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SUPPLEMENT

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Cover picture: A hunter in the mid-1700s. Detail from 'Cabreo del Magistero' (Treasury) manuscript in the National Library, Malta.

BIRD SHOOTING AND TRAPPING IN MALTA: A TRADITIONAL SPORTS?

Natalino Fenech

Whether bird shooting and trapping are traditions and whether they can be justified, are two different questions. For an activity to be accepted, it does not have to be traditional. On the other hand, traditional activities may become unacceptable as the values of society change. Even so, one has to establish whether what some people call 'traditional' is in fact traditional.

Hobsbawm states that "'Traditions" which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented. "Invented tradition" is taken to mean a set of practices which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past."¹

Hunters and trappers frequently claim that their pastimes are 'traditional sports', hence they are more then justified in practising them. They claim that man was always a hunter. If man was always a hunter, all men should be hunters, not just in Malta but worldwide. As it is, hunters are a small minority of any population. Table 1 shows statistics for some European countries. Malta has the highest density of shooters and the highest percentage of the population who own a shooting licence. Yet, the number of hunters is under 5 per cent of the population, a far cry than what it should be if the 'man the hunter' instinct is anything to go by.

Hunting in Malta's History

A cursory glance through Malta's history is sufficient to show that the claim that hunting is a traditional sport is unfounded. Any hunting or trapping which may have taken place was for food, not for sport.

Professor Evans noted that people in the first eight separate phases in the prehistoric occupation of these Islands had no metal for tools and

1. Hobsbawm, E., 'Introduction: Inventing Tradition' in Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, T. (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge 1992, 1.

	Population (1990 figures)	Shooting licences	% of population with shooting licence	number of licences/ 100km ²
Italy	57,512,000	1,500,000	0.2%	498
France	56,647,000	1,850,000	0.3%	336
Greece	10,038,000	50,000	3.5%	265
Malta	352,430	16,760	4.8%	5312
Luxembourg	366,000	2,600	0.7%	100
UK	57,000,000	200,000	0.3%	87

Table 1

weapons.² He also states that, once the sea separated Malta from Sicily, there could have been little attraction for hunting societies, even if these had means of crossing the sea, which is in itself doubtful.³ Both Evans⁴ and Bonanno⁵ support the theory that the first societies in Malta were already farmers who brought with them domestic animals and supplies of seed for cultivation.

The fact that the only weapons that may have been used for hunting were only some sling stones and two spear heads, indicates that hunting was not an important activity in prehistoric Malta. This view is further strengthened by the lack of finds of wild animal bones and the lack of pottery incised with birds and wild animals.

There is almost no information about hunting before the fourteenth century, except for falconry. Falconry was the hallmark of the noble classes in the Middle Ages and the Maltese nobility had petitioned the king to allow them to keep falcons 'as in Malta there was nothing to do, except to go hawking.'⁶

Prior to the arrival of the Order of St John, the Maltese lived a meek existence and it is unlikely that they had the time and means for hunting. In the earliest known description of Malta, dated 1536, Jean Quintin d'Autun noted that the Maltese cultivated cotton and cumin and that they

2. Evans, J.D., *Ancient Peoples and Places MALTA*, London 1959, 29.

3. *Ibid.*, 39.

4. *Ibid.*, 45.

5. Bonanno, A., 'A socio-economic approach to Maltese prehistory the temple builders' in *Malta Studies of its heritage and history*, Malta 1986, 20.

6. Mifsud, A., 'Sulla caccia in Malta nel passato', *Archivum Melitensis*, III (1917), 118.

fed also on thistle and used cow's dung for the baker's oven.⁷ In his extensive description, Quintin d'Autun does not mention anything about hunting. Over two hundred years later, Baron Riedesel noted that the diet of the Maltese consisted of 'bread, pepper, onions, and anchovies.'⁸

Under the Order of St John edicts regulating hunting were issued. Most of these edicts stated that no one could hunt without a licence from the Grand Falconer. Large areas of land as well as the hunting of partridges and hares were declared as reserved for the Grand Master. Trespassing, the disturbance of nests of partridges, as well as the collection of firewood from reserved areas, were heavily penalized.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the standard of living of local people, although improved, was still miserably low and remained so for a long time. In 1804 De Boisgelin wrote that 'The Maltese are remarkable sober; a clove of garlic, or an onion, anchovies dipped in oil, and salted-fish, being their most usual diet. On great festivals they eat pork.'⁹ In 1870 the noted naturalist Andrew Leith Adams described the Maltese as 'olive oil and pickled-fish eating islanders.'¹⁰

Bird meat seems to have been a welcome addition to people's diet and Adams noted that the 'poulterers' shelves are stocked with all manner of birds, great and small.'¹¹ At the same time Charles Wright, an ornithologist, noted that all kinds of birds 'from an eagle to a nightingale are sent to the market as game.'¹² These observations show that a mere 120 years ago people caught birds for food, not for sport. So much for the 'sporting tradition'. Needless to say, bird stuffing became popular even more recently. Fridges and deep freezers were uncommon even during the first half of this century.

Increase in shooting licences

A better standard of living meant that guns and cartridges came within the reach of more people. Better conditions of work, such as the

7. Vella, H.C.R., *The earliest description of Malta (Lyons 1536) by Jean Quintin d'Autun*, Malta 1980, 39.
8. Cavaliero, R., *The Last of the Crusaders*, London 1960, 89.
9. De Boisgelin, L., *Ancient and Modern Malta*, London 1804, I, 78.
10. Adams, A.L., *Notes of a Naturalist in the Nile Valley and Malta*, Edinburgh 1870, 108.
11. *Ibid.*, 90.
12. Wright, C.A., 'A Fourth appendix to a list of birds observed in the Maltese Islands', *The Ibis*, 1870, 493.

introduction of the forty-hour week, and more holidays, gave people more free time. Shooting provided many with a manly activity which was easy to follow and which gave them a certain status in their respective peer groups.

The increase in the number of hunting licences is a clear indication that hunting is anything but traditional. In 1902 there were 1709 hunting licences. The number increased to 5138 by 1968. The average increase over 66 years was of 51 licences per year.

The number of shooting licences started to soar in the 1970s when Malta experienced rapid and significant changes in standards of living. Between 1968 and 1981 there was an average increase of 446 licences per year while the number of licensed shooters stood at 10,953. In 1989 the number of shooting licences stood at 16,133, an average increase of 647 licences per year.¹³

The population growth between 1985 and 1990 was of 5 per cent, yet the increase in the number of shooting licences was of 39.84 per cent. The biggest percentage increase was in Gozo, where the number of shooting licences increased by 8.6 times more than the population.

Bird Trapping

De Soldanis,¹⁴ in the mid-1700s, mentions trapping sites for turtle doves, falcons, short-toed larks, and pigeons. Nets were more efficient than guns and it is not surprising that people used them to catch birds. However, their use was very restricted as people worked hard for long hours to earn a miserable living, and although birds were a welcome addition to their diet, they had no time to spare trying to catch them.

Antonio Schembri, the nineteenth-century pioneer of Maltese ornithology, does not mention anything about bird trapping.¹⁵ It was Wright who, in 1864, stated that trapping was the favourite pastime of country people adding that 'the village priest, whose occupations and duties afford him an abundance of idle time, pursues it with great assiduity.'¹⁶

Finch-trapping is another side-effect of the improved standard of living. Besides the lack of free time, every patch of soil was cultivated and

13. Reports on the workings of Government Departments.

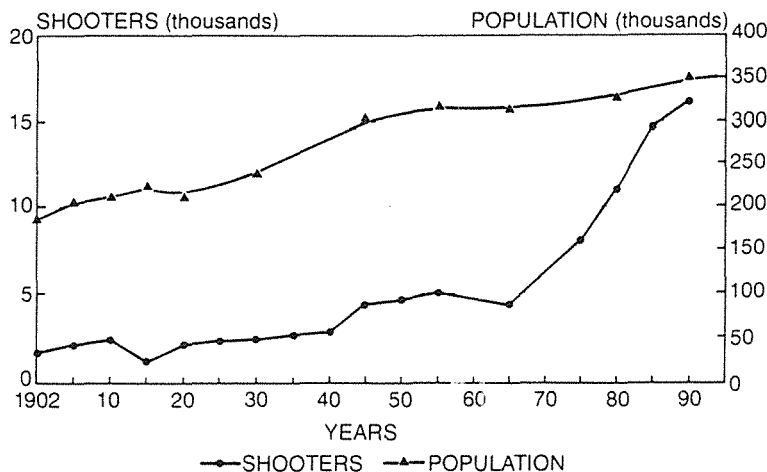
14. National Library of Malta, MS 143 (M) 1.

15. Schembri, A., *Catalogo ornitologico del gruppo di Malta*, Malta 1843, 136.

16. Wright, C.A., 'List of the birds observed in the islands of Malta and Gozo', *Ibis* 1 (6) 1864, 48, 138.

NUMBER OF SHOOTING LICENCES/POPULATION

for the years 1900 to 1990



Note the increase in the number of shooting licences from 1,709 in 1902 to 4,716 in 1950. The increase in the number of licences started in the 1970s when the standard of living started improving.

Source: Government Department Reports Census '85

valuable agricultural land could not be wasted simply to accommodate a trapping site. Today, many trapping sites are situated on arable land. The number of trapping sites spiralled over the past forty years. In places such as Ghar Lapsi, trapping sites practically touch one another. There were a mere three trapping sites there in the 1950s.¹⁷ In Gozo there were less than 100 finch trapping sites in 1944;¹⁸ now there are over 1,600.¹⁹

Shooting and Folklore

The fact that shooters and trappers are practically absent from Maltese folklore implies that shooting and trapping are not really ingrained cultural attitudes. There is hardly any mention of hunting, except in ornithological works of the late 1800s and, occasionally, in travellers' accounts of the same period.

Hunters feature very sparingly in local paintings. The earliest known

17. Victor Mamo (personal communication).

18. Joe Attard Tabone (personal communication).

19. Fenech, N., *Fatal Flight, the Maltese obsession with killing birds*, London 1992, 111.

watercolour of a hunter is found in a treasury manuscript of the mid-eighteenth century. The way the hunter is dressed shows that he is unlikely to be a Maltese. In the watercolour of the Grand Falconer by Zimelli (c. 1770), a barefooted hunter holding a rabbit is seen in the background. This may be the oldest drawing of a Maltese hunter. In the Ġgantija watercolours by C. Brockdorff (c. 1830), hunters can be seen in three different paintings. But again, the way they are dressed shows that they are unlikely to be Maltese.

The earliest collections of proverbs of De Soldanis²⁰ and Vassalli²¹ list nine proverbs which mention birds. Of these only two mention bird trapping. These imply the use of vertical nets which were set and left unattended. Trapping by the use of clap nets, although known to exist in the mid-eighteenth century, became widespread over the last forty years.

The contemporary works of Aquilina²² and Manduca and Mifsud²³ list 58 proverbs which mention birds. Of these, 16 are related to hunting and trapping. Although the fact that the proverbs related to hunting are absent from the earliest works does not necessarily mean that they did not exist, the fact that they escaped the authors' attention could signify that they were not commonly used, if they existed at all. In all probability, the proverbs listed by Aquilina²⁴ and subsequent works came into being during this century.

Religion and hunting

The 'tradition' where shooters fire blank shots in honour of saints is an invented tradition. Shooters say that this tradition dates from the time of the Knights, yet this practice was introduced at St Julians in the early 1980s.²⁵ The use of firearms for salutes, known as *feu de joie*, was a prerogative of the military and had no connections with Church festivities. There is no mention of and such salute in a recently published 344-page

20. Gatt, E.C., 'The Semitic element in the "Damma" of Agius de Soldanis,' Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Malta, 1984.

