LABOURING IN LILLIPUT:

Labour Relations and Images of Smallness
in Developing Microstates

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SUMMARY

This project opens up insights into the social processes colouring labour relations in developing microstates. It purports to explore how worker behaviour in very small, often island, developing countries unfolds in circumstances prone also to influences resulting from the condition of smallness.

The thesis' main intended contribution is therefore an alertness to the plausibility and heuristic usefulness of a smallness perspective towards a better understanding of microstate labour dynamics in particular.

The research design adopted is reflexively critical. It confronts the theories and epithets surrounding the developing microstate, constructing a home grown, conceptual framework and methodological regime. This sensitises research to the often unacknowledged, behavioural dynamics which 'infect' labour formation and labour-management relations in these territories.

The method of investigation comprises a resort to multiple data sourcing. A literature audit is complemented by 4 case studies. These involve: Transnationally comparable employment and labour relations settings emergent from semi-structured interview scripts; encounters with fellow microstate academics; and an autobiographical ethnography.

The material is organised as follows: The research question is first set up and the applied methodology problematised (Chapter 1). Next is a review of development theory, with the proposal of an alternative explanation of microstate 'development' strategies, subsequently applied to the experiences of Malta (my country) and Barbados (Chapter 2). The construction of a microstate labour syndrome follows, with the explanatory and organising potential of a typology revolving around the conditions of intimacy, totality and monopoly (Chapter 3). These leitmotifs are then tested out: First, in the context of labour relations in two microstate hotels (Chapter 4); secondly, with respect to the behaviour and perceptions of microstate campus academic staff; lastly, in relation to the self as microstate academic (Chapter 5). The conclusion serves as a synthesis as well as an opportunity to appraise the implications of the results (Chapter 6).
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .................................................. vii
DECLARATION .......................................................... x
FIGURES & TABLES ...................................................... xi
ABBREVIATIONS USED .................................................. xii

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY (Pages 1 - 50)

1. The Project at Hand .............................................. Page 1
   1.1 Prologue .......................................................... 1
   1.2 The Thesis ..................................................... 3
   1.3 Germs of an Idea .............................................. 4
   1.4 The Small Developing State as Lilliput ..................... 5

2. Research Design .................................................. Page 7
   2.1 Purpose of Enquiry ........................................... 7
   2.2 Resources at Hand ........................................... 8
   2.3 Choice of Population Under Study ......................... 8
   2.4 Empirical Fieldwork ........................................ 11
   2.5 Ideology ....................................................... 14
   2.6 Literature Bias .............................................. 15
   2.7 Smallness as a Pertinent Methodology .................... 16

3. Multiple Sourcing ................................................ Page 17
   3.1 Other Literature ............................................. 17
   3.2 Empirical Fieldwork ........................................ 19
   3.3 Popular Wisdom ............................................... 20
   3.4 Autobiographical Material ................................. 23
   3.5 Peer Review .................................................... 25

4. Fieldwork .......................................................... Page 27
   4.1 Hotel Case Studies ........................................... 27
   4.2 University of the West Indies ............................... 32
   4.3 The Option for Introspection .............................. 37

5. Problems ............................................................ Page 39
   5.1 Location ........................................................ 39
   5.2 Generalisability ............................................. 43
   5.3 Inductive Theