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**Medieval Inquisition in Malta 1433 – 1561**

*Alexander Bonnici*

**Fernand Braudel and The Mediterranean**

*Alberto Tenenti*

**Hydrology and Water Supply of**

**The Maltese Islands**

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*Saviour Rizzo*

**The Dynamics of Political Restructuring in**

**Western Europe and Malta**

*Godfrey Baldacchino*

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*Cover picture: Grand Master Jean de La Valette who, together with the Knights, petitioned the Pope to grant them the authority to try those who go astray in their Christian belief. (See article by A. Bonnici pp. 61 – 75).*

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# MEDIEVAL INQUISITION IN MALTA 1433 – 1561

*Alexander Bonnici*

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## A. INQUISITION FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF HERESY

### Detection and Punishment of Heretics

**I**NQUISITION is the name given to ecclesiastical jurisdiction dealing, both in the Middle Ages and in later times, with the detection and punishment of heretics and of all persons guilty of any offence against Catholic orthodoxy. The word 'Inquisition' was probably used in the above sense for the first time in 844, when Emperor Charles II advised the bishops to inquire into the errors of the people and correct them.

In its historical significance, the word 'Inquisition' has very close links with a tribunal which in the past engendered great fear, even in those who had no doubts of its fairness. It was every inquisitor's duty to look out for heretics in order to correct and punish them.

The first form of punishment for heresy was *excommunication*, which was a purely spiritual penalty. The Fathers of the Church in general condemned physical punishments. But, once the Roman Empire had become Christian, a heretic began to be regarded by the authorities as guilty of treason. A heretic tore apart the political body which identified itself with the body of Christ: the Church. Penalties, such as confiscation of goods and even death, began to be inflicted, though the Church still held to its original attitudes.

### ABBREVIATIONS:

AGOP: Archivum Generale Ordinis Paedicatorum (Romae)

AIM: Archivus of the Inquisition, Cathedral Museum, Mdina

AO: Acta Originalia

Arch.: Archives of the Order of Malta at the National Library, Malta.

CEM: Curia Episcopalis Melitensis

Lib.: Library Manuscripts at the National Library, Malta

NLM: National Library of Malta

It happened then that the medieval Catharist movement was feared as threatening not only the faith but also the very institutions of society. As a result of this, the Church's judgement changed, and the ecclesiastical authorities began to seek the help of the secular power.

From the twelfth century onwards, very often, severe punishments were meted out on those who went astray. Harsher punishments followed for those who persisted in their heresies. At times, the culprits were even condemned to capital punishment.

There were different types of Inquisitions quite distinct from each other. The main types were: a) Medieval Inquisition, b) Spanish Inquisition, and c) Roman Inquisition.<sup>1</sup>

### Variations of Medieval Inquisition

The Medieval Inquisition became an organized system, during the reign of Pope Lucius III. In 1184, he founded the *Episcopal Inquisition* which required aid from secular rulers, denunciation of heretics by the faithful, half-yearly diocesan visitations, and strong measures against supporters of heresy. However, it was not successful.

During the same period, the Pope began to delegate an ecclesiastic by conferring on him full powers against heretics of a certain place for a determined particular period. This is known in history as the *Legatine Inquisition*. The Inquisitors, delegated by the pope, stayed in their office for as long as it was necessary, but never for a long period. Towards the end of the twelfth century, canon law was evolving rapidly. As a result of this, under Pope Innocent III (1198 – 1216), heretics began to be judged according to a particular legislation. Cistercian monks were officially entrusted with the duty of detecting heretics; but these monks were never called 'Inquisitors'. Once again, this Inquisition proved unsuccessful.

The Inquisition as such came into being when Emperor Frederick II appointed some officials, called inquisitors, to detect heresy throughout the Empire. Pope Gregory IX, suspicious of Frederick's political ambitions, declared such investigations to be in the realm of the Church, and chose papal inquisitors instead. In 1231, this Pope established a reformed legislation against heretics. The penalties of death, banishment, or confiscation of property were so clearly formulated as to be henceforth incontestable. The inquisitors became absolutely independent of the bishop, and subject to

1. For a general idea, see A. H. Verril, *The Inquisition* (London 1931); Mariano D'Alatri, *E l'Inquisizione? Tabù e Realtà sul Tribunale della Fede* (Rome 1959).

FR. DOMINIC BARTHALU, a Dominican Prior of St. Mary of the Grotto at Rabat and Pro-Inquisitor for Malta and Gozo for the Medieval Inquisition.



GRAND MASTER JUAN D'HOMEDES who decided to institute some kind of Inquisition in Malta in 1553.



BISHOP DOMINIC CUBELLES. The last Pro-Inquisitor of Medieval Inquisition and the first Inquisitor of the Roman Inquisition.



the pope himself. Thus, the *Monastic Inquisition* was created. The Inquisition Tribunal was mainly entrusted to Dominican friars, who were the first to be called 'Inquisitors'. The Franciscans Conventual were inquisitors in Tuscany, in a large territory of the Venetian dependencies, and in some parts of Latium.<sup>3</sup>

## B. THE INFLUENCE OF SICILIAN INQUISITION

### Earliest Vague Facts

The earliest vague historical facts about the Inquisition Tribunal in Malta have connections with the Medieval Inquisition and with the Dominican friars. But very little is known about actions taken against heretics, though it is a fact that the Tribunal depended on that of Sicily.

The Medieval Inquisition was present for about 130 years in Malta and prepared the way for a better-organized inquisitorial tribunal. When the Medieval Inquisition was re-established and entrusted to Dominican or Franciscan Conventual friars, the islands of Malta and Gozo were ruled by the Aragonese and the Castilians and were dependencies of Sicily. For this reason, the Sicilian Tribunal of the Holy Inquisition occasionally exercised its authority in Malta through a 'Commissioner'. But, for the period of about sixty years of Monastic Inquisition presided over by Dominican friars, very little is known of those Commissioners who represented the Sicilian Inquisitor. No documentary evidence exists that a commissioner for Malta was assigned on a long-term basis. Moreover, it is improbable that he resided permanently in Malta.

### 1433 – 1503: Pro-Inquisitors of Malta

Although the commissioners responsible for inquisitorial proceedings in Malta were occasionally called 'Inquisitors', their authority never exceeded that of a Pro-Inquisitor. As a matter of fact, the commissioner in Malta carried out his inquisitorial duties as a Deputy Inquisitor. He made use of his authority *instead* of the Inquisitor General in Sicily. It is presumed that a Pro-Inquisitor was appointed whenever inquiries or investigations regarding the faith were deemed necessary.

The presence of the first known Pro-Inquisitor, who was invested with

2. Çf. C. Reviglio Della Veneria, *L'Inquisizione Medioevale ed il Processo Inquisitorio*, 2 ed. (Torino 1951); H. Ch. Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages* (New York 1956).

authority over Malta coincided with the visit of King Alphonsus I of Spain. In 1432 the King stopped for a short stay in Malta, on his way back from an expedition against the Sovereign of Tunis. The King honoured the noble family Inguanez by accepting to be their guest in their house at Mdina.<sup>3</sup>

Shortly after this visit, in 1433, Friar Matthew of Malta was chosen as a Pro-Inquisitor, or Regional Inquisitor, for the Maltese Islands.<sup>4</sup> Probably, he was the Augustinian Friar Matheus Zurki, a Master in Theology.<sup>5</sup>

Towards 1450, the Dominicans opened their first friary in Malta, annexed to the small church of St Mary of the Grotto in Rabat.<sup>6</sup> Since 1448, the Dominican Fr. Salvo Cassetta, from Palermo, had been in charge of the Sicilian Inquisition Tribunal. For 14 years (1448–1462), he served as inquisitor for the diocese of Palermo only. However, from 1462 to 1476, Cassetta was made Inquisitor for all Sicily and Malta. It is not known, however, whether he had any delegate in the island for inquisitorial investigations. Between 1474 and 1476, having been chosen for a higher office, Cassetta presided over the Inquisition Tribunal through his delegates.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, during his term as Inquisitor, no trace of any delegate in Malta, has so far been discovered.

On 20 February 1475, Fr. Philip de Barberiis, a Dominican friar, a Master in Theology, was appointed by the Holy See as an Inquisitor against heretical depravity, with jurisdiction over a very vast territory. His domain spread over all the two kingdoms of Sicily and Sardinia, and over Malta.<sup>8</sup> In 1481, when Malta still depended on de Barberiis, King Ferdinand obliged Bishop John Paternò, the Ordinary for Malta and Gozo, to contribute to the support of the Inquisition Tribunal. In the same time year, however, a very troubled period began for Inquisitor de Barberiis. On being suspected of heresy, he lost his post as Inquisitor. Still, in 1482, after an imprisonment of almost a year, he was declared innocent.<sup>9</sup> Though born in Sicily, de

3. G. F. Abela, *Della Descrittione di Malta* (Malta 1647), 424–425.

4. Regia Cancelleria Palermo, 1433, f. 122; 1434, f. 199; Abela, 558–559; M. A. Coniglione, *La Provincia Domenicana di Sicilia* (Catania 1937), 295.

5. G. Wettinger-M. Fsadni, *Peter Caxaro's Cantilena* (Malta 1968), 29–30.

6. M. Fsadni, *Our Lady of the Grotto: Priory, Church, and Sanctuary* (Malta 1980), 6.

7. Coniglione, 47–50.

8. AGOP, IV, 3, f. 101; I express my gratitude to Fr. Stephen Forte, O. P. who allowed me to consult and publish transcripts collected by him from the General Archives of the Dominicans in Rome. I also thank Fr. Michael Fsadni, O.P., who helped me in all that referred to Maltese Dominicans and granted me permission to consult other transcripts collected by Fr. Daniel Callus, O.P., from the General Archives of the Dominicans.

9. Coniglione, 69–70; Abela, 559.

Barberis may have been of Maltese origin. The Latinized form of 'de Barberis' derives from 'Barbara': a family name still common in Malta.<sup>10</sup> If this is correct he seems to have been the only Inquisitor of Maltese origin. No documents testify to de Barberis's presence at any time in Malta. Besides, it is not known whether he had any delegate or Pro-Inquisitor for the Maltese Islands.

After that, for five years between 1481 and 1486, Honofrius Cassetta, the nephew of the above-mentioned Salvo Cassetta, presided over the Sicilian Tribunal, with authority over Malta.<sup>11</sup>

### 1485 – 1486: Dominic Barthalu, A Pro-Inquisitor for Malta

Between 1485 and 1486 the Prior of the Dominican Friary of St Mary of the Grotto at Rabat was Dominic Barthalu or Barthalo.<sup>12</sup> In 1486, this Maltese Dominican exercised a delegated power, with the title of Pro-Inquisitor for Malta and Gozo. He is referred to as 'Inquisitor for the town and island of Malta under de Reda, Inquisitor for the whole Sicilian Kingdom'.<sup>13</sup> Barthalu was in charge of the Inquisition in Malta for just a short time. In 1486 he imprisoned, within the building of the Rabat Dominican Priory, three Jews suspected of heresy.<sup>14</sup>

Today, no trace survives of the prison-like cells attached to this Dominican Priory. The prison could not be anything else except one or two well-locked chambers with iron bars in the windows. It is presumed that they were not dissimilar from that cell which, up till quite recently, still

10. Abela; further information was to be found in an inscription in marble that once existed in the Dominican Priory at Birgu. It read: *Magister Philippus de Barberis, alias Barbara, Melitensis, a Syxto IV Inquisitor anno 1475, tandem constitutus a Ferdinando Rege Aragonum in toto Regno Siciliae, et ultra Sardiniae, Corsicae, Melitae, Gauli, anno 1481*: M. Fsadni, *Id-Dumnikani fir-Rabat u l-Birgu* (Malta 1974), 113. But the above inscription did not furnish any new fact. It totally depends on Abela, and did not exist in the first cloister of Birgu. It is not completely reliable.

11. Coniglione, 69.

12. Fsadni, *L-Ewwel Dumnikani f'Malta* (Malta 1965), 78.

13. G. Wettinger, *The Jews of Malta in the Late Middle Ages* (Malta 1985), 84; Abela, 559. Once again in the cloister of the Dominican Priory at Birgu, another inscription reminded us of this well-known Dominican. It read: *Pater Magister Dominicus Bartolo, Melitensis, Ordinis Praedicatorum, Inquisitor huius Insulae, qui huius virtute patriam decoravit, anno 1492*: Fsadni, *Id-Dumnikani fir-Rabat u fil-Birgu*, 113. But the inscription depends on Abela (p 559). The year '1492' is not correct. The inscription was to be found in the second rebuilding of that Dominican Priory.

14. Wettinger, 85.



existed in the same priory for the temporal confinement of some insubordinate friar.

Bearing in mind that Barthalu lived in the Rabat Priory just for 1485 and 1486, it can be inferred that he was delegated as Pro-Inquisitor for one particular instance.<sup>15</sup>

Not later than 1486, Giacomo Reda from Trapani was chosen as an Inquisitor General for Sicily and Malta. He kept that office up to 1503. In 1489, Giacomo Manso is mentioned as another Inquisitor General for Sicily and Malta, with the same powers as Reda. For the first time two inquisitors, the Dominicans Reda and Manso, were invested with joint power. On account of that, they were forbidden from taking action against heretics, without or against each other. They presided together between 1489 and 1497.<sup>16</sup>

### **Side Effects of the Spanish Inquisition on Malta**

Up to the period of Inquisitor General Reda, the Master General of the Dominicans used to appoint the inquisitors for Sicily and its dependencies. But the beginning of the sixteenth century marked the end of the Medieval Inquisition in Sicily which happened on account of a tribunal that was to dishonour the Church.

In 1478 Pope Sixtus IV gave his consent to the establishment of the Spanish Inquisition. The tribunal was first organized in the Spanish town of Seville, with the Dominican Tommaso Torquemada as the first Grand Inquisitor. The Church had been led into error because the Sovereigns of Spain, Ferdinand and Isabella, had insisted on setting up that tribunal without declaring that it was meant to be a political tool against Jews and Muslims. It was a melancholy contrast to the general leniency of the Medieval Inquisition (with the exception of that of Southern France). The kings of Spain and the inquisitors themselves were often reproached by popes and other Church authorities for their exaggerated, cruel, and ruthless penalties.<sup>17</sup>

For some years there had been no change in Sicily. Although there had been vigorous attempts from 1488 onwards to introduce the Spanish Inquisition, Sicily and its inquisitors offered a bold resistance and nothing changed in Malta up to the end of the fifteenth century. Besides, from 17

15. Barthalu lived for long years in Sicily: AGOP, IV, 11, f. 105.

16. Coniglione, 42–43.

17. H. Ch. Lea, *History of the Inquisition in Spain* (New York 1887).

January 1497, the Dominicans Andrea Cattano from Lentini and Blandino de Accardo from Noto had some connections with Malta, when they were chosen as assessors of the Inquisitors-General Manso and Reda. After Manso's death, the Master General of the Dominicans appointed Tommaso Schifaldo as an Inquisitor General with the same authority as Reda.<sup>18</sup>

From the very first years of the sixteenth century, the Spanish Inquisition prevailed over ecclesiastical matters in Sicily. The Medieval Inquisition was given a definite blow when Reginaldo Montoro, Bishop of Cefalù, on 20 July 1503, officially organized the Spanish Inquisition. It was the end for the Medieval Inquisition. The Dominican officials were compelled to hand over all archival material to the Spanish Inquisition.<sup>19</sup>

In fact, though we have consulted the scanty information about Maltese Dominicans who dwelled in the two priories of Rabat and Birgu, through the first sixty years of the sixteenth century, there is no evidence of any friar being engaged in inquisitorial activity.<sup>20</sup>

Besides, the Spanish Inquisition had no direct influence over Malta and its dependencies. Vague facts induce us to presume that the diocesan bishops of Malta for a period of about sixty years inquired, examined, and tried heretics. But, during that last period of the Medieval Inquisition, the bishops were not called inquisitors. The first forty years of the sixteenth century were a very dark period of transition. The Maltese bishops' presence at the consecration of several Sicilian churches; their signatures in deeds published abroad; the castles, palaces, and rural possessions owned by them in Sicily; their offices in the Royal Court in Rome; the occurrence of their deaths in some Italian city; the appointment of vicars to substitute them for long periods in their See; all these provide most evident proof that the bishops of Malta, too, did not abide by the law of residence.<sup>21</sup>

### C. BISHOPS AS PRO-INQUISITORS OF MALTA

#### **Prior to the coming of the Knights**

The population of Malta was too small to attract the interest of the Church. In the new situation of the Medieval Inquisition, it would have been

18. Coniglione, 302.

19. *Ibid.*

20. AGOP, IV, 3, ff. 88r – 123v; 29, f. 69.

21. Arthur Bonnici, *History of the Church in Malta* (Malta 1967), I, 78.

considered unthinkable to designate a learned priest or friar and entrust him with the difficult task of an Inquisitor General in an island of not more than 20,000 inhabitants.

Nevertheless, the Bishop, even without any express deputation as Inquisitor, was bound to teach and defend Catholic Orthodoxy. At least one bishop formed a tribunal similar to that of the medieval style and this makes one presume that the Medieval Inquisition survived with great hesitation and unsuccessfully for at least forty years, through the bishops of Malta. There could not be any success or diligence since the bishops did not find anyone who efficaciously convinced them to reside in the island. We are not even quite sure about the names of the bishops, and we have no definite knowledge about the nature of their pastoral work in Malta. It remains totally hidden whether they did anything to instruct the Maltese in the Catholic Faith or to defend orthodoxy from any occasional error among them.

The following were the bishops, and indirectly Pro-Inquisitors, until Malta was granted as a fief to the Order of St John:

1. 1506: Bandinello De Saulis who was then transferred to Heraclea, and later created cardinal.<sup>22</sup>
2. 1509 – 1512: Bernardino of Bologna who, after leaving the diocese, was nominated Bishop of Majorca and Messina.<sup>23</sup>
3. 1512: Giovanni Pajades who died shortly after his nomination and never came to Malta.<sup>24</sup>
4. 1514 – 1515: Giovanni De Sepulveda who soon renounced the bishopric.<sup>25</sup>
5. 1516 – 1523: Bernardo Catagnano who, in 1516, renounced the bishopric in favour of Cardinal Raphael Riario; the latter, in 1519, renounced it in favour of Cardinal Andrea Della Valle. It was renounced again in favour of Bonifacio Catagnano (1520 – 1523).<sup>26</sup>
6. 1523 – 1538: Gerolamo Ghinucci who was the last bishop to be absent from the diocese for a long number of years.<sup>27</sup>

22. G. Gulik-C. Eubel, *Hierarchia Catholica* 2 ed. (Munster 1923), II, 51 – 52.

23. Ibid. G. F. Abela-G.A. Ciantar, *Malta Illustrata* (Malta 1780), II, 51 – 52.

24. Gulik-Eubel 51 – 52; Abela-Ciantar, 52.

25. Gulik-Eubel 51 – 52, Abela-Ciantar, 52 – 53.

26. Gulik-Eubel, 244; Abela-Ciantar, 52 – 54.

27. Gulik-Eubel, 244; Abela-Ciantar, 57 – 58; Bonnici, I, 72 – 74, 78.

However, not one of them had any interest in Malta. None of the above can be called a responsible Pro-Inquisitor of Malta. Notwithstanding this, they were the only persons through whom the Medieval Inquisition continued to have an official representative. A vicar general or a delegate was permanently in charge of the diocese and any eventual error against the Catholic Faith was denounced in front of the bishop's representative in Malta.

An enormous quantity of documents was always jealously kept in the diocesan Curia of Malta. The original papers, which can still be consulted, are of great importance because they contain references to all the problems of a small island. Forty-one huge manuscript volumes open to us the ecclesiastical situation in Malta between 1400 and 1561. Today, all these documents are preserved in the Cathedral Archives at Mdina. Their reading is far from simple, with the result that most historians might feel discouraged in front of them, though this is just one of the many problems. It is by no means easy to find facts or denunciations that refer to errors against the Christian Faith. Most documents refer to marriage contracts; petitions for a divorce; problems of nuns in cloistered monasteries; land administration; and frequent jurisdictional dissensions with the civil authority. In this dull period for the Church, on account of the local bishops' absence, most of the formal written petitions were addressed to the Vicar General of Malta and Gozo. Proceedings handled by an occasional Pro-Inquisitor, as in the case of the above-mentioned Barthalu, were incorporated of these archives. This is another hint that what once fell under the influence of Sicilian Inquisition, had to be submitted to the bishop's Curia in Malta.<sup>28</sup>

### **Bishop Domenico Cubelles, Last Pro-Inquisitor and First Inquisitor**

In 1530 a new era began for Malta and its dependencies when these islands were given in fief by Emperor Charles V to the Order of St John. Though this was to be a difficult period of uncertainty, when the Maltese had no right to say a word in the choosing of their bishop, they undoubtedly passed through a positive change. Quite frequently, throughout the Order's era, Malta was not satisfied on account of a succession of foreign pastors, interrupted just once by Balthasar Cagliares, a bishop of great merits. Nevertheless, Malta enjoyed the benefit of resident bishops, though some of them were away for years. Little is known about the German Bishop Balthasar Waltkirk, who died in 1530, the year of his nomination, and

28. CEM, AO, MSS. 1-41 (1400-1561).

never even came to Malta. Bishop Tommaso Bosio (1538 – 1539) could have proved a fervent pastor and a zealous Pro-Inquisitor; but he died too soon, and had no time to develop his talents.<sup>29</sup>

The successor of Bosio, Domenico Cubelles (1540 – 1566), during his long term as Bishop of Malta, was the last official representative of a Medieval Inquisitor. As an authorized guardian of the Catholic Faith, he continued to safeguard it against heretics. He was never nominated as Inquisitor of the Medieval Tribunal, though he often used his own courts of law in defence of the Catholic Faith. However, he can be considered the last Pro-Inquisitor of the Medieval Inquisition.

During the first years of Cubelles, a French priest named Francesco Gesualdo, founder of the Confraternity of Good Christians and a teacher with a considerable number of followers, became tainted with Lutheranism and began sharing his ideas with a limited number of followers.

In 1545 Bishop Cubelles started his investigations about them. Their errors were denounced in details by witnesses. The best known among Gesualdo's followers was Matteo Falson, Captain of the Rod of Mdina and one of the wealthiest inhabitants of Malta. His son, called Matteo as well, is even more famous, and soon became a legendary figure in the fantastic story of witchcraft in Malta. The lawyer Pietro Cumbo was another outstanding figure who followed the steps of Gesualdo.

At first the Bishop of Malta called them one by one but, after questioning, they were dismissed and left completely free. From the official information gathered, the bishop did not convince himself that the case was really a very serious one. He still nourished hope in them. Because of this, after a paternal warning, all of them were left free.

Shortly after, the Bishop sadly noticed that his leniency had had a negative effect. Fresh reports that reached the Bishop and Grand Master D' Homedes forced the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of Malta to act energetically and severely without sparing those who did not sufficiently demonstrate signs of repentance.<sup>30</sup>

### **The Knights' Controverted Commission**

Facts are not clear enough, especially about Gesualdo's case. Worries and anxieties were uttered about him, not only by the Bishop but also by the Grand Master. Since Cubelles had no papal brief that empowered him to

29. S. Salelles, *De Materiis Tribunalium S. Inquisitionis* (Rome 1651), prol. 10, 46, nn. 15 – 16.

30. AIM, Mem, 12, ff. 16v – 17v.

proceed as Inquisitor, Juan D'Homedes, in his qualification as head of the Order and highest dignity in Malta, decided, not later than 1546, to set up some kind of Inquisition on the island. He chose a commission whose members were the Conventional Chaplain of St Lawrence at Birgu and three knights. The Grand Master legally invested them with the power of handling cases connected with errors against the Catholic Faith. It is not known who had authorized the Grand Master to take that important decision. At that time, the Conventual Chaplain was Matteo Castillo, a theologian very well known for his learning. The three knights of the Commission were Fra Cristoforo de Acugna (a Portuguese knight), Fra Francesco Nibbia (an Italian who officially received denunciations against some very dangerous heretics), and Fra Gehan de Condè (a Spanish knight popularly called 'Bandieras'). It was their duty to invigilate over all the inhabitants of Malta, and they were bound to inform the bishop's vicar in case of any suspected person. Gesualdo and some of his followers were charged in front of the knight Fra Francesco Nibbia. Later on Notary Jacopo Baldacchino had to do some important declarations about this case. Baldacchino did not denounce Gesualdo to the bishop, but to Nibbia. This notary had become aware of Gesualdo's errors when he had attended his school at Mdina. Grand Master D'Homedes imprisoned Gesualdo and, for some time, kept him locked up in the dungeons of Castel St Angelo at Birgu.<sup>31</sup>

The Holy Office never assented to the proceedings by the knights. Some thirty years later, Notary Baldacchino testified again against these heretics in front of Inquisitor Pietro Dusina. This prelate asked him why, in a matter of faith, he had denounced heretics to the Grand Master's Commission, and not to the bishop. Baldacchino replied: 'I presented myself in front of the Grand Master because I did not know whether the bishop resided in Malta at that time.'<sup>32</sup> Probably no one had told him that in such a case he could have gone to the bishop's vicar.

The declaration of Notary Jacopo Baldacchino furnishes written evidence that the tribunal instituted by D'Homedes was established at least by 1546, and not at the beginning of 1553, as referred to by the well-known Sebastiano Salelles. Besides, these facts demonstrate that the same Salelles is incorrect in stating that the Order's Commission had hardly done anything beneficial in inquisitorial proceedings. To this can be added that

31. *Ibid.*, f.18r-v; Salelles, 48, n. 26.

32. *Ibid.*

Baldacchino's declaration and Salelles' information about the case both imply that Bishop Cubelles was absent from Malta at that time.<sup>33</sup>

### **A Death Sentence**

After his release from civil prison, Gesualdo resumed his teaching tainted with Lutheranism. Another priest, Andrea Axac, a school teacher, followed him with ardent conviction and they boldly and openly declared that priests should be free to marry. In fact, two priests that adhered to Gesualdo's teachings, notwithstanding their vow of celibacy, got married in an ostentatious public form.

Gesualdo and some of his followers were imprisoned again, this time by the Bishop of Malta. Cubelles found Gesualdo guilty and impenitent. All the errors of Gesualdo and his followers are described in detail. It is a voluminous case against twenty-eight persons. Gesualdo was condemned to be burned at the stake: he was handed over to the secular arm and executed in public. During the same period it is said that another heretic, Petit by name, met the same fate. Suspects at that time were both Maltese and foreigners. Heretical opinions continued to find some favour among the more educated inhabitants of Malta.<sup>34</sup>

Cubelles, however, was quite mild with all the other accomplices of Gesualdo. Matteo Falson and his son were forbidden to leave the island. Cubelles nourished some hope that the capital sentence inflicted to Gesualdo could serve as a severe warning to all the inhabitants of Malta.<sup>35</sup> Later on, whenever problems associated with the faith emerged, Bishop Cubelles continued to feel bound to take the necessary measures. Processes were formed under him in 1553 and 1558 in the same style as that against Gesualdo.<sup>36</sup> The younger Matteo Falson had to be judged and condemned again during the inquisitorships of Pietro Dusina and Pier Santo Umamo. But, then, it was not the period of Medieval Inquisition any more.<sup>37</sup>

### **The End of Medieval Inquisition**

During the last months of 1558, under the grandmastership of Jean de la

33. Salelles, 48, n. 26.

34. Ibid., 33–34; A. P. Vella, *The Tribunal of the Inquisition in Malta*, 11, n. 2; C. Cassar, 'The First Decades of the Inquisition: 1546–1581', in *Hypphen*, IV, n. 6 (1985), 207–208.

35. AIM, Mem. ff. 44v–45r.

36. Cassar, 208.

37. AIM, Mem., 12, ff. 44v–45r; NLM, Lib., 10, ff. 396–410; 1122, f. 1136r–v.

GRAND MASTER  
JEAN DE LA  
VALETTE and the  
Knights, in 1559,  
petitioned the Pope  
to grant them the  
authority to try  
those who go astray  
in their Christian  
belief.



Valette, a certain friar named Angelo of Cremona, most probably a Dominican, settled for a short time in Malta as a counsellor to Bishop Cubelles. While declaring that he had no authority over the knights, Friar Angelo investigated their behaviour. Then, towards the end of that year, Friar Angelo returned to Rome where he handed a report to the Holy Office. As a result of that report, during a general assembly of the Holy Office in Rome, the necessity arose of sending a resident Inquisitor to Malta. The news shocked all the knights. Immediately, on 3 January 1559, Francesco della Motta, an Italian Knight of the Priorate of Venice, was instructed to proceed to Rome with the function of an ambassador to



defend with all his might the knights' cause. First of all, it had never happened that an Inquisitor had been sent to investigate into the orthodox behaviour of the knights. Pope Paul IV had to be convinced that the knights always maintained the Catholic Faith intact. The mere discussion about sending an Inquisitor to inquire into the knights' conduct would be prejudicial to the Order's prestige. According to the knights, an Order so highly esteemed in the military defence against Muslims, has always endeavoured to be much more vigilant against the poisonous teaching of heretics. Disregarding actions against heretics, the knights petitioned the Pope to grant them the authority to try those who go astray in their Christian belief. They nourished the hope that the Pope might invest their Grand Master and the Council with that authority.<sup>38</sup>

That was not the only attempt by the Order. Notwithstanding this, Pope Pius IV, on 21 October 1561, instituted the Inquisition Tribunal in Malta. The first Inquisitor was Bishop Cubelles himself. This move marked the definite end of Medieval Inquisition in Malta. Cubelles was the first one in a long series of sixty-two inquisitors.<sup>39</sup> It was the dawn of the Roman Inquisition which was the result of a re-organization of the Inquisition Tribunal by Pope Paul III in 1542. Its central office was in Rome. The Maltese Tribunal was very often called 'The Holy Office'. All subsequent Inquisitors of Malta were rightly called 'Delegates of the Holy Office in Rome'.

For the sake of accuracy, one has to admit that the Christian Faith in Malta was faithfully and diligently safeguarded and defended by the Roman Inquisition.

38. NLM, Arch., 427, ff. 261v – 262r; cf. B. Dal Pozzo, *Historia della S. Religione di Malta* (Verona 1703), I, 84.

39. Salelles, prol., 41, n. 2.

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# FERNAND BRAUDEL AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

*Alberto Tenenti*

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**F**rom the steep slopes and sandy beaches that surround its shores, for thousands of years sundry people and races have been drawn to the waters of the Mediterranean – including, for example, those Mongols who arrived towards the middle of the thirteenth century as the last wave of that human tide that had swept most of Asia and south-eastern Europe. One can, therefore, be indigeneous to the Mediterranean and live there for a number of generations or even centuries: but one can also become naturalized in a short time, from various places of origin, from the three continents that enclose this great Inland Sea. Today fully-fledged seasonal and temporary migrations pour visitors coming from the most far-flung of north European countries. From Lorraine, one of its regions lying between France and Germany, a concurrence of fairly unusual circumstances contrived not only to interest young Fernand Braudel in the Mediterranean but, from 1923, to attract him to live in its very heart. An exceptionally brilliant winner of a nation-wide competition for high school teachers, he was just over twenty when he arrived at Constantine, from where he soon passed to the even more seductive Algiers.

In addition to having a long and distinguished ancestry, the study of history and geography have both enjoyed in France a remarkable association and osmotic relationship with the sciences, the universities, pedagogy, and education that stretches practically to the present. In Italy today the study of history, when it does not form part of legal studies, has for years been closely associated with the disciplines of philosophy, a clear result of Germanic influence. France has, however, chosen a decidedly different option and has conceived of the inter-relationship of history and geography. Such an intellectual marriage, of great relevance both on the level of research and as regards the formation of a distinct mentality, goes back at least to Classical Aristotelian tradition. On reflection, it is not only possible to find precedents for certain Braudelian ideas in the sixteenth

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**T**HIS is the text of a lecture delivered on 6 June 1986 during the Second General Assembly of the Community of the Mediterranean Universities that was held in Ancona, Italy, during which occasion the Mediterranean Prize was posthumously awarded to Prof. Fernand Braudel. The paper has been translated from Italian by Louis J. Scerri.

century, both in Jean Bodin and in Henri de La Bopelinière, but one can also retrace the threads that link those concepts from that time to our period, especially through the work of particular great Illuminists. Without going back that far, between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in addition to an extremely vigorous historical school of which Jules Michelet was not the only exponent, there had arisen in France a strong tradition of human geography whose major exponent was Paul Vidal de La Blache. It will not be superfluous to draw attention to the fact that, just at the same time as Braudel's ideas about the Mediterranean were forming in the intensely vivid Algerian context, in 1929 the journal *Annales* was first published, which reserved for geography a prime place.

These are just brief references to point out that, right from the beginning, Braudel's work and his fruitful encounter with the Mediterranean realities did not spring up in a scene that completely lacked stimuli or exciting methods of inquiry. His great originality and the complex of his creative intuitions were grafted upon scientific ideas that were already strong rooted and they came to mature in a lively university environment. This is not to say that there was not in France too, during the first decades of this century, strong objections to innovative ideas and that there could not be felt that force of intellectual inertia with which less productive spirits instinctively identify themselves. Nor can it be said that the *Annales*, on one hand, and Fernand Braudel, on the other, did not point out the direction of secession from those traditional attitudes that had a large following in their country. One has to stress that in the humanities, from philosophy to psychology as from sociology to history, France at the beginning of the twentieth century represented a veritable intellectual crucible, out of which the emergence of innovatory ideas did not come as a surprise. In other words – whatever her influence on particular European and Mediterranean regions, which in certain cases was formidable – France was undeniably one of the poles of intellectual activity in the most diverse of fields, thanks to its potential, with its organization of cultural institutions, schools of the highest level, and successful dynamic methodologies. Indispensable as this tribute is to the lively environment from which Braudel emerged, yet it obviously does not serve to explain the directions that his ideas were to take. Let us therefore turn to Mediterranean Studies which were his specialization from 1923, since – and this has to be mentioned at least in passing – Braudel was to be concerned above all, although not exclusively, with this subject with its various interests for over half-a-century and practically until about 1980. In particular one has to insist on the potential comprehensiveness of his approach to the various phenomena that was so typical of his method and

which led him to an intuition and a vision of history that is, so to say, unequalled.

It is certainly not the case here to run through once again that vast range of concentric or parallel perspectives in which over the years, but particularly recently, the complex of systems of historical knowledge has been subdivided. It is well-known that there exists the history of biology, or of law, of literature, and of the arts, as well as of philosophy and other disciplines. Every form of material and everyday life, just like those of institutional, political, and scientific ones has its own particular type of history which has imposed itself as a dimension of organized knowledge that cannot be ignored. It is a reality that pervades the educational development of anybody who goes beyond secondary education – where history is expected to be taught as if it were only, or almost only, the narration of certain events, sometimes of a religious – cultural or economic, but more of a politico-diplomatic and military, nature. History for Fernand Braudel naturally does not consist of this latter dry and extra-ordinarily impoverished version, but neither is it merely the sum-total of the various specializations that are also taught at university level. As he has so convincingly shown right from the first publication of his book on the Mediterranean in the age of Philip II, in 1949, history is life in all its human dimensions and therefore his Mediterranean has come to be depicted as a world, that is to say an extremely complex organism.

One has to linger for some time on this view which is so basic for Braudel's vision of history. If it is true that Braudel gave particular attention to what those interested in the subject call economic history, in his works – and above all in that on the Mediterranean – he evoked and treated much more and of a more different nature. Even before anyone dreamed of talking about interdisciplinarity, he instinctively refused to be pent up within the bounds of any one particular discipline. Not only that, but he never believed that by putting together the ingredients of a certain number of systems of knowledge one could obtain a historical knowledge worthy of its name. No more catalogue, he believed, could exhaust that wealth of the various aspects of the life of man, ancient as well as modern. History for him is, therefore, not the sum-total of information provided by existent specializations or others that could yet come into being: it is instead the knowledge of the human reality in its widest sense, in its indefinite but always concrete dimensions.

Braudelian history, in short, does not follow either academic traditions or preferences. His intention is on one hand to focus on the problems of men in their concrete outlines and their complex interconnections, and on the

other to explain their organic and structured valencies. To illustrate this conception, the example provided by his analysis of the Mediterranean world is certainly the most relevant. First of all – even if for Italy one could quote the contemporary panoramic vision of the book by Pietro Silva – it was certainly not usual for a historian to choose a geographical area as the subject of his inquiry. Historians have always chosen to focus most of their works on states, cities, wars, or even particular personages. By so doing they have shown that they believed that the coherence of their work was based on an investigation of constructions or a series of interventions directly related to the actions of man, either singly or in a group. So they substantially left out of consideration not only that area or environment in which such actions took place but also, to some extent, even the time – by which is understood that complex of durations that last longer than the life span of the actors themselves. Such a conception and such a practice of history suffer from a theatrical and psychological vision of things, as if the course of events was some sort of spectacle taking place on a stage. This is such an attractive and persuasive perspective that it has not only survived to our times but it is still considered as being valid by many. Even though the matter may greatly surprise us, today this archaic method of writing history is still deemed a legitimate exercise. The reason is quite simple: those mental promptings that characterized the birth of civilization and that have been passed down to us are very much alive.

Fernand Braudel's method of looking at events can, in some ways, be traced back to predecessors more or less remote in time. A contemporary Italian historian had also selected the Mediterranean as the topic for his investigation (in all its extent and over a long period of time). However, these two reminders indicate precisely the enormous advances of the French historian. Indeed, for Braudel the Mediterranean is not simply a spatial container where various rulers succeeded one another and is certainly less the tendentious support for an ideology, as used by Pietro Silva who thought he could link the distant Roman Empire to the contemporary one of the Lictorian Fasces. Braudel managed first of all to free himself of those conditioning and debatable myths which various civilizations had cultivated and brought to the Inland Sea – from that of Roman unity to that of the holy Muslim war or of the Christian Crusades. His greatest and essential merit lay in his serene acceptance of the two inseparable faces of the human reality. In other words, he has grasped that indissoluble link of antagonism and friendship which – one as much as the other – joined together the peoples and the nations that settled around its shores. The French historian – partly at least thanks to his first stay in North Africa which though

Muslim had a markedly strong Christian presence – learned to free himself of those recurring ghosts that have been so important for the orientations of the coastal civilizations. He has offered an outstanding example, moral as much as scientific, of how one can analyse in a clear manner and without that murky rusty sediment the centuries-old clash of peoples in conflict, whether it is military, or religious, or political, or one of differing customs. He succeeded in achieving this because in his youth he did not imbibe those ancestral mutual hatreds: his maturity enabled him to rise above them through his unconditional support for the human condition, his profound and enlightened comprehension. His great work on the Mediterranean therefore constitutes in the first place a lesson in civil and mental coexistence, in addition to the recognition of the equal dignity of all the chessmen of this vast board. In this way the book goes near to affirming that which unites over that which divides, to a vision of constructive interpenetration.

It was absolutely indispensable to stress in the most explicit manner that the very form of the scientific conclusions of Braudel's work on the Mediterranean should be based on an inspired belief of the fundamental solidarity that welds together the peoples that gravitated to that sea. It should be pointed out rightaway that the vastness of his vision translated itself in an unusual and original breadth of the spatial conception of the subject as he studied it. In particular reference is made to the multiple associations that the French historian so persuasively presented, grafting to the Mediterranean basin large stretches of the European and Asian continents and of the immense Sahara. For Braudel the Mediterranean is a world that finds meeting on its shores the dialectical lines of demarcation both of large terrestrial zones and wide stretches of sea, and of the dialogue between those peoples who were thus brought into contact. However, that which most impresses in his global analysis of this reality is not the extraordinary and organic widening of the geographical horizons as much as that scientific element to which reference has already been made. As is well known, right from its very first edition, the book on the Mediterranean was divided into three sections which most critics have rendered into images of three distinct periods of time: the long term one lasting many centuries; the medium term of conjunctures persisting for a few decades; and that of events which is restricted to a duration of a few months or days. There is no doubt that a similar tripartite division, which is indicative more than anything else, cannot be understood and much less applied in a rigid and mechanical manner. Indeed what is important is not only or just a matter of measuring one phenomenon or another, as if the most important function of each one of them were to prolong itself in time. This is merely a preliminary analysis

to draw attention to the fact that what matters is not only that which makes an impression in an instant, the exceptional event that gets talked about, but rather and perhaps not less that which seems to be covered in silence and which acts in a manner which is more muffled and continuous and, in the end, more potent. Such a methodological distinction should not conceal that which is scientifically more important, that is the fact that the various durations are taking place at the same time, in a way that the global rhythm of history always corresponds to the result of all the forces that interreact within it.

This is exactly what can be called 'layers' since – if one had to use a metaphor to describe the geohuman future – there is no better metaphor than that of geological evolution. There are indeed certain structures in the history of men and of their environment, certain structures that seem not to change – like, for example, certain religious beliefs, certain social divisions, certain methods of construction. Still, in spite of their recurrence in one generation after another and in one century after another, even they are subject to changes – as for example, the very surface of the earth which did not always have the same distribution of the land masses and which is today still moving in a very imperceptible manner. Similarly, the methods of cultivating fields, weaving textiles, and making war are subject to change which, at times, can be quite rapid. It is quite useful to continue with this example and to recognize the fact that from time to time there occur certain cataclysmic events, from volcanic eruptions to social revolutions, from the outbreaks of fatal epidemics of former times to the nuclear explosions of today. The crucial matter is to keep in mind that all things that take place are closely related to one another, that a process of long duration can lead to a catastrophe, seismic or historic, that occurs in a few moments, and that life in its totality is made of strata, each of which is in continuous activity within itself or in relation to the others.

Such a vision of the Mediterranean reality was innovatory not only with respect to the caution it prescribes to the necessary differentiation in the measurements of temporal rhythms of the phenomena. It has even been more innovatory inasmuch as it has made scholars to accept the evidence that in history there is not just room for the most dramatic events or the deeds of some personage who is accepted as a protagonist. The history of man, and in this case of Mediterranean man, is at the same time and not less importantly, to be seen in the activities of shepherds and of farmers, of the sea-farers, as well as in those of the weavers and of miners. All human beings in their various daily activities are therefore restored the dignity of actors in their own right – even if they had been only slaves, as was the case

with many during the period which Fernand Braudel studied. Indeed how can the fleets, which at that time embodied the power of the various navies and the respective States, be even conceived without the motive energy provided by the slaves or by the galley crews whose condition was much similar to the slaves'? Thus the French historian has singularly extended both the horizons and the area of competence of historical knowledge since Braudel includes within it, in addition to the great rivalries, even the anonymous deeds of he who day after day toils to produce something, or struggles for survival, or modifies perhaps imperceptibly the conditions of his existence. History is the great symphony in which all tones merge; it is not the narration of exceptional deeds but the recovery and the study of all traces of human activity, at whatever stage and in whatever environment they manifest themselves.

So the vast depiction of the Mediterranean world does not only constitute just the arena in which Braudel's vision and scientific analysis were progressively given expression, but actually the workshop of his revolutionary field of inquiry. It is enough to leaf through the pages of his first great book, which is dedicated to it, to meet bandits side by side with merchants and a study of the routes of gold close to an investigation of those of grain. Similarly the role of the winds in navigation is considered to be no less important than that of the artillerymen on the different types of vessels, just as insurance rates are not treated more lightly than the making of woolen cloth. Life in all its various dimensions is therefore restituted to our consciousness, through the sharp and impartial careful examination of all phenomena, always on the evidence and the basis of authentic contemporary sources. One, therefore, should not be surprised to find the French historian introducing his treatise in a manner so unusual in works of this kind: 'I have loved the Mediterranean with passion . . . I have joyfully dedicated long years of study to it — much more than all my youth. In return, I hope that a little of this joy and a great deal of the Mediterranean sunlight will shine from the pages of this book.' By way of proud self-justification, he concluded by affirming that a historical work centred on a stretch of water had all the charms and undoubtedly all the dangers of a new departure, hopeful nevertheless of having been right 'to come down on the side of the unknown' in deciding to face the task.

The navigation so tirelessly embarked upon, therefore, had to carry the writer extremely far. About twenty years later, the first edition of the book made way for a substantially enlarged edition. If it is so uncommon to encounter such considerable rewritings, the revision which Braudel had the courage to undertake was not an end of itself. Even though he was involved



in a new work (no less wide-ranging), he would not remove himself too far from the by now familiar Mediterranean waters. More exactly, he would take up once again those fundamental intuitions which have been already explained in order to extend and adapt them to reconstruct a veritable economic history of the world. It should not appear paradoxical that this same historian, so attentive to the existence of the almost static and the action of those extremely slow-working forces, should be attracted by structured dynamics which have a centripetal effect on the most refined and individually-managed economic mechanisms. In his book on the Mediterranean, drawing such a brilliant solution from the panoramas of human geography, Braudel had stressed the movements over centuries and milleniums of processes which nonetheless form part of the rhythm of time. Later, having determined to trace the development of capitalism from the Late Middle Ages onwards, he identified a structure of over-lapping strata in economic life, similar to what he had pointed out in his first great book. Just as in his earlier book he measured historical phenomena according to the scale of their duration, in the second one he analysed economic phenomena according to their degree of complexity. On one hand, that is, he had particularly lingered on those forces which slow things down and which are structurally conditioning at every level; on the other, he established that in a particular but crucial geographical area there existed a dialectic of production, of exchange and of profits, in which the action of men found itself heavily involved and not unsuccessful in imposing its laws from certain zones.

So, having set forth his model of interpretation founded on the interplay of the long-term structures, medium-term trends, and events, he proceeded to suggest another model based on the movement from self-dependence to the market economy and from this to capitalist accumulation. In his book on the Mediterranean, Braudel had established a model of approach which of these markets were decisive, precisely to the extent to which they gave emphasis in their areas, to the mediation between North-Atlantic Europe of the European economic system, he believed he could take it as a more general example of development. Now, as soon as one goes to examine where that adventure originated from, one realizes that the French historian sees its very birth in the Mediterranean basin. Perhaps out of an implicit respect to a long tradition of historiography that has never actually been gainsaid, Braudel accepts the thesis of the decline that lasted for centuries following the division of the Roman Empire. Without undervaluing in any way the civilization of the Early Middle Ages, both in its Byzantine and Islamic forms as well as in that of Western Europe, he does not discern any

sufficiently structured awakening of economic activity on an international level before AD 1000. Even after that date, on the other hand, he feels that he cannot observe – in spite of a recovery that becomes more evident with the passage of time – the rapid establishment of any dominant system. Until the sixteenth century he does not see the Mediterranean – which to him is the crucial point of encounter for the Asiatic, African, and European continents – gravitating towards one central and regulating motive force. And, as a matter of fact, he takes into consideration the spirited and prolonged rivalry among the most dynamic cities such as Genoa, Barcellona, and Venice, which for so long fought for primacy without being able to consolidate it for any long period of time.

Braudel had no doubts at all that at least from the twelfth century, and even more so from the thirteenth, certain conspicuous forms of capitalist economy had already got under way, especially in Flanders, the area of the Champagne fairs, and northern Italy. In this latter area, Braudel notes the emergence of a sort of crucial quadrilateral based on Milan and Florence in addition to Genoa and Venice. There is no need to stress that the functions of these markets were decisive precisely to the extent to which they gave emphasis in their areas to the mediation between North-Atlantic Europe and the Levant as well as the Mediterranean regions of Asia and Africa. Fernand Braudel, however, sees the origin of a fully-fledged capitalist economy when one particular centre becomes able to assume and to hold on to leadership. He is of the belief that this only happens with the decisive supremacy of Venice at the beginning of the fifteenth century. It is then, he thinks, that the trade centre of the lagoon came to be the focal point of an economic world. By this turn Braudel conceptualizes the formation of an organic complex of interdependent areas which are orchestrated by a pole which provides both its heart and motor. During the fifteenth century Venice came to represent the mighty meeting point of the regions of Germany and of central Europe and those of the Levant. At the same time Venice came to find itself at the southern end of the axis which started from London and Bruges and which crossed and gave economic life to western Europe. But this is not all, because the Adriatic City at that time also managed to become the main point of reference and of convergence of the most profitable of the Mediterranean trade routes which ran along its principal East-West axis.

It is, therefore, easy to establish that Fernand Braudel saw in Venice the first real example of the capitalist system since she was able to direct towards her the strategic trade routes of the Mediterranean in its widest sense (that is as a basin to which gravitate most of the trade of the three continents that

surround it). First of all this means that even in his second great work – to which he dedicated almost thirty years of study – the heart of world development is seen to be located on its shores. In a sense, therefore, his vision of history, just like the continued specializations of his researches, is centred around the Mediterranean. The Mediterranean of his first great book in fact had all the appearances of a world: in his second work it emerges as the area from which began the future capitalistic unification of the entire planet. It is quite obvious that for him modern capitalism first manifested itself in the Mediterranean from where it obtained its movements to conquer the globe. Between the first and the second book there is not even a chronological confusion but a widening of the horizons and a greater articulation of the problems. The subject of the first book on the Mediterranean was the second half of the sixteenth century; in the second the author's attention was directed to a longer period that lasts at least from the beginning of the fifteenth century to the end of the seventeenth: however, even in the later work the sixteenth century still proves to be the central and crucial period. Braudel's vision of historical development which is much wider in the second book is divided into three distinct phases: the phase of Venice in the fifteenth century, which is, so to say, completely Mediterranean; then that of the sixteenth century when the joints between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic start to give way; and finally that of the seventeenth century where the Mediterranean finds itself in a subordinate role to the oceanic capitalistic systems. In all his work, one can therefore distinguish a great continuity and a unity of development. It can therefore be stated that, all through a period of over fifty years of research and reflection, the features of the Mediterranean constituted the dominant motif and the dynamic yeast of the further specialization of his research.

For greater clarity it should be explained that the sixteenth century represents for Braudel the phase of the unravelling of world economic development. Perhaps in a thousand years the picture may appear different but certainly, without running the risk of being accused of Eurocentrism, it is difficult to think otherwise for the time being. Until that period, which for the West marks the end of the Middle Ages, the world was divided in three distinct areas with little or no communication among them. Not only was the American continent practically out of every trade circuit, but also most of Africa was inward-looking in spite of some feeble contacts between its eastern areas and the Indian subcontinent. Early in the sixteenth century this system of almost watertight compartments began to change and eventually transformed itself in an altogether new system that more or less unifies all three, as it does today. The establishment of one oceanic economy

after another represents indeed the start of that process whereby all the countries of the world now depend on one another. It cannot be denied that this phase commenced during this sixteenth century when the fates of all the civilizations of the world began to intertwine. From being the very heart of the former world set-up, the Mediterranean quickly went through this rather dramatic transformation which Fernand Braudel examined in the manner of the great diagnostician that he was. He observed that the connections between the powers and economies of the Mediterranean on one hand and those of Atlantic Europe on the other begin to deteriorate in the sixteenth century, even though the former continued to perform primary roles for decades more. It is in this respect that he succeeded to acknowledge the crucial role played by the Genoese economy in attracting the wealth of the recently-discovered New World and as a financial centre that regulated the huge Spanish Empire – in addition to, at least indirectly, the economy of Europe.

During the sixteenth century, that is after Venice had lost her supremacy and while Antwerp was gaining that central role of the first order that she was to keep for decades, the Mediterranean retained its decisive role at least through the vital action of Genoese finance. Its subordinate role will become clear only in the seventeenth century when the supremacy of the Dutch, with Amsterdam as its epicentre, emerges. This panoramic but clearly expressed vision represents a profound study of the Mediterranean and its destinies.

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# HYDROLOGY AND WATER SUPPLY OF THE MALTESE ISLANDS

*Mary Attard*

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**W**ATER supply is essential to all forms of economic activity, both the industrial and the agricultural. It is, therefore, not surprising that a great deal of attention has been paid to this topic in Malta where, as in all Mediterranean countries, rainfall is very unreliable, making water supply a perennial problem. The rapid growth of population (about 340,000), the high standard of living, and increasing tourism, all lead to an increase in water consumption.

## **The Climate**

Malta has mild, wet winters and hot, dry summers. The average annual rainfall is about 508 mm. Temperatures vary between an average of 6°C. in winter to 32°C. in summer. The average daily number of hours of sunshine is 5 in winter (December) and 13 in summer (July). (Fig. 1)

The heavy, often over-localized downpours (accompanied by rapid run-off) in which the bulk of the rainfall occurs, together with summer drought and intensive evaporation, are factors which greatly reduce the effectiveness of the not so abundant precipitation.

## **Geology**

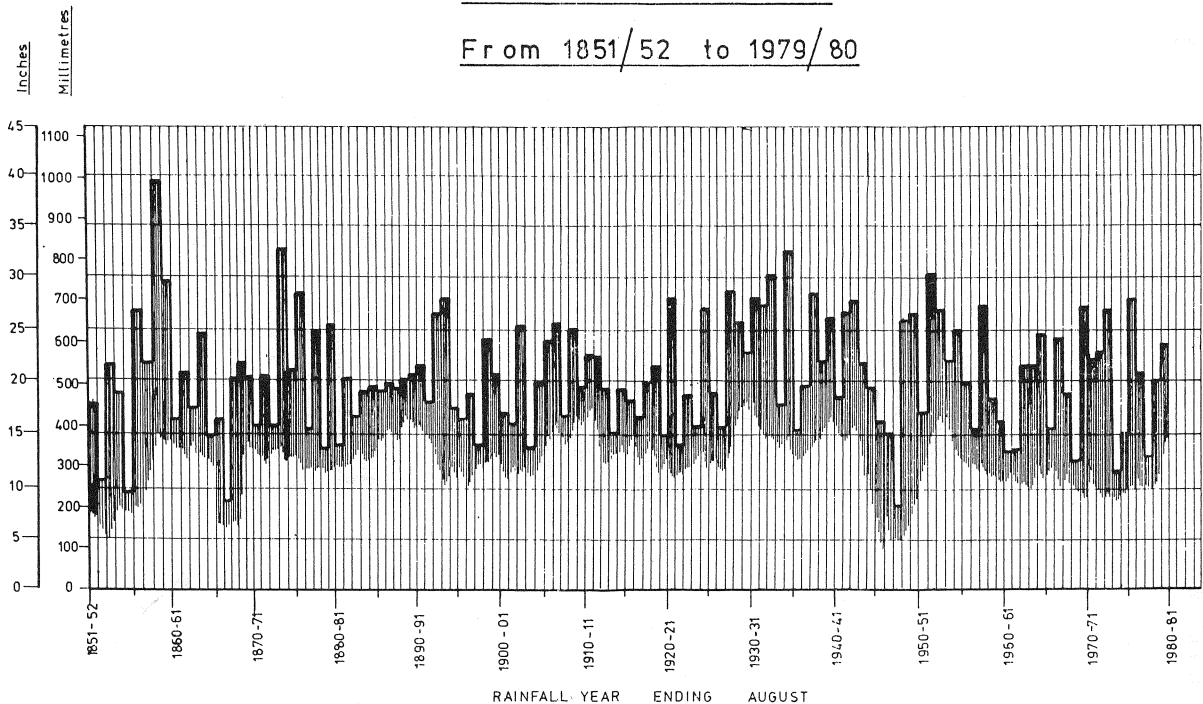
### *a) Stratigraphy*

Malta is fortunate in its stratigraphy which provides favourable conditions for percolating and underground storage of rainwater. The Maltese archipelago is made up of sedimentary rocks formed in shallow waters during the Miocene – Oligocene periods (Tertiary Carbonates). Some Quaternary formations of rocks are also found in some areas. Our calcareous rocks are made up of plankton, fossils, and sediments which originated from land-derived materials. (Fig. 2 shows the layout of Maltese Geology)

The most valuable aquifers are the Upper and Lower Coralline limestone. However, the presence of bedding planes, joints, and fissures is more important in controlling the underground movement of water than are the porosity and permeability of the rocks themselves. Globigerina is composed largely of thick and relatively impervious marly beds, through which percolation is slow and from which run-off is correspondingly rapid.

# RAINFALL MALTA

From 1851/52 to 1979/80



Rainfall has been recorded on the island since 1851 and the mean annual figure is 508mm. The replenishment of both acquifers depends directly on the annual precipitation.

# THE MATRICULATION EXAMINATION SYSTEMS OF KNOWLEDGE – INTERMEDIATE LEVEL SYLLABUS FOR 1991

1. The examination will consist of two papers and candidates must show competence in each. In addition, a project must be submitted as indicated below.\*
2. Books listed as **Recommended Reading** are intended to indicate the range of topics candidates are expected to be able to tackle. Candidates are not required to have read any of the books listed as **Further Reading**. They will, however, gain familiarity with approaches helpful to establishing interdisciplinary linkages related to central themes (e.g. power) and applications to the Maltese context, by consulting some of them. Teachers may refer their students to as many, or as few, of them as they think fit.
3. Questions will be set in English, but may be answered either in Maltese or in English.

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## PAPER I (3 hours)

Candidates will be required to answer three questions, one from each section.

### 1. Man and Symbols

- (a) Thinking and learning
- (b) Language and other media of communication

#### Recommended Reading:

Edward De Bono, *De Bono's Thinking Course*, Ariel, 1985.

J. Nisbet & J. Shucksmith, *Learning Strategies*, Routledge Chapman & Hall, 1986.

Michel Serres, *Hermes: Literature, Science, Philosophy*, Harari, Josue V. & Bell, David F., ed., John Hopkins, 1983.

#### Further Reading:

P. T. Geach, *Reason and Argument*, Blackwell, 1977.

R. J. Kreyche, *Logic for Undergraduates*, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970.

A. Borg, *Ilsienna: Studju Grammatiku*, Malta, Has-Sajjied, 1988.

2. Man and Environment
  - (a) Global ecosystems; world human population; environment and society; natural resources; threats to the environment. Special reference to Malta where appropriate.
  - (b) Government (rule of law and division of powers) and the principal institutions of social life.

#### Recommended Reading:

B. J. Nebel, *Environmental Science: the way the world works*, Prentice-Hall Inc., 1986 (2nd edition)

Aristotle, *Politics*, Penguin, 1981.

#### Further Reading:

G. T. Miller, *Living in the environment: an introduction to Environmental Science*, Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1988 (5th edition).

J. Turk & A. Turk, *Environmental Science*, Saunders College Publishing, 1984 (3rd edition).

I. Illich, *Tools for Conviviality*, Calder & Boyars, 1973.

E. F. Schumacher, *A Guide for the Perplexed*, Har-Row, 1978.

J. Vanek (ed.), *Self-Management: Economic Liberation of Man*, Penguin, 1975.

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\*Further information regarding the project for the 1991 Systems of Knowledge syllabus will be published in a supplement in the next issue of *Hyphen*.

### 3. Man and History

The Mediterranean and its role in the world.

Recommended Reading:

E. Bradford, *Mediterranean: Portrait of a Sea*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1971.

Further Reading:

F. Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, Fontana, 1975.

A. P. Vella, *Storja ta' Malta*, Klabb Kotba Maltin, 1974.

## PAPER II (3 hours)

Candidates will be required to answer three questions, one from each section.

### 1. Set Texts – Man and Power

These books are for compulsory study. Candidates are required to have a thorough knowledge of their structure and to be able to produce reflections on their form and content on the basis of personal reading. Special attention should be paid to passages explicitly dealing with the theme of power, e.g. Dante – *Inferno* Cantos XXVI–XXVIII, *Purgatorio* Cantos VI–VII, *Paradiso* Cantos VII, VIII, XX.

Virgil, *Aeneid*, Oxford University Press, 1986.

Dante, *The Divine Comedy*, and De Monarchia – extracts from Book One, in *The Portable Dante*, Penguin, 1981.

Goethe, *Faust, Parts 1 and 2*, Penguin, 1969.

Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, Penguin, 1982.

### 2. Scientific Methods and History of Science

Facts and hypotheses, achievements and limitations of past and present models, divisions (physics, chemistry, biology, earth sciences etc.) and correlations, impact on society and relationship to other fields of knowledge.

Recommended Reading:

J. Bronowski, *The Ascent of Man*, Futura, 1981.

Further Reading:

M. Goldstein & I. Goldstein, *The Experience of Science: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, Plenum Press, 1984.

A. Koestler, *The Sleepwalkers: A History of Man's Changing Vision of the Universe*, Hutchinson, 1959.

Carl Sagan, *Broca's Brain: The Romance of Science*, Hodder, 1980.

### 3. Artistic Aims and Achievements

Comprehension of non-verbal messages, aesthetic perception and the different languages of art.

Recommended Reading:

Kenneth Clark, *Civilization*, Penguin, 1982.

Further Reading:

J. Attali, *Noise*, University of Minnesota Press, 1985.

M. Buhagiar, *The Iconography of the Maltese Islands 1400–1900*, Progress Press Co. Ltd., 1987.

E. H. Gombrich, *Story of Art*, Phaidon Press, 1984.

F. Haskell (ed.), *Patrons and Painters*, Yale University Press, 1980.



**Matriculation Examination**

MAY/JUNE 1989 SESSION

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

Subject:

**SYSTEMS OF KNOWLEDGE**

Paper Number:

Paper I

*Answer four questions, one from each section.**Answers may be given either in Maltese or in English.***PART A****Section 1: Man and Symbols**

1. Language is but one medium that man uses to express his deepest thoughts and desires and his vision of the world. Discuss.
2. The dominant medium of communication of a society determines the type of society it is. How far do you agree with this statement?
3. "In the life of civilized human beings mass entertainment now plays a part comparable to that played, in the Middle Ages, by religion."

*(Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World Revisited*)*

Discuss.

4. Write a critical review of a television programme or a film that, in your opinion, deserves comment.
5. *Either*.
  - (a) If you were a member of the selection board interviewing candidates to be teachers, what questions would you ask the candidates?

*Or*

- (b) Malta is facing a water shortage problem. How would you organize your thinking to solve the problem?

6. Complete the following syllogism taken from *Don Quixote* with the missing conclusion, and comment on the logical interest of the passage. (The use of logical symbols might be found helpful.)

If the lord of a manor, divided by a river upon which was a bridge with a gallows at one end, decreed that whoever would cross the bridge must first swear whither he were going and on what business; if he swore truly, he should be allowed to pass freely; but if he swore falsely and did then cross the bridge he should be hanged forthwith upon the gallows; and a man . . . swore 'I go to be hanged on yonder gallows' and thereupon crossed the bridge, then . . .

## Section 2: Man and Environment

7. Is there any relationship between development and water resources? Discuss with reference to particular examples.
8. Human activities may be contributing to climatic change. Discuss.
9. Which factors do you think should be considered in evaluating the impacts of a project on the environment?
10. Should authority over a state be concentrated in the hands of one person or divided among several?
11. What do you understand by a family and how is it affected by social change?
12. Should I always obey my country's law?

## Section 3: Man and History: the Mediterranean and its Role in the World

13. The development of civilization in the Mediterranean has been influenced by geographical factors. Illustrate and comment.
14. "History does not repeat itself." Or does it?
15. What are the tools and sources of the historian?
16. "Revolutions cause more harm than good." Discuss with examples.
17. How important was the role of religion in the history of the Mediterranean?
18. How did (a) the invention of agriculture and (b) the Industrial Revolution affect social life in the Mediterranean?

## Section 4: Set Texts

19. What importance is given to the elements of nature in any two of the texts you have studied and in which the hero faces climatic as well as human hostility?
20. Write a dialogue between either Ulysses or Sinbad and a modern tourist.
21. "The hero is subordinate to the adventures." How true is this of any of the central figures in the texts you have studied?
22. Are there instances in the stories you have studied in which the heroes can be said to have used "lateral thinking"?
23. "Any departure is something of a death." Comment on this saying with reference to the texts you have studied.
24. Discuss **one** of the following statements with reference to one or more of the texts you have studied:  
Punishment is the beginning of redemption.  
Life is governed by destiny.
25. Compare the part which Islam plays in the Sinbad stories and in Don Quixote.
26. Compare the attitude towards death of Odysseus with that of Socrates.

**Matriculation Examination**

MAY/JUNE 1989 SESSION

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

Subject: **SYSTEMS OF KNOWLEDGE**

Paper Number: Paper II

Answer **three** questions: **one** from each Part and **one** from **either** Part B or Part C. Answers may be given either in **Maltese** or in **English**.

**PART B: Scientific Methods and History of Science**

1. "Science is often depicted as a human activity enabling us to march towards truth by accumulating more and more data, under the guidance of an 'infallible' procedure called 'the scientific method'." Discuss.
2. From the ancient Greeks science received two great ideas: (a) that the world and the universe can be understood; and (b) that there are limits to what we can do and understand.

With reference to examples from modern science, illustrate these two ideas.

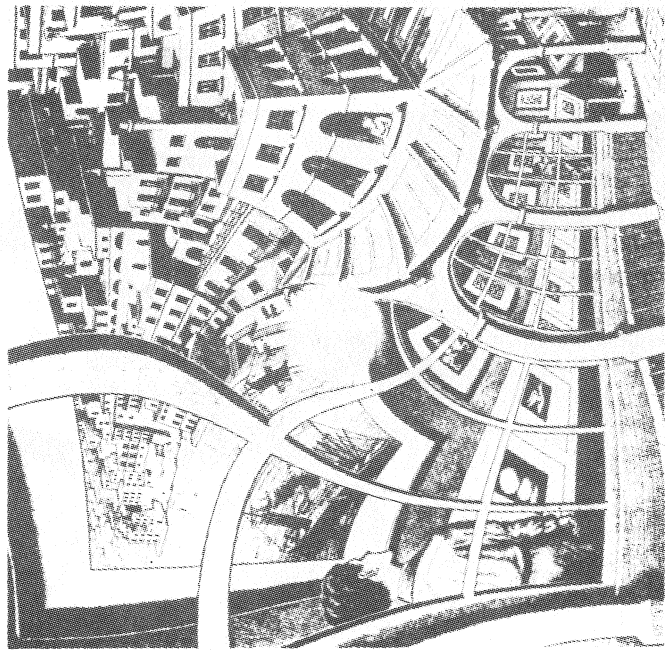
3. In the opening chapter of *The Ascent of Man*, Bronowski proposes the idea that man is a unique creature, who is a shaper of the landscape rather than just a figure in it. Do you agree? With reference to the evolution of man indicate how this idea may be proved or disproved.
4. Discuss the following statement: "Numbers are the language of nature."
5. The second half of the eighteenth century was the breeding ground of several revolutions. How did this affect the development of the sciences during this period?
6. In *The Ascent of Man*, Bronowski elicits an interesting parallel between the art of a particular period and contemporary scientific discoveries. He quotes as instances: Newton's work on optics and painters' fascination with coloured surfaces; the theories on atomic structure and *pointillisme*. To what extent would you agree with this thesis?
7. How does Newton's view of the universe differ from that of Einstein? What impact have these two views had on society?
8. "Science is pure analysis, like taking the rainbow to pieces; and art is pure synthesis, like putting the rainbow together." Discuss.
9. "Civilization is made by settled people." Discuss, commenting also on the role played by nomadic people.

### **PART C: Artistic Aims and Achievements**

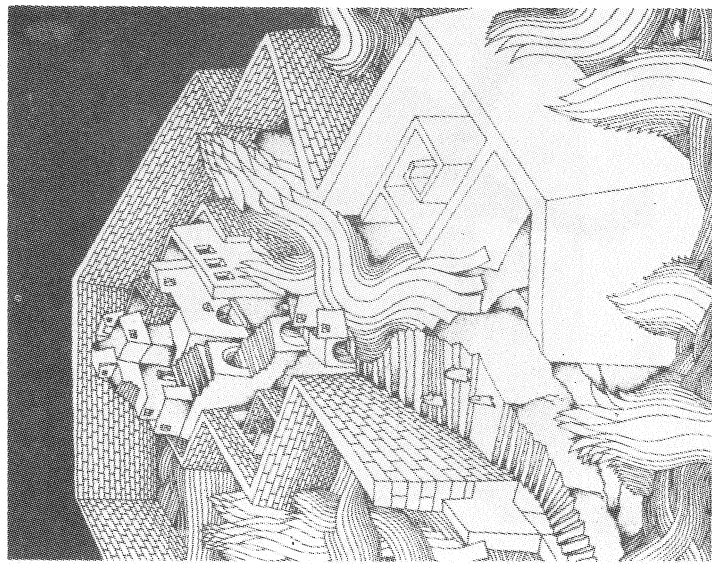
- 10.** Was Gombrich right in describing the passage from Egyptian art to Greek as the 'great awakening'?
- 11.** The Greek philosopher Protagoras declared that 'Man is the measure of all things'. Discuss how this declaration is reflected in the art of the Renaissance period, *or* of Classical Greece, *or* of both.
- 12.** 'During the early Middle Ages, the Church was not only an organizer, it was a humanizer.' How is this fact evident in the art of the Western world at the time?
- 13.** How were nature and work idealized in the art and artistic movements of the late 18th and 19th centuries respectively?
- 14.** "Art is frequently in revolt against its own conventions." Discuss with reference to any particular period of the history of art.
- 15.** Does a work of art have to be original?
- 16.** Exemplify different ways in which artists have interpreted Nature.
- 17.** Compare *either* (a) and (b) *or* (c) and (d) on the attached sheet.

Question 17.

(a)

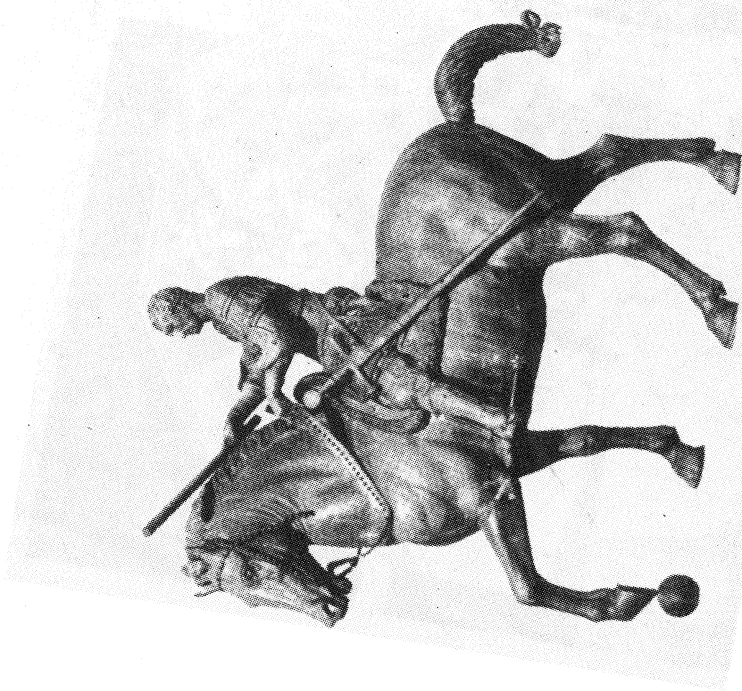


(b)



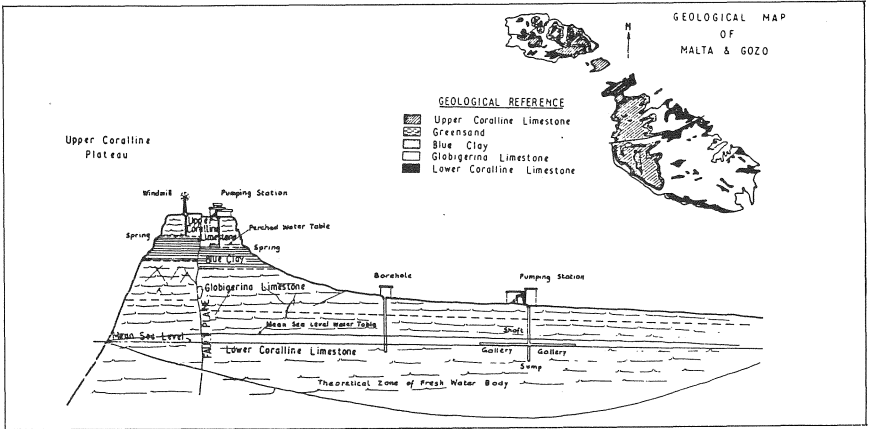
Question 17 (contd).

(c)



(d)





### b) Tectonic Structures

The strata of Maltese rocks has a undulating regional dip to the South-East and the islands are cut by a system of normal faults striking East-North-East, which affects Malta especially and is responsible for cutting the island into a series of horst and rift blocks (block-faulting). The largest faultline in Malta is the Victoria Lines fault which structurally divides Malta into two regions – to the north of this faultline there is a series of rift and horst blocks which divide northern Malta into a series of valleys and ridges. South of the Victoria Lines fault, the faults are less conspicuous and it is from this area that most of our drinking water is supplied.

### Hydrology

From the total amount of rainfall over the Maltese Islands about 6 per cent is lost by direct run-off to the sea, 75 per cent is lost through evapotranspiration and the remainder percolates through the rocks and collects into two natural underground rock reservoirs. These form two distinct aquifers, one in the Upper Coralline and the other in the Lower Coralline and Globigerina formations.

The upper water-table has been broken by faulting and the Upper Coralline limestone aquifers, in which water movement is controlled mainly by fissures, are often thin so that storage possibilities are limited. It is the high-standing water-tables, sealed off by the Blue Clay beneath, which are the most important, particularly in the Mizieb and Bingemma Basins, where perched synclines collect water from the neighbouring uplands. Most of this water from the Upper Water-Table is used for irrigation but also about two million gallons are used as public water.

There is another subdivision of water-tables based on sea-level and those developed above impermeable strata. The main sea-level water-table is the source of public supply in Malta and this reservoir accounts for about ten million gallons. This water-table owes its existence to the simple fact that every winter the local rainfall adds more fresh water to the underground store that can be dissipated by: a) the direct discharge of its superficial portion around the coast in response to the head of water inland, b) the deterioration of its composition as the result of diffusion from the highly-saline sea waters around it and beneath it. This forms a fresh water lens floating on top of a saturated zone of salt water.

The most valuable parts are those where the salinity of the top water does not exceed 15 parts per 100,000. The water body is replenished for the most part through the extremely limited outcrops of Lower Coralline since the Globigerina, especially where it is soil-covered, forms a region of very slow percolation. Therefore, it is important that Lower Coralline catchments should be preserved and protected from pollution. In some cases, they are built over – like in the Mt Carmel Hospital area, others are used as refuse dumps like Has-Saptan. Deep fissures result in the mixing of salt water.

Replenishment of the Upper Water Table, like that of the Lower, depends largely on the characteristics of the surface and it is here that we have a conflict of needs. The expansion of built-up areas over the Upper Coralline and since non-productive rocky land has been reclaimed and covered with soil, this resulted, especially in the latter case in reduction of percolation and created a bigger demand for irrigation water. In some areas over-pumping of water for agricultural purposes has occurred, like on the Rabat-Dingli Plateau. Growth of settlement increases both water consumption and pollution.

### **Production of Natural Water**

Total production of public water from the water-table amounts to about twelve million gallons a day. This water is extracted by means of underground-galleries and 150 boreholes scattered all over Malta and Gozo.

#### *a. The Underground Galleries*

The largest amount of water, about seven million gallons each day, collects in these underground galleries mainly found in the Lower Coralline Limestone. These galleries are serviced by twelve pumping stations, the largest of which is that at Ta' Kandja which pumps more than about one million gallons a day.



*b. The Boreholes*

In the 1970s boreholes started to be dug so that water production would be increased over and above that of the underground galleries. These boreholes are more economical to be excavated given the development of drilling rigs, and to be kept in working order. Up to now, about 150 boreholes have been dug and these produce about five million gallons of water each day.

*c. Spring Water*

A blue-clay formation situated in the western part of the island and located some 100 metres above mean sea-level is responsible for a number of perched aquifers which give rise to small springs at certain points.

**Problems Encountered**

Hydrogeology difficulties limit the amount of water that can be pumped from the aquifers and the yield is not sufficient to satisfy the local demands by industries and tourism.

In some areas there is a gradual increase in the chloride resulting from over exploitation and nitrate content presents a very serious problem in some sources. This has been partly solved by either blending with better water or by keeping extraction rates under control. Unfortunately, like in many developed countries, the problems of nitrates in water supply has also been felt in Malta and efforts are being made to control the situation. The average daily production for Malta is about  $61,800\text{m}^3/\text{d}$ .

Prior to 1971, ground water extraction failed to cope with demand and sea water desalination was introduced to supplement the total production of water from natural sources.

One of the drawbacks facing small islands is the problem of run-off water. This depends on the topography. Water must travel through our main drainage lines which cross the whole island before they discharge into the sea. Therefore, the Government constructed a system of small dams and water tanks to capture as much as possible the flow during the winter season. Other valleys are cleaned and larger earth dams are built such as at Girgenti valley. It is also proposed to include afforestation schemes by planting trees along the sides of valleys. Recreation areas are also being proposed in these areas for public use.

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# INTEREST GROUP POLITICS

*Saviour Rizzo*

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**I**N every society, regardless of its political system, power tends to be concentrated in the hand of the few. The direct system of democracy of the ancient Greek city-states where every citizen was given the opportunity to participate actively in the act of governing over the centuries gave way to the doctrine of the divine rule of kings. The reigning monarch was believed to have derived his right to rule from divine powers and his rule on earth was simply the transcendence of a will from above. When Louis XIV of France said 'L'etat c'est moi' he was merely expressing a widely-held belief which was firmly rooted in history.

When the liberal movement eventually managed to encroach upon the absolute power of kings and ultimately to transfer that power to parliament, the democratic states that emerged were not able to reinstate the full participatory process reminiscent of the direct democratic system of the Greek city-states. The form of democracy that took shape was of a representative type wherein the few who get elected in a General Election act on behalf of the governed. The Constitution confers on these representatives of the people the legislative power to enact, repeal, or amend laws as well as the right to govern and administer the internal and external affairs of the state.

Political cynics might sneer at this transformation by arguing that our representatives at the legislative assemblies enjoy the same rights and powers of the anointed king. Ministers have appropriated the awe which was once the prerogative of kings and noblemen. In other words this change has simply dispersed power to a limited few.

However tenable such a view may seem to be, the erosion of the power of kings and the eventual transference of power to constitutional assemblies were the product of an awakening of consciousness among the populace that strength could be derived from unity. As government became accountable to the people, this consciousness proved not only to be self-sustaining but also incremental so that, whereas the existing groups tended to grow in stature and effectiveness, new pressure groups emerged whose aim was to direct the policy of the State towards their beliefs.

The church and the land-owning classes had for many centuries tried (and very often managed) to steer the policy of the State along channels that were consonant with their interests. With this newly won right of representation other groups came into being which started making inroads in the govern-

ment of the State by seeking avenues through which they could influence public policy.

Pressures brought to bear on government started to be exerted from every quarter so that the rulers had now to contend with or accommodate a multiplicity of demands. To quote one example, the disenfranchisement of women in a democratic representative system prevailing in Britain at the turn of the century soon gave birth in 1903 to the formation of the Women's Social and Political Union which from 1906 to 1914 undertook increasingly militant action to further the suffragette cause, its members enduring imprisonment and forcible feeding. Women over the age of thirty were enfranchised in 1918; women between twenty-one and thirty in 1928.

The Trade Unions, commanding the support of a sizeable section of the working force, also became a strong influential pressure group and they played a prominent part in shaping the political history of the last two centuries. The Trade Union movement went beyond merely exerting pressure and it sought to involve itself in policy-making by getting some of its members or people who sympathized with its cause elected to Parliament.

In many Western European countries this cue of active politics has been taken up in the recent years by the Environmentalists who have really become a force to be reckoned with. As the hazards to the environment seemed to be increasing to proportions which could prove to be beyond human capacity to cope with, the Environmentalists decided to make their presence felt more by actually contesting political elections. 'I Verdi' in Italy contested the General Elections, held in July 1987, and obtained more than 2 per cent of the votes cast — a feat which was hailed as a morale booster to the cause of the environment.

### **Interest Groups**

Very often these interest or protectional groups are based on multi-functional organizations which have a common interest. These are the ones who are likely to take part in active politics. They may also publish a daily or a weekly newspaper to inform both the legislature and the public about the problems and issues which they would like to be solved and to stimulate public debate. Other pressure groups whose main concern is the promotion of policies derived from a shared set of values, beliefs, or ideologies cannot operate in the same professional way as these interest protectional groups. They may make use of the media by means of press releases, letters, and articles. They may put pressures on politicians, especially during election time, by the issue of memoranda.

The latter category of groups may be formed owing to a perceived need to

alter the common shared values of society or owing to an arousal of a cause which a group of people think deserves the attention of the public and the government. The suffragettes is a case in point. On the other hand a pressure group may campaign for demands which may sound anathema to another group of people. Thus a pressure group advocating the right to abortion may run counter to the moral values of other people and so an Anti-Abortionist lobby group becomes operational. In Malta we have witnessed how the activities of Ornithological Society (M.O.S.) have mobilized the hunters and bird trappers who, fearing that their pastime was being threatened, began using the same lobbying tactics characteristic of other pressure groups.

The presence of such pressure groups, together with their right to voice their cause, is the essence of pluralism. A pluralist system of government is seen as a system where the power holders try to accommodate, as far as it is humanly possible, a multiplicity of interests. This form of pluralist participation is interest group politics where one interest group competes with other groups in an effort to shape public policy. Pluralism assumes that society is composed of individuals and groups with differing interests and values. Where the divergences are rooted in such objective cleavages as class, occupation, race, and ethnic background, the pressure groups that emerge may seek to dominate the sphere of influence in the political field or else prevent another group from dominating that sphere.

A group's power to influence legislation is not based simply on the size of its membership but by the amount of financial and manpower resources it can commit to a legislative pressure campaign and the astuteness of its leaders. The pressure brought to bear by Solidarnosc on the Polish Government was the arousal of a long-suppressed will by the Polish workers to voice their protests. The economic hardships and the leadership of Lech Walesa brought these repressed feelings to the surface. The time was propitious and leadership was not lacking. Even in the United States of America the Jewish Community can exert a highly influential pressure on the foreign policy of the USA owing to the financial resources which it can harness:

### **Marxist Ideology**

This dominance of one group over others as a result of its resources forms the bone of contention for the detractors of pluralism. Indeed Marxists still maintain that the basis of cleavages in society is mainly economic. It follows that those wielding economic power constitute the dominant pressure group in society. Such is the dominance of this group that, rather than lobbying

for its cause, it tends to make use of or associate itself with the social institutions so that the norms and value imparted to members of society approximate to its ideals. Somehow, the Marxists maintain, our dominant values are culturally moulded. The State for the sake of its survival has very often to submit to the dictates and imperatives of economic needs and is therefore constrained by the power wielded by this group. Subsequently the State becomes the real defending bastion of the dominant values. So participation through pressure groups is illusory and it simply helps to legitimize a system which is constantly manipulated by an economic élite.

Moreover, pressure groups may work on the assumption that the centre-piece of democracy is opposition rather than participation. Protests, strikes, demonstrations, and petitions are all signs of underlying grievances which give rise to conflicts. Faced with confrontation the economic élite, through the apparatus of the State, grants concessions in order to preserve itself. So far it has managed to adjust itself to new exigencies. So pluralism, according to Marxist thought, is a mere window-dressing.

The bureaucracy and rationalization that have permeated our economic and social life may lend support to these contentions. The hierarchy inherent in this bureaucratic system creates an élite who will do everything within its power to maintain the status quo. And yet, however valid these contentions may be, it can hardly be denied that pluralism has given the citizens room to manoeuvre. The presence of pressure groups means the acceptance by the State of the rights of different groups. This right constitutes one of the tools which the minorities, the underprivileged, and other groups being discriminated against have used to further their cause. Whether the benefits accruing to the populace belie the Marxist contentions is still an ongoing debate between the so-called Left and Right.

The principle of pluralism has also permeated industry. A big industrial firm is today a coalition of different interests. Paternalism has had to give way to mutual collaboration and compromises. Collective bargaining, a feature of industrial relations in the industrial sector, 'is seen by many as being the main agency for workers' participation in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and not least the United States (where collective agreements are wide in scope and cover many managerial practices)'.<sup>1</sup> There seems to be similarities in the political and industrial fields. In both cases the question being asked is whether pressure groups have

1. Michael Poole, *Towards a New Industrial Democracy – Workers' Participation in Industry* (London, 1986), 131.

really managed to make a dent in the prerogatives of the power holders. Or is it simply the case of the policy makers adjusting to new exigencies but by and large retaining their power intact? These are questions which the historian, the political scientist, and the sociologist are called to answer.

### **Functions of Pressure Groups**

What may beset the researchers in this field is the fact that pluralism is a phenomenon which cannot easily be measured. Dissent is one of its features for it is based neither on consensus nor on unanimity.

But open dissent need not always make news value. On the other hand, where features of pluralism are lacking, open dissent tends to hit the world headlines and it may well lead to violent uprisings that either cause disorder or threaten the stability of society. In spite of the waves of confrontation and conflict that pressure groups bring to the fore, they may also by the same token give a valid contribution to the political stability by serving as a bridge between the governed and government.

So a study of the various ways in which pressure groups operate may well provide the analyst with objective criteria for there seems to be some parallelism in the functions of pressure groups.

All pressure groups try to ensure that their cases are well known and sympathetically received by the public for the education of the public may well change the climate of public opinion.<sup>2</sup> By airing their grievances or proclaiming their beliefs, they somehow act as mediators between State and citizens thus serving as a control over specialized political institutions and ensuring that these remain within the broad framework of the social values of societies. Through pressure groups the public may really make its voice heard effectively.

Any government needs a measure of public support. Being oblivious to well deserved causes and demands, it may jeopardize its position. Had Marie Antoinette endeavoured to procure bread for the hungry rather than say 'let them eat cakes', her execution might have been averted. Pressure groups may indeed give government the seal of legitimacy.

2. F. Randall, *British Government and Politics* (London, 1979), 20.

# IL-MALTI

## Kopji tas-snin mgħoddija għall-bejgħ

Prezz: Numru wieħed – 25ċ

Numru Speċjali – 50ċ

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|--|---|
| 1939: Marzu; Settembru   | 1964: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                           |
| 1944: Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                                     | 1965: Marzu; Ġunju; Sett./Diċ. (flimkien)                         |
| 1945: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                              | 1966: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                           |
| 1946: Marzu; Settembru; Diċembru                                     | 1967: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                           |
| 1947: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                              | 1968: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                           |
| 1948: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                              | 1969: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                           |
| 1949: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                              | 1970: Marzu; Ġunju; Sett./Diċ. (flimkien)                         |
| 1950: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                              | 1971: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                           |
| 1951: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                              | 1972: Marzu/Ġunju (Numru Speċjali N. Cremona) Settembru; Diċembru |
| 1952: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                              | 1973: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                           |
| 1953: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                              | 1974: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                           |
| 1954: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                              | 1975: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                           |
| 1955: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                              | 1976: Marzu; Ġunju  |
| 1956: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                              | 1977: Marzu; Ġunju; Sett./Diċ. (flimkien)                         |
| 1957: Marzu; Ġunju; Sett./Diċ. (flimkien)                            | 1978: Marzu; Ġunju; Sett./Diċ. (flimkien)                         |
| 1958: Marzu; Ġunju; Sett./Diċ. (flimkien)                            | 1979: Marzu; Ġunju; Sett./Diċ. (flimkien)                         |
| 1959: Marzu; Ġunju; Sett./Diċ. (flimkien)                            | 1980: Jannar/Diċembru (numru wieħed biss)                         |
| 1960: Marzu; Ġunju; Sett./Diċ. (flimkien)                            | 1981: Jannar/Diċembru (Numru Speċjali Ġ. Galèa)                   |
| 1961: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                              | 1984: Jannar/Ġunju (Numru Speċjali – Żieda mat-Tagħrif)           |
| 1962: Marzu; Ġunju; Settembru; Diċembru                              |   |
| 1963: Marzu; Ġunju (Numru Speċjali R. Briffa); Sett./Diċ. (flimkien) |   |

Ibghat għall-kopja meħtieġa flimkien ma' ċekk għall-ammont ta' flus li jiswew il-kopji lis-Sur Pawlu Mifsud (Tel: 440733), 24, Triq il-Linja tal-Ferrovija I-Qadima, B'Kara.

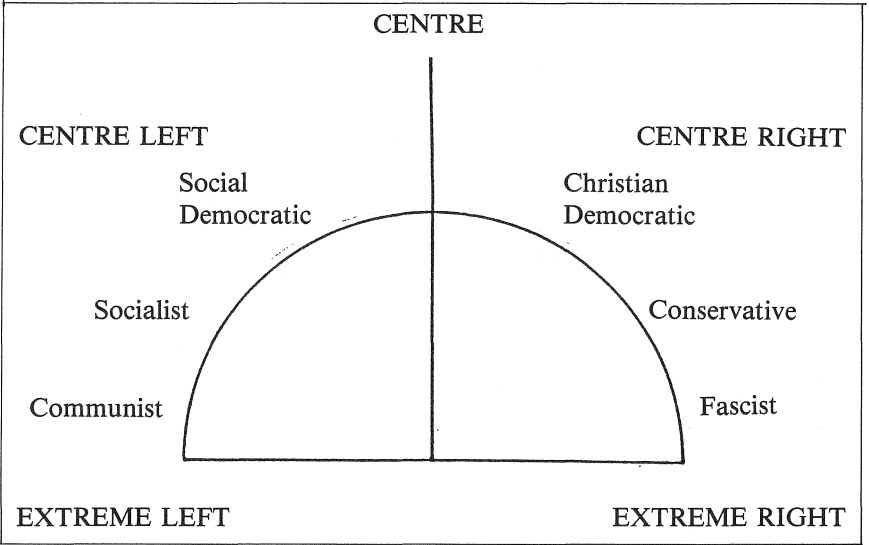


Figure 1: The Spectrum of Political Ideologies:

For details on each see, for example, Baldacchino (1988) pp. 117 – 122.



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# THE DYNAMICS OF POLITICAL RESTRUCTURING IN WESTERN EUROPE AND MALTA

*Godfrey Baldacchino*

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## Introduction

'Left' and 'Right' have become clichés in political discourse: in popular and academic circles alike, the terms *left* and *right* are simplistic antithetical representations of a cluster of outlooks which may be said to represent political ideology. This is the pattern of beliefs which determine man's vision of the world both as it is and as he would like it to be. The term *left* conjures up such diverse political forms as 'pink' Euro-Communism, the welfare capitalism of Swedish social democracy, and the giants of Lenin and Mao. *Right* brings to mind a set of equally unhappy bedfellows: the autocratic regime of South Africa, and Italy's and West Germany's Christian Democrats as well as Thatcher and Reagan, the stalwarts of the 'New Right'.

The usage of *left* and *right* as explanatory tools is associated with their representation on a hemispherical spectrum which can therefore differentiate between various shades of moderacy and radicalism (See Figure 1). The analogy is in fact of French provenance: in the French Parliament, Communist deputies are obliged to occupy the extreme left set of seats, followed by the Socialist and the Social Democratic deputies and so on, with the extreme right seats reserved for the fascist-oriented parliamentarians.

Until the early 1970s, it appeared that West European politics was being characterized by either stable fragmentation of voter preferences or else by the decrease of the existing fragmentation. The spread of *left-right* electoral preferences appeared either ossified<sup>1</sup> or otherwise as taking a moderate, centrist orientation, with hardline extremist political parties of both *left* and *right* consistently losing ground.<sup>2</sup> However, such a case could not be made in the epoch which

1. Lipset & Rokkan (1967) argued that West European politics had coagulated, with religion, region, community, and social class persisting as the cardinal dimensions of political cleavage. A similar conclusion was reached by Rose & Urwin (1969) from an examination of persistence and change in 19 democracies between 1945 and 1968. Wolinetz (1979) concluded that most party alignments in post-war Western Europe were indeed stable until the 1970s with the exception of (i) fluctuations in the elections of the immediate post-war period – usually the result of temporary surges by Communist parties – and of (ii) France, which passed through the social upheaval of the Fourth Republic and witnessed the Gaullist phenomenon.
2. Kirchheimer (1966) proposed a dynamic model, suggesting an evolution of established political parties into 'catch-all' parties which would seek nationwide potential constituencies, trading off hard and fast ideological principles for the sake of capturing wider electoral interests. This would also result in smaller ideological differences between extant parties. This model was influenced by the 'end of ideology' thesis – see Bell (1961) – as well as by the US political system which has been described as the only pure catch-all two-party system in the Western World (Rose & Urwin 1969, p. 36).

followed: in the two last decades, it has been more correct to speak of a 'defreezing' of the West European party system.

The process which abruptly presented itself in the West European political system has been called one of political defreezing, realignment, or restructuring. Essentially, the process represents a rehabilitation of political party systems in the face of the changing class basis and perceptions of upcoming electorates and of the emergence of new issues of political cleavage other than the traditional segmental and economic ones. The reorientation has involved a general increased fragmentation of representative bodies, both within and outside the party system. It has also led to a shift in basic strategy by political parties as they have sought to adjust to the new political environment.