21. Vassalli, M.A., *Motti, aforismi e proverbi Maltesi*, Malta 1828, 93.

22. Aquilina, J., *A comparative dictionary of Maltese proverbs*, Malta 1972, 694.

23. Manduca, J.S. & G. Mifsud, *Il-Qawl iqul*, Malta 1989, 316.

24. Aquilina, 694.

25. Azzopardi, A.E., 'Is-salut tal-kaċċaturi' in *San Ġiljan Programm tal-festa*, (ed. A. Borg), Malta 1990, 21.

Bugeja, J., 'Salut lil San Ġiljan mill-kaċċaturi,' *Il-Passa*, Ottubru 1992, 13.

book which marks the 100th year of St Julians as a parish.²⁶

Shooters also mention the legend of Our Lady of the Grotto, first recorded in a 1670 manuscript, which talks of two hunters who, on their way home, saw a rabbit entering a cave. One of the hunters went after the rabbit but suddenly felt very tired and fell asleep. The other hunter left as he thought his friend had died. To his surprise, he saw him coming out of the cave fifteen months later. At first he thought he was seeing a ghost and was more surprised to hear his friend say that he had slept for a few hours when he knew he had been missing for over a year.²⁷ The sleeping hunter said he had dreamt that he had seen a lady holding a child and felt certain sweet feelings which made him conclude that he had seen the Virgin Mary.

Without going into the merits of the legend, which talks about a dream or an apparition, one can interpret it as one in favour of nature protection, since the hunter was made to sleep so that the rabbit could escape death!

Even the other saints whom shooters claim are their patrons have messages for shooters to change their way of life. St Hubert is said to have seen a deer with a cross between its antlers, and the deer told him to change his lifestyle.²⁸ The legend of St Julian also has a similar message as the saint changed his life when, on his return from a hunting trip, he killed his sleeping parents by mistake. St Julian then changed his lifestyle and started building hostels for the poor.²⁹

The Myth of Tradition

Bird shooting cannot simply be called a tradition because some people have been killing birds for a long time. As the statistics of shooting licences show, shooting gained in popularity following the Second World War. Most shooters came from the upper classes and saw hunting as a prestigious pastime. The increase in their number has nothing traditional about it and is not related at all with demographic growth.

Moreover, one cannot say that hunting is traditional when non-traditional means, such as breech-loading and repeater shotguns, efficient shotgun cartridges, electronic bird calls, and plastic decoys as well as cars, rubber dinghies, and fast motor-boats and other non-traditional

26. Fiorini, S. (ed), *San Ġiljan mitt sena Parroċċa*, Malta 1992.

27. Fsadni, M., *Our Lady of the Grotto, priory, church and sanctuary*, Dominican Publications, Rabat 1980, 41.

28. 'San Umbertu - patrun tal-kaċċaturi', *Il-Passa*, November 1990, 7.

29. Fiorini, 3-8.

paraphernalia are used. Even if one were to accept that hunting is a tradition, traditions may well be wrong and there is no valid reason for perpetuating them.

The Hunting Instinct

Some shooters say that hunting is natural, that it is an instinct. Azzopardi states that 'one of the morphological adaptations of hunters are forward-looking eyes as present in sharks, cats, and hawks, while the hunted have eyes on the side of their heads so as to have a wider range of vision as a protection against surprise attack'. Human beings have forward-looking eyes: hence we are hunters, he argues.³⁰

Such a statement shows a profound ignorance of elementary biology. Sharks and hawks do not have forward-looking eyes. Jumping spiders and wolf spiders, which are hunters *par excellence*, have eyes all round the head. They in turn are hunted by both birds and certain wasps. So much for the argument that the direction in which the eyes face, distinguishes the hunters from the hunted.

Human beings have forward-looking eyes for ancestral reasons - we are primates. Primates originally lived in trees and needed stereoscopic vision to be able to judge distances carefully, as they moved from branch to branch. Primates are omnivorous, not primarily carnivorous, as real hunters are.

Cats and other raptorial predators, such as wolves and weasels, have many adaptations for hunting. They have speed for running down prey, sharp claws for catching, and incisive canines for tearing flesh. These adaptations, as well as other physiological and morphological ones, are present in natural predators but are absent in man.

Even the claim that hunting is an instinct is unfounded. Primitive man was never a hunter but a hunter-gatherer, and one cannot speak of a hunting instinct with reference to man. The instinct was to obtain food, not to hunt. Even if one were to agree that hunting was natural, being natural is not a good enough reason why it should be performed in our times. We often have natural desires to do a number of things, but some of them have to be controlled in society.

Sport Hunting

Some argue that shooting is a sport and, in a romantic vein, try to describe the thrill of the kill after having stalked the bird with a dog since the

30. Azzopardi, A.E. *Fatal Flight - the facts*, Malta 1992, 4.

very first light of day. Such shooters usually say that their fun arises not from killing the bird but in seeing their dog rushing, pointing, and, finally, flushing a bird from thick cover. But, in all honesty, the real fun, the climax, is not when the bird is flushed and takes flight, but when it is shot. If the fun is really to see the dog stalk, point, and flush, and not to kill, then there would be no need to shoot the bird when it takes to the wing. Indeed, there would be no need for shooters to carry a gun at all!

Others argue that shooting is an important source of revenue for the Government. A leading article in *Il-Passa* (a monthly paper for shooters and trappers) stated that between 1985 and 1989 over Lm690,000 was paid as duty on items related to bird shooting, such as shotguns, loaded cartridges, cartridge cases, lead shot, and gunpowder.³¹ This implies a Government revenue of less than Lm140,000 a year from material which is used primarily for killing birds. A low price which does not compensate for the millions of birds which are shot and trapped each year without taking into account the unquantifiable loss of earnings from decline in competitiveness resulting from loss of work (many shooters and trappers take long periods of leave and sick leave to practise their pastimes), damage to property, pollution from spent lead shot and cartridges, nuisance and inconvenience caused to the non-shooting public, the toll on migratory birds, and so forth.³² The costs of what the Government loses from hunting-related activity works out to be over twice of what it earns.

Among the excuses used to justify shooting, the commonest one is that shooting takes place almost world-wide. Even if it were so, hunting is not practised anywhere as it is in the Maltese Islands. Nowhere is bird-shooting so uncontrolled. Nowhere in the world are birds killed for the thrill of the kill, for no purpose other than machismo.

We are living in a country and in an age where no one needs the protein from hunted birds or animals. Shooting is not a sport; it is a pastime, done solely for fun. The pleasure is in the killing and killing can never be allowed to become a pleasure in a civilized world.

Shooters deny that their fun is derived from killing birds. George Bernard Shaw had very strong ideas about this: 'the sportsman shooting quite skillfully and coolly without the faintest sense of murderous

31. 'Qed jinxtraw 19 il-senter kull ġimgha', *Il-Passa*, December 1990, 1–2.

32. Fenech, N. 'Socio-economic aspects of bird hunting in the Maltese Islands.' Paper presented at the UNSRID conference on The Social Dimensions of Environment and Sustainable Development, Foundation for International Studies, Valletta Malta, 22-25 April 1992.

excitement, and with no personal feeling against the birds, is really further from salvation than the man who is humane enough to get some wickedness out of his sport. To have one's fellow feeling corrupted and perverted into a lust for cruelty and murder is hideous; but to have no fellow-feeling at all is to be something less than even a murderer. The man who sees red is more complete than the man who is blind.'³³

One may, or may not, agree with Shaw's way of thinking. But his words may give plenty of food for thought: 'Even as it is, there are now so many other pastimes available that the chic of killing is becoming more and more a disgrace to the chooser. The wantonness of the choice is beyond excuse. To kill as the poacher does, to sell or eat his victim, is at least to act reasonably. To kill from hatred or revenge is at least to behave passionately. To kill in gratification of a lust for death is at least to behave villainously. Reason, passion, and villainy are all human. But to kill, being all the time quite a good sort of fellow, merely to pass away the time when there are a dozen harmless ways of doing it equally available, is to behave like an idiot or a silly imitative sheep.'³⁴

Shaw was writing at the turn of this century – a time when the pastimes available could not match what is available now. Today hunters have clay pigeons and guns which shoot infra-red beams at moving targets, thus avoiding the use of lead and noise pollution. There are also computer games which enable shooters to kill as many birds as they like on their computer screens, without depleting the natural populations.

Hunting is not really a tradition and if, by any stretch of imagination, it is qualified as a tradition, it still cannot be justified. Bird shooting and trapping should disappear gradually. This should be a natural step in the evolution of mankind. If not for the sake of birds, we have to do it for the sake of mankind.

In our day and age, where building sprawl and roads have taken up close to 20 per cent of our Islands, and with a population density of over 1000 people per square kilometre, what sense does it make to allow people to roam about with guns with ranges of over 50 metres?

33. Shaw, G.B., Preface in Salt, H.S., *Killing for sport, essays by various writers*, London 1915, xxxii.

34. *Ibid.*, xxxiii.

POWER AND AUTHORITY *

Alan Renwick / Ian Swinburn

Power is the ability to get things done, to make others do what you want – even if they do not want to do it. A variety of means can be used to persuade people to do things, but power always has as its base the ability to reward or punish.

From this outline it becomes clear that power is not something that only exists at a national or international level; power exists wherever people are involved in relationships – at a family level, in school, in work, or even when playing sports. Within the family parents have considerable power over their children, they can make them eat cabbage, go to bed, or wash behind their ears. When children are older, they may have a strict time by which they should be home. Children do as they are told, to a large extent, because their parents can back up their instructions with either rewards or punishments, including the ultimate expressions of power – *force*. Within certain limits parents may use force to discipline children and most children are aware of this – but force is not used very often, the threat of it is enough.

Many children realize that their parents can control them. Some also realize that they have some power over their parents. Again this power is based on *rewards* and *punishments*. Children can also, to some extent, punish parents – through tantrums, lack of co-operation, and so on. Usually, though, parents have more power than children – and so can win a struggle. Yet this illustrates a major point. We all have some power – the problem is one of degree: who has more power than me and who has most power of all?

Children do not only obey their parents because they know that their parents can reward or punish them, they also believe that their parents have a right, based on age, experience, or simply because they are parents, to be able to tell them what to do (even if they may not always like it). At school, teachers are not simply obeyed because of their power – pupils accept that teachers should be in a position to tell them what to do. In the main individuals accept that the government should be in

* Published with permission of the publishers Stanley Thornes, from *Basic Political Concepts* (Second Edition)

a position to run the country.

There are considerable disadvantages for a government which depends solely upon military power to maintain control. In the long term it is important for all people in positions of power that they should have their position recognized as legitimate (rightful) by those over whom they have power. Professor Crick, in his article, 'Basic concepts for political education', has this to say:

Probably all governments require some capacity for or potentiality of force or violence; but probably no government can maintain itself through time, as distinct from defence and attack at specific moments, without legitimating itself in some way, getting itself loved, respected, even just accepted as inevitable, otherwise it would need constant recourse to open violence – which is rarely the case.

Authority is the quality of being able to get people to do things because they think the individual or group has the right to tell them what to do. Those in authority are followed because it is believed that they fulfil a need within the community or political system. Authority, then, is linked to respect, which creates **legitimacy** and, therefore, leads to power.

A distinction needs to be made here between authority and authoritarian. All governments need authority for people to accept their right to make decisions. Not all governments are authoritarian. Authoritarian regimes are those which rely heavily on coercion, on making people do what the governments want, irrespective of their wishes. This is often done by the use of arbitrary imprisonment, use of the armed forces, and secret police. A more commonplace example may make this clear: a teacher can control a class in a number of ways, often by his authority as an expert. Some teachers rely instead on the exercise of strict controls, punishments, and limited freedom of action for individuals – such behaviour can be seen as authoritarian. Because such a situation can be unpleasant for the individuals concerned there is an automatic tendency to criticize such an approach, yet it may have its advantages at times and may, in some circumstances, be necessary. A teacher with an unruly class last thing on a Friday afternoon may have to be authoritarian in order to get any work done.

