships. Yet, the conditions of the labour market may compel employees to accept subordinate roles through impersonal forces. Such acceptance is never fully legitimate but remains potentially problematic. The imprint, in the Maltese workers' minds, of past experiences of large scale unemployment, together with a long experience of national powerlessness, has already been amplified in this study. These have respectively led to a strong preoccupation with security and with paternalistic compliance. The Maltese situation thus provides a good example of the extent to which power can provide a legitimate basis for the power holders.[33] As Gouldner has

argued:

> "Power often creates its own legitimation....Those who obey
> because they are afraid do not think of themselves unmanly
> or cowardly; in an effort to maintain a decent regard
> for themselves, the fearful frequently find ingenious ways in
> which they can define almost any demand upon them as
> legitimate. " [34]

Likewise, Worsley maintains that:

> "....the best form of power rests not on coercion but on a
> successful appeal to its legitimacy ". [35]

Nevertheless, it has also been shown earlier in this study that there were simultaneously, some important limitations to the colonial power-holders. For while Maltese powerlessness has been most evident in national political and economic activities, there were important local activities which remained predominantly under Maltese domain. Traditionally paternalism has also been accompanied by various forms of manipulation and, most significantly, by political activism. This goes to show that the legitimacy secured through the paternalistic ideology and manifested through a widespread compliance or subordination was only skin deep. Thus, it was perhaps inevitable that such an insecure basis for authority relations would sooner or later collapse. On the other hand, a good indication of its effectiveness was the fact that any serious challenge to authority relations has to emerge, characteristically, from above, that is, under the influence of charismatic leadership inspired from outside Malta.

Like other subordinate groups, Maltese workers are culturally receptive to strong, charismatic leadership. They have been successfully led by such individuals; this is indicative of an endemic social need for someone to express their grievances and help to realise their aspirations. Whether such grievances and aspirations are consciously felt or not is immaterial. As Fox explains:

> "The position of the charismatic leader rests on an
> identification between leader and led of such a kind
> that he is able to crystallize, articulate and shape
> the practical expression of normative aspirations of
> his followers ". [36]

It has already been shown how the MLM leadership mounted an effective challenge to the traditional power structure in Maltese society. This has been done by directing the Movement against both the colonial power holders and those local institutions which served as legitimating agencies for the prevailing power structure. The attacks directed against the Church authority during the politico-religious disputes of the 1930's and the 1960's were only the most dramatic episodes of this prolonged campaign. The overall aim throughout has been that of implanting a new secular ideology to replace the traditional, religious one.[37] In this way, the prevailing power structure was attacked

at its roots by attempts at removing the legitimacy of the 'paternalist' imagery. That this was possible indicates that power provides, at least, a potentially insecure basis for legitimacy.

The effectiveness of power in promoting legitimacy may also be undermined by a general shift in social values or ideas which once provided a main source of legitimacy. In Malta, the hitherto prevailing tradition of compliance with paternalism, based on the reality of national dependence to a foreign colonial power, has succumbed to the challenge from political elites - notably from the MLM leadership. Following the breakdown of Mintoff's Integration proposals in 1958, whereby the Maltese would have been placed on an equal, constitutional level with British citizens, there was a demand for "full and immediate independence". Even though constitutional independence was eventually granted in 1964, as soon as the MLP was returned to power in 1971, it resolved to "enable Malta to achieve economic independence in the shortest possible time".[38] To all intents and purposes, the Maltese tradition of compliance with (colonial) paternalism was broken on March 31st, 1979, when the last British servicemen left Malta.

The MLM leadership appealed to the Maltese workers' sentiments of nationalism in an effort to rally them behind a new ideology which would serve as the basis for a new pattern of authority relations. In this nationalistic appeal, it was considered important to stress instrumental elements, both as benefits resulting from complete autonomy and as a means of purifying this new ideology from the other-wordly values proclaimed by the Church, which had served as the traditional rallying point. It was therefore emphasized that the acquisition of political and economic rights for self-determination may entail sacrifice and self-restraint in the long run but was ultimately in the interests of the Maltese workers.

As a practical measure, various schemes of workers' participation were started, particularly in those enterprises which had been national-ised from their former colonial managements. In such enterprises, economic difficulties were often encountered and, through their own management committees, the workers were compelled to make sacrifices peacefully. When the economic situation improved, part of the income was distributed among the workers in the form of bonuses or other fringe benefits. Thus, workers' participation has been closely linked with instrumental values and used as a means of securing the workers' cooperation in difficult economic circumstances. The overall result has been a remarkable achievement of industrial peace. In other words, it is argued that the prevailing atmosphere of industrial calm is the result of a new basis of authority and trust relations between the Government, the Union and the workers which has been established.

The most advanced system of participation in Malta is found in the Drydocks where near full control has been formally vested since 1977 on a Council which is directly elected by all workers for a two-year period. In addition, there is a series of works committees elected to represent particular sections of the work force at lower management levels. Through these institutions, the Government and

the GWU claim that the workers' interests are adequately represented
so that any unpopular measures taken in the national interest are
justified.

The extent to which workers' participation has actually gained
acceptance among the workers is actively debated bot within political
circles and in the country at large. This new approach has meant a
reversal of former roles and ideologies. The Union, previously accused
of. resorting to irresponsible industrial action, is now being blamed
for "abandoning the workers" and for submitting itself to a "political
overlord". Some see workers' participation simply as "means of attempt-
ing to secure labour's compliance",[39] a Government device through
which it seeks to control the Union and avoid industrial action. On
its part, the Union seeks to legitimize its new role through appleals
in the press, the organisation of seminars on workers' participation
and through whatever opportunities present themselves of addressing
the workers.[40]

Though workers' participation essentially implies the availability
of some means by which "the workers or their representatives actively
share in decision-making within the enterprises"[41] in practice this
may be hampered by the lack of the "workers' propensity to partici-
pate".[42] In a cultural context characterized by attitudes of deference
and compliance, based on a deeply ingrained concept of powerlessness
and dependence, attitudes towards power-sharing cannot be expected
to develop overnight. The data presented in this chapter suggests that
the introduction of workers' participation in Malta seems to be
accompanied by some attitudinal changes on the workers' parts: For
instance, most workers now favour some form of direct participation.
However, the concept itself of participation is being largely incorporated
within the traditional ideological framework. In this context, the
Government's paternalistic role features very prominently. Yet the
success of the MLM has been that of expressing and harnessing on a
national level the aspirations of Maltese individuals which had hitherto
been overshadowed by a superimposed value system which only left
room for the development of adaptations to powerlessness. The GWU
is now effectively shedding its traditional role in order to assist the
MLP Government to govern effectively "for the well being of the
workers" and of "the country as a whole". Just as at the enterprise
and departmental levels, the Union collaborates through workers'
participation, at the national level, it works "hand in hand" with the
Government.[43]

One particular Union role which has come under severe strain
following these changes in Union policy and ideology is that of the
shop steward. Like their British counterparts, Maltese shop stewards
are:

   "essentially shop-floor bargainers, using all the oppor-
      tunities presented to them to satisfy their members'
      grievances and claims".[44]

Although wage-bargaining in Malta is customarily conducted by

full-time union officials or national section secretaries, shop stewards still have an important intermediary role. They normally perform some vital tasks for the union such as recruitment of new members and the maintenance of interest among old members. They also generally serve as the main link and means of communication between the union and its members.[45] But the effectiveness of the shop steward's role and his main source of power emerges from his relationship with shop-floor workers whom he represents. For this reason he is:

"likely to take their point of view in any dispute with management, and as their leader must be their spokes-man".[46]

Thus, shop stewards cannot afford to ignore the declared wishes of their constituents on whom they ultimately depend for their authority. Their role involves the constant need to retain the member-ship group cohesion and commitment to whichever course they choose to follow. Yet, if they are to retain their credibility with management they must also manifest some marginal involvement in managerial functions which is usually done through productivity bargaining. With the introduction of an effective system of workers' participation – or evem more workers' control – stewards are likely to find themselves initially in an ambiguous role situation. They eventually require a fundamentally new role definition carrying a new self-image. Such problems reflect those of adjustment of the union role itself to a participatory situation.

These difficulties are, of course, encountered at the Drydocks, where the opposition between management and workers – with the union taking an uncompromising confrontation role on the workers' behalf – has been traditionally strongest. It has been explained,[47] in an attempt to sort out some of the problems, that there are no conflicting duties between the management committees and the Union. The Union's role is that of a safeguard against abuses and of a teacher to the workers. That of the committees is of:

"ensuring that lazy workers should not ride on the hard-working ones....to see that those workers on 'idle-time' are given other tasks"[48]

The emphasis here lies on the demarcation of duties between the Union and the workers' committees – depicting the latter's role as an aid to management. However, during this same occasion, the existence of a lack of communication between stewards and committee members was brought to light. A need was expressed by shop stewards, managers and committee members for prior consultation and cooperation. In particular, stewards were blamed for withholding their consent to unpopular measures until they receive a clear mandate from Union headquarters. It was argued that the stewards' role must change from a protective to a productive one.

"One should no longer regard the steward as the one who is always arguing and opposing".

On their part, some Drydocks shop stewards expressed difficulty of adjustment to their new roles. In these respects, they may also be reflecting the complaints and uncertainties of their constituents.[49]

To conclude, it is probably too early to say whether the current venture of workers' participation in Malta will lead to the workers' disenchantment as has happened in those places where the workers realized that this system did not live up to their expectations.[50] It is indeed quite clear that from Government's point of view this represents a most important attempt at establishing a new social basis for authority or high trust relations. However, one stands to see whether the Government will simply succeed in establishing itself as a new paternalist figure, given the strength of the traditionally dominant value system with its traditional forms of social adaptation.

NOTES

1. Similar responses tend to be given by English workers: 67% of the Luton affluent workers, 70% of process workers in various regions and 80% of Banbury factory workers. (M. Mann, op.cit. (1973) p.35). This suggests that the "unitary perspective" of work organizations (as depicted by A. Fox op.cit. (1974) pp.249-255) continues to prevail in theory though it may no longer serve as a practical guide to industrial relations. In France and Italy, on the other hand, it appears that few workers perceive management-worker relations in these terms. Cf. M. Mann, op.cit. (1973).

2. N.W. Chamberlain and J.W. Kuhn, Collective Bargaining (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1965).

3. Vide Chapter 3, supra..

4. Vide Chapter 6, supra.

5. Cf. Mann, op.cit. (1970).

6. The desire to set oneself up on one's own is highest among those who, in fact, can actually do so due to their own skills and market demand for them i.e. skilled manual workers among whom 80.6% relish this prospect.

7. M. Mann op.cit. (1970).

8. As they see it, collective action is useful to raise the conditions of the working class as a whole. Beyond that, individual avenues (e.g. better training, hard work or patronage links) are the means for achieving an advantage over others.

9. In 1970 there were slightly over 45% Union members of all wage and salary earners. Around 70% of this membership belonged to the GWU. By 1977 Union Membership dropped to 37%. This was mainly due to the rundown of the British Base and the exclusion from Union membership of workers enrolled in the labour corps (5.7%) who were legally under military discipline. But the workers' disenchantment with current Union policy may also have contributed to this downward trend. Source:

Annual Abstract of Statistics (D.O.I., 1978). International figures for 1968 are: U.K. - 40%, Italy - 35%, W. Germany - 26%, U.S.A. - 22% and Japan 20%. Cf. Strumthal, Comparative Labour Movements (Wadsworth, California USA, 1972) p.48. Among the workers' sub-sample there are 50.4% who "belong" or "used to belong" to a Trade Union.

10. If the sample had only included Union members - rather than all workers - this category would naturally have been higher.

11. These were four self-employed tradesmen.

12. From a speech to stewards and delegates by the Secretary, Metal Workers Section of the GWU prior to the second Council elections held at the Drydocks. Reported in L-Orizzont, (February 1977).

13. In his opening address to a three-day seminar on Workers' Participation for Union activists organised by the GWU with the collaboration of the I.M.F. and I.L.O., Mr G. Agius, the GWU General Secretary, stated: "Participation had to be undertaken by the Union because otherwise it might have meant the end of the enterprise. Unions had to do it; Unions were dragged into participation: 'we have to succeed'. In Malta the Unions did not fight for participation". This Seminar was held at Mount St Joseph, Targa Gap, Malta, in October 1972.

14. L-Orizzont (29 April 1978) p.16

15. In his more recent study of participation in Malta, G. Kester has reaffirmed his earlier conclusion. Kester, op.cit. (1980) See also E.L. Zammit Transition to Workers Self-Management.

16. G. Kester, Workers' Participation in Malta - Issues and Opinions. (University of Malta Press, 1974). G. Kester, D. Vella and E.L. Zammit, Is-sehem tal-Haddiem Malti fl-Industrija: Rapport dwar Stharrig f'Erba' Ntraprizi. (Department of Economics, University of Malta and Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, 1974)

17. Reported in L-Orizzont (3 March 1978) p.9. See also, Supplement to 1973-1980 Development Plan for Malta (Valletta, OPM, 1977) Part 4, Conclusion.

18. Supplement to 1973-1980 Development Plan, Ibid.

19. Following the conceptualization of participation made by K.F. Walker, op.cit. (1974). Apart from the workers' perceived capacity to participate, another factor which may influence the propensity to participate is their actual ability. Many seem to feel that an ideal participative system entails worker involvement in all kinds of decisions. Seventeen men (74%) maintain that workers are able to contribute with ideas or practical experience in most kinds of decisions. But at the same time, most of these acknowledge the need for raising the workers' educational levels and for specialized training before their span of control can be widened.

20. The establishment of workers' committees as a later development of participation was mainly intended to bridge this gap. This was explicitly stated by the Minister of Development in a seminar on workers' committees. Reported in L-Orizzont (6 March 1978)

21. As during the notorious parity dispute between manual and non-manual workers of 1970-71 Cf. Chapter 3, supra.

22. Constitution of the Republic of Malta (Department of Information, 1974) Chapter I (1).

23. A recent statement on some of the characteristic features of "Maltese Reformist Socialism" and of the difficulties encountered has been made by the Prime Minister in his address to the Union of Socialist Youths. Reported in L-Orizzont (7 March 1979).

24. These include: "Nationalisation" 3.7%; "MLP/Mintoff" 3.7%; "Christ's teachings" 1.1%; "Workers' Participation" 0.5%; "Economic Progress" 1.6%

25. The term "justice" (il-gustizzja) was used intentionally in the question because in working-class jargon it designates both the law-courts as an institution and the police force as the administrators of "justice" to ordinary citizens.

26. There was only 13.4% non-response here and this was mainly due to the fact that there was purposely no in-between category included in the list of options presented.

27. Cf. Chapter 6, supra.

28. Vide Chapter 6, supra,

29. Vide Chapter 2, supra.

30. A. Fox (1974) p.26

31. Though, as Fox has recently emphasized, this is not to say that "low discretion roles necessarily imply low-trust relations"...."The crucial importance of the orientations and perceptions of the 'actors' is subsequently emphasized....thereby confirming once more the importance of mediating frames of reference, ideology and aspirations" Sociology 13, (1979) pp.105-6.

32. W. Baldamus, Efficiency and Effort (Tavistock, 1967) p.59. Cf. Chapter 5 supra,. It was argued earlier on that such adjustments operated as 'defence mechanisms' against 'cognitive dissonance'.

33. Cf. A. Fox (1971) p.50.

34. Quoted by A. Fox, op.cit. (1974) p.277.

35. P. Worsley: "The Distribution of Power in Industrial Society" in J. Urry and
J. Wakeford (eds): Power in Britain (London, Heineman, 1973) pp.247-266. See also, in the same volume, the "comment" by D. Lockwood on Worsley's essay, pp.266-272.

36. A. Fox op.cit. (1971) p.41.

37. Although the anti-colonial element within the MLM really emerged after the collapse of Mintoff's 'integration' proposal in 1958.

38. Development Plan for Malta 1973-1980 op.cit. p.4.

39. H. Ramsay: "Cycles of Control: Worker Participation in Sociological and Historical Perspective". Sociology, Vol II (3) (1977) pp.481-506.

40. The author, for instance has chaired over such a seminar held at the Excelsior Hotel, Floriana, in July 1975. Guest lecturers from the ILO were invited.

41. K. Walker: "Workers' Participation in Management: Problems, Practice and Prospects" I.I.L.S. Bulletin No.12 (1974) pp.3-35.

42. Ibid. pp.14-17.

43. Through the recent 'statutory fusion' of the MLP and the GWU, two Union officials are offered Cabinet seats when the annual budget is being discussed before being presented to parliament.

44. W.E.J. McCarthy: The Role of Shop Stewards in British Industrial Relations. Royal Commission Research Paper No. 1 (1966) quoted in H.A. Clegg: The system of Industrial Relations in Great Britain (Oxford, Blackwell, 1976) p.12.

45. H.A. Clegg, op.cit. pp.16-19.

46. Ibid., p.21.

47. The former Minister of Development at a 3-day seminar attended by Drydocks shop stewards, workers' committee members, management, Union and Government representatives.

48. L-Orizzont, 6 March 1979 p.1

49. The fears that many Drydocks workers are disappointed in the current Union policy received some confirmation from the results of the Council elections held in February 1979. In this election the highest number of votes were obtained by the only candidate who was not sponsored by the GWU, who is an expelled member and prominent in the Opposition Nationalist Party.

50. Lord Bullock: Report of the Committee of Inquiry on Industrial Democracy (London, HMSO, 1977) pp.109-110.

PERCEPTIONS OF THE CLASS STRUCTURE

Mixed Social Consciousness and Images of Progress

There are indications in the foregoing discussions that there exists a local minority which holds new perceptions within a predominantly traditionalist framework. Similar trends are expected to emerge from a study of the same respondents' perceptions of the class structure of their society. The first part of this chapter mainly reviews some results obtained by other researchers relating to the emergence of class consciousness. These ideas provide possible inter- pretations and enable comparisons to be made with the empirical data presented in the second part of the chapter.

The distinction usually discussed by sociologists between the objective and subjective aspects of class is central to any study of social inequality. It involves the problematic links between man's relationships to the means and processes of production – including relative life-styles and life-chances and men's ideas, values and attitudes concerning these relationships. According to Marx, the development of class conciousness – an ingredient of the revolutionary reconstruction of society – is based on the polarisation of two major classes which emerge as the necessary outcome of the capitalist production system. A process of proletarianisation under capitalism contributes to the dissemination of ideas, an awareness of a common situation of exploit- ation and hence to the emergence and development of a revolutionary class consciousness: A "class in itself" develops into a "class for itself".[1] Yet the precise manner and conditions under which this process occurs remain problematic. Marx himself was no simple deter- minist and recognised that "it is men that change circumstances".[2] Lenin emphasised the central role of the Communist Party as the vanguard of proletarian class consciousness and revolution: The spontaneity of the masses needed control and direction by conscious leaders who keep the ultimate political goal in mind.[3] Lukacs, like Marx, depicts the proletarian under capitalism as dominated by economic 'laws' which operate against his "true interests". For this reason he distinguishes between false class consciousness and imputed or correct consciousness. The latter is brought to the proletarians from "outside"[4] – notably from party intellectuals. It refers to "thoughts and feelings men would have in a situation were they able to assess it and the interests arising from it in their impact on immediate action and on the whole structure of society".[5] Lukacs deems such thoughts and feelings to be "appropriate to (man's) objective situation".[6]

Bottomore, however, argues that these conclusions actually differed from those of Marx, for whom the working class will attain a fully developed consciousness "through its own efforts and experiences".[7]

Apart from the problem of interpreting Marx correctly, Bottomore also argues that the dismissal of people's actual perception under the

label of "false consciousness" is sociologically unacceptable. A socio-logical approval of the phenomenon of class consciousness necessitates an exploration of people's subjective experiences – including their definitions and their reactions to objective situations as they develop historically. These definitions are heavily influenced by the sub-culture as well as by the outcome of competition between groups trying to establish their own vantage points. Thus, the success or failure of the MLM to superimpose new perceptions over the traditional sub-culture has to be measured in the context of historical circumstances. In fact, some writers have identified certain items as necessary consti-tuents of full class consciousness. The realisation of this consciousness comprising all these items is indeed rare. In fact the results of empirical investigation usually demonstrate that some of these essential components – conceptions of class identity; opposition, totality and an alternative society – are absent in concrete situations. Nor does it appear that the working class progresses automatically towards "a fully-fledged class consciousness". This problematic and uneven develop-ment of working class consciousness, as has happened in Britain, has provided one of the main stimuli to the contemporary research on social perceptions. Rather than following the ideological assumption and predictions of the classical theorists on class consciousness, popular images may be fragmentary, ambiguous and incoherent, sometimes even illogical. [8] Many workers may not even uphold an antagonistic "us-them" view of the social structure. An awareness of structural inequality may be legitimised, regardless of how it effects the subjects.

Moore [9] has found that within the occupational community of Durham miners, any proletarian image of society is considered as a form of deviance from the established, deferentialist viewpoint. The traditional coherence between religious, economic and political beliefs have made it very difficult for the Labour Party to win support within that mining community. The non-emergence of a radical class conscious-ness, in spite of the strong sense of occupational community, is explained by the miners' preoccupation with their market interests which, in their views include employers. Thus, in defending market interest the miners are, in fact, reinforcing the social order. This case also underlines the importance of religious and economic ideas in the shaping of social perceptions.

In the case of the East Anglian fishermen, studied by Lumnis[10] the occupational community provides its own reference groups with its own work skills and internal prestige symbols serving as the basis of a distinct set of social perceptions. This accounts for the fishermen's:

"perception of the wider social structure as a hierarchy while not applying this structure to their own occupa-tion". [11]

As Lumnis explains, class consciousness will not emerge unless 'they' are perceived as being responsible for the unpleasantness in the condition of 'us'.

Ultimately the issue of class perception concerns the relationships between an objective situation, its subjective representation as ideas and the consequent action based on these. The relation between these items is clear, but it is equally clear that people play an active, mediatory role in these relations.[12]

The contemporary sociological studies of class perceptions – as distinct from the traditional studies of self-rated class[13] – are inspired by the viewpoints of the actors themselves. The subjective significance of these models can only be investigated through intensive interviewing techniques with as few preconceived ideas as possible on the parts of the investigators.[14] Nevertheless, a remarkable coherence has emerged in the findings, and broadly similar distinctions between two contrasting models of society have been found by researchers, namely:

Prestige Model – Power Model (Bott, Willener and Popitz)
Gradation Schemes – Dychotomic Schemes (Ossowski)
Egoism – Paternalism (Runciman)
Static Strata – Dynamic Classes (Centers)
Status Ideology – Class Ideology (Prandy)
Individualism – Collectivism (Goldthorpe and Lockwood)[15]

Though internal variations within these models have been reported, the Prestige Model variety is typically held by middle-class, non-manual workers, whereas the Power Model variety is typically held by manual workers. The characteristic elements of these two basic models diverge on several points.[16]

Popitz[17] has found six variations in social perceptions which further elaborate these categories. Some of his results obtained among German steel workers in 1957 bear a striking resemblance to the empirical data presented in this chapter and so merit some detailed mention. Popitz found that society may be regarded as:

(a)   An **Ordered System** where social harmony prevails (Static Order) or which is evolving towards that state (Progressive Order); it will be shown that this notion of an orderly progressive society which constantly 'moves with the times' according to an unwritten 'law of progress' is very popular in Malta.

(b)   An **Unchangeable Dichotomy** where no action on the part of the oppressed can be effective. This view implies a rejection of the labour movement (collective destiny) and/or a resort to individual efforts.

(c)   A **Changeable Dichotomy** where the class sytem is susceptible to reform (democratic evolution) or simply to a revolution (class conflict).

In addition there were 20 per cent of the respondents who exhibited "no image of society" and another 7 per cent with inadequate responses or 'intermediate cases' which had to be excluded from the analysis.

While there exists some form of general agreement on these two basic popular models of class structure – Power and Prestige – there is also a considerable amount of diversity regarding their articulation. In fact a number of 'older' studies seem to accept a central issue uncritically. In their attempt to link social perceptions with particular situations and experiences, they argued that the:

"position within the social structure conditions the view of that structure ". [18]

The evidence of the Malta case confirms that perceptions of work and power as well as of the class structure as a whole can be generally traced to sources outside the immediate social environment, whether to the traditionally dominant value system or to the leadership of the MLM. As shown in the previous chapter, Mintoff's efforts to implant new social perceptions in the areas of work and power have had some slight effect. An analysis of his impact on class perceptions however, reveals doses of the traditional adaptations to powerlessness for many years to come. In fact, the research findings in this chapter indicate that, also in this context, the objective circumstances have not generated any large scale proletarian images.