### **The Dynamics of Restructuring**

a) One condition which has led to a restructuring of political systems in Western Europe has been the *reaction against the politics and policies of the post-war Welfare State*. This has apparently been catalysed by the so-called economic crisis of the 1970s. By a combination of circumstances, the post-war Western Governments had become increasingly responsible for the management of the economy.<sup>3</sup> As a result, these Governments became increasingly held responsible for the well-being of the entire society. Providing full employment, controlling inflation, and sustaining economic growth became seen by electorates (and accepted by parties of both Left and Right) as a Government duty. All went well in the affluence and prosperity of the 1950s and 1960s; but a generation of high expectations succeeded: voters began to regard material security, increased prosperity, and continuing improvements in the quality of life as natural and automatic. Meanwhile, public expenditure had shot upwards and Governments began to find it increasingly more difficult to expand, or even maintain, pre-existing levels, social policy programmes without unacceptable increases in taxation. This led to the eruption of the crisis situation of the 1970s: Governments in Western Europe proved unable to control inflation, maintain full employment, and ensure a high level of economic growth.

The reaction has been a general revival of interest in 'old' Christian Democratic/Conservative values. Criticism has been voiced against the high costs of Government bureaucracy, exorbitant taxation, and excessive constraints on private enterprise, including unbridled trade union activity. These outcries are supported not only by an appropriate scientific and

3. These circumstances include the Great Depression and the Keynesian reaction; prolonged exposure to state economic intervention and planning under Fascism and wartime; the sharp increases in approval for Welfare State concern; and the necessity to plan for and even furnish the capital for re-investment in the period of reconstruction (Lipset, 1964).

ideological basis;<sup>4</sup> but also by the long, prior experience of a mismanaged, inefficient public service which had cast the latter into general disrepute. The successes of the right-wing counter-movements was thus assisted by such and similar unsatisfactory performances of Keynesian economic policy (Chaloupek, 1985; Abel-Smith, 1985).

b) The dynamics of restructuring also came about as a result of a *well-observed sociological phenomenon*. The long epoch of political freezing had reduced the appeal of sectarian tendencies; some of these had been resolved in any case by the post-war politics of consensus, while persisting issues had lost much of their appeal to younger generations of voters anyway. Thus, parties had softened their political platforms to widen support and maintain a *raison d'être*. The institutionalization of parties in this manner has tended to moderate them and therefore to reduce the political-party ideological divides. This makes the parties concerned more indistinguishable in the eyes of upcoming voters for whom the issues which had led to the formation of the parties in the first place may be obsolete and totally irrelevant. This leads to reduced partisan loyalties with the established order and foments a tendency to look for alternative representative bodies which are more contemporary in outlook and at the same time may be better able to mobilize discontent and fulfil expressive functions.<sup>5</sup>

c) This process is enhanced by the parallel *decline of party allegiances*. Out of traditional dimensions of political cleavage, the economic *class* cleavage has tended to persist as a post-war major parameter. But evidence seems to suggest that even class criteria do not seem to have remained all – powerful determinants of political party choice.<sup>6</sup> Reasons for this weakening may be found in the changes undergone by the Western advanced industrial societies: the inheritance of parental partisanship tastes has been diluted because of increased social mobility and exposure to wider, more

4. These include supply-side economics and such texts as Friedman & Friedman (1979) and Hayek (1976).
5. The decreased relevance of long-established institutions to younger generations leading to the foundation of more expressive, democratic structures which, if successful, become institutionalized in their turn . . . This process has been called 'the iron law of degeneration' (Meister, 1973).
6. Rose (1982) shows that since 1964, no more than one-fourth of British voters have persistent political loyalties tied to class. Zuckerman (1982) argues that class-based divisions cannot be said to be persistent and widespread. Rose & Urwin (1969) consider ethnicity and religion to be stronger determinants of party allegiance than social class in Western Europe.

diverse sources of information and communication. The traditional working class has made social, political, and economic gains through the extension of citizenship rights and franchise (Bendix, 1969), the growth of redistributive practices (Lipset, 1964), high levels of economic expansion, and improvement in factory conditions (Goldthorpe *et alii*, 1969). The resulting *embourgeoisement* has led to an increased readiness by members of the lower social classes to associate readily with middle-class values and therefore middle-class parties of the Right.

d) Furthermore, *the working class itself is undergoing structural change*: The phenomenon of industrialization, the uprooting of rural workers, their proletarianization and their bringing together in large numbers to undertake routinized work processes had led to the growth of trade union consciousness and of mass leftist support (Mann, 1973) and to a decimation of the Christian Democratic/Conservative vote (Irwing, 1979). The process is still underway in a number of countries or regions where industrialization has been a late-comer. By and large, however, in most of the industrialized nations, the process is now reversed: the industrial environment has reached a saturation point and is subsequently in decline, with the traditional working class retreating under the composite impact of new technology, cheap imports, rationalization, robotization, and structural unemployment.<sup>7</sup> Over and above this, the remaining production units which engage human labour are increasingly being parcelled out into 'island production' sites where small size, relative isolation, and paternalist management techniques diffuse class and trade union consciousness to a minimum.<sup>8</sup> The classical strongholds of unionism and leftist support – transport workers, dock workers, miners, and shipbuilders – are amongst the worst hit by this blind process. The working class seems to be dwindling to a small minority, especially if defined in terms of manual, non-supervisory workers who produce surplus value directly (Poulantzas, 1975). In such a situation, it seems that a continued appeal by parties of the Left directed only at the residual working class would lead to political suicide.

e) The decline of the traditional working class is accompanied by the *emergence of a 'new middle class'* – clerks, technicians, salesmen, bureaucrats, middle management, professionals – generally well-educated workers engaged in tertiary sector service occupations whose attitude to

7. On de-industrialization see, for example, Bluestone & Harrison (1982) and Thirlwall (1985).

8. See, for example, Mitter (1986) and Solinas (1982) for insights into this process in the United Kingdom and Italy respectively.

work and to authority tends to be more deferential, compliant, and conformist than proletarian, rebellious or class and power-conscious (Lockwood, 1966; Merton, 1968; Goldthorpe *et alii*, 1969). This is understandable because those workers fortunate enough to form part of 'core' staff are encouraged to commit themselves to the enterprise ethic and associate themselves with the interests of capital. This is achieved by comfortable salaries, ample job discretion, and autonomy, promotion prospects, job security, and professional status (Rus, 1984). The process finds expression today in the increasing disposition of such higher-salaried personnel to set up their own trade union organizations, separate and independent from their more proletarian counterparts.

f) A further explanation for the restructuring phenomenon in contemporary Western European politics is the effect which rampant, structural unemployment has had on ethnic relations. Chronic shortages of employment possibilities has led to outbreaks of *resentment and friction with minority groups* in many societies. The victims of this feeling are invariably the ethnic communities, with millions of members spread over the industrial cities of Western Europe. They had come from Portugal, Southern Italy, Yugoslavia, and other areas of the Mediterranean littoral at a time when Western Europe was experiencing a labour shortage. Then, the influx of workers willing to work without expecting too high a compensation was very welcome. Unwittingly, these workers tend to fall into the lowest rungs of the occupational ladder, indirectly contributing to the upward social mobility and *embourgeoisement* of the indigenous workforce. Today, with around 20 million unemployed in Western Europe, these immigrant workers are perceived as 'job thieves' by the locals. These immigrants also tend to serve as convenient scapegoats of community and urban violence and unrest. The resulting outcome, then, is a sprouting of both anti-immigrant sentiment as well as a demand for better law enforcement policies, both of which are championed by the parties of the Right.<sup>9</sup>

In spite of what has been described above, the composition and strength of the Left on the new class map may not be so despairing. It is true that the 'new middle class' is growing; but this labour segment is not homogeneous and most of it may be seen as occupying a 'contradictory class location' which makes them potential voters of the Left (Olin Wright, 1976). Also, the expansion of white-collar jobs has been accompanied by a pervasive process of de-skilling and routinization of such white-collar labour

9. Such effects are poignantly documented by Johnson (1981) with respect to France.

(Braverman, 1974). The new middle class may therefore be seen to hold the promise of being indeed a new working class (Parkin, 1968; Mallet, 1969; Touraine, 1971). Nevertheless, this potential new working class would *not* tend to be attracted by the traditional leftist battlecries of nationalization, extreme vertical redistribution of wealth, and universally applicable cradle-to-grave welfare provision.<sup>3</sup> The rhetoric of class struggle and capitalist exploitation does not resonate so much in their ears.

### **The Political Consequences of Restructuring**

Given these dynamics of restructuring, how were Western European party systems affected by these processes?

a) *Political fragmentation and the growth of small interest groups.* The decline of old partisan loyalties and the reaction against the politics and policy of the Welfare State both created fluid electorates which gave some support to new interest groups. Such interest groups lacked the financial and organizational strength of the larger political parties but they nevertheless operated with some effect owing to the increased access to the mass media in the democratic pluralist environment of the West. They also have the added attraction of being relevant to specific and contemporary issues. They do not have to adopt compromising attitudes for the sake of wooing other citizens under the organization's umbrella. They are therefore able to mobilize mass participation but, being interest specific, they tend to have glorious but short, meteoric careers.

Many such interest groups (such as the CND in Britain, the Nuclear Disarmament Movement on the Continent, the Feminist Movement, the Anti-Apartheid Movement) are organized outside the parliamentary system. The members' activism (if not also their votes) is therefore a loss to political parties. Indeed, the apolitical nature of such interest groups may have come about because the established political structure is perceived not to have responded (or not to have responded sufficiently) to a specific issue.

Within the political party arena, the increase in political fragmentation has been nevertheless remarkable mainly as a result of a plethora of new issues: membership in the European Economic Community (this was a major political issue in election campaigns in Britain, Norway, and Denmark); protest against a high level of taxation (Denmark); ecology (in nine West European countries); demands for further democratization (Britain, The Netherlands); and even an anti-ecology sentiment (The Auto Party in Switzerland). More interestingly, a fair number of new parties have emerged which represent a reawakening of traditional political cleavages which had been thought close to being defunct: language (Belgium); regional-

ism (Britain, Spain, France, Belgium, West Germany, and Italy); and also rural interests (the Farmers' Party in the Netherlands).

b) *A shift towards the Right in electoral preferences.* The changing composition of the electorate in social class terms and the impact of the macro-economic 'crisis' have both contributed to an increase in support for Rightist parties in West European elections in the last decade or so. The appeals of class reconciliation, concern for the security of the individual, rolling back the State machine, tax reliefs or other more extremist policies (such as tough anti-immigrant legislation and class revenge) have contributed to an overall, significant shift to the Right in electoral preferences across Western Europe during the 1980s. (See Appendix I).

c) *The Reorientation of the Left* – Indeed, for a time, it seemed that the arguments of the Left were dated and old-fashioned, belonging to an age when the concerns to build a welfare state and the assurance of union rights were important issues amidst the ruins of war and the immediately following period of reconstruction. Apparently, both the period of affluence and that of 'crisis' had reduced the Socialist appeal.

The correction adopted has been to present a more moderate Left – arguing less for nationalization, rampant redistribution, and revolutionary anti-capitalism. The spent force of the extreme left, Communist parties all over Europe (except in Italy, Portugal, Greece, and San Marino) is evidence of this (See Appendix I). Ideological emphasis on the class struggle is reduced – the appeals have shifted from a traditional working class to a wider, national basis; the language has also tended to shift from being radical and confrontative to being depolarizing and reformist. Sometimes, one has to had to fight it out with more extremist hard-liners in order to make the transition to a more moderate image.<sup>10</sup> Socialist parties have indeed strengthened their electoral base and have assumed a catch-all look in Spain, France, the Netherlands, and Greece.<sup>11</sup> Their status as 'natural parties of government' in Scandinavia since the 1920s has not waned (Castles, 1978).

There are of course serious dangers in Socialist parties becoming more

10. Examples in this respect include the recent attempts at policy re-deployment by the British Labour Party and the defeat of the extreme-left faction at the 1979 Spanish Socialist Party Congress. (Share, 1985), p. 93 – 6.
11. In Italy, 'catch-all' status on the Left is still held by the Communist Party, the largest in Western Europe. It has, however, succeeded in being so by adopting a more moderate platform since the events of the 'hot autumn' of 1969. See Hine (1978).

centrist, Social Democratic, in orientation. They may lose the votes of ideological leftists who will perceive them as too soft on key issues, or as having outrightly sold out to capitalism. The newly-formed social democratic entities may nevertheless not attract or maintain votes from the new working class. And in the coming of a post-industrial and leisure society, the labouring condition itself may lose its priority as a key social experience which moulds the political expectations and beliefs of citizens.

d) *The politics of de-structuring* – Another problem facing all political parties in Western Europe – but more seriously those of the Left – is the growing extent of the apoliticization of potential voters. Expanding political competences and resources of contemporary electorates are reducing the need of the dependence on partisan cues, consequently leading to a decline of partisan, often lifelong, attachments. This process brings into existence a large pool of apolitical individuals who lack party ties. The growth of citizen action groups and apolitical protest movements are indicators of this process. One consequence of such destructuring is that small, issue-specific parties may be further strengthened and increased pressures may be brought to bear on established parties to respond more faithfully to public opinion and to introduce a stronger degree of accountability to electorates (Dalton, 1984; Flanagan and Dalton, 1984). A ‘post-materialist’ generation of citizens is apparently emerging which, armed with a higher level of formal education and freed from the threat of material deprivation and war, will assign a higher priority to non-material higher order needs (Maslow, 1954; Inglehart, 1977). Such priorities include democratization of political structures and industrial democracy (Levin, 1981) as well as ecology (Lauber, 1983).<sup>12</sup> Such post-materialists do not tend towards hard and fast partisan loyalties but most are likely to identify ideologically with the Left (Muller-Rommel, 1985; Savage, 1985). This implies a further potential loss of leftist votes going either to small parties or being lost altogether to extra-parliamentary allegiances, increasing further the relative strength of the Rightist vote.

### **The Maltese Condition**

How does the Maltese condition fit into this picture? Malta’s two major

12. This is an important explanation behind the spectacular growth of environmental or ‘green’ pressure groups and political parties in Western Europe. Green parties have become a significant minority in the Luxembourg, West German, and Austrian Parliaments (See also Appendix 1).



political parties have crystallized their support over the last twenty years. They have become 'catch-all' parties sufficiently institutionalized and involved in grassroots organization to remain dominant forces in the democratic contest and to thwart all attempts so far at establishing significant alternative political parties.<sup>13</sup> Both the Malta Labour Party (MLP) and the Nationalist Party (NP) have emerged from rather rigid social class and regional positions and expanded to appeal to all potential voters in Malta and Gozo, trading off in time hard-and-fast ideological principles for the sake of capturing wider electoral interests. Intense feelings of partisan sympathy may, in fact, reflect a closing ideological divide between the two parties and, therefore, a greater theoretical possibility of voters switching allegiances across party lines. Since the magnitude and direction of such 'floating' is probably what nowadays determines eventual local election outcomes, there is a continuous concern (especially by party officials) for preserving and cultivating the loyalty of the converted.

The local labour market situation has also undergone rapid change. Rural-to-urban migration and industrialization (particularly the very rapid increase of manufacturing employment and the corresponding exponential decline of full-time agricultural work) contributed to an expansion of the traditional working class. This labour market condition may therefore be seen as a contributor to the leftist majorities achieved in Maltese general elections ever since the granting of universal suffrage in 1947 up till 1981.<sup>14</sup>

It is probably coincidental that the Nationalist majority obtained in the 1981 general elections corresponded to the apex of manufacturing employment in the Maltese economy. The vulnerable export-oriented industries fell victim to an international recession. Subsequently the share of private manufacturing employment has fallen from 24.1 per cent of the total local labour force in 1980 to 21.9 per cent in 1988.<sup>15</sup> In spite of contrary market indicators, the Socialist Governments of 1971 – 87 invested considerably in

13. Other than the MLP and NP, seven other political parties successfully obtained seats in the Maltese Parliament since the 1947 general elections. Of these, four survived only one election campaign. Only the Democratic Action Party and the Constitutional Party succeeded in electing deputies in two successive general elections. The largest and longest-lasting alternative was Boffa's Malta Workers' Party, a splinter from the MLP in 1949 which was, however, totally re-absorbed within the MLP by 1955 (See Appendix 2).
14. This excludes the 1962 and 1966 elections, which are problematic to analyse in view of the 'mortal sin' condition.
15. Computed from the Economic Survey. See Economic Division – OPM (1980) p. 72 and (1988) p. 48.

parastatal manufacturing, shiprepair and shipbuilding sectors which now provide employment to almost 10,000 workers. Was this an explicit attempt to preserve or cultivate sites of traditional proletarianization and, therefore, of leftist-oriented voter-workers?

In the meantime, tertiary sector, service-oriented activities have expanded and now account for practically half of Malta's jobs (excluding the burgeoning underground economy). Apart from a steady 25,000-strong civil service, most of the new employment opportunities are found in the private sector and are directly or otherwise involved in tourism. Most consist of self-employment or family concerns. Such entrepreneurs are more likely to support and press for trade liberalization and tax breaks than to clamour for egalitarian, restrictive, and 'big government' practices. This is, however, a very sweeping generalization: given the widespread underground economy, many wage and salary earners in the formal economy are self-made own account workers after working hours. Is the result a schizophrenic class location, with proletarian sentiments coloured by formal work experience juxtaposed to a more liberal, conservative emanating from the informal labour process?<sup>16</sup>

The Welfare State in Malta is, generally speaking, not under threat. Rather, its defence and upkeep appear to be a priority for parties of both, left and right. The public expenditure to maintain the Welfare State has, however, invariably spiralled upwards over the years.<sup>17</sup> The increase in cost has been partly maintained by increases in revenue from income and expenditure tax, income from property, and profits from public enterprise.<sup>18</sup> Tax rate increases may, however, become an unavoidable issue in view of the increasing proportion of senior citizens and a longer life expectancy which together act to increase demand for old age pensions.<sup>19</sup>

The improved quality of life – the standard of living has apparently

16. Although this issue begs much further research, it may be related to the existence of two levels of normative reference – a consensual one and a conflictual one – identified by British action sociologists from the study of industrial relations. See Parkin (1982) p. 95, and Batstone *et alii* (1976). A similar dichotomy is reflected in Maltese perceptions of class structure and class relations. See Zammit (1984).
17. Public social security and health expenditure doubled in real terms between 1977 and 1986. See Central Office of Statistics (1988), p. 26.
18. *Ibid.* See discussion in Briguglio (1988), Ch. 7.
19. The 65+ age group constituted 9.9% of the Maltese resident population in 1985. This percentage is expected to increase to 15.5% by the year 2000. See the latest available Census Report in Central Office of Statistics (1986), p. 56.

doubled in real terms over the last thirty-odd years<sup>20</sup> – has been credited as the prime cause of embourgeoisement and the resulting heightened preference by working class citizens for middle class political leaders and electoral programmes. Over and above this, better educational services and the satisfaction of lower order, survival needs via minimum wage legislation, welfarism, equal wage for equal work for women, and other such measures, has apparently contributed to an increasing concern for post-materialist considerations by the Maltese electorate. Most evident at the present time is the environmental issue: the proliferation of new building sites, the destruction of natural habitats and historical monuments, the building of the new power station are some of the topics which consistently show that, even in Malta, the political agenda appears to be increasingly turning green.<sup>21</sup>

Another post-materialist consideration which may gather momentum in the next few years is the demand for greater democratization at work and in society. Profit sharing, worker directors, and civic councils are aspects of this movement beyond lower order 'bread and butter' issues. The extent to which these calls for participatory management and politics are co-optative ploys by established power structures and not a reflection of genuine grass-root demands and sentiments remains as yet an open subject for debate.<sup>22</sup> All the same, even if such initiatives are mere cosmetics of democratization, they nevertheless provide useful experiences which are in themselves educational for those involved and which may generate a spill-over effect in the sense that they may trigger demands for still further democratization.<sup>23</sup>

Finally, Malta is apparently lucky to be blessed with the absence of religious, racial, or tribal conflict. There is, however, much to support the proposition that the Maltese people are today two 'nations'. In spite of many policy convergences by the MLP and NP, perceived outcomes of policy decisions as well as the political behaviour of partisan supporters is more consonant to the analogy of ethnic conflict: the 'Reds' and the 'Blues' are amongst us, each group armed with its particular economic, religious,

20. This statistic was computed with the assistance of Dr Lino Briguglio, economist.

21. That 'green' is the world's new political colour is proclaimed, for example, in *The Economist*, 15 October 1980. See also Apap Bologna (1980), Ch. 1.

22. Witness the contributions of political party and trade union representatives during a seminar on worker participation held at the University of Malta in September 1988. These have been subsequently published. See Zammit, ed. (1989), *passim*.

23. The transformative versus co-optative potential of participatory schemes is discussed by Stephens (1980), Chapter 1.

and moral values, each with a fully-fledged cultural industry to ensure preservation and self-reproduction (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1975). Given the two-party structure of Maltese politics, sympathizers of the party in opposition tend to view themselves as an oppressed ethnic group.<sup>24</sup>

There is a second parameter of internal division, a geographical one, apart from the partisan divide. The 25,000 inhabitants of the sister island of Gozo, tend to identify themselves as Gozitans rather than Maltese. Apart from the very obvious physical separation – an 8-kilometre isthmus – Gozitans have consistently protested that they are the perennial losers in Maltese politics.<sup>25</sup> This general feeling of discrimination coalesced into political expression when the Jones Party and the Gozo Party contested the 1947 general elections on behalf of Gozitan interests. The latter party declared that Gozitans were tired of political adventurers who went to their island at election time and then disappeared.<sup>26</sup> Although ‘Gozitanism’ has not reared a political head since then, both major parties must constantly stave off the threat by political mobilization and/or appeasement.<sup>27</sup>

### **A Logic of Industrialism?**

The approach adopted in this paper approximates closely the ‘Logic of Industrialism’ thesis propounded by eminent American political scientists almost three decades ago (Kerr *et alii*, 1960). The argument is itself highly ideological and seeks to provide a scientific, almost evolutionary and deterministic justification for the demise of the Left as a relevant social and political movement in advanced democratic states. The model takes the USA’s current political party structure as the shape of things to come in other democratic states, trailing behind the US in economic (and therefore also political) maturity. If the USA presents ‘the image of the European future’ (Lipset, 1964, p. 272) then the logic’s general postulate appears confirmed by the rightward shift in European politics which finds its alleged

24. For a recent contribution on this theme, see Serracino-Inglott (1988), pp. 365 – 373.

25. A recent statement on Gozitans as a minority has also been pronounced by the Bishop of Gozo. See *Il-Ġens*, 6.1.89.

26. *The Times of Malta*, 21 April 1947, quoted in Pirota (1987), p. 73.

27. It is likely that Gozo as a district sees the highest concentration of party mass meetings during electoral campaigns. One may add that the red-blue partisan divide appears to be taking a physical, regional form with respect to the south and north of Malta respectively. The MLP obtained 57.4% of votes cast in the southern districts (I to VII) during the 1987 general election, the NP 61.9% of votes cast from northern districts except Gozo (VIII to XII).

ultimate destination in the contemporary development of the 'New Right' movement in both US Republican and Democratic parties where anti-establishment populism and 'law and order' sentiments are the order of the day (Schneider, 1987).

The major criticism levelled at the Logic of Industrialism thesis is that no significant social and political movement allows itself to be exclusively determined by economic change. There is a complex interplay between social movements and their political and economic contexts, such that pressure groups, trade unions, and political parties initiate their own reforms to counter and adapt to newly emergent labour markets and the associated cultural and political conditions. This is indeed the crucial lesson to be learnt by political movements seeking to remain relevant forces in the democratic contest: to face upcoming challenges rather than invest in anachronistic confrontations and the tactics which may have paid off in the past. The Social Democratic successes in Scandinavia are possibly heavily indebted to their singular achievement in advancing labour interests within the general advance of Big Capitalism.

### **Synthesis**

The decline of partisan loyalties, the changing structural composition of the labour force, and the catalysing effect of the socio-economic 'crisis' have together led to a de-freezing of long-enduring partisan alignments and the emergence of neo-conservatism, small issue-specific parties and non-parliamentary interest groups. Class-based political cleavages appear to be progressively intercepted by a new political dimension based on materialist/post-materialist considerations over the quality of life. In the face of this contemporary deterioration of traditional leftist appeal, a number of leftist political parties have adopted a more moderate, reformist image with apparent success. Ideologically, this involves a shift to a more centrist platform, replacing the revolutionary elimination of capitalism with the evolutionary reform within capitalism as a major rallying call. This can make leftist parties successful at co-opting the expanding cadres of middle-class, service-employed, and post-materialist citizenry. Such a tendency is, as expected, most visible in the northern, more developed, countries of Western Europe.

Comparative developments in Malta lag behind in time and momentum. Such lags are the result of a number of reasons. Firstly, Malta's development status is, speaking relatively to Western Europe, certainly not yet of age. Secondly, the large public sector distorts free-market dynamics and the associated cultural and political changes. Thirdly, the small size of the

island and its astronomically high population density preserve the influence of family, partisan sympathies across generations, in spite of a nuclearization of the basic family unit. Finally, the same geographical conditions of size and human density make it easier for the political parties to cultivate blind respect by an elaborate grassroots organization which can provide almost cradle-to-grave exposure to partisan socialization. This, by and large, perpetrates partisan dogmatism, which is very much insensitive to changing environmental, socio-cultural, or economic conditions.

Still, in spite of these lagging devices, one may all the same hypothesize that a certain amount of re-structuring on the lines of other West European nations is already taking place in Malta and that this re-structuring is influencing the local political party arena. It may be argued that the increasingly better educated and affluent voting population is developing (albeit so far imperceptibly) a new political culture and is exerting new pressures on the established political structure. New issues – such as ecology, democratization, accountability of power holders, and efficient public sector management – are being introduced into the political cauldron. Whether the MLP and NP succeed in reconciling themselves to these new ingredients, or whether the latter will become the launching pads of new, more interest-specific political parties, remains yet to be seen.

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**APPENDIX 1 'Left' – 'Right' Shifts in West European Elections**

An analysis of 19 general elections in 19 West European countries between 1983 and 1987 reveals the following trends when results are compared with those of the immediately preceding national election:

\*Communist and extreme left parties lost votes percentage-wise in *all* cases. The most spectacular communist decline occurred in France (from 16.2 per cent of the vote in 1981 to 9.8 per cent in 1986).

\*New parties contesting elections on a right-wing platform (tax cuts, law & order, pushing back the Welfare State, anti-immigration and other such measures) were generally successful. In particular the National Front in France (9.7 per cent of the vote in 1986), in Iceland (the Citizen Party with 10.9 per cent of the vote in 1987) and in Greenland (the Issittrup Partii with 4.5 per cent of the vote in 1987). *No* new left-wing party contesting elections for the first time in the period under review registered a significant proportion of votes.

\*Environment, ecology, or simply 'green' parties registered increases in *all* elections where they contested. Spectacular successes were achieved in Luxembourg (5.2 per cent of the vote in 1984) and Austria (4.8 per cent in 1986) where these parties contested for the first time.

\*Electoral shifts towards parties of the Right have been observed in Denmark (1984), France (1986), Greenland (1987), Spain (1986), Portugal (1987), and Sweden (1985). Centre-Right majorities were preserved in Italy (1987), the United Kingdom (1987), the Netherlands (1986), West Germany (1987), and Malta (1987) where there has been little preferential shift between elections.

\*Electoral shifts towards parties of the Left have been observed in Luxembourg (1984), Norway (1985), Iceland (1987), and the Faroe Islands (1984). Centre-Left majorities were preserved in San Marino (1983) and Austria (1986) where there has been little preferential shift between elections.

\*Belgium (1985) and Switzerland (1983) remain multi-party centrist political systems with no generalized distinguishable trend or ideological preference.

Source: *Keesing's Archives*, various issues, 1983 – 87.

*The Outcome of Maltese Post-War National Elections: 1947–1987*  
 (The number in brackets stands for the number of parliamentary seats gained)

	1947	1950	1951	1953	1955	1962	1966	1971	1976	1981	1987
Registered Voters	140703	144516	151979	148478	149380	166936	161490	181768	217785	238341	246292
Actual Voters	106116	106941	113368	119328	121243	151595	144873	168913	206843	225700	236720
Valid Votes	105494	106129	112625	118453	120651	150606	143347	168059	205440	224151	235169
Nationalist Party (NP)	19041 (7)	31431 (12)	39946 (15)	45180 (18)	48514 (17)	63262 (25)	68656 (28)	80753 (27)	99551 (31)	114132 (31)	119721 (35)
Malta Labour Party (MLP)	63145 (24)	30332 (11)	40208 (14)	52771 (19)	68447 (23)	50974 (16)	61774 (22)	85448 (28)	105854 (34)	109990 (34)	114937 (34)
Malta Workers Party (MWP)	—	24616 (11)	21158 (7)	14000 (3)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Constitutional Party (CP)	—	10584 (4)	9150 (4)	1385 —	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other Parties and Independents	23308 (9)	9166 (2)	2163 —	5117 —	3694 —	36370 (9)	12917 —	1858 —	35 —	29 —	511 —

Source: *Il-Qawmien* (Social Action Movement Publication), No. 647, June 1987, p. 7.

## ERNLE BRADFORD'S *MEDITERRANEAN:* PORTRAIT OF A SEA

**E**rnle Bradford's masterpiece *Mediterranean: Portrait of a Sea*, first published by Hodder & Stoughton in 1971, is once again available in an excellent reprinting by Tutor Publications.

Bradford's easy yet deep style is what makes *Mediterranean* so eminently readable. While the layman will find it a fascinating interpretation of the saga of the Middle Sea, the historian will appreciate Bradford's sound research, his clear exposition of facts and his wise conclusions - a combination of qualities in which Bradford's personal experiences sailing the seas has certainly had a great bearing.

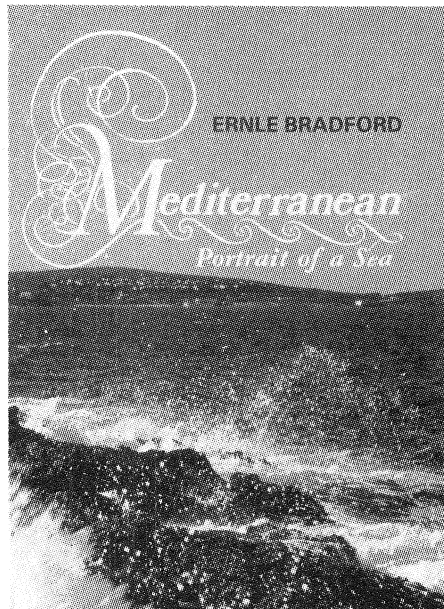
Bradford guides the reader around the sea that gave birth to Western culture and civilization - introducing the traders, the sailors, and the fighters who have all left their mark on its history and our civilization, itself the

result of the continual interplay between East and West.

The author skilfully presents the history of the Mediterranean with one eye on its geography and another on the succession of historical events. Indeed the story of this sea is impossible to understand if one ignores the geographical environment of the various regions that form part of it. The Mediterranean

emerges as one whole, almost as a distinct personality whose portrait Bradford will so lovingly and so convincingly present to us.

For the variety of peoples and races that have been so inexorably attracted to its shores, the Mediterranean has been a link rather than a barrier, giving rise to, but finally overcoming, a diversity of cultures and beliefs.



***Il-Malti jista' jingabar  
f'enciklopedija ta'  
Letteratura Maltija.  
Ibghat għall-kopji ta'  
l-imghoddi  
lis-Sur Pawlu Mifsud,  
24 Triq il-Linja l-Qadima,  
B'Kara.***