Perhaps an example might clarify this. In the past in Britain the church had great secular as well as spiritual power – it was a large landowner, it had its own courts and it could control to some extent the lives of ordinary people. In the twentieth century the control of the church over people's lives has declined – fewer people attended services and many

churches have closed. Successive governments have taken over many of the functions previously carried out by the church, for example, in areas such as education and health care. Even so the church and church leaders still have considerable authority. The intervention of the Archbishop of Canterbury's special envoy, Mr Terry Waite, into many potentially explosive situations and his ability to produce results is indicative of the great authority still exercised by the church. Mr Waite, in Iran in 1981 and Libya in 1985, was responsible for securing the release of detainees being held hostage when conventional methods had failed.

According to the German writer Max Weber (1864-1920), there are three main types of authority: traditional, legal-rational, and charismatic.

Traditional authority is legitimated by appealing to the past. It often looks back to old customs and the acts of ancestors. Weber claims this is the type of authority typical of simpler, pre-industrial societies.

Legal-rational authority is legitimated by appealing to rules and laws. The British government has authority because it was elected by a legal process and because it works within the laws of the land. This type of authority is typical of industrial countries.

Charismatic authority is based on the personal attributes of an individual which give him the ability to get others to follow, even if they have to break the law. Hitler and Mussolini could be examples of charismatic leaders, as could Jesus. Charisma is very rare and societies with charismatic leaders often have difficulties in replacing them.

These are ideal types of authority and are unlikely to exist in their pure form. Britain, for instance, has a government based largely on legal-rational authority, but with some element of tradition (for example, the monarchy) and from time to time some elements of charismatic leadership (for example, Churchill).

Types of power

We have already seen that power can exist at an almost infinite number of levels but we will now have to concentrate upon an analysis of different types of power at a national level. Here it becomes necessary to try to distinguish between different types of power, for individuals may be very powerful in some fields but not in others – although we will see later there is a considerable overlap. These divisions of power can be seen a consequence of a type of society in which there is considerable division of functions – a complex society will develop certain complex and specialized groups to deal with particular types of problems. Their

expertise will give them power over the non-expert majority, often linked with the ability to make life pleasant or unpleasant for the mass of people. We can identify three main concentrations of power in modern Britain:

- (a) political power;
- (b) economic power;
- (c) military power.

Political power

For the purposes of this discussion we shall take the concept of politics as being concerned with those decisions which affect the way a society is organized and the goals which that society chooses to pursue. Conflict about goals and ways of achieving them is an inevitable feature of such a definition.

In Britain it is the party which gains a majority of MPs in the House of Commons which forms a government. The leader of the party usually becomes Prime Minister and together with his chosen cabinet formulates policies which are then passed to parliament for discussion. A government with a working majority can usually get its way.

At one level, then, political power rests with the government (some would go further and say that it rests increasingly with the Prime Minister), but if parliament has supreme legislative power – it is sovereign – then it must be the repository of political power. Parliament, however, has limitations to this sovereignty but it can still exert strong political control, even to the extent of causing a government to resign and forcing a general election. A minority government is particularly vulnerable to such pressure but even a majority government could be under threat from a major revolt of its own back-benches.

Even if a party does not form the government under a parliamentary system, it can retain a certain amount of power. The Opposition, to some people, seems to be a negative institution – blind opposition for the sake of it. This is a mistaken view for the Opposition serves to keep the government of the day on its toes, provide an alternative government for the electorate to choose if the occasion should arise, and attempts to amend what it considers to be misguided, excessive, or ill-considered government legislation. In items of minority government, opposition parties can limit the activities of government.

Party, parliament, and government hold much political power but, many would argue, it is the individual who has supreme power. The major difficulty is that many others would argue persuasively that the individual has little or no power. The act of voting can be seen as an

expression of the will of the people – democracy is, after all, people power, but the extent to which an individual can influence the outcome of an election is minimal. His ability to influence political events between elections may be less, but he can try. Just as the individual voter often feels powerless, so, too, do many back-bench MPs who feel themselves to be controlled by the party machine which whips them into line. MPs are able to ask questions, designed to reveal the shortcomings of a government, and to introduce Private Members' Bills. However, the need for specialists in government and the cloak of official secrecy which still falls over much government business has led back-benchers to feel that they lack real power.

The position is somewhat complicated by the narrow definition of political power so far adopted, for we have seen in recent years that power may be leaving the hands of other powerful bodies. There has been increasing speculation that other centres of power are becoming concerned in politics – the main brunt of the attack has been aimed at trades unions. There seems to be much doubt as to how far it is now possible to talk of political power as being divorced from other types of power. The relationship between these various, political, and 'nonpolitical' elements and which is likely to be most dominant is discussed further in a later section.

Economic power

The wealth of a nation depends on the extent to which it can produce goods and services efficiently and the way that those with economic power help or hinder such production. In the twentieth century governments have become increasingly involved in regulating economic forces by introducing price controls, trades union legislation, import restrictions, and taking control of large sectors of manufacturing and service industry, including steel production and the railway service. The fact that government is often a major employer serves to underline the difficulties involved in separating economic and political power. Despite this there are three main groups which can wield considerable economic power apart from the government. These are:

1. Industrial combines (including multi-national companies);
2. trades unions;
3. financial institutions.

Before proceeding to a further examination of these, it is worth noting that there are numerous external organizations which from time to time exert economic pressures on governments, from beyond national

boundaries. When considering the internal economic situation it is worth remembering the constraints upon governments imposed by such organizations as the International Monetary Fund, the European Economic Community, and the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

Industrial combines

Through their control of employment and production and their central position in the wealth creation process, industrialists are able to wield great power. Most of the wealth producing sector of the economy (mainly the privately owned sector) has as its main aim the making of profit. If industrialists do not feel that there is sufficient prospect of reasonable profits they can exercise their judgement and limit investment and employment. On these sort of commercial decisions the well-being of the nation depends. If, on the other hand, there are good prospects for profit and efficiency then the nation benefits from having more goods and higher employment coupled perhaps with rising living standards.

This type of argument is often put forward by groups such as the Confederation of British Industry to explain why industrialists are such a vital sector of the community that they should receive as much encouragement as possible with as few restraints as possible. This view of industrialists as working in the national interest has led some politicians, often Conservative, to argue that the growth of trades union power has so reduced the ability of British industry to retain a competitive edge in international markets, that the result has been frustration and a dilution of incentive among industrialists. They go on to argue that it is necessary to stem the growth of trades union power in order to release the productive forces of the economy. This view stresses the way in which industrialists benefit the whole nation while trades unions act just for a sector of the community.

Although the above argument presents industrialists in a favourable light it is questionable whether they always act in the national interest or even whether it is their primary intention to do so. Many companies are now multi-nationals whose interests extend over much of the world, and are not linked with the well-being of one country, but with the firm. Multi-nationals are now in a position where many smaller countries, and from time to time, larger countries, are almost powerless to hinder their activities. A more wide-ranging criticism has come from people like Professor R. Miliband who has argued that the controllers of industry are able to exert permanent pressure on government because of their

power to make decisions which will affect the way the economy expands. According to Miliband, trades unions often seem to have more power because their dealings with government, and hence their successes, are more public. Industrialists, he argues, have more power, and this is strengthened by their social and economic backgrounds, which tend to be similar to those of politicians and top civil servants. It seems likely, then, that politicians may be more in tune with the ideas of industry than of labour.

Trades unions

Trades unions seek to represent, and improve, the conditions of workers. They grew up to represent mainly manual workers and this is still where their main strength lies.

Trades unions gain their power from their high membership. An old trades union slogan is 'Unity is strength' and this reflects union attitudes. An individual worker has little power or influence but when he joins a union he and his colleagues can have great power. This visible type of power that unions have tends to be of a negative sort. They can disrupt industry by taking various kinds of action, the most extreme kind of which the strike. This ability to disrupt not only affects the industry concerned, but also the general public. Impact may be immediate – for example, the dock strikes in 1984 – or cumulative, such as the miners' strike from March 1984 to March 1985. The violence associated with picketing during the miners' strike, not only incensed many members of the public, but also caused tension between the leadership of the TUC and the Labour Party on the one hand, and militant elements of the NUM on the other. This was brought to the fore when Mr Norman Willis, General Secretary of the TUC, expressed the organization's condemnation of all violence from whatever quarter it comes, in November 1985.

However, there is a positive side to union power which operates unobtrusively to keep the economic system functioning. Unions prevent many worker problems reaching a serious level through their routine work; yet such work receives little publicity. Employers recognize, from a practical point of view, the value of continuing consultation with a single committee of workers' representatives, and some favour the closed shop for this reason. Under such an arrangement a worker would not be accepted for employment unless he belonged to a relevant union. In Britain the right of an individual to refuse trades union membership where a closed shop applies was reinforced by the passing of the Employment Act in August 1980. Accordingly a worker can reject trades

union membership if he/she genuinely objects on grounds of conscience.

As trades unions exist to further their members' aims, one of their main tasks is to try to increase the wages of their members. It is in this field that economic and political forces often collide. Many governments have tried in some way to control incomes in order to control inflation. Unions have, at various stages, been willing to support the government or been wholly antagonistic to such policy. The relative failure of incomes policies has often been used as an illustration of the extent of union power - there has grown a feeling that unions have too much power. Many feel that the unions' power to cripple the country has led to a stage where governments lose if they confront unions.

It was largely to control this perceived abuse of power that the 1979 Conservative Government introduced a number of pieces of legislation to restrict union power. The 1980 Employment Act placed limits on picketing, the 1982 Employment Act restricted the existence of closed shops, and the 1984 Trades Union Act insisted on secret ballots before industrial action and the need to ballot members in order to allow some union funds to be used for political activity. This latter provision was seen, by the Labour Party, as a party political action aimed at weakening the Labour Party.

The trades unions have had long and close links with the Labour Party; indeed, some were instrumental in the foundation of the Labour Party. Even now, much of Labour Party finance comes from subscriptions from the unions which are affiliated to the party. In such unions part of the members subscription goes towards Labour Party finance unless an individual chooses to 'contract' out; in return delegates from the unions can attend the Labour Party Annual Conference (the governing body of the Labour Party) and have one for each union member, which can be cast in a block - hence the term 'block voting'. The block vote means that unions can outvote individual members, about 6 to 1 and have their policies accepted as Labour Party policy. They can also affect the membership of the National Executive committee which deals with the day-to-day running of the Party, by voting on their nominees.

It would be quite wrong to assume that the Labour Party is dominated by the unions; the parliamentary party has consistently fought for its right to pursue the policies not of conference but of the parliamentary party. The power struggle within the Labour Party which led to the expulsion of leading members of the Militant Tendency indicates the extent to which there is a divide between members of the parliamentary party and some members of the party outside parliament.

The limits to union power or influence appear to be the extent to which their power remains a negative one – to disrupt rather than to build it is this type of highly visible action which gives the unions at least the appearance of having greater power than is possessed by employers. The period of Mrs Thatcher's administrations were marked by a radical reduction in trades union power and influence. Trades unions have been kept very much at arm's length on matters of industrial and economic policy.

Financial institutions

In any country which relies heavily upon trade and industry those institutions which control the flow of funds and credit will have great power. In Britain the City plays a large part in determining the business confidence people feel and the likelihood of success being enjoyed by a new venture. At the same time it is not easy to see how the power of finance is used; certainly there does not appear to be any type of conspiracy of individuals wanting to use their power, although one might believe there was if one listened to certain left-wing Labour supporters. Again, it can be seen as individuals and groups reinforcing each other's ideas and creating a situation in which financial confidence is high, leading to a feeling of success; or where financial confidence is low, leading to an unwillingness to finance new ventures. In the 1970s, with high inflation rates, high interest rates, and curbs on profits, confidence was very low – and this had some effect on the prosperity enjoyed by Britain. In addition, the need for Britain to seek support from bodies such as the International Monetary Fund badly affected the willingness of banks to take risks. The Conservative Government White Paper on the economy, published in 1980, set out monetarist policies to remove the cancer of inflation. Restriction of the money supply was a key feature of inflation control in the 1980s. Government spending on welfare provision and private company subsidies was curtailed. However, it seems that no radical measure is without cost – in this case the cost of high unemployment.

The ability to influence, in whatever way, the economy of an advanced industrial society gives individuals and groups very great power. The power, though, does not rest exclusively with any one group at any one time. Each group has some power and at different times the balance of power may shift. Arguments which suggest that one group or other has too much power must be examined to determine what is meant by too much power and whether a diminution of power would favour another group.

Military power

In many ways military power is the easiest type to see and to understand. TV pictures of British troops fighting in the Falklands, exercising at the London airports, or even RAF aeroplanes flying overhead, demonstrate to us that there are organizations in our society which can use force should the need arise. The armed forces control the major part of the weaponry of Britain and, indeed, of most countries. This gives them tremendous potential power, but this power is seldom used directly. The threat of force is often sufficient deterrent. In many developing countries military power has been an active element in political struggle. The armed forces have been instrumental in replacing one government with another. The intervention of military personnel has led, in some Third World countries, to the establishing of military governments.

The armed forces in most Western industrial nations seem unwilling to become involved directly in political struggles – they see their role as being subservient to those who control the government of the country. Military power gives way to political authority. Whether this deference to political authority is absolute is doubtful. In 1981 officers of the Spanish army took over the Cortes in an attempted coup because they objected to government policy. Both Portugal and Greece must also be seen as potentially somewhat unstable in this respect.

Without a doubt the military in Britain could seize control since it has the expertise and the technology to do so, but the armed forces accept that the government has the authority (given by the people) to rule without direct military interference. This is not to say, however, that the military is without influence. Defence spending is one of the major items of expenditure of any British government, and the leaders of the military use their influence on government to gain the funds they require for weaponry. Fears of external threat can lead governments to very high levels of expenditure.

The secondary position of the military in liberal democracies means that they should only act when authorized to do so by the political leaders of the country. The Falklands war of 1982 illustrates this point. The decision to defend the islands by the use of force was taken by the government, not by the military. Only when government approval was given could the task force be sent and even then the rules of engagement were partly drawn up by politicians. It was a political decision as to when diplomatic initiatives had failed and when military options should be exercised.

The stability of parliamentary democracy in Britain has removed the

need for direct military involvement in politics, except on rare occasions when instructed by the civil authorities to take action. Such stability allows the military to retain its traditional role, in reserve, ready to repel external aggression and to assist the police in the maintenance of internal law and order as, for example, in Northern Ireland.

Although the major task of the armed forces of most countries is to defend the nation against others and respond to political or military attacks, in some countries the prime purpose of the armed forces is to keep the civilian population subdued. Marxists would argue that the armed forces of all liberal democracies are part of the Repressive State Apparatus which also includes the legal system and the police. This Repressive State Apparatus exists to bolster up the Ruling Class by controlling, either directly or by threat, the majority of the population. The involvement of troops in industrial disputes is seen as a sign that the military is not neutral but exists to support a class society. It cannot be denied that at times the armed forces are used by the government to mitigate the effects of emergencies, both civil and industrial; but those in government would say that this is for the benefit of the population as a whole, not as a way of protecting their position.

Discussion point

Externally the armed forces of most countries share the same tasks, to defend the nation against others and to respond to political or military attacks. War is the ultimate test of a country's power and it is for this purpose that armed forces are kept (although in some countries it could be said that the prime purpose of the armed forces is to keep the civilian population subdued).

It is only in times of war and occasional civil unrest that military power is of great relevance in the advanced countries, but the possibility of the military defending the civil order adds strength to a political system.

In addition to these centres of power – political, economic, and military – other institutions exert great influence and also have some degree of power. The education system acts to spread knowledge and to train young minds, and, to considerable extent, to ensure conformity. With the mass media, the education system controls the flow of ideas and information we consider. This gives them great control over what ideas and information are seen as legitimate. Organized religion still exerts some power, and much authority, though over a declining proportion of the population. Pronouncements of leading churchmen are still of great importance and are widely reported.

Leading members of the judiciary have both great power and authority, for their pronouncements are also listened to with interest and presented as authoritative. Once again it becomes clear that one cannot point to one group of people and say they alone have power. In Democratic countries power seems to be spread among many people.

A FEW LINES OF SHAKESPEARE...

David Clarke

Shakespeare has said so much, his achievement in a succession of plays and poems is so vast, that one is tempted to believe he found it easy to write with such flowing and consummate artistry. Effortlessly, it seems, his imaginative insight swept over all aspects of human life, probing and illuminating and creating a body of work which seems beyond the scope of just one man. It is the work of one man, nevertheless, and the serious student of Shakespeare must be prepared to look closely at Shakespeare's craftsmanship. His achievement can be analysed as well as dazzle us, and his mastery of detail confirmed.

For reasons of space two examples must suffice and their analysis be confined to dramatic significance – that is to say, the ways in which the lines fit into the larger pattern of each play – and to the quality of poetic expression, which involves some consideration of matters such as diction and imagery and the way the verse moves and should be spoken.

The first extract is from *Othello*, a play which deals with sexual jealousy and its tragic consequences:

This fellow's of exceeding honesty,
And knows all qualities, with a learned spirit,
Of human dealing. If I do prove her haggard,
Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,
I'd whistle her off and let her down the wind 5
To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black
And have not those soft parts of conversation
That chamberers have, or for I am declin'd
Into the vale of years – yet that's not much –
She's gone; I am abus'd; and relief 10
Must be to loathe her. O curse of marriage,
That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad,
And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
Than keep a corner in the thing I love 15
For others' uses.

Othello himself speaks here. His first line refers to Iago, who, from sheer

delight in evil and knowing he is trusted by Othello, has made up a tale that Desdemona, Othello's wife, has been unfaithful to him. Knowing he has poisoned Othello's mind, Iago cunningly pleads with him to hold Desdemona 'free' from suspicion and departs, leaving Othello alone on stage.

As far as the dramatic significance of these lines is concerned, this is the pivotal part of a play which abounds with examples of suggestion seen as truth itself, none with a more tragic outcome than here. That Othello so readily believes Iago exemplifies, perhaps, his credulous foolishness, but all the other characters also believe in Iago's 'honesty' and are taken in by him.

The piercing effect of Iago's insinuations is seen in Othello's reflections on women. From a contemplation of Desdemona's individual waywardness and his soldierly resolution to cast her off should she prove false (lines 3-6), he descends to the sort of belittling generalization that Iago earlier makes about Venetian women: they may be 'delicate' but they have 'appetites' and Othello fears he may have been drawn into a monstrous liaison. His search for reasons for Desdemona's supposed adulterous behaviour – his blackness, age, and lack of sophistication – quickly gives way to an appraisal of his own tarnished image, as if his self-esteem depends upon total possession of the loved one. Desdemona thus becomes 'the thing' to be possessed. Failing that, he feels her rebellious and abhorrent actions dishonour him and reduce his life to a base level.

Though he says 'I'll not believe't' when she enters a moment later, the speed of his arousal to an uncontrollable jealous fury is remarkable. The suggestion that Desdemona is unfaithful leads Othello immediately to demand 'the ocular proof'. He is quickly convinced of her guilt by 'trifles' and his commanding nobility in the first scenes of the play collapses in distress.

If we now turn to the poetic expression of these lines, we can see that the passage opens with a straightforward announcement (yet again) of Iago's 'honesty' – the word becoming more grating and ironic as the play progresses – and an observation on Iago's knowledge of many types of people. In Othello's view this worldly experience implicitly justifies suspicion of Desdemona.

More complex is the image of Desdemona as 'haggard' – that is to say, as a partly trained hawk that has gone wild again. Othello sees himself as her trainer, tying her to his wrist by his heart-strings as a falconer would secure a hawk by leather straps ('jesses'). At this stage he does not

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

Matriculation Examination

MAY 1992 SESSION

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

SYSTEMS OF KNOWLEDGE

Paper I

Answer **one** question from each section. Answers may be given in **Maltese** or in **English**.

Section 1: Man and Symbols

1. 'Generally speaking, it is mind which has a hold over matter, and not the other way round.' Discuss this statement.

2. What do silent films stand to gain or lose through the absence of the spoken language?

3. Discuss how

(i) logic, or

(ii) the concept of language

was instrumental in achieving the technological revolution of the modern age.

4. You are the sales representative of a company which produces stationery from recycled paper. You have been entrusted by your company to market this product on the local mass media. Describe your strategy.

5. Give reasons for the validity or otherwise of the following statements:

(a) If it rains, I will neither go to swim nor will I go to Valletta.

I went to swim.

So it did not rain and I went to Valletta.

(b) He will not pass the Chemistry exam unless he studies very hard.

He failed the Chemistry exam.

Therefore he did not study very hard.

(c) If it is sunny and there is no wind, I will go for a walk.

I did not go for a walk.

So it was windy.

(d) All dragons are reptiles and belch fire.

All reptiles have one tail.

Anything that belches fire is a reptile.

Therefore all dragons have one tail.

6. Communication involves the observance of the rules and conventions governing the language adopted. These rules and conventions are,

however, being continually challenged. What urges poets, inventors, publicity agents, and others to depart from them?

Section 2: Man and Environment

7. Sustainable development has been defined as 'developing natural resources so that, while improving people's living standards, the source of that improvement is not exhausted' (Colin Johnson, *The green dictionary*, Optima, 1991). Discuss.

8. Discuss the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as voluntary organizations acting as pressure groups, in the political process, illustrating your answer by a case study in Malta you are familiar with.

9. 'Waste is a human concept. In nature nothing is wasted, for everything is part of a continuous cycle.' Discuss this statement.

10. Democracy is usually referred to as the rule of the people. To what extent, in fact, can 'the people' rule? How do they actually rule in Western democracies?

11. 'Radical economic inequalities are not like the results of natural catastrophes. When they persist and are passed on from one generation to the next there is something very wrong with a society and its institutions.' Discuss this statement and suggest possible remedies to these inequalities if you think they are needed.

12. Following the recent collapse of most Communist regimes, it has been argued by some that liberal democracy is the only legitimate ideology left in the world. Do you agree? Give reasons for your answer.

Section 3: Man and History

13. 'The past consists of a huge number of events, many of which were so trivial that they disappeared sooner or later without trace. But those events which are recognized as significant are the stuff of which history is made.' Discuss.

14. How has the study of history helped you to know yourself better?

15. Empires rise and fall. Can you identify common factors in this process?

16. If you were caught in a time warp that suddenly transported you to the Athens of Pericles, what lessons do you think you could impart to the Athenian citizen?

17. Is man moulded by his times or the reverse? Discuss with reference to any period you have studied.

18. You have been asked to write the history of the local Band Club founded towards the end of the last century. How would you go about this task?

Paper II

Answer **one** question from each section. Answers may be given in **Maltese** or in **English**.

Section 1: Set Texts - Man and Power

1. 'All power is from God.' Discuss with reference to the texts you have studied.

2. How relevant is the study of the set texts to an understanding of the present process of European economic and political union?

3. 'Knowledge is power.' Discuss with reference to the set texts.

4. What makes of Aeneas the ideal man to wield power?

5. In your opinion has the concept of power evolved over the centuries covered in the set texts? Illustrate with reference to characters and situations in these texts.

6. In which age and environment described in the texts you have read would you prefer to have lived? Give reasons for your answer.

Section 2: Scientific Methods and History of Science

7. *Astrology* is the prediction of human affairs by the reputed influence of heavenly bodies and their apparent movements. Discuss how scientific method may be applied to critically assess the validity of *Astrology*.

8. A fertilized human egg cell will eventually develop into a fully formed individual. During the 18th century, several scientists believed that in this fertilized human egg, there was already a fully formed miniature individual who gradually increased in size during the nine-month development period. Discuss our modern ideas on what is to be found within this first human cell which will regulate its development and turn it into a complete individual.



Plate A

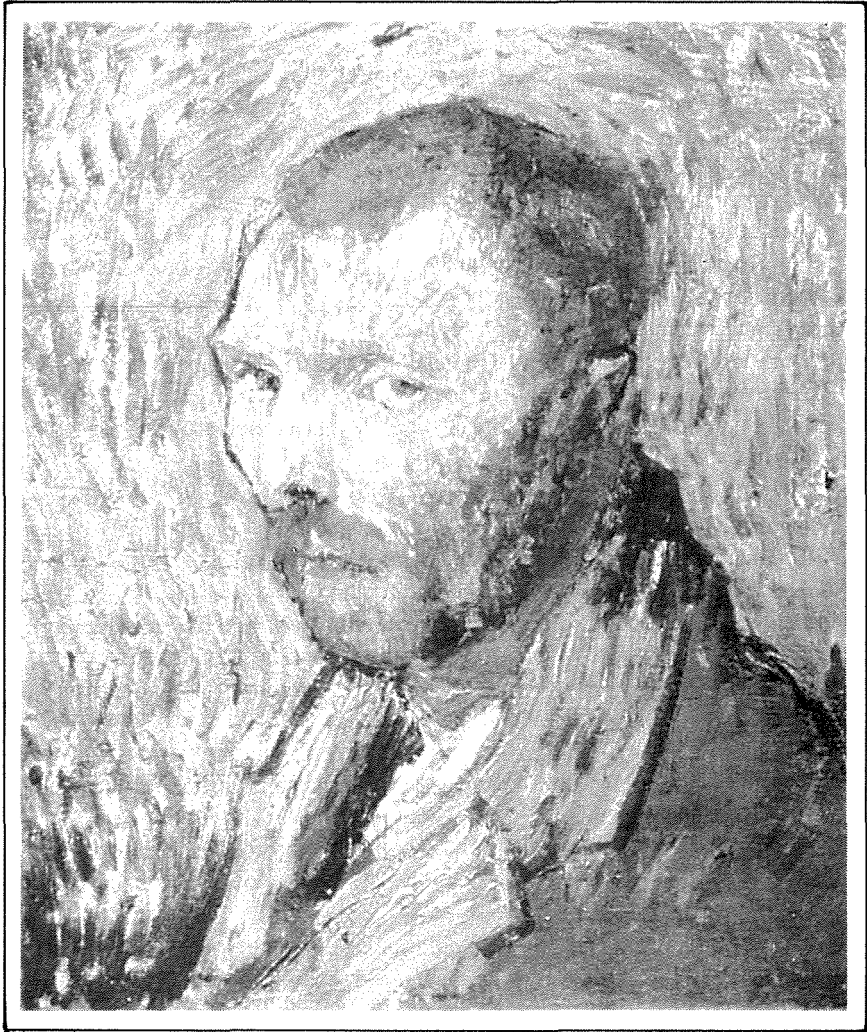


Plate B

9. Write an account of how our knowledge of the atomic and sub-atomic structure of matter developed during the present century.

10. It is often stated that people like Adolf Hitler misinterpreted and abused of Darwin's Theory of Evolution and the concept of the *struggle for existence*. Give a brief account of Darwin's theory of evolution and of our modern interpretation of it.

11. Discuss the following statement with reference to one or more named examples from the history of science:

A scientific hypothesis is often not accepted by the scientific community, as well as society in general, not necessarily on the basis of presented data and evidence, but because we are not ready for it.

12. 'Science creates inequalities at all levels of society and among nations.' Discuss.

Section 3: Artistic Aims and Achievements

13. Plate A and Plate B are both self-portraits. What do they tell you about the artists themselves and about their art?

14. Plate C (c.1306) and Plate D (c.1600) are paintings that deal with the same subject, the first being by Giotto, the second by Annibale Carracci. Comment on them separately and together, referring to the artists' treatment of the subject.

15. Plate E represents Bernini's 'The Vision of St Theresa' (1644-1647). Comment on it as a work of art and describe its significance for the age in which it was created.

16. Compare and contrast the art of any two periods of Western history, commenting on the styles, the intentions, and the social and historical conditions that produced them.

17. Take any work of art you are familiar with which you may describe as 'experimental' and discuss the significance of what it attempts to explore.

18. Discuss how the theme of nature has been treated by artists in some particular period of Western art.

Plate C

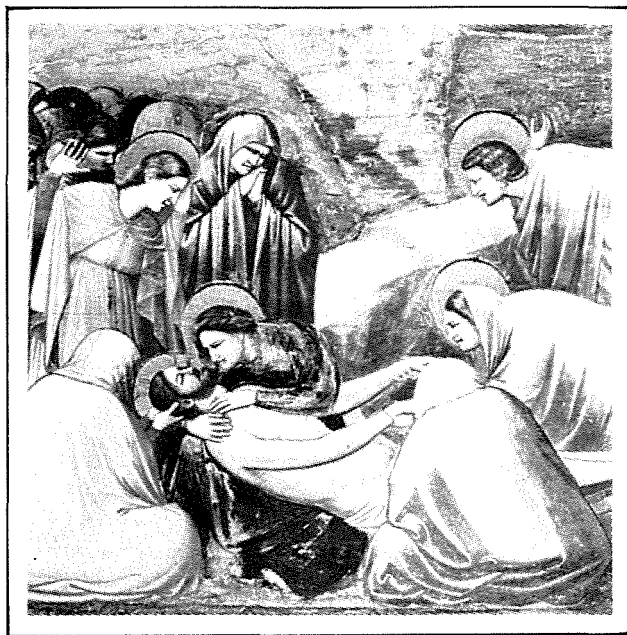


Plate D



Plate E

think of death as the punishment for Desdemona's wildness, or promiscuity. He will merely release her like an untameable hawk and leave her to fend for herself.

The speech intensifies as Othello identifies within himself possible causes for Desdemona's unfaithfulness, but these speculations are superseded in line 10 by the brief and simplistic conclusion 'I am abus'd'. His anguish is emphasized by the natural stresses on important words: 'gone', 'abus'd', 'loathe', 'curse'. Relief from torment will now come only through a developing hatred. The contrast between 'delicate' physical appearance or character on the one hand and excessive sensual behaviour on the other ('appetites') repels and horrifies Othello. He cannot cope with such disparity between appearance and reality.

The speech marks a change in the verbal patterns of the play. Desdemona has been described as a hawk and a creature, and it is evident that Othello, confessing he would 'rather be a toad', is beginning to use the animal imagery so characteristic of Iago. The toad image reveals how humiliated Othello feels by his wife's imagined, insatiable lust. From now on the debasement of his thoughts to disgusting and bestial levels is mirrored in his language and actions. His tone, already bitter and recriminating, is soon to degenerate into mental rage.

The second extract, taken from the last act of *Antony and Cleopatra*, is spoken by Cleopatra in praise of her lover, Antony, who is now dead:

His legs bestrid the ocean; his rear'd arm
Crested the world. His voice was propertied
As all the tuned spheres, and that to friends;
But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,
He was as rattling thunder. For his bounty, 5
There was no winter in't; an autumn 'twas
That grew the more by reaping. His delights
Were dolphin-like: they show'd his back above
The element they liv'd in. In his livery
Walk'd crowns and crownets; realms and islands were 10
As plates dropp'd from his pocket.

Having been taken captive by the Roman army, she speaks these lines, almost in reverie, in the presence of Dolabella, who has relieved Proculeius as Cleopatra's guard, and he soon confirms her suspicion that Caesar will lead her in triumph as his prisoner through the streets of Rome. Rather than submit to such humiliation, she commits suicide.

Part of the dramatic significance of the play is that it presents two conflicting views of Antony. One is of an Antony who is described by Philo in the play's first scene as 'a strumpet's fool' and who earns the contempt of Caesar and of Rome for his 'lascivious wassails' and neglect of duty. The other, which Cleopatra describes here, is of Antony the fearsome general, courageous and all-conquering, whose greatness and magnanimity inspire loyalty and devotion among his followers. Cleopatra's 'dream' of Antony's noble qualities is supported by other evidence: by his sending treasures, for example, to Enobarbus who has deserted him, by Pompey's comment that 'His soldiership/Is twice the other twain', and by the praise that Caesar rather grudgingly gives him. At the same time, his actions in determining to fight by sea, in having Thidias whipped, and in challenging Caesar to single combat, lend some justification to Caesar's description of him as 'the old ruffian'.

Our view of Cleopatra is similarly divided, though whatever we may have thought of her in the past, this speech dispels any idea of her being merely a wanton, fickle and temperamental. Now Antony is dead, she stands alone against Caesar. Her love of Antony, for so long based – as we thought – upon sensuality and caprice, is raised and exalted in Act V. Unshakeable in her resolution to follow her 'husband', in her praise of Antony she herself acquires the dignity and stature of a great tragic figure. Their love, a consuming passion, has been their ruin. The fact that they give all for love is also cause for celebration.

Much of the diction of the passage is drawn from nature ('ocean'), the references to the seasons and harvest ('dolphin-like', 'realms and islands') and from the larger universe ('world', 'tuned spheres', 'orb'). The diction exaggerates Antony's physical size to suggest his greatness of power and character. This is Cleopatra's dream of her lover and her statements are compliments on the grand scale.

These lines exhibit what has been called the 'cosmic' imagery of the play. Antony is described in colossal terms. The first half line suggests the extent of Antony's influence and control, and the heraldic image 'his rear'd arm/Crested the world' conveys his military power. In contrast, his voice is compared with the harmonious music of the spheres, when he spoke to friends, and with 'thunder' when he was angry. His generosity was like the harvest reaped in autumn. As dolphins show their backs above the waves, so Antony rose above the pleasures that were his element. Lines 9-11 convey the idea of conquest over kings and princes, the comparison of 'realms and islands' with silver coins ('plates dropp'd from his pocket') being evidence of Antony's richness and liberality. He

appears to be the source of everything.

The verse is eloquent and moving. Cleopatra speaks the lines with a deep sense of admiration. She is sad, but the short sentences build in a restraining effect. To her, they are statements of fact rather than grief, and there is a sense of marvel and wonder at the man's greatness as each sentence adds to the praise of its predecessor. Cleopatra's recollection of her lover is of something grand, precious, varied and ennobling, and her words are suitably rhapsodic and lyrical.

It should be obvious that the study of Shakespeare's poetry must involve a willingness to get to grips with the vocabulary of his time. It is essential to find out what his words mean before profitable analysis can be undertaken. The word 'jesses', not in common use, is a good example, if the image is to be appreciated; so, too, are 'haggard' and 'plates', both of which could easily be misunderstood by a modern reader. Of course, a narrow focus on a few lines cannot convey the mighty impact each full and magnificent play has on its audience, but it can give some idea of the amazing range of effects Shakespeare achieves through his handling of language. After all, the plays did not just happen. They were *made* by a conscious artist, and to study his superb craftsmanship is the source of much enrichment.

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Systems of Knowledge Syllabus for 1994

1. Aims

Systems of Knowledge supplements the 'A' level programme of studies with a cultural course which not only helps break down departmental separatism in schools but also prompts students to reflect maturely on the specific learning derived from their 'A' level courses and helps them relate it to other fields of knowledge within a broad social and cultural framework. It is essentially an attempt:

to broaden the sixth-form curriculum;
to foster a greater flexibility in adapting to changing patterns of work and life in a post-industrial age;
to afford opportunities of going beyond the traditional limits of particular disciplines and gaining insight into different systems of knowledge;
to develop the candidate's ability to view ideas, skills, and situations from a wider standpoint than that of a single discipline.

2. Scheme of Assessment

30% of the global mark will be awarded by the schools and based on work carried out by the candidates in Part I of the course;

30% will be allocated to the Final Examination which consists of two three-hour papers testing candidates on the whole programme;

10% of the marks will be awarded by the moderators for interdisciplinarity;

30% of the marks are allocated for the project on Technology and the Quality of Life.

2.1 School-Based Assessment

A maximum of 30% of the marks will be awarded for the candidates' performance across the study-units of Part I. The aggregate mark for these study-units must be the result of continuous assessment based on a minimum of five tests or assignments. The latter may take the form of essays, projects, practicals, etc.

In their assessments teachers should take into consideration the student's ability to:

- a. understand the disciplines, concepts, and methods applicable to the topics being studied;

- b. relate subjects to one another, to general knowledge, and living experience;
- c. analyse and evaluate a variety of types of evidence, making use of the concepts of cause and consequences, continuity and change, similarity and difference;
- d. use language clearly, consistently, and appropriately;
- e. understand the influence of Art and Science upon society;
- f. give evidence of appreciation of the strengths and the limitations of the various kinds of knowledge as well as their similarities and differences.

The mark awarded could be split into three components: Clarity, Critical Thought, and Content.

A record, drawn up by the class teacher, of each candidate's attendance and performance in this continuous assessment exercise (including a breakdown indicating how the total marks have been computed) is to be kept by the school for the purpose of moderation by the Markers' Panel. This record should be countersigned by the Head of School.

Candidates applying to sit their Final Examination are to submit to the Matriculation Support Unit an official copy of their record on the appropriate form.

- 2.1.1 Private candidates will have to undergo a Formal Assessment covering the five study-units in Part I. It will consist of one three-hour paper carrying 30% of the marks, i.e. the same amount awarded by the schools in their continuous assessment.

This Part I Formal Assessment will be held for the first time in May/June 1993. There will be no supplementary session.

Notification to the Matriculation Support Unit regarding the Formal Assessment will not be accepted unless accompanied by a school certificate stating that the candidate has completed Form V or its equivalent. For the purposes of the interpretation of this clause it is here understood that a scholastic year ends in the second half of June.

- 2.1.2 Candidates failing the Final Examination are not obliged to repeat the first year of the course or the Part I Formal Assessment. They may opt to carry over to the next examination session the original mark or try to improve it by sitting/re-sitting the Part I Formal Assessment. The Part I and Final Examination cannot, however, be taken in the same session.

2.2 Final Examination

2.2.1 Paper I (3 hours)

15% of the marks will be awarded for this paper.

Questions covering the following five modules may be the essay type,

the kind calling for short replies of one or two paragraphs, or multiple choice. They may also straddle modules and call for linkage with the themes covered in the second year:

- i) Logic and Communication;
- ii) The Natural and Social Environment;
- iii) History of the Mediterranean;
- iv) Scientific Methods and History of Science;
- v) Forms of Art and Expression.

2.2.2 Paper II (3 hours)

15% of the marks will be awarded for this paper.

Candidates will be expected to answer four questions, one on each of the following themes:

- i) The Sea;
- ii) Energy;
- iii) Work and Leisure;
- iv) Language.

In both papers questions will be set in English but may be answered either in Maltese or in English.

3. Programme Outline

3.1 Part I

In the first year candidates following the Systems of Knowledge course are expected to cover the following five study-units which will be school-assessed, subject to moderation by the Markers' Panel.

The aim is to improve the candidates' ability to grasp, and experiment with, ideas and principles, and not simply to memorize facts. Nonetheless, real knowledge and preparation in the various areas is obviously essential.

For the exploration of all the five areas of study, guidelines, rather than exact prescriptions, are provided.

i) Logic and Communication

This unit affords students opportunities to exercise and develop their thinking skills, helping them to master the guiding principles of discourse so that they learn to debate, discuss, and argue logically and form sound opinions.

Teachers are encouraged to foster creative thought by organizing practical sessions in which students try to solve problems together in order to learn, among other things, how the opinion of one speaker may yield a new truth when combined with that of another.

Thinking and communication are means for fitting the mind to derive knowledge in any branch of intellectual endeavour whether it is in the humanities, the commercial subjects, or science. They drill the mind into exactitude.

The specific character and potential of television and other audio-visual media should also be explored.

Recommended Reading

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

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

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

Further Reading

M. Serres, *Hermes: Literature, Science, Philosophy*, J.V. Harari & D.G. Bell, (ed.), John Hopkins, 1983

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

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

ii) The Natural and Social Environment

This unit explores relationships between MAN and his physical/human environment. These relationships become particularly relevant in the study of spatial patterns involving phenomena on the Earth's surface. It brings students into contact with other disciplines in both the Natural and Social Sciences. It also seeks to make students aware of the relationship of central political concepts to political activity and structures.

Topics that could be covered include:

a) Global ecosystems; world human population; environment and society; natural resources; threats to the environment; etc. Where appropriate, special reference to Malta should be made.

b) Government (rule of law and division of powers) and the principle institutions of social life.

Recommended Reading

B.J. Nebel, *Environmental Science: the Way the World Works*, Prentice-Hall Inc., 1986 (2nd edition)

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

iii) History of the Mediterranean

This unit is intended to encourage students to view the shaping of their nation's destiny against the background of the cultural forces that have acted and reacted upon one another in the Mediterranean. It should also create an awareness of the role of the Mediterranean 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

iv) Scientific Methods and History of Science

This unit explores the steps by which physical science has grown, how it has attained to its present power and importance. Students should also be made to reflect on the moral and philosophical issues raised by the sciences.

Topics should include: 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

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

v) **Forms of Art and Expression**

This unit aims to help students view works of art within a historical perspective and to perceive a coherent relationship between seeing and understanding, engendering an awareness of art as a major visible aspect of human endeavour. Also, this module helps the student understand the role of the artist, the architect, and the craftsman down the ages.

Recommended Reading

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

Further Reading

K. Clark, *Civilisation*, Penguin, 1982

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

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

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

- 3.1.1 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 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.

3.2 **PART II**

In the second year students are to follow a modular course covering the following themes:

i) **THE SEA**

H. Belloc, *The Cruise of the 'Nona'*

The Sea has always exerted tremendous fascination on man besides being a major source of food supply and, for most of history, an essential means of communication between different continents and countries. It was consequently a determining factor in the establishment of trade routes.

The power of the sea to fire the imagination has found an eloquent expression in great works of art and literature, not only during the Romantic period but also in all other periods of the history of civilization.

Scientists believe that life started in the sea and it is significant

that water covers three quarters of the earth. This has earned for the world the name of Water Planet.

The Sea as a source of energy has provided challenges to man who has only partially come to terms with its vast potential.

The exploitation of the resources of the sea has only recently become a major world concern and the subject of international fora. *Pacem in maribus* is an important case in point.

Throughout history the sea has been an important source of power and its control equated with world domination. Great nations have always been concerned with building powerful navies.

The sea is not only a means of bringing different peoples and cultures into contact with each other, it has often been a great divide. History is full of eloquent examples.

The recreational and leisure aspect of the sea is a final important consideration as borne out by the popularity of swimming, yachting, and other sea-orientated sports.

ii) **ENERGY**

Omeru, *L-Odissea* (trans. Victor Xuereb)

The concept of energy is one of the most basic and unifying ideas in science and in the relation between man and the physical world. It is also one of the most useful, since in the process of reviewing its multifaceted aspects, one will cut across physics, chemistry, and biology, as well as the arts, sociology, and history itself. The aim of this study-unit is to allow the student to experience this unifying and therefore intellectually-satisfying sense of power in all its diverse forms in nature.

A useful introduction to this study-unit is Chapter 8 of *The Ascent of Man* by J. Bronowski. However, it must be made clear to teachers and their students that this study-unit goes beyond the ideas expressed in this chapter, as can be seen by the detailed descriptions of the study-unit. No single book would be able to convey the broad approach to the study of the concept of energy and power. Moreover, it would be counterproductive to expect students to read a long list of books on the various aspects of this study-unit. Therefore, no specific reading list will be made available for this unit. The tutor is advised to introduce the various ideas presented below, through discussions and by directing the students to read certain basic science texts and to consult articles, essays, and any other relevant reading, material of the teacher's own choice. This calls for more preparation on the teachers' part, but will allow the teachers to develop the material to be discussed in a manner which would best suit their own background, as well

as that of the students.

a. Energy Transformations and the Laws of Nature

- Energy as a single unifying concept in science;
- The diverse forms of energy;
- The First Law of Thermodynamics and Energy Conversions;
- The Second Law of Thermodynamics and the concepts of useful energy (or FREE ENERGY) and dissipated heat energy resulting in an increase in ENTROPY, or disorder.

b. Energy and Chemicals

- Energy changes during chemical reactions;
- The nature of CHEMICAL ENERGY in atoms, bonds, and molecules.

c. Energy and Life

- Life as a continuous change at the levels of molecule (chemical changes or METABOLISM), individual (e.g. growth, movement, ageing) and communities;
- The need of a continuous supply of energy to maintain life functions;
- The sun as the ultimate source of all energy available to life on earth, the role of plants, and PHOTOSYNTHESIS;
- Energy flows through an ecosystem by way of food chains and trophic levels;
- Energy Resources and their use in agriculture, food production and distribution.

d. Energy and the Quest for Power

- The role played by the utilization of water and steam power in the dramatic social changes during the 18th and 19th centuries (i.e. the Industrial Revolution);
- James Watt and the development of the steam engine;
- Matthew Boulton, Benjamin Franklin, and the new dynamic and republican spirit.

e. Energy and the Arts

- The use of form, composition, and colour to depict energy in the visual arts;
- The Romantic Poets and Painters and the concept of nature as a source of energy.

f. Energy and the Future of Mankind

- Problems associated with excessive energy consumption

- by modern man: environmental pollution;
- Nuclear Power: nature, promises, and hazards;
- Alternative sources of energy for the future.

iii) **WORK AND LEISURE**

Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha*

Work and leisure are two essential components of everyday life which lend themselves to a discussion which can touch upon aspects from various fields of knowledge as indicated in the following description. Although the description is divided into separate parts, the discussion on this theme should emphasize the interrelationship between its various aspects.

a. **Distinction between Work and Leisure**

The distinction between work and leisure: a person's work can be somebody else's leisure. Types of work: manual and mental, production and service. Types of leisure: active and passive, at different stages of life, in different cultures.

b. **Sociological and Ethical Aspects**

The relationship between employer and employees: rights and duties of both. Trade unions and their functions. The changing concepts of the working class. Leisure: individual pastimes and group activities, clubs. Leisure and social class.

c. **Psychological Aspect**

Motivation and commitment to work. Employment and unemployment or forced leisure.
The relationship between work, leisure and creativity.

d. **Economical Aspect**

Work and the generation of wealth. Leisure and the consumer society. The industry of leisure: tourism.

e. **Historical Aspect**

From crafts to mass production in the industrial revolution. From a feudal system to the new industrial barons. The technological revolution and the need for updating and continued education of the workforce. Leisure as a relatively modern right.

iv) **LANGUAGE**

L. Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass*

Bloch and Trager's definition of language as a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates has a number of implications. In the first place it excludes such things as non-vocal

communication (e.g. smoke signals, nautical signs, gestures), communication among animals (e.g. the dancing of bees), unsystematic vocal noises (e.g. human screams and grunts, the cries of animals).

Secondly, the definition makes it clear (a) that language is primarily a vocal activity and that written language is secondary to spoken language, (b) that language is a social activity, and (c) that linguistic symbols, i.e. words are arbitrary, not in the sense that an individual can give a succession of sounds any meaning he chooses but in the sense that there is no direct connection between words and the realities they relate to.

With this definition as a starting point it is possible to go in a number of different directions. What follows is a series of sign posts indicating the direction one could take.

a. Language in the world

(A geographical and historical perspective)

- Language families
- The rise and fall of languages
- Languages across frontiers

b. Language in the community

(A historical and social linguistic perspective)

- The making of a standard language
- Dialects and the standard form
- Languages for internal and wider communication

c. Language and the individual

(A psycholinguistic and pedagogical perspective)

- Acquiring a first language
- Language and thought
- Language in education

d. Language as a system of communication

(A linguistic perspective)

- Sounds
- Vocabulary
- Grammar
- Structure
- Meaning: Sentence
- Meaning: Utterance

e. Language into literature

(an aesthetic perspective)

- Oral traditions
- Literary genres

- production of the object or programme;
- b. give evidence of graphical and other communication skills necessary for describing the object or programme;
- c. identify problems which lend themselves to solution through practical technological activity;
- d. identify the resources required for solving practical technological problems;
- e. produce and interpret data by means of diagrams, charts, graphs, experimental results;
- f. think up and record ideas as likely solutions to problems;
- g. describe the interaction between technology and the needs of society; and
- h. record the production of the object or the development of the programme.

The level expected by the Board of Examiners in the project is comparable to that of a Craft, Design and Technology (CDT) course in the fifth and final year of secondary school.

4.2.2 Recommended Reading

T.R. De Gregori, *A Theory of Technology*, Iowa State University Press, 1987

Further Reading

J.K. Feibleman, *Technology and Reality*, Martinus Nijhoff, 1982

M. Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motor-cycle Maintenance*, Bantam, 1976

4.3 APPROVAL OF PROPOSED PROJECTS

Projects should be thought up by the candidates and short descriptions of them must be submitted on the appropriate form to the Board of Examiners for approval at least fifteen months before the examination to which they refer, i.e.

for May/June 1994

by Friday 5 March 1993

Candidates will be informed whether their Project has been approved or otherwise through the school or individually as the case may be. Project themes may not be changed without the prior approval of the Markers' Panel.

The Systems of Knowledge project can form part of a broader project or undertaking of whatever nature so long as the Systems of Knowledge project is an element of the whole activity.

4.4 PROCEDURE FOR ASSESMENT

Candidates presented by School. Supervision and assessment of projects must be carried out by a teacher from the candidate's own

- Universal themes in literature
- The experience of literature

3.2.1 The four literary texts are obligatory reading. They are intended to prompt candidates to adopt an interdisciplinary and cross-curricular approach.

4. PART III

PROJECT

Technology and the Quality of Life

Candidates following the Systems of Knowledge course must complete a project on Technology and the Quality of Life.

Projects may be carried out by individuals or groups of not more than five candidates, provided that the personal contribution of each member can be identified.

4.1 Aims

The aims of the project is to achieve an understanding of what technology is ('application of knowledge for making and doing purposeful and useful things' - UNESCO) and its requirement of other knowledge besides scientific (e.g. skills in design, evaluation of solutions, etc.)

The project is intended to provide candidates with an opportunity of exercising the required skills in a relatively relaxed environment and is therefore more likely to lead to the production of interdisciplinary material characterized by some degree of integration.

4.2 Assessment

Assessment will be of a technological project including:

1. the production of an *object* or *programme*, and
2. an *account of its making*, i.e.
 - (a) Problem to be solved, relevance, and constraints;
 - (b) Ideas (thought of, discussed, researched) for solution;
 - (c) Design (rough sketch, drawing, description, or first prototype) of solution;
 - (d) Construction;
 - (e) Testing;
 - (f) Evaluation; and
 - (g) Display /Modification.

4.2.1 In assessing the project, account will be taken of the candidates' ability to:

- a. describe and apply facts, principles and concepts related to the

school. Tutors will submit their mark, through the head of school, to the Matriculation Support Unit, University of Malta. The school should make the projects available to the Board of Examiners for the purpose of carrying out the moderating exercise. Each candidate is required to be present during this exercise to answer any questions the examiners may put.

The projects of candidates attending a school may be carried out at the school or at home but they must be made available at the school for the purpose of the moderation exercise already referred to.

The assessment mark for the completed project must be submitted by schools by the following date:

for May/June 1994

Friday, 5 March 1994

- 4.4.1 **Private Candidates.** The projects presented by private candidates will be assessed directly by the Board of Examiners. Such projects should be readily portable and make available at the University for assessment on the following dates:

for May/June 1994

on 4 and 5 March 1993

However, a private candidate may join a school-based group for the project if the school authorities permit it. Such permission must be granted in writing by the Head of School and copied to the Board of Examiners. In such cases, the assessment of the private candidate's project will be school-based.

4.5 RE-SIT OF THE EXAMINATION

Candidates failing the examination are not obliged to present a *different* project when they re-sit the examination. In such cases the mark obtained for the first session project will remain the project mark applicable for subsequent sessions of the examination. In interpreting the word *different* in the first sentence, the Board of Examiners' decision is final.

SLAVES AND CAPTIVES ON MALTA: 1053/4 and 1091

Anthony Luttrell

Despite the desperate scarcity of sources, it is now generally agreed that between about 870 and about 1200 Malta was in Muslim hands and that any element of Christian continuity from before 870 can virtually be excluded. Where texts are lacking legend may flourish; but the notion of some Christian survival through the Muslim period, an idea long accepted as ancient unbroken tradition of the type described by Gian Francesco Abela in 1647 as the *approuate traditioni hauute da nostri Maggiori*, is demonstrably an early-modern invention.¹ Most of the sources available for the period were indicated and discussed, somewhat disjointedly, in 1975,² while others were supplied in Godfrey Wettinger's standard synthesis on Muslim Malta as revised in 1986.³ Doubts remain however, especially since Joseph Brincat recently added an important new element to the discussion by noting a passage in the writing of al-Himyari who died in 1494 but used earlier sources.⁴ Further such literary discoveries remain possible but excavation, which might well solve vital problems in this period, is unlikely to be able to

1. A. Luttrell, 'Girolamo Manduca and Gian Francesco Abela: Tradition and Invention in Maltese Historiography', *Melita Historica*, vii, no. 2 (1977).
2. T. Brown, J. Cassar Pullicino, A. Luttrell *et al.*, in *Medieval Malta: Studies on Malta before the Knights*, ed. A. Luttrell (London, 1975); note that the Norman invasion should be dated to 1091 and not to 1090.
3. G. Wettinger, 'The Arabs in Malta', revised edition in *Malta: Studies of its Heritage and History*, ed. Mid-Med Bank (Malta, 1986); a third addition is forthcoming. V. Grassi, 'Materiali per lo Studio Della Presenza araba nella Regione italiana: i. L'Epigrafia araba nelle Isole maltesi', *Studi Magrebini*, xxi (1989). At least one other Arabic inscription on Malta deserves publication. The Maimuna stone, which Grassi, 25, 35 notes as in a class of its own and as coming from Gozo, is first documented in Valletta in 1772 and could have been imported from abroad: A. Luttrell, 'The Roots of Medieval Gozo', *Al-Masaq*, iv (1991), 52-53; G. Bonello, 'New Light on Majmuna's Tombstone', *Sunday Times* (Malta), 735 (8 November 1992), 41. The inscription's stone awaits analysis.
4. J. Brincat, *Malta 870-1054: Al-Himyari's Account* (Malta, 1991); G. Wettinger's reactions in *Sunday Times* (Malta), 620 (26 August 1990), 23; 625 (30 September 1990), 16.

do so for some time.⁵ The Maltese language was scarcely written down until modern times and cannot throw convincing light on the period before 1200, though toponyms, and especially microtoponyms which clearly persisted for many centuries,⁶ are documented in very considerable number for the fifteenth century and, occasionally, a little earlier. Whether such place names can safely be adduced as evidence for the period before 1091 is extremely doubtful, but since none of them indicates a probable pre-870 toponym they would, if anything, strengthen any theory of a break following the conquest of 870 circa.⁷

There are strong indications, and al-Himyari's text reinforces them, of a Christian opposition to the Muslim attack of 870 which resulted in the dismantling of one or more churches and the death or exile of the bishop and many of the Christian inhabitants on Malta.⁸ Outright resistance on farms or in caves would scarcely have been possible on a small, flat island. It is possible that after 870 there were no Christians, but only Muslims, on Malta; or that a few hundred indigenous Christian inhabitants survived as *dhimmi*, that is as free citizens of inferior status; or that some inhabitants became *mawali* or converts to Islam and were accepted as equals; or that they became slaves precisely because they resisted the conquerors of 870. On a small and distant island the laws of Islam were not necessarily followed strictly and other situations are conceivable. Thus in the tenth century Ibn Hauqal described rural communities in Western Sicily in which Muslim men married Christian women as Islam permitted, their male children being brought up as Muslims and the females as Christians.⁹ In the late-thirteenth century the Sicilian Bartolomeo de Neocastro reported a more fantastic but possibly significant story told by a Muslim on Gerba, according to which the inhabitants of the islands, explicitly including Malta, were the

5. Cf. A. Luttrell, 'Medieval Malta; the Non-Written and the Written Evidence,' in *Malta: A Case Study in International Cross-Currents*, ed. S. Fiorini and V. Mallia-Milanes (Malta, 1991).
6. E.g. M.A. and D. Aquilina *et al.*, in *Hal Millieri: a Maltese Casale, its Churches and Paintings*, ed. A. Luttrell (Malta, 1976), 26-27 and Fig. 2
7. Wettinger (1986), 90-91.
8. Brown, 81-84; Luttrell (1975), 21-28; Wettinger (1986), 90-91; Brincat, 2, 6-7. Wettinger, 91, says that Maltese Christians must 'undoubtedly' have fled from Sicily to the Italian mainland; but that is a hypothesis.
9. Ibn Hauqal, *Configuration de la Terre (Kitab Surat al-Ard)*, trans. and ed., J. Kramers and G. Wiet, i (Beirut - Paris, 1964), 198; cf. A. Luttrell, 'Ibn Hauqal and Tenth-Century Malta', *Hyphen* (Malta), v, no. 4 (1987), 159.

out to the more numerous slaves that in the event of a Byzantine victory they would be subjected to a captivity and bondage worse than that which would face the free Muslims, who would have friends or allies or a community to redeem them, and the masters promised their slaves that if they joined in resistance to the Byzantines they would, if victorious, be granted their freedom and the daughters of the free minority in marriage. The slaves fought harder than the free Muslims and the majority of the Byzantines were killed, just one ship escaping.¹⁵ Though some Byzantine prisoners, not necessarily Greeks, conceivably remained on Malta following this defeat, the fact is that no surviving source mentions any other Christians, indigenous or otherwise, on Malta between just after 870 and 1091, and the non-written evidence is similarly silent.¹⁶

Joseph Brincat seems to accept al-Himyari's account of an island uninhabited for some 180 years and of a deliberate attempt at recolonization. That would imply a complete ethnic break between Byzantine and Muslim Malta, yet he is reluctant to dismiss the implausible notion of Christian communities from before 870 surviving on tiny Malta for a long period in 'hills and valleys ... living or hiding in caves' but leaving no apparent trace of their existence. Despite the strong evidence for Christian opposition in 870 Brincat considers that 'any Maltese survivors from the 870 massacre must have increased, and unless they offered resistance (which would be unlikely) would have been integrated with the new settlers, probably among the slaves.' In that case, however, there would have been no total abandonment. Brincat claims that there are no clues as to the race, creed, or language of the immigrant slaves of 1048/9 but suggests that quite possibly they were neither Arab nor Berber but Christians from Sicily who were of three types: Sicilian Christians, ex-Christians, and Slavs.¹⁷

15. Text and translation in Brincat, 2-5. Al-Qazwini's less detailed version, which did not mention daughters or marriages, is given in translation by Brown, 84-85. Al-Qawzini dated the Byzantine attack to 440 (1048/9); Brown, 85, suggests 1038. Wettinger (1986), 91, interpreting Qazwini's slaves as 'a subject population, perhaps indeed partly of indigenous origin, already Islamicized and Arabized ...' implies that al-Qazwini wrote of the Muslims and slaves as 'Maltese'.
16. Wettinger (1986), 91-92; T. Blagg and A. Luttrell, 'Notes on San Pawl Milqi', in T. Blagg, A. Bonanno and A. Luttrell, *Excavations at Hal Millieri, Malta* (Malta, 1990).
17. Brincat, 7-9.

offspring of black African men and Byzantine women from Sicily.¹⁰ Arabic-speaking or Coptic Christians might have reached Malta from the Levant or from Africa; in 827, for example, many Copts were sent from Egypt to Tunisia where they orientalized its Christianity.¹¹

It was stated by Ibn Hauqal and a number of other Arabic writers that Malta was totally abandoned in the tenth century. Al-Himyari's account of the conquest strengthens the picture of destruction and abandonment in and after 870, and his claim that Muslims repopled the island and built a city after 440, that is after 1048/9, implies a total depopulation of some 180 years and a complete break in ethnic, linguistic, and religious continuities. Al-Himyari repeats the story, known to al-Qazwini in the thirteenth century, of a Byzantine attack on Malta with many ships and a siege of the city, dating it to 445 or 1053/4 and adding new details.¹² It could have been that a Muslim settlement of 1048/9 circa provoked an almost immediate Byzantine riposte, and it would be unwise to dismiss entirely the idea of a complete abandonment since that would explain the general absence of evidence for continuing occupation; but the balance of probability seems to lie against a complete desertion. The various descriptions of an abandoned island have been explained, quite convincingly, as the result of textual confusion with another place with the similar name of Galita,¹³ and it may be that al-Himyari, faced with evidence both for a total abandonment before 1053/4 and of a community on Malta in that year, sought to resolve the apparent contradiction by inventing a slightly earlier repopulation and the building, or perhaps a rebuilding, of the city. At present only a detailed and exhaustive investigation of al-Himyari's sources and of their manuscript traditions offers even an outside hope of settling that problem.¹⁴

According to al-Himyari, the 400 free Muslims on Malta and their more numerous *abid* or slaves were attacked in 1053/4 by the *Rum*, that is the Byzantines, 'and the Muslims asked them for clemency and they refused it, except for women and belongings.' The free Muslims then pointed

10. Bartholomaeus de Neocastro, *Historia Sicula*, ed. G. Paladino, in *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, n.s., xiii, part 3 (Bologna, 1922), 63-65.

11. A. Luttrell, 'The Christianization of Malta', *Malta Year Book 1977* (Malta, 1977), 420.

12. Text and translation in Brincat, 2-5.

13. Most recently Wettinger (30 September 1990), 16.

14. Brincat, 9-20, discusses such investigations and announces future contributions; Wettinger (26 August 1990), 23, and (30 September 1990), 16, indicates various problems.

Had the slaves of 1053/4 been descendants of the pre-870 inhabitants they would probably have remained on the island with their women, unless the latter alone had been deported or absorbed by Muslim conquerors, and the men would have had no pressing need to marry the free Muslims' daughters. Had they been Christians, the threat of captivity and bondage under the Christian Byzantines would not have been very compelling. Only if they were Muslims would their condition, already one of slavery, have been likely to be worsened by a Byzantine victory. Furthermore, the free Muslim minority would have been most reluctant, even in an emergency, to trust a more numerous group of Christian slaves with their freedom as equals. That the free Muslims offered their daughters in marriage might suggest that the slaves were not Christian, since Islam prohibits Muslim women from marrying non-Muslims. Godfrey Wettinger points out that had there been Christian survivors from before 870 who remained Christians, they would presumably have been relatively free *dhimmi* rather than slaves. He suggests a re-peopling of the island, however gradual, by Arabic speakers who might have come from North Africa or other areas to the east or west rather than from Sicily, and he notes that the Muslims are not known to have had Christian slaves on Sicily. Unless in 1053/4 there were *dhimmi* who were not mentioned by al-Qazwini or by al-Himyari, then there were only free men and slaves; and the latter were unlikely to have been Christian even in origin.¹⁸ Had the free Muslims' wives and daughters been Christians according to the Sicilian practice reported by Ibn Hauqal, that would have allowed Christian slaves to marry them and might have explained why the Byzantines demanded the women; but that would be to pile hypothesis on hypothesis while leaving other problems unsolved. The reality may have been an untidy and fluctuating jumble of poorly defined personal conditions operating within a very small context.

Brincat writes of a 'total and abrupt change of language' and of the 'lack of a linguistic substratum' in the eleventh century. It could reasonably be supposed that such hypothetical developments would have been the result of some 180 years of total abandonment, if such an abandonment were proven. To assume such developments as facts which support an

18. This is merely to elaborate, in the light of al-Himyari's text, on what has been said by A. Mayr (1896), Brown (1975), 84-85, and Wettinger (1986), 91; *idem* (26 August 1990), 23; *idem* (30 September 1990), 16.

unproven hypothesis of a total abandonment would scarcely be logical. To say that a hypothetical immigration of Sicilians and Slavs in the eleventh century would solve the problem of those Maltese Semitic terms, including *knisja* for church and *qassis* for priest, which relate to the Christian religion, is to imply that the existence of the terms in modern Maltese strengthens the hypothesis that the slaves of 1053/4 were Christian and that they reached Malta from Sicily.¹⁹ In reality there is no such problem, since the Semitic terms are totally undocumented in Maltese until much later and there is no way of demonstrating that they reached Malta as Christian terms in the eleventh century. They could have arrived in a variety of ways and at various times.²⁰

The situation on Malta had changed by the time of Count Roger the Norman's attack on the island in 1091. The chief source for that event is the chronicle of Roger's French chaplain and biographer Geoffroi Malaterra, who was either with Roger or received a first-hand account of events. His chronicle included a passage describing how the Muslims' Christian captives, of whom a great number or *plurima multitudo* were held within the town, came in procession to greet the victorious count:

Videntes autem captivos christianos, ab urve progredientes, prae gaudio suae insperatae liberationis ab imo quoque cordis lacrimis profundi, lingo vel calamis, prout quisque primo inveniebant, compositas cruces in dexteris ferentes, *Kyrie eleyson* proclamando, ad pedes comitis provolvi, nostri vero ad talem intuitum pietatis affectu lacrimoso rore perfunduntur. Comes ergo, taliter urbe sibi confoederata, captivos, asportet, per naves ordinans, reditum cum magno timore, prae nimio pondere captivorum, ut submersionem veritus, accelerat. Sed dextera Dei, ut credimus, ex eventu patuit: naves per undas sublevans, cubitu uno liberiores super mare ferebat, quam in aditu suo cum eas minus onus gravabat.

This means that by 1091 there were many Christian captives on Malta who went with joy to meet Roger, carrying crosses and crying *Kyrie Eleison*; Roger took them away, seriously overloading his ships, and devastating Gozo on his way. On reaching Sicily he freed the captives and offered to settle them in Sicily free of any 'servile exaction', but they preferred to return to their own 'fields and

19. Brincat, 7-9; Luttrell, 'Christianity' (1977), 420, provides the literature on these Semitic terms. Brincat has the merit of being the first of the 'philologists' to confront the earlier historical evidence and to seek to place the language in a more acceptable context: cf. J. Brincat, 'Language and Demography in Malta: the Social Foundations of the Symbiosis between Semitic and Romance in Standard Maltese', in *Malta: a Case Study ...* (1989). The article provides a more convincing account of the origins of the language.

20. Luttrell (1975), 24-25.

friends' and left for their various homelands, crossing the Straits of Messina.²¹

It might be argued that Malaterra was not present on Malta and was misinformed or inaccurate; certainly he was anxious to exaggerate Count Roger's achievements.²² Yet his account of events on Malta appears detailed and circumstantial, so that it seems reasonable to accept the core of his story. Clearly the freed captives were not indigenous to Malta and were not, or mostly not, from Sicily, since they left for their homelands by crossing to mainland Italy. It might seem contradictory that the captives who were full of joy at their release should ask for mercy in Greek. If the captives were Greeks, or mainly Greeks, it might have been that they shouted various remarks and that Malaterra, who presumably knew no Greek but as priest would naturally have recognized the words *Kyrie Eleison* from the Latin mass and have known that they meant 'Lord have mercy'²³ thought that that was what he heard. Even if this were the case, it would be unlikely that after some forty years the numerous captives of 1091 were survivors from a Byzantine attack of 1053/4. It seems more probable that the 'captives' of 1091 had been taken more recently in battle or by pirates, or have been shipwrecked, or been imported as slaves. If these captives were mainly Latins, and quite possible Italians, they might have carried crosses and shouted 'Lord have mercy' in Greek, perhaps the only Greek words they knew, precisely to emphasize that they were Christians, their joy perhaps being tempered with the fear that the invaders were, as in 1053/4, Greek-speaking Byzantines whom they would have feared as recent and bitter enemies of the Latins.

Brincat claims that the supposedly Christian slaves of 1053/4, the Christian captives of 1091, and the Christians on Malta between 1130 and 1154 were 'markers of continuity'.²⁴ In the almost total absence of evidence it is difficult entirely to disprove even apparently unlikely suggestions, yet it is clear that even if the slaves of 1053/4 were Christian they would technically have been bound to have converted to Islam in order to become free men and marry the free Muslims' daughters; that would have broken the continuity. The Christian captives of 1091 did

21. Gaufredus Malaterra, *De Rebus gestis Rogerii ...*, ed. E. Pontieri, in *Refum Italicarum Scriptores*, n.s. v, part 1 (Bologna, 1927), 94-96: Cassar Pullicino, 100, points out that the story of the Christians carrying palms is a legend.

22. Cf. Pontieri's *prefazione*; Cassar Pullicino, 97.

23. Cf. P. Siffrin, 'Kyrie Eleison,' *Enciclopedia Cattolica*, xx (Rome, 1933), 767-768.

24. Brincat, 9.

not come from Malta and left the island in that year; they could have contributed little or nothing or any Christian continuity. What may be deduced about the Christians of 1127 to 1154, who are known to have been punished for killing a Muslim on Malta,²⁵ is that presumably they reached the island after 1091 when the Christian captives left; most probably they came after the renewed conquest of Malta by Roger I in 1127 and were few in number.²⁶ There was, therefore, little room for Christian continuities. The reality was probably confused and untidy with individual exceptions to general developments. If Geoffroi Malaterra was correct in reporting that Count Roger took away from Malta all, or perhaps most, of the Christian captives then on the island, it would follow that Malta was more Muslim after 1091 than before it.

25. Wettinger (1986), 98; Luttrell (1991), 37.

26. Luttrell (1975), 31. S. Fiorini, 'Malta in 1530', in *Hospitaller Malta: 1530-1798 - Studies on Early Modern Malta and the Order of St John*, ed. V. Mallia-Milanes (Malta, forthcoming), notes an Italo-Byzantine *familiaris* of Roger I who before about 1135 had been exiled to Malta where he spent fifteen years surrounded by Muslims.

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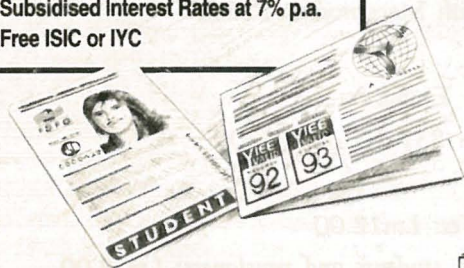
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