Experience and Images of Class Structure

No serious observer of Maltese life would fail to recognise that within living memory there has been a visible decline of class differences. Most Maltese adults recall how rigidly stratified their society used to be: the colonial overlords on top, the local elites – often of foreign descent or sympathy, in the middle, and the bulk of the local population at the bottom. Particularly since the second world war, a process of democratization has proceeded apace with the decline of colonialism, economic affluence and the enactment of social legislation. That there persists an unequal distribution of what sociologists usually refer to as class, status and power is however undeniable. Indeed, such inequalities are widely regarded as fair and legitimate, as serving a useful social purpose and, at any rate, as being inevitable facts of life.

78% of the respondents in the main survey recognise the existence of social classes in the sense that these represent a convenient way of grouping people who automatically share common characteristics. Only 3.2% deny their existence outright, though as many as 18.8% failed to give a coherent answer or preferred not to express themselves on this matter. [19]

Nevertheless, most of these respondents expressed a hierarchical image of the class structure – as composed of three or more 'classes' or 'strata'. These are based upon the possession of objective attributes – namely education, occupation and wealth (30.1%) and upon inter-actional or prestige criteria (30.6%). On the other hand, a minority of the respondents hold a dichotomous image of the 'class structure'. Even this 'power' model of society is based upon a combination of objective criteria and interactional exclusiveness. All the responses are

reproduced in the table below:

TABLE 7.1

Images of Class Structure

Model of Society	Basis for model (%)		
Hierarchical	Education	–	9.7
(60.8%)	Occupation	–	8.6
	Wealth	–	11.8
	Pure Prestige	–	5.9
	Composite	–	24.7
Dichotomous	Power	–	5.9
(17.2%)	Wealth	–	4.3
	Pure Snobbishness	–	4.8
No classes exist		–	3.2
No meaningful class perception expressed		–	18.8

The hierarchical model tends to be composed of three or more "classes" ranked in ascending order while the dichotomous model is typically composed of two unequal "classes". A variation of the second model consists of the view of society as composed of the bulk of the population placed within one, large, central 'class' with other residual categories above or below it.

The Drydocks shop stewards responding to the supplementary survey also hold varied opinions about the basis for class differences. Fourteen (61%) attribute them to attitudes of superiority or snobbishness among the wealthy and the educated, or to inferiority of the lower working groups; five men(22%) attribute them simply to egoism or jealousy between groups or individuals; and only two (9%) vaguely suggest that there is domination by one interest-group over all the others.

The shop stewards spoke of "high, middle and low social classes" of which the middle one is, by far, the largest and the low the smallest. In fact, as a result of the MLM's efforts, they believe that the 'low class' has almost disappeared. They imply that there are effectively only two classes now and even these are seen as "moving closer towards each other" as a result of present socialist policies. Hence, even in this restricted sense there are very few respondents who explicitly visualise society in terms of dichotomous classes and none at all who regard these as completely incompatible with each other. Only one respondent avowedly visualizes society as basically constituted of two opposed classes with conflicting interests – a large working-class which includes both skilled and unskilled workers

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and a 'middle class' comprising a number of groups which range from a teacher's grade – which is "equivalent to that of a foreman" – upwards, ending with managers and professionals.

Such a class dichotomy is based only upon occupational ranks. It discards other visible contrasts in living styles, social prestige, income and the possession of power, one or more of which were mentioned by all the other respondents as aspects of social inequality. This respondent, a sixteen-year old apprentice, later revealed that his father, an ex-Drydocks worker, is still an active member of the MLP district committee and he himself, as a boy, belonged to the Brigata.[20] He says of himself: "I literally grew up within the Party ranks". For these reasons, his remarks carry an added weight. Throughout the interview, he emphasized all along the importance of greater communication between the two distinct groups. He states:

> "The people at the top do not give us a chance to start
> a dialogue between us, such as to be able to commun-
> icate as human beings. They say: "This is as far as
> you can go......".I don't think that they should impose their
> authority....There must always be somebody to give orders
> but not to impose himself, if possible".

This is no unbridgeable "us and them" attitude. It is far removed from the radicalism often attributed to a class-conscious proletariat. Yet, this dichotomous perception stands out among the rest of the shop stewards' perceptions.

1. A large middle class comprising the bulk of society and incorporating virtually all types of workers;

2. A lower class which is generally seen as gradually diminishing due to the fruits of the combined efforts of Union and Party within the MLM – availability of education, social services and improved standard of living;

3. A small upper class made up of top managerial grades and professionals.

In such a vision, the workers usually place themselves in the middle 'class' with the bulk of society.

Three other respondents – 13% – perceive four or more social classes arranged into a hierarchy. Their own place within this hierarchy is consequently unclear – they fit in somewhere but are vague about their exact location. These three respondents were also among those who distinguished explicitly between an inferior 'class' of labourers or unskilled workers and that of skilled tradesmen who occupy a definitely higher level. In fact three of these respondents are unskilled workers and they placed themselves in a lower 'class'. This suggests a feeling of inferiority on their part – by comparison with the trades-men of the Dockyard who possess superior training and skills.

Seventeen of these shop stewards – 74% – mention that 'classes' arise chiefly from differences in amount of wealth and income. Financial possessions are perceived to be naturally at the root of most definitions of "classes" given, such as the following:

- "the one whose earnings are just enough to live on"

- "the one who earns enough income to save some proportion of it"

- "the one who hardly knows, himself, how much money he has".

The reason for this is that if one has a lot of money, one can associate oneself with high society, and this automatically places one in the high class".

Only five respondents – 22% – disagree with the priority given to wealth, claiming that social 'classes' are rather a function of the visible manners (imgieba), education and general appearance of individuals or groups. The higher 'classes' are readily recognised by their snobbish-ness as well as by their occupation and education, while lower 'classes' are uncouth in their manner. Two of these workers also included family background, descent or family names among the determinants of 'class'.

Thus, among the Drydocks shop stewards, the basis of 'class' differentiation is either a matter of money, or a matter of one's social links and general behaviour. The only exception is a pipe-worker who maintains that it is a man's set of ideas, his manner of living and his own self-image which ascribe him to a particular social 'class'.

In spite of difference in wealth and skill, all stewards consider themselves as broadly within the 'working class'. Most of them adhere to a neat three 'class' model of society, in which there is a superior and inferior group to themselves. They often differentiate between manual and non-manual work as well as between skill-level, always placing themselves at some intermediate level.

Perceived Class Relations

Considering now only those respondents who managed to express some meaningful class perception in the main sample (78% of the total), there are almost twice as many who view 'class' relations as harmonious as there are who view them as conflicting. The respondents perceived number of 'classes' and 'class' relations are shown in Table 7.2.

The conception of a central class in potential conflict with others on the fringe invokes the image of a coalition rather than 'class' as commonly understood by sociologists. This basically consists of a network of unequal partners having informal links, common standards

TABLE 7.2

Perceived Number of Classes and Class Relations

Harmony (65%)	2 functionally interdependent classes	15.3%
	3 or more interdependent 'classes'	49.7%
Conflict (35%)	2 conflicting 'classes'	7.3%
	A single central 'class' with residual 'classes' on the fringe with individual conflict	27.7%

$(N = 137)$[21]

and complementary interests which serve as rallying points for members. Nevertheless, partners might well view each other with distrust and behave as competitors towards each other as they participate actively in various networks of a small-scale society which constantly cross-cut into each other. Therefore, this conception implies constant individual conflict in a situation of formal equality among the bulk of a population.[22]

The questions concerning the perceived bases of 'class' differences numbers and 'class relations' lead to a consideration of their relative sizes or of the shape of the class structure which the respondents conceptualize. The three distinct models of class structure which emerge have in common a small, tapering superior class on top which stands for the traditional image of power and authority relations in both civil and religious institutions. The three models are as follows:

(a) The vision of two unequal 'classes' consisting of a small superior 'class' and a much bigger inferior one. These are traditionally referred to as 'the rich' and 'the poor' (is-sinjur u l-fqir) or simply 'the high' and 'the low' (l-gholi u l-baxx). Nowadays, the lower is more often called 'the workers' class'. One third of these respondents consider such classes to have conflicting interests.

(b) The vision of three or more unequal classes with a pyramidal class structure. Relations between groups is characteristically harmonious. Differences between 'classes' are usually considered to be of degree rather than of kind.

(c) The vision of a large central mass with a residual category on top and another below. This involves a diamond class structure where the bulk of the popu-lation is referred to as 'the workers' or 'ordinary

men' and are considered above 'the low, 'the vulgar'
and 'the poor' (il-baxxi, il-psatas, il-fqar)

Cross-Tabulation of the Basis for 'Class Distinctions' (Table 1)
and perceived relations between them (Table 2) reveals a set of
expected patterns: Those who uphold a hierarchical model tend to
perceive 'class' relations as harmonious and functional: those who
uphold a dichotomous model tend to perceive 'class' relations as
actually or potentially in conflict, though strikingly, among the few
respondents who hold this dichotomous view – 32 – a minority does
not regard these relations as conflicting in any way. All in all only
11.8% of the total sample – that is, 22 respondents – definitely
expressed a dichotomous image of the class structure with conflicting
'class' relations. This is only to be expected in the Maltese context
where, as already established, both the dominant value system and
the traditional patterns of social adaptations emphasize deference,
acceptance and paternalistic compliance.

A second cross-tabulation, this time of 'class' perceptions (Table
2) with the broad occupational categories of those who uphold them
reveals a clear association of the hierarchical model with non-manual
workers and of the dichotomous with manual workers, particularly
the unskilled.

TABLE 7.3

Association of Class Model with Occupational Category

Perceived Class Model	Worker Categories (%)			
	Non-Manual	Skilled Manual	Unskilled Manual	Total (Workers' sub-sample)
Hierarchical	86.5	75.9	74.3	79.2
Dichotomous	13.5	24.1	25.7	20.5
	(N = 37)	(N = 29)	(N = 35)	

(N = 101)

The above evidence suggests that any radical ideas on social
change and class consciousness are more likely to appeal to manual
workers, for this is where any dichotomous – conflict perceptions of
the Maltese class structure tend to be found. Nevertheless even here,
the traditional perceptions still predominate widely.

Even among the shop stewards of the supplementary survey,
'class' relations are essentially regarded as harmonious. Any ideas of

power-conflict in society are soon banished and regarded as self-defeating:

"All classes are in need of one another and this is why
    there is cohesion. They cannot all live by themselves... ".

Except for the ex-"**Brigata**" member mentioned earlier, all workers in the sub-sample perceive society as being composed of unequal but compatible 'classes'. Social order is perceived as an integrated network of roles. This is implied in their vision of manual work which they value as equally important as other kinds of work. Harmony is linked with interdependence. The elderly cleaner explains:

"Everyone is important in the natural order. People really
    make up one chain. There are large links and small
    links but they are all joined ".

In reply to the direct question – "Do you think social classes co-exist harmoniously or do they inevitably generate conflict?" – twenty one workers (91%) express a belief in co-existence and harmony. Significantly, however, many respondents do realize that beneath this idealistic image there are competitive forces and great rivalries between individuals and 'classes'. But, in the final analysis, this is considered as a positive factor, as envy and competition provide an incentive for improvement in the social scale. After all,

"anybody would prefer to be above you, rather than
    having you above him. One doesn't care much about
    others ".

Individual egoism is perceived even in the context of an ordered society, for

"everyone looks after one's own interests. This is very
    natural.......there is a lot of selfishness around ".

It is within this framework that the Dockyard steward rationalises his position relative to others in a tightly-knit social order. His own experiences of conflict, embodied in his own union role, are overshadowed by his "chain model" of society.

Evaluation of the Class Structure

It has already been established that there are almost twice as many respondents in the main sample who perceive the existing relation-between 'classes as harmonious and cooperative rather than conflicting. The spontaneous image of industrial relations is that of a 'single family' and 'one team'. The principle of income differentials is acceptable to most, provided that these are based on effort and ability. All this suggests that the existence of social 'classes' is generally accepted as fair and legitimate – or, at any rate, a necessary fact of life. Few respondents could envisage a society without 'class' differences. In fact when asked whether they believe that 'class'

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differences can ever be somehow removed, the following responses were obtained:

TABLE 7.4

Can 'Class' differences ever be removed?

Opinion Expressed	Responses (%)
Impossible	65
Very difficult/remotely possible	10.9
Possible	20.4
DK/NA	3.7

(N = 137)

However, these results do not necessarily indicate a static view of society and a total lack of aspirations for any form of social change. Significantly, the previous chapter has shown that the harmonious image of hierarchical work relations is upheld concurrently with strong beliefs in workers' solidarity and union as a means of securing common interests. And although few respondents disagree with income differentials in principle, only 53.9% of the respondents consider the actual income distribution as being just and fair.

With regards to the Dockyard workers, their own relative affluence, higher skills and status, undoubtedly contribute towards their perceived justification of social inequality. and their lack of enthusiasm in promoting working class interests generally. They are content to 'let things take their own course' rather than take any drastic action to change the 'social order'. This is why almost all the respondents feel optimistic about the prospects of a gradual phasing out of social inequality through social reforms. Through constant improvements in educational facilities, the communication gap between 'classes' is perceptibly being lessened and snobbishness disappearing. Through its social legislation, the Labour Government is perceived to be alleviating the hardships of the needy. Nevertheless, the Drydocks shop stewards are also convinced that some aspects of 'class' distinction may never be completely eradicated and that income inequalities, in particular, are both inevitable and justified.

Perceived Avenues for Social Mobility

Given that one's work provides a key element of social placement in Maltese society, one's attitudes towards promotion at the work place may be taken as indicative of the way one regards the class structure in general. When the respondents in the main sample were

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asked whether they "aspire to promotion to a higher position at work", roughly a half indicated any such inclination. Such aspirations, which tend to be relatively higher among non-manual workers, are shown below:

TABLE 7.5

Aspiration for Promotion

Promotion Aspired	Worker Categories (%)		
	Non-Manual	Manual	Total
Very much	48.1	29.5	35.3
Only slightly	14.8	21.3	19.3
None at all	33.3	37.7	36.3
DK/NA	3.7	11.5	9.1
	(27)	(61)	(88)

$(N = 88)$[23]

It can be deduced from the above table that there is an expressed lack of ambition among many workers belonging to both categories. This may be due to a natural reluctance on men's part to raise hopes to an unrealistic level as a form of psychological defence mechanism, similar to the high levels of satisfaction expressed with the jobs within reach. In fact, when asked what do they consider to be "the main problem blocking their way to a possible promotion", a small, equal proportion of both manual and non-manual workers consider themselves unsuited for promotion. In a situation where vacancies are limited both categories of workers blame the lack of available opportunities as the cause of competition and of a common resort to patronage. Needless to say, "lack of patronage" provides a neat excuse for those who fail.

In order to establish more directly the respondents' general perceptions of actual avenues of social mobility, those respondents who had earlier indicated the existence of 'social classes' were asked:

"In your opinion how can 'the Maltese working class' best improve their position in society?"

No suggestions or pre-coded answers were offered. The responses tabulated in Table 7.6 demonstrate an overwhelming belief in the ability for upward mobility through individual (90.5%) rather than

collective (7.3%) efforts: [24]

TABLE 7.6

Perceived Avenues for Social Mobility

Mobility possible through.........	Type of Effort (%	
Individual Efforts (90.5)	Education for oneself and one's children	– 27.7
	Merit and hard work	– 33.6
	Patronage networks	– 13.1
	A combination of patronage and merit	– 16.1
Collective Efforts (7.3%)	Union action	– 1.5
	Joint action of Labour Movement GWU + MLP	– 5.8
The 'working class' cannot improve itself		– 2.2

(N = 137)

Raising personal qualifications figures prominently among the responses but many respondents also believe that education and hard work alone are not sufficient to promote someone to a higher social position. One also needs patrons in order to secure better chance. As argued earlier on, patronage has traditionally occupied a semi–legitimate practice, though never a publicly justifiable one. It has been suggested that patronage may now be in the process of becoming formally institutionalized as party political clientelism.[25] Whatever the case, any reference to patronage usually carries an indirect condemnation of a social structure where ascribed criteria provided for some a means of advantage. Therefore, the reference to patronage increases the number of respondents who do not perceive any realistic possibility for Maltese workers of raising their social position.

Yet, in spite of this perceived lack of avenues for social mobility, only a handful of respondents (7.3%) believe that the 'Maltese working class' can raise their social position through collective efforts. This attitude is again understandable in terms of the traditional powerless condition and its corresponding forms of adaptations. In line with the trends established earlier, this perception is more popular among manual than non-manual workers. Among the latter, almost everyone

seems to believe in the need of individual qualities – education and personal ambition – which lead to upward mobility, along with patronage.[26]

When asked the question "What are your prospects of promotion?", thirteen (56%) of the Dockyard shop stewards in the sub-sample stated flatly that they have no desire to improve their position. As these explained "I am not a very envious person" or "there are too many of us, which makes my chances very remote". At any rate, only seven men (30%) felt they had any reasonable promotion prospects. The rest (14%) generally manifested attitudes of studied indifference and regarded promotion as a remote possibility.

Patrons were again mentioned as passports to promotion. This practice was clearly in evidence at the Dockyard during the Admiralty period when management used it as a divisive tactic. Reportedly, this practice did not disappear entirely even after power was transferred to the new Maltese worker directors.[27] Fourteen shop stewards (60.9%) mentioned the importance of "saints" in the Dockyard.

The stewards' opinions on questions of promotion, patronage and avenues of social mobility are not very different from those of the main sample, except perhaps for their greater awareness of the value of solidarity with fellow workers. While this value has its roots in traditional Maltese perceptions, it is central to the MLM in general and to the stewards' roles in particular.

Perceptions of Change and Progress

In view of the indications which have emerged so far, one can deduce what sort of visions of social change have traditionally been nourished in Maltese society. It is also suggested that the current perceptions of change reflect, in varying degrees, influences emanating from the major source of Socialist ideology in Malta – the MLP. This organisation plays the role of a mass political party which claims to introduce "radical social changes" – including changes in people's values and perceptions.

As the average Maltese sees it, change is synonymous with progress. In this sense, when asked to indicate "the most important changes which Malta has undergone since the Second World War", almost all respondents are impressed by Malta as a "rapidly changing society."[28] The complete set of responses is tabulated in Table 7.7.

National Progress principally refers to the important series of political and economic events of recent years leading to national identity, self-reliance and self-assertion. These include the attainment of political independence from colonialism and the economic transform-ation culminating in the closure of the British Base. The pursuit of a non-aligned foreign policy, the establishment of a republic and the appointment of a Maltese Head of State are seen in integral parts of this process. Likewise are the notable advances in industrialisation and tourism, nationalisation of banking and broadcasting and particularly the setting up of Air Malta and Sea Malta, the national airline and

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shipping companies.

TABLE 7.7

Change and Progress in Maltese Society

Type of Change		Responses (%)
National Progress	–	42.5
Social Progress	–	22.6
Technical Progress	–	11.3
Generally Undesirable Changes	–	4.8
DK/NA[29]	–	18.8

(N = 186)

Social Progress refers to the improvement of living conditions – mainly resulting from the enactment of state legislation and from trade union pressures. Important advances mentioned include higher wages and working conditions, social assistance and insurance, better housing, clothes, food, schools, wider opportunities, cleanliness and generally higher living standards. This form of progress is considered by most to be the Government's main duty.

Technical Progress refers to the objective improvements of communication networks, transport, the expansion of industrial and commercial enterprises and of readily observable infrastructural projects. Such progress, however, carries no added social significance: it is not considered part of any meaningful overall plan or social objective.

Generally Undesirable Changes cover a broad range, but all have in common a critical view of past changes: regress rather than progress. These respondents explain that apparent material progress has been achieved at the expense of regress in the religious, moral, cultural and political spheres: Increases in criminal offences, moral laxitude, violence and class hatred are manifestations of a general trend towards materialism, secularism and a lack of self-restraint. Such views are usually accompanied by a nostalgic yearning for a past when reportedly there was more "peace and unity", though admittedly less material comfort. The general verdict is "We were better off when we were worse off".[30]

What is striking about these expressed perceptions of social change is that practically everyone feels that profound changes have taken place in Malta "since the war", Nevertheless, a closer analysis of the responses reveals a very limited view of social change. Practically

all the perceptions can be subsumed under the model of an "ordered structure" as discussed by Popitz and colleagues in their study of German steel workers already referred to in this chapter[31] In particular, there seems to be no trace in the responses of a dichotomous or conflict image in terms of which class change is assessed. Once again it seems that the dominant value system has provided the framework within which social change is formally assessed in Maltese society. Any change is registered from the vantage point of the country as a whole, rather than from that of a particular class or category.

In answer to the question: "What changes in your opinion are most necessary in Malta for the future?", almost half the respondents (48%) again mentioned the need for continuing along the road of social, national and technical progress while a minority (14%) insisted on the need for a moral renewal or a nostalgic return to previous standards of public morals. But most of the remaining respondents (30%) stated flatly that they saw no need for further changes. This of course, cannot mean a rejection of progress on their parts but an implicit belief in the continuation of the same previous trends, without any major changes being effected. Such a lack of imagination or of mobility for self-expression follows the traditionally established pattern where ideas and initiatives emanate from the top positions of society rather than from its grass roots.On the other hand, the desire expressed by many respondents for further social progress underlines the established expectation of such reforms as among the citizens' rights. Such reforms are not intended to challenge the existing class structure: rather, they are expected to reinforce it by defusing any potential demands for a revolutionary upheaval from a deprived social class.

Likewise, when stressing the need for further national progress, some respondents argued that the realization of economic goals is best met through a joint class effort and consensus. As they explained: "Everyone needs to pull the same rope"[32] They emphasized the need for higher productivity from workers in order to secure the national objective of economic independence.

On the other hand, reference was also made to the claim made by Government propagandists that the economy was well geared to meet the challenge ahead. This meant that after a period of restraint and "sacrifice", the time will come when one shall "reap the fruit" consisting of wage increases, further social benefits and the consolidation of past achievements.

A breakdown of the expressed images of (past) social change by occupational category, age, sex and educational background reveals that the distribution of responses among these categories reflects the overall tendencies established earlier on. All categories are impressed by progress registered on the national, social and technical levels. Yet, some differences emerge concerning the relative importance which is attached to each item by particular categories:

(a) The national progress perception tends to be stressed

more by younger respondents, males, the better
educated and those in non-manual occupations.

(b) The social progress perception tends to be stressed
more by older respondents and particularly by both
skilled and unskilled manual workers.

(c) No meaningful perceptions of progress tend to be
expressed by older respondents, the less educated
and unskilled manual workers.

The table below shows the perceptions of past changes in the workers'
sub-sample tabulated by occupational categories:

TABLE 7.8

Perceptions of Social Change

Type of Change	Worker Categories (%)		
	Non-Manual[33]	Skilled Manual	Unskilled Manual
National Progress	52.5	36.0	20.4
Social Progress	27.5	39.0	40.8
Other[34]	12.5	25.0	38.8
	(40)	(36)	(49)

(N = 125)

Following Popitz's classification, it can be seen that all the
changes – whether past or prospective – which were perceived by the
respondents are of an orderly and progressive nature. No revolutionary
or radical upheavals of the class structure were envisaged. It is interest-
ing to note that manual workers, who on other points have manifested
some radical potential, expressed the highest awareness of progress
in terms of social reform and assistance. The vision of social change
as progressive rules out any idea of a profound, structural change.
Such findings correspond with the respondents' expressed views about
the Maltese class structure, of their own self-rated position within it
and of the social mobility avenues which they perceive: it is within
those groups which are most closely integrated within the established
value structure – through educational training, the mass media and
work experience – that one can expect to find the highest awareness
of the national progress objective. And it is the subordinate and
marginal groups – such as the less educated, females and unskilled
manual workers – who are most likely to lack any clear, coherent

vision of change and to be relatively least impressed by the national progress achieved in the past.[35]

These trends were further confirmed through several cross tabulations of the data available. Those respondents who hold a hierarchical view of the class structure are more likely to be impressed by the national progress achieved than those holding a dichotomous view. Likewise, those respondents who placed themselves in the upper or middle social 'classes' are more likely to view social change in terms of national progress than those respondents who placed themselves in the 'ordinary man's class'. And the latter are more likely to take such a view than those who identified themselves with the 'lower class'.[36]

Finally it is among the majority (69.8%) of the main sample who accept the principle of income differentials – the most tangible evidence of social inequality – that the tendency to regard change as national and social progress also predominates. The minority (21.0%) who reject any justification for income differentials tend to regard past change as purely technical progress or simply not to express any meaningful perception of it. These trends are tabulated below:

TABLE 7.9

Evaluation of Income Differentials in principle

Images of Change	Justification (%)	
	Justified	Not Justified
National Progress	46.9	41.0
Social Progress	26.1	15.4
Other [34]	22.3	35.8
	(130)	(39)

(N = 169)

These results support the view that those embracing dominant social values also tend to perceive past changes as progress towards national and social objectives – thus contributing towards harmonious relations between social classes.

In terms of Popitz's classification, the progressive view of social order is generally upheld also by the Drydocks shop stewards. Society is seen as undergoing a process of gradual and constant improvement. Satisfaction with present conditions is combined with an expectation of future development. This view, shared by seventeen men (74%)

implies the preservation of the present order.

It seems that this perception of a changing society is reinforced by an awareness of the fundamental changes which have taken place within the Dockyard itself in recent years. Undoubtedly, the changeover period left a deep impression on the workers. Most of them recall many changes in the type of work carried out and the quality of the work expected from them: An Admiralty shipyard demands precision at the expense of speed; a commercial shipyard relies on speed and profit rather than accuracy, for it has to face stiff international competition in securing contracts.

The developments taking place since 1971 and the ensuring restraints on wage increases and overtime are seen as part of the national drive to restore economic viability. Other perceived changes are the higher levels of workers' education, less fear when confronted with those in authority and a slackening of discipline. The improvement of machinery, the physical development of the Yard and the initiation of shipbuilding are looked upon as positive proof of the continuing importance of the Drydocks to the Labour Government.

Progress is ultimately assessed by them in terms of social reforms, more education, a higher standard of living and a general increase in welfare. These are seen as the direct results of a series of decisions taken by those in command.

There are only three respondents (13%) who can be said to view society in terms of a static order. They express satisfaction with the running of things such as to preclude the vision of much further development. Their approval, however, usually is an indirect expression of complete faith in the social order under the guidance of the present Government. Thus, though some workers may not themselves visualize change, they are ready to welcome it, if it originates from the 'right' sources. As one shop steward stated:

"I have faith in our leaders, the workers' leaders, that is the Union and the Party together. That's what I'm always telling the workers".

Perceptions of Class Structure and Political Support

At various points throughout this survey, the foregoing analysis of perceptions of class, power and work relations has revealed that there are two distinct levels of operation: Certain perceptions reflect the subordinate value system. It has been argued that both sets of perceptions are relics of the traditional adaptations to powerlessness. Yet, it now appears that the widespread vision of a progressive society which has also emerged may provide a bridge between the two sets of perceptions.

It had been anticipated before undertaking this study that any emergent radicalism in Malta would be attributable to the direct ideological influences of the MLM. Yet, the 1976 and 1981 election

slogans "Forward in Peace" and "From Good to Better" are no invita-
tion to radical social change. Indeed, judging by the usual indicators
of class consciousness,[37] it seems that this is rather conspicuously
absent. As stated earlier, there is no doubt that the MLP bases much
of its appeal on status jealousy and social stigma. But they ultimately
tend to lead to social reform rather than upheaval and to workers'
participation rather than control.

In this final section an attempt is made to explore whether the
prevailing perceptions of class and social change are in any way
affected by MLP allegiance. As an indication of this, respondents
were asked about their voting preferences; the answers were then
cross-tabulated by some of the main variables which have emerged in
this analysis.[38]

When expressed political support is cross-tabulated by perceptions
of the class structure, the following trends are revealed: Nationalist
Party (NP)supporters are more likely to view class relations as harmonious
and to resort to objective or composite criteria as the bases of 'class'
distinction. MLP supporters, on the other hand, are more likely to
view 'class' relations as conflicting, to resort to dichotomous criteria
or not to express any image of the 'class' structure and of class
relations. MLP supporters are also more likely to locate themselves
in the lower and average man's 'class'; NP supporters tend to place
themselves more often in the middle or upper class.[39]

Returning to the issue of social change, the following trends are
revealed by cross-tabulating the perceptions of social change with
political party support. Both the NP and MLP supporters tend to be
mostly impressed by the achievements of the national progress variety
as explained earlier in this chapter.[40] However, the next emphasis of
the MLP voters is on the social progress achieved, the NP voters
place their second emphasis on the technical aspects or else do not
express any meaningful perception of change.

When respondents' perceptions of desired future changes were
cross-tabulated by voting preferences, the MLP supporters again
expressed a greater need for more social progress. But most NP
supporters this time also expressed their desire to see a change of
Government, presumably from Labour to Nationalist, as their prescrip-
tion for the future.

These results suggest a different emphasis in outlook between
the supporters of the two rival political parties. Such differences are
associated with varying class and occupational experience as well as
the ideologies promulgated by the political leaders. This point is
reinforced by the fact that among those respondents who believe in
the near possibility of removing class differences (15.1% of the main
sample) MLP voters outnumber NP voters by almost three to one.
And whereas for NP supporters national economic progress brings
about a widening of the middle class, for MLP supporters the way to
remove class differences is through progressive social reforms. Such
perceptions closely reflect the views promulgated by each party[41]

TABLE 7.10

Perception of Past Change and Party Support

Perception of Past Change	Political Party Supported (%)		
	MLP	NP	DK/NA
National Progress	46.4	48.5	35.7
Social Progress	29.0	21.2	19.0
Technical Progress and no meaningful perception of change expressed	18.8	27.2	39.3
Other	5.8	3.1	6.0
	(69)	(33)	(84)

(N = 186)

Hardly any of the expressed perceptions of change involve any radical re-structuring of society: Both the NP and MLP supporters are concerned primarily with promoting national progress. The main difference lies in secondary emphasis. The Nationalists are more concerned with the traditional, moral, cultural and political status of Maltese society; the Labourites with the material living conditions of the under-privileged.

For these reasons, one may wonder about the extent to which the traditional patterned adaptations to the former colonial powerlessness are being supplanted by new social perceptions[2]. Some openings have indeed been made. These have followed the introduction of workers' participation, the narrowing of the gap between the national, dominant value system and the local, subordinate one, the narrowing of class differences and the general emphasis on national progress. These are also the visible signs of a continuing search for new social bases of authority relations in Malta.

NOTES

1. G. Mackenzie, op.cit. (1966) p.100. See, for example, G. Mackenzie, "Class Consciousness: Marx Re-Examined" in Marxism Today (March 1976) pp.95-100.

2. K. Marx and F. Engels, The German Ideology (London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1965) p.58.

3. T.J. Hammond, Lenin on Trade Unions and Revolution 1893-1917 (New York, Columbia University Press, 1957) pp.27-30. Note Lenin's famous statement: "The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness" as distinct from "real political consciousness". Lenin "Chto delat?" Sochinenia IV p.384, quoted by Hammond. For a further discussion of Lenin's position, cf. R. Hyman, Marxism and the Sociology of Trade Unionism (London, Pluto Press, 1971). It was precisely the argument about the "spontaneity" of the proletariat against the indispensable "role of leadership" that lay at the root of the split between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. Op.cit., pp.31-32. Cf. also F.F. Hudson, Fifty Years of Communism - Theory and Practice 1917 (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1971) pp.36-47, and C.W. Mills, The Marxists (Harmondsworth), Penguin 1962)

4. T.B. Bottomore, "Class Structure and Social Consciousness" in I. Meszaros: Aspects of History and Class Consciousness (London, Merlin, 1971)

5. G. Lukacs, op.cit. (1977) p.51

6. Ibid.

7. T.B. Bottomore, op.cit.. 1971 pp.53-54

8. J. Cousins and R. Brown "Patterns of Paradox: Shipbuilding Workers' Images of Society" in M. Bulmer, op.cit. (1975) pp.55-82. See also, R. Brown and P. Brannen, op.cit. (1970).

9. See for instance, R.S. Moore, "Religion as a source of variation in working class images of society" in M. Bulmer, op.cit. (1975) pp.35-54.

10. T. Lumnis, "The Occupational Community of East Anglian Fishermen" British Journal of Sociology. Vol. 28 (1) 1977, pp.50-74

11. T. Lumnis, op.cit. (1977) p.72

12. P. Hiller, op.cit. (1975) p.2. A similar point is made by: A. Willener, Images de La Societe et Classes Sociales (Berne, 1957) p.214. Cited in M. Bulmer, op.cit. (1975) p.3.

13. See in particular, R. Centers, The Psychology of Social Classes (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1949). J.L. Haer, "An Empirical Study of Social Class Awareness" Social Forces Vol. 36 (1957) pp.117-121. H.H. Hyman, "The Value systems of Different Classes" in P.I. Rose (ed.: The Study of Society New York, Random House, 1967) pp.371-393. F. Chinoy, "The Chronology of Aspirations" in P.I. Rose (Ibid.) pp.393-404; and A. Kornhauser, op.cit. (1965) pp.213-219. Ironically, Centers' study of 1945 had also been followed by various "embourgeoisement" theorists. See for instance, J.C. Gowder, "A Note on the Declining Relation between Subjective and Objective Class Measures" British Journal of Sociology, XXVI (1975) pp.102-109. Various British studies have also contributed towards the sociological recognition of the contrasting perceptions held by the middle and working classes, notably: F.M. Martin, "Some Subjective Aspects of Social Stratification" in D.V. Glass: Social Mobility in Britain (London, Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1954) pp.51-78. P. Willmott and M. Young, "Social Grading by Manual Workers", British Journal of Sociology VII (1956) pp.337-345. D. Lockwood, "The New Working Class", European

Journal of Sociology I (1960). J. Goldthorpe, op.cit. (1969) pp.118-145. W.G. Runciman, Relative Deprivation and Social Justice (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1972) Chapter 9, pp.210-221. M. Stacey, op.cit. (1960) and F. Parkin, op.cit. (1967).

14.   The main published studies are the following: E. Bott, op.cit. (1957), especially Ch.VI "Norms and Ideology - Concepts of Class", pp.159-191. R. Hoggart, The Uses of Literacy (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1958). O.A. Oeser and S.B. Hammond (eds) Social Structure and Personality in a City (London, Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1954). Alfred Willener, op.cit. (1957). K. Popitz, et.al. "Workers' Images of Society" in T. Burns (ed.) op.cit. pp.249-267. S. Ossowski, Class Structure in the Social Consciousness (London, Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1963). J.H. Goldthorpe et.al., op.cit. (1969) especially Ch.5 pp.116-156. K. Prandy, Professional Employees (London, Faber, 1965). A.F. Davies, Images of Class (Sydney University Press, 1967). P. Hiller, op.cit. (1975). M. Bulmer (ed. op.cit.). F. Parkin, op.cit. (1974), particularly the articles by R. Scase, op.cit. and Gavin Mackenzie, "The Affluent Worker Study: An Evaluation and Critique". Partial reviews of this litera- ture can be found in R. Dahrendorf, Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society (London, Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1959) pp.280-289. D. Silverman, op.cit. (1972) pp.179-183. G. Bain et.al. op.cit. (1973) pp.10-23 and G. Mackenzie, "World Images and the World of Work" in G. Esland et.al. (eds) People and Work (London, Holmes- McDougall, 1975) pp.170-185.

15.   G. Bain, et.al., op.cit. (1973) p.14.

16.   G. Mackenzie, op.cit. (1975) p.179 (1). The number of classes: two or from three upwards. (2) Self-placement in class structure: "middle" or "working class". (3) Shape of class structure: diamond shaped or like a pyramid. (4) Loose groups and aggregate or cohesive classes. (5) Bases of class distinctions: life-style and ability or wealth and power. (6) Relations between classes: interdependent and harmonious or conflicting. (7) Society perceived as an 'open' or a 'closed' system. (8) Evaluation of the class structure as fair and legitimate or exploitative and unjust. (9) Changes envisaged in the class structure: orderly and progressive or only revolutionary. (10) Any vision may or may not be held of an alternative type of society.

17.   K. Popitz, op.cit. (1969)

18.   A. Steward and R.M. Blackburn, "The Stability of Structural Inequality". Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the British Sociological Association (University of Surrey, 1973) (mimeo) p.4. Or as recently re-stated by Crompton: "The employment situation of a group is of crucial importance in determining whether a 'class' or 'status' ideology is manifest......I would therefore argue that the scientists and engineers studied by Prandy did not so much reject a 'class ideology' in favour of a 'status ideology", as manifest and ideology congruent with their 'true' class position - i.e. they carried out, or expected to carry out, part of the function of capital." He then goes on to identify "sources of structural ambiguity" in the class situation of white-collar workers which explain their mixed class and union consciousness. R. Crompton, "White Collar Unionism: A Reply to Banks" Sociology Vol. 13 (1) (1979) pp.103-4.

19.   Various studies show that most people have in fact some general - often implicit - perception of the social world in which they live, through which they interpret their own experiences. Such perceptions, however, are not necessarily

self-consistent and may appear contradictory. As many people "think in terms of multiple determinants or regard different factors as being of importance at different levels of the perceived class structure" - a minimal attempt was made to 'direct' the type of response when interviewing. Cf. P. Hiller, op.cit. (1975) p.5, and A. Willener, op.cit. (1957) p.214 cited in M. Bulmer, op.cit. (1975) p.3. Therefore when in doubt, a respondent was listed as having no quantifiable perception of the class structure rather than run the risk of attributing to him a pre-determined code. The higher level of non-response to these questions among respondents with a low educational and socio-economic background thus reflects the difficulty of soliciting a meaningful response from such persons rather than the lack of any model through which to make sense of their social experiences.

20.   The Labour Brigade, a party organization which organizes activities and instruction for M.L.P. members' children.

21.   There were a further eight respondents who although recognizing the existence of social classes were not able to specify their type of inter-relations.

22.   The implications of such a conception for sociological research and theory with a particular reference to Maltese society have been discussed by J. Boissevain, Friends of Friends - Networks, Manipulators and Coalitions (Oxford, Blackwell, 1974).

23.   Excluding the self-employed and those workers who had already reached the peak of their careers and including only those potentially eligible for promotion.

24.   This result differs from the one obtained by Kester in a survey which was confined to four highly unionised industries where workers' participation had just been introduced, following the newly elected Labour Government, at a time when the workers' expectations were very high. In that survey 23% of the workers saw collective action, and 16% workers' participation, as the main means for raising the workers' social position. Cf. G. Kester, op.cit. (1974) p.200. However even there, the largest group (47%) recognized individual avenues as the effective means for social mobility.

25.   D.M. Boswell, op.cit. (1978)

26.   A number of non-manual workers gave a "don't know" answer to this question due to the fact that they were asked how can the "Maltese working class" - rather than simply "anyone" - improve their social standing. This question suggested some political overtones which they avoided. They are also less likely to identify themselves with the "working class" and so show less interest in their problems.

27.   "Hawnhekk mhux kemm taf imma lil min taf: Minn dejjem hekk niftakarha t-tarzna".

28.   Cf. J. Boissevain, op.cit. (1965) and (1969).

29.   These respondents preferred not to indicate any changes, possibly as they might betray their political leanings.

30.   "Konna ahjar meta konna aghar".

31. Popitz et.al., op.cit. (1969). Their notion of a "progressive order" is close to the notion of "progress" as utilized in this study.

32. "Kulhadd irid jigbed habel wiehed".

33. These percentages do not add up to 100 because the three respondents who opted for "other" images are not presented here for the sake of simplicity and clarity. All these respondents were elderly, non-manual workers. There were also six housewives among the respondents who expressed a similar perception.

34. This groups together the respondents who perceived social change in terms of technical progress and those who expressed no meaningful perception.

35. When both "national" and "social" perceptions are grouped together, the resultant distribution is as follows: Non Manual: 80.0%, Skilled: 75.1%, Unskilled: 61.2%.

36. The relative awareness of "social progress" and especially "technical progress" follows the opposite trend.

37. Conceptions of class identity, opposition, totality and an alternative society. M. Mann, Consciousness and Action in the Western Working Class, p.13. Macmillan Paperbacks. London, 1973.

38. A series of questions were asked as follows: "Have you decided for whom to vote in the next elections?" If so: "Do you have any difficulty in telling me?" If not: "For which party will you vote?" In addition respondents were also asked to explain the reasons behind their voting preferences, their opinions on "socialism" and "capitalism", and to specify the best and the worst achievements of each political party when in power. As expected, the rate of non-response to these questions was higher than to the rest of the questionnaire. Only 54.8% (102) of the sample declared their voting intentions; of whom 67.6% (69) support the MLP and 32.4% support the NP. Considering that the outcome of the last few elections show that the electorate is almost evenly balanced between the two main political parties - the MLP and the NP - these results manifest a greater reluctance on the parts of NP supporters, particularly those in non-manual work, to reveal publicly their political leanings. Nevertheless, the results obtained in this way, enable some exploration of various aspects of two competing political ideologies. Due to the abnormally high non-response rate to these questions, the conclusions drawn from them can only claim a limited validity.

39. In spite of the high non-response rate to the political questions, certain indications can be deduced from the summary tables as follows:

(a) **Political party supported by self-rated class:**

	MLP	NP	DK/NA
Middle class	43.4	60.7	46.3
Lower class	56.6	39.3	53.7
'N'	(53)	(28)	(54)

This suggests that among MLP Voters there is a tendency
to identify with the "lower", "average" or "working"
class, whereas those who identify themselves with the
"middle" class tend to vote NP. (Cf. M. Stacey,
Tradition and Change - A Study of Banbury (Oxford Univ.
Press,1960) pp.45-46)

(b) **Occupation (%) by political party support:**

	Non Manual	Manual
MLP	30.0	43.5
NP	15.0	17.6
DK/NA	55.0	38.9
'N'	(40)	(85)

This supports the popular view that there is a stronger
tendency for manual workers to support the MLP rather than
the NP. The corollary cannot be deduced from the data,
however, due to the higher non-response rate among non-
manual workers. Nor can the equally valid questions about
"traditional", "deferential voters" and "status" consi-
derations be anywhere like adequately analysed. A fuller
treatment of these issues must await further study.

40. Though even here, the Nationalists' emphasis on "national progress" is slightly
stronger.

41. As J. Boissevain (op.cit. 1977 p.14) has argued: "It would also seem that
perceptions can be imposed....Thus when a party controls the government, the
particular view of development that it holds becomes national policy. It is promul-
gated and people are conditioned, even forced, to accept it. In time it may become
their own perception of development. Thus notions of development....can be formul-
ated by an influential minority, and then imposed through mass media, political
indoctrination and government policy on a much wider body of people".

42. Cf. D.M. Boswell, op.cit. (1978) pp.10-11.

CONCLUSION

An attempt has been made throughout this study to explore popular Maltese perceptions of power, work and the class structure and to interpret these in the light of sociological research and theory. Special attention has been devoted to the attempts made by the MLM – in particular to the role played by its 'charismatic leader' – to change the traditional perceptions and to introduce new ones. Their impact has been assessed by means of interviews conducted on a small, nationally representative sample and an even smaller nucleus of Drydocks shop stewards, who being at the 'vanguard' of the MLM, were selected as a critical test-case.

In general, very little evidence of changes in perceptions has emerged from this data. On almost every explored item, the traditional outlooks tend to predominate. Responses constantly reflect traditional adaptations to national powerlessness. That condition itself has been interpreted in terms of an alienation – anomie syndrome which generates a series of adaptive responses in a Mertonian fashion, namely: 'compliance with paternalism', 'individual manipulation', 'Localist–retreatism' and 'political activism'. These adaptations were traced historically and related to the Island's long colonial experience. This is still the general outlook even though that experience has been formally terminated with the achievement of independence in 1964 and the final withdrawal of British forces in 1979. The transformation of the economy from one based on 'servicing' the strategic needs of a colonial, mother-country into a small, 'productive' economy seems to be well on its way. A number of changes in the social structure are also visible, including a process of secularization resulting in a more narrowly defined role for the Church. The Maltese elected politicians have usurped much of the power formerly enjoyed by the Church and the Colonial administrators. The general weakening of localist ties has been accompanied by the emergence of national centres of power and social activities. Yet the emergence of new social perceptions is more problematic.

It has been shown how the MLM, inspired by its leadership, has strived to introduce new perceptions as a means of consolidating the structural reforms which it introduced into this society. Its challenge to traditional authority relations and its attempts to establish a new basis for such relations has been documented. Yet the MLM was found to reflect within its own ranks a basic dilemma which divides Maltese society: betweeen the moderates and the extreme radicals – the traditional compliers and the political activists. That this is no mere power struggle between strong personalities but a reflection of a deeper structural rift was frequently underlined in the responses given to questions exploring the current perceptions on work, power and the class structure. Commonly held images of cooperative, fraternal relations with working companions were often tempered by competition, mistrust and suspicion. Declarations of compliance with official norms at one level were frequently followed by references to the indispensability of patronage and other forms of individual manipulation. The high level of expressed satisfaction with work often manifests pragmatic

rather than normative acceptance. And although there is a broad based agreement on the principle of income differentials this does not extend to the existing distribution. In short, the inherent inconsistencies between the various forms of adaptations to powerlessness emerged at almost every level - manifesting themselves in incoherent and uncertain perceptions.

A general preoccupation with security - reflecting a long experience of unemployment and dependence upon available jobs - colours all other aspects of work. This is followed by the traditional values of honour, ghaqal and bzulija. Yet there are also some important variations in the responses given by different categories of workers. For instance, when considering income relativities, manual workers are generally more critical than the non-manual while Drydocks shop stewards go a step further. For them they present a constant cause for militant action. Among the Drydocks shop stewards there is also an increased awareness of the ultimate meanings and values attached to work. They tend to regard it from a perspective of the enterprise and the country as a whole and not simply as a source of extrinsic satisfaction. Thus their work carries a new meaning and conveys an added source of pride and identification.

Similar conclusions were reached when the perceptions of power and the class structure were studied. Beneath the widely expressed submission to managerial authority, of whom Maltese tend to speak in paternalistic terms, there is a concealed antagonism, an awareness of conflicting interests and roles. These are acknowledged as indispensable parts of work. Even at the Drydocks where the respondents are generally left to work at their own pace there is an ambivalent attitude towards their superiors. One reason for this is that the shift from the traditional Union policy of confrontation to one of collaboration and participation has been sudden. Enough time has not yet passed for the new perception to replace the old one. Nor have the formal changes yet made much impression upon the workers or affected their lives in a material way. They see their elected superiors in much the same light as their former ones. They are even being asked to make sacrifices without being able to bargain with their representatives. In fact, it seems that a basic problem with the current experiences of workers' participation is that the paternalist image of management inherited from the past colonial administrators has been largely retained. And as such they tend to elicit traditionally compliant and other adaptive responses. For the most part, workers' participation - and socialism as a whole - are perceived through an ideological framework established within the traditional subculture.

Finally when class perceptions were studied, the vision of a hierarchical structure with harmonious relations and open movement between the various strata emerged as the most popular among the respondents. Only a minority uphold a closed, dichotomous, two-class image with conflicting relations between these. The majority believe in the possibility of upward mobility through individual rather than collective efforts. Yet patronage is also regarded by many as an indispensable element - along with other qualifications. Within these

general patterns, manual workers were the more likely, in relative terms, to express radical views – particularly on the possibilities of changing the existing class structure. Perhaps the most clear point at which the new perceptions are catching on in Malta concerns the images of national and social progress. Change, reform and progress have almost become synonymous terms. People generally approve of these and they regard them as linked with political progress. In this respect they are reflecting the views propagated by the politicians themselves. What remains somewhat striking is the absence of a more unequivocal demand for structural changes both in the official ideology of the MLP – as a mass radical party – and among its staunchest supporters. But when considering the privileged position relative to other workers which the Drydocks workers are reputed to have, this lack of radicalism no longer remains surprising. A structural upheaval would jeopardise that position by upsetting their comparative reference framework and possibly wipe out their relative advantages.

Admittedly the stewards value, above all else, working class solidarity and discipline to the MLM's calls. They are the devoted followers of its charismatic leadership and fully committed to its ideals. Thus though they themselves may not envisage a new social order, they are still likely to support whatever changes might be still necessary in the opinion of their leaders. Nevertheless, following the removal of the colonial administration and the replacement of the former N.P. with the workers' government, they themselves find no scope for further changes. A number of them are under pressure from their constituents to go back to some form of collective bargaining. In view of their staunch support for working–class solidarity, militant inclinations and discipline in following Union directives they may be depicted as potential proletarians. Yet the self–restraint imposed upon them by their leaders in recent years through various circumstances and devises has reduced that potential to a state of latent proletarianism. The danger now is that even this may succumb to the new paternalism to which they are currently exposed.

Therefore, the main impact which the MLM has had so far on people's perceptions lies in the area of national and social progress. In this respect, the new perceptions are building upon – and partly adapting – the traditional paternalist base rather than completely replacing it. But this does not rule out any long term influences which the MLM may still have in introducing other perceptions both through ideological persuasion and through structural innovations. It is simply to state that the evidence for this is still uncertain. Much depends on the future directions taken by policy makers and the lessons learned from past mistakes. In spite of what the protagonists may claim, workers' participation is still at an early, experimental stage. It was practically unheard of in Malta before 1971 as indeed was the whole notion of socialism. Unless constant development of these ideas takes place it is difficult to see how a new social basis of genuine authority relations could emerge. The shop stewards' readiness to experiment and to accept new work values, the narrowing class differences and the developing closer links between the national – dominant and the local – subordinate value systems provide enough

scope for future developments – even if the evidence in the country at large is still fragmentary.

The evidence of the Malta case presented throughout this study generally confirms well established sociological theories. In fact these have provided valid interpretations to events and processes within this and other similarly placed societies. But this evidence has also suggested that some qualifications to certain theories may be necessary. What is at stake is the age-old issue concerning the relationships between objective social experience and environment and subjective perceptions, values and norms. That a certain limitation and even determination is exerted by the former upon the latter has been clear from the start. However, the evidence from this study serves to emphasize that it is not only people's immediate experiences and environment which matter but the whole tradition and historically generated culture from the wider society – including any incursions from the dominant value system. Thus it has been argued that the predominant Maltese perceptions of work, power and the class structure are best understood in terms of national powerlessness and the traditional adaptations. In this case, the immediate work situation and community relations have played a secondary role in shaping perceptions. Moreover, there is a two-way relationship between objective and subjective factors. The evidence of developing Maltese perceptions has suggested that ideas emanating from the top echelons of the MLM may partly succeed in changing some traditional perceptions. In this sense; people are seen as active agents. Rather than simply reflecting their environment, they initiate action – or participate in action initiated by others – aimed at changing their traditional environment.

APPENDIX I

The Main Survey: Sample Design

The aim of this survey was to explore the perceptions of work, power and class structure which are held by a sample representing a cross-section of the Maltese adult population. For this purpose it was decided to design a sample which was large enough to enable a proportional representation of all the major categories of the adult population - including housewives, the aged, unemployed, etc. The inclusion of women has enabled comparisons to be made between the wider social environment and workers' sub-sample. This was intended to test influence of work - and of various categories of work - on people's perceptions. At the same time the sample had to have an adequate representation of workers in all the main sectors of employment found in Malta - including the self-employed. For this reason it was planned to extract a substantial workers' sub-sample from the main sample which would suit the analysis envisaged. The sample had also to be of such a size as to be manageable by a single researcher aided by a small group of students with limited means at their disposal.

Bearing in mind these considerations it was decided to aim at a total sample of around 200 Maltese adults extracted from the electoral register which had just been amended so as to include 18 year olds - following legislation which extended the vote to that age group. The electoral register is normally kept up to date as a general election could be held at any time following the dissolution of parliament.

It was also decided, in the light of extensive research experience in Malta since the mid-1960's, to hold personal interviews following a structured questionnaire which includes a large number of open-ended questions. This procedure necessitated very careful editing and coding. However, it was preferable as it reported the respondents' spontaneous perceptions in their own words. The problems of categorizing and coding responses were minimized by the fact that the interviews were conducted by the author aided by a small group of assistants. Occasionally the respondents were given a set of opinions to choose from - usually when asked to rank their feelings on an attitude scale. The respondents' unrehearsed perceptions are sociologically valuable in their own right - even if these might seem superficial and incoherent. It cannot be presumed, **a priori** that people's perceptions and ideas - let alone their words and actions - are self-consistent. In other words people may very well hold confused and even contradictory ideas. And often enough the confusion may only be apparent to an observer.

As many Maltese are not accustomed to form filling and to answering questionnaires, it was feared that a mailed questionnaire would have a very low response rate and that the answers would not be very informative. It was also considered important to conduct field work as removed in time from the general election as possible in the circumstances so as to minimise any possible polarisation of responses along party lines which becomes accentuated during an electoral campaign.

In fact, as predicted, the questions about political ideology and allegiance evoked the least response and the consequent analysis relied very little on these. There were only 14 outright refusals – giving a total response rate of 93% – rendering a total sample of 186 interviews. But there were varying levels of non-response to particular questions. As indicated in the text this is partly explained in terms of the traditional powerlessness condition. As a corollary to Boissevain's intriguing question: "Why do Maltese ask so few questions?"   one could ask: "Why do the Maltese express so few personal opinions?" The answers, of course, are the same: due to the fear of heresy inspired by the dogmatic tradition of the Church, due to the tradition of being dictated to by colonial masters, due to the fear of political victimization and due to the communication problems arising out of a poor educational background. In fact, non-respondents often turned out to be housewives who felt that they had no opinions whatever to offer on work, power and class relations or unskilled, manual workers. Traditionally, Maltese women's interests are centered on their homes and families and few actively participate in social life. Besides, a number of questions concerning work were inapplicable to them. Nevertheless, their influence on their husbands' and children's ideas and perceptions of work and class relations cannot be ignored. Maltese society is in many respects a matriarchal one. As Boissevain has found, Maltese wives are often the real decision makers inside their own families – "from the doorstep inwards".   Due to the composition of non-respondents, the relative number of workers interviewed emerged as slightly higher than the number of total workers in the national population would strictly warrant.

Sample Composition

The resultant sample comprises interviews with 186 individuals, of whom 50.6% (94) are females and 49.4% (92) are males. Their ages are distributed as follows:

18 – 28 years	24.7%
29 – 39 "	24.2%
40 – 50 "	19.4%
51+ "	31.7%

Among the respondents of the total sample there are 125 workers (67.2%) and these comprise the workers' sub-sample. These include 73.6% (92   males and 26.4% (33   females. Furthermore, there are 89 "rank and file employees" among the respondents who make up 71.2% of the workers' sub-sample and 47.9% of the total sample. This excludes professionals, employers, businessmen and other self-employed persons and the unemployed.

The main control variables along which the data was analysed included age, sex, education and skill-levels. Yet the manual – non-manual distinction emerged as the crucial variable which determines many other characteristics. This phenomenon is undoubtedly one reflection of a society where the traditional status of non-manual work has not yet been seriously undermined by other work rewards. However as

Maltese society is rapidly industrializing, it is not clear whether this situation will continue to prevail in future.

Sample Procedure

The 1975-76 electoral register which gave an up-to-date list of all Maltese persons who are over 18 years of age was used. Here the adult population is divided into males and females and distributed into ten electoral divisions of unequal weight. It was convenient to group the sample into clusters in order to avoid extra travelling which was time consuming.

The following multi-stage cluster sampling procedure was adopted. Each procedure was followed separately for males and repeated for females. The envisaged sample size (200 was allocated to ten quotas according to the weight of each electoral district.

Within each electoral district persons in the electoral register were grouped into parishes – which normally include people living in a small geographical area within walking distance. It was convenient to have a clustering of respondents within a small number of parishes. But as these were not evenly distributed, they were listed cumulatively and a process of elimination by random method was followed in those districts which included more than six parishes (e.g. the second parish was eliminated from the sixth district which included seven parishes, while the first, second, third, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth parishes were eliminated from the tenth district which included fourteen parishes . Thus every district as divided by males and females was distributed by parishes, excluding those eliminated. According to the weighted average of each parish, the quota (y for each district was distributed accordingly: y (M/F parish total
(M/F district total

e.g.: The male quota for the sixth parish (3439 males of the second district (9866 males with a total quota of 10 is as follows:

$$10 \ (\frac{3439}{9866} = 3.5 = 4 \text{ respondents (when rounded up .}$$

The resultant quotas for each parish were then distributed to actual individuals listed in the register by a random method according to the sex ratios which had been previously determined – as shown above.

Statistical Significance

The standard X_2 coefficient of correlation test has been administered on all the results presented in the analysis and in each case the $.95^o$ level of significance was approximated. All interviews were conducted in Maltese in the respondents' homes and they generally took place after work in the evenings. Each interview lasted between one and two hours on average. The results were coded, transferred on punch cards and processed through the Oxford University Computer Centre using the SPSS programme.

NOTES

1. The overall response pattern resembles that obtained by Kester (op. cit. 1974, p.110) though that survey was administered under very different circumstances.

2. J. Boissevain, "Why the Maltese ask so few questions?" **Ferment** (Royal University of Malta, January 1969).

3. "Mill-ghatba 'l-gewwa". Cf. J. Boissevain, op.cit. (1969) Chapter 3.

4. "Workers" as percentage of total population (1976): 54.9%. In addition there were 5.1% officially registered as unemployed. (Malta Statistical Abstracts, 1977).

5. Cf. W.G. Runciman, op.cit. (1972) pp.50-61, pp.372-375 and pp.383-384. For a contrary view cf. G. Mackenzie, op.cit. (1973) p.126.

The Main Questionnaire

(Abridged and translated version)

Note

DK   = "Don't know" answer
DNA = Question "does not apply".
NA   = "No answer", refusal.

General Information

1. Age
2. Sex and locality (by observation)
3. Marital status
4. Number of children
5. Education
6. Religious observance (last mass attended)
7. Newspaper readership

Work Experience – Satisfaction – Orientations

8. "Work" performed. ("Housework" excluded)
9. Formal training for this work, received.
10. Please explain exactly what you do at work.
11. If employed: (a) with whom employed
                 (b) position occupied
12. What are your exact responsibilities: tools/machines/men?
13. Think of your "work experience" as a whole: Would you describe yourself as "generally contented" or not with your work? Rate your level of "general contentedness" along this scale: Very contented/quite/not so/not at all/DK, DNA, NA.
14. What aspects of your work do you appreciate most and what aspects of your work do you find most distasteful?
15. Would you say that you are "proud" of your work? If so, why? If not, why not?
16. Number of years spent doing this work.
17. Previous work experience. Give entire work history.
18. Why did you leave each job?
19. The first work you ever performed.
20. How did you obtain your first job? Explain in detail.
21. If you had all the choice, what work would you select for yourself?
22. Did you ever have more satisfactory work than at present? If so: Which? Why? (Explain)
23. Were you ever out of work? (If so) for how long altogether? Explain why.
24. What is/was the work of your:
    (a   grandfather (father's father)
    (b   grandfather (mother's father)

(c)   father
        (d)   mother
        (e)   brothers and sisters
        (f)   your two best friends
25.   What work would you like your eldest son/daughter to do?
26.   How old were you when you first started to work?
27.   Why does man work?
28.   Besides earning his living, what else does man get from his work?
29.   What do you consider most important when comparing one work
        to another?
30.   If given the chance what would you prefer: a job, like your present
        one, where you work as an employee or leave it in order to
        work on your own?
31.   If you could change one thing about your work, what would you
        change?

Work Groups – Promotion Prospects

32.   Are there any – among your working companions – whom you
        would describe as "intimate friends"? (If so) How many?
33.   How often do you speak to any of these "intimate friends" (if
        any) while at your place of work? ("often"/"sometimes"/"rarely"/
        DNA)
34.   How often do you meet with these "intimate friends" (if any)
        outside of your work place?
35.   How many of your "intimate friends" at work (if any) live in
        your own town or village?
36.   How do you spend your free, "after work" hours?
        (a) on weekdays
        (b) Sundays and holidays
37.   Apart from your own immediate family members, whom do you
        spend your free "after work" hours with?
38.   Do you aspire to be promoted to a higher position at work than
        you have at present? (e.g. supervisor, foreman, manager). How
        do you rate your own desire along this scale? ("Very much"/
        "Only Slightly"/"No aspiration"/DK/NA/DNA)
39.   What are your chances of promotion within a year or two? ("Yes,
        certain"/"probable"/"not so good"/"none at all"/DNA)
40.   What is the main obstacle to your promotion?
41.   How do you think others manage to obtain a promotion?

Unions – Power and Authority – Workers' Participation

42.   Are you a member of a trade union? If so What union? How long
        have you been a member?
43.   Have you ever belonged to any other union?
44.   Did you ever occupy a position (above membership) in any union?
        (if so) What position? (if so) When?
45.   Are you satisfied with your union? ("very contented"/"quite"/"not
        so"/"not at all"/DNA)
46.   Who really controls union policy – the general membership through
        their representatives or some internal union cliques?
47.   What is the most common type of problems or "problematic

issues" which generally crop up at work between the management and the workers?

48. Whose fault is it probably?
49. What should be done to resolve these problems?
50. In the event of an industrial dispute on any issue between Union and Management, whose side are you likely to support?
51. How should the superiors at work be appointed?
52. Who should ideally be in charge of discipline at work?
53. What should be done so that Maltese workers devote more of their energies for work?
54. How can the Maltese workers effectively manage to secure their common interests - such as improving their living standards and working conditions - through collective or individual action?
55. How do you regard management-worker relations - as two teams set against each other or as members of the same football team? (i.e. Do you normally work hand in hand?) If so, should they work hand in hand?
56. In fact, do they generally work hand in hand or like members of opposite teams?
57. If you had a choice what would you select: Government employment or employment with a private employer? Why?
58. Recently, in some work places, workers' participation has been introduced. Have you heard about these? (If so, Which are these places? Please tell what you know about them.)
59. What effects is this new system having on the workers' lives? Do you agree with it?
60. In your opinion, how should the workers participate at work? Or is it better that everything should go back to what it was before?
61. Can an enterprise be managed entirely by the workers?
62. Should the unions participate directly, indirectly or not at all in management? Why?
63 Do you agree or disagree with the statement that "Justice (courts, police, etc) generally sides with the rich and powerful"? Indicate your answer along this scale: "Fully agree"/"agree"/"disagree"/"fully disagree"/"don't know"
64. Do you agree or disagree with the statement that "the Church generally sides with the rich and powerful"? Please indicate along this scale: "Fully agree"/"agree"/"disagree"/ "fully disagree"/"don't know."
65. How would you describe the relations between the Church and the present Government? Please indicate along this scale: "Very good"/"good"/"bad"/"very bad"/"don't know". Explain why.

Social Class Perceptions and Perceived Income Relativities

66. One often hears people mention social class. Some say: "That person belongs to such a class".
    (a) What do **you** think about social classes?

What are their bases?
- (b) Do such classes really exist?
- (c) Which ones are there? How do you name the main classes?
- (d) How does one class differ from another? How do you distinguish one from another?
- (e) What are their relative sizes? What is the shape of society seen from the classes point of view?
- (f) In which class do you locate yourself?
- (g) What puts people in one class or another?
- (h) What relations exist between classes?
- (i) In your opinion can the Maltese "working class" improve their position in society? If so, how can they best do so?

67. Can the differences between classes be removed in some way or can one do nothing about it?
68. Is it right to have people with differences in income or should everyone have the same income?
69. Should clerical work be paid more than manual work? Or should it be the opposite? Why?
70. What do you think about your income: Do you earn more than you should? Do you earn a just wage? Or do you deserve to earn more?
71. What do you think about the income of a professional? ("Earns more than he should"/"a just income"/"deserves more"/"don't know").
72. What do you think about the income of a labourer employed by the Government? ("Earns more than he should"/"a just income"/"deserves more"/"don't know").
73. What do you think about the income of a labourer in private employment? ("Earns more than he should"/"a just income"/"deserves more"/"don't know").
74. What do you think about the income of a businessman with a small shop? ("Earns more than he should"/"a just income"/"deserves more"/"don't know").
75. What do you think about the income of a Government civil servant? ("Earns more than he should"/"a just income"/"deserves more"/"don't know").
76. What do you think about the income of a priest? ("Earns more than he should"/"a just income"/"deserves more"/"don't know").
77. What do you think about the income of a fitter with Malta Drydocks? ("Earns more than he should"/"a just income"/"deserves more"/"don't know").
78. How much do you earn? (per week/month).

Political Perspectives

79. What do you understand by "socialism"?
80. What do you understand by "capitalism"?
81. What is the best thing done by the present Labour Government?
    What is the worst thing they have done?

82. What is the best thing done by the previous Nationalist Government? What was the worst thing they did?
83. If an election were to be held now, have you decided whom to vote for?
84. Do you have any difficulty in telling me who you intend to vote for? If not: Whom do you intend to vote for? Why do you intend to vote so?
85. What are the most important changes which Malta went through during the past thirty years (since the war)?
86. What changes in your opinion are most necessary in Malta for the future? Mention the most important one.
87. What else should I have asked you of interest to the Maltese worker and his life today?

APPENDIX III

The Supplementary Survey

Aim of the Survey

The main aim of this exercise was to explore in greater detail the ground covered in the main national survey among a particular group of workers in a critical work situation. In this case, the focus of attention was on certain aspects of the workers' sub-culture. It centered on attitudes and values surrounding the experience of work and towards authority in general. It included the workers' perceptions of participation, their expectations and relationships with their union and their images of the social order.

The Malta Drydocks Corporation was chosen as the field of research for the reason that it constitutes by far the largest mass of skilled workers on the island and though it is one of the most traditional Maltese industries, it has undergone a number of radical changes throughout the years. As argued above, the Dockyard has reflected and often sparked off the major political and industrial events taking place within the country during the present century. Its work force represents, in a very real sense, "the vanguard" of the Malta Labour Movement. This applies most specifically to the shop stewards and other Union activists on the shop floor – from among whom many MLM leaders are nurtured. They have always attracted considerable attention by their historical militancy. As such, one would **a priori** expect these workers to exhibit a somewhat more radical outlook not´ only about the immediate environment of their work relationships but also concerning their perceptions of the total social class structure. One would expect, in particular, that this group of workers manifest a challenging attitude towards authority which, of course, cannot be divorced from their overall orientation to work. In fact, it was found to be closely linked to it. Therefore, the workers combine a high level of political awareness with trade union-istic activism.

It is not claimed that the Drydocks worker is a typical Maltese worker. He is in fact a very **privileged** worker· in that society. This labour force constitutes a kind of elite among the working-class – an elite with very strong political and trade-union consciousness. It also enjoys certain extrinsic and intrinsic rewards from work which are not so common among most Maltese workers. The reason, therefore, why Dockyard workers' and in particular, shop stewards' attitudes were explored, was this expectation of some sort of consciousness among a section of the work force representing a potential element of radicalism within the Maltese working class.

The part played by Maltese shop stewards in shaping Union policy is much more restricted than their counterparts in Britain. For instance, unofficial industrial action is practically non-existent in Malta.

This is explained by the frequent interaction, exchange of communication among the various levels of Union and Party organization - facilitated by the small scale and short distances of the country, and the tendency to informalize social relations. Hence, the shop stewards' main task is that of mediating between management, Union and a generally uneducated, and compliant work force, but also one that is often suspicious and prone to grumbling. Their role includes especially the task of winning over the workers through persuasion to the Union's policies and standpoints. It also includes that of representing the workers' grievances and reactions. In the words of the Labour Minister to a group of shop stewards convened for a conference:

> "The shop steward is the important link in the chain,
> linking the workers to their leaders".

The Supplementary Sample Characteristics

The sample size was of twenty-three shop stewards and Union activists. The actual names were obtained from the Metal Workers' Section of the G.W.U. which represents over 95% of the total labour force. This strategy involved some risk of a possible filtering by the Union but it also carried the advantage that those interviewed were aware of the whole project enjoying Union support, and therefore were possibly more free in imparting ideas and information. Indeed, if they were hand-picked, one can safely assume that these would be those workers who best approximate to the official MLM ideology and the least hostile towards the MLM leadership. The interviews, in fact, indicated that these respondents did not shy away from expressing their own minds, except very occasionally, and their cooperation was clearly very much a result of the Union backing which they knew we had.

The Dockyard employed 5,223 permanent workers in 1977, of which just over 400 were white-collar workers. The sample thus represents 0.44% of the total labour force. Fourteen of the workers interviewed were active shop stewards at the time, representing 28% of the total number of stewards at the Dockyard. The rest occupied, (or had occupied in the past) some similar Union role.

Age, Education and Marital Status

The respondents could be classified into three main age groups:-

(a)   Sixteen of them were between 30 and 55;

(b)   Five were under 30;

(c)   Two were over 55.

Nineteen men were married and had children of school-age while four were single. Twelve respondents had completed primary education prior to entering the Dockyard school. Seven others had commenced

but not completed secondary education. The rest, three, had reached the General Certificate of Education 'Ordinary' level standard.

Skill Level

The majority of respondents (seventeen) were skilled tradesmen, one was an apprentice-fitter, while of the rest, three were skilled labourers and two were unskilled labourers. The types of trades represented were as follows: 1 welder; 3 shipwrights; 2 electrical fitters; 5 engine fitters (1 maintenance fitter); 1 apprentice fitter; 2 boiler makers; 2 pipeworkers; 1 gear cutter; 1 sand-blaster; 1 ship painter; 1 iron caulker; 1 office cleaner; 1 slinger; 1 blacksmith. These represent a cross section of all major trades in the Yard.

Social Background

Twenty-one workers had a purely working-class background – that is, having a father (and grandfather) who were also manual workers. The remaining two came from families with a white-collar occupational background.

Conduct of the Interviews

The survey was carried out between January and February 1977. A questionnaire, similar to the one of the Main survey – but with more details – was used as a guide. Personal interviews were carried out at the Dockyard itself during working hours. A room in the Education Section was provided for this purpose. All interviews were recorded on a cassette tape-recorder with, of course, the respondents' approval. They were later transcribed as accurately as possible, to facilitate the analysis.

The questionnaire that was administered was rather extensive and most of the questions were typically open ones. That is, the respondent was allowed complete freedom in his answers, very often even when they were not strictly relevant to the question asked. The interview was conducted informally in the form of a conversation. In fact, the questions, rather than being rigorously adhered to, served frequently as guidelines to a general discussion. This was the case especially in discussion of topics such as participation and images of society. The actual questionnaire was divided into sections and its main themes were the following:-

- The worker's general orientation towards his job.
- Motivation to work and job satisfaction.
- Dependence on work.
- Participation and attitudes to authority and power relations.
- The Union in the Dockyard. Work groups.
- Images of Class and Change within society.
- Notions of socialism.

The questionnaire and the interview were, of course, totally in Maltese. Each interview lasted approximately between two and three hours.

Response

The overall response was very favourable. As mentioned above, this was probably due to the Union assistance and backing which the project enjoyed. Most respondents revealed themselves extremely willing to volunteer information, both personal and general, and none objected to the use of the tape-recorder, after a brief explanation as to the purpose and scope of the survey. In fact, one main problem throughout almost each interview, was how to direct the discussion politely on the topics of direct interest without conveying a business-like impression to the respondent. The problem of reticence or self-guardedness was not encountered except only in one instance. Also, it was an extremely rare occurrence for the respondents to refuse to answer any particular questions though they were explicitly reminded that it was up to them to decide. This only happened once or twice. On the contrary, discussions on topical and controversial issues tended to be rather exhaustive and each interview proved to be a most valuable experience. Personal interviewing, obviously, has a number of advantages over the strategy of mailing questionnaires, the rapport established with each person interviewed was excellent, so much so that even information of a confidential nature was volunteered without hesitation.

Limitations

It is clear that the small size of the sample limits the generalizing potential of this study. For this reason, it would be presumptuous to attempt to draw scientific conclusions from these results. At best one can only advance hypotheses which require further testing. However, the purpose of concentrating on a small number of shop stewards lies in the fact that as these people are elected to represent the mass of workers, they may be expected, more than the ordinary worker, to reflect values and attitudes generated by the world of which they are a basic component of the worker sub-culture. As shop stewards are at the lowest rung of the Union role hierarchy, the possibility was reduced that the outcome of these interviews would simply reflect the official Union views. As it turned out, these men were far from bureaucrats suffering from any trained incapacity.

NOTES

1.   Malta Drydocks Corporation is simply referred to as "the Dockyard" by the workers - after the name it had during the Admiralty days: H.M. Dockyard.

2.   Vide Chapter 3, supra.

3.   Implicit is the assumption that if this element is not to be found at the

Dockyard, among the shop stewards (who are avowedly the most militant shop-floor workers), it is not likely to exist among any other section of the labour force.

4.   L-orizzont, (Union Press) 6.3.78

5.   The total list of shop stewards at the time was fifty. There were similar numbers of "collectors" and "delegates" to the general council of the GWU. All of these are democratically elected by the Union membership in departments or similar groupings.

APPENDIX IV

The Collection of Documentary, Oral and
Circumstantial Evidence

At a number of points throughout this study, the analysis draws on the author's experience of living in several parts of Malta and on actively participating in its social life. In particular, the stimulating experiences of teaching undergraduates at the University of Malta for over a decade and of conducting sociological research both within Malta itself and among the Maltese Migrants in London have provided many valuable insights into the Maltese social structure.

Since 1971 when the MLP under Mintoff's leadership has been returned to power after 13 years out of office, a systematic programme of reforms has been ushered in. It was often stated – explicitly or implicitly – that this ambitious programme included, as an ultimate objective, that of changing popular, social perceptions: from a traditional to a more rational basis. The evidence for this claim and the programe for its implementation was systematically collected through a detailed examination of practically all that was written in the Maltese press, official party documents and especially through a direct listening to Mintoff's public speeches delivered throughout Malta or on the local television. His parliamentary speeches were studied through the detailed reports appearing in the press and the officially published parliamentary reports. Inevitably the thesis itself incorporates only a representative fraction of this mass of data which was gathered over the years. A detailed analysis of it would extend over several volumes and would stretch the scope of this thesis far beyond the acceptable limits. Yet it is the author's intention to continue with this analysis in the years to come in the believe that such a study – apart from its intrinsic fascination – would provide useful sociological data to anyone interested in this experiment in social development.

APPENDIX V

Bibliography

In a study of this nature, touching on some of the most fertile areas of contemporary sociology it is difficult and quite unnecessary to compile a comprehensive bibliography. Listed below are the references which were actually utilised in view of their direct relevances to the main arguments – in the knowledge that fuller lists are available elsewhere.

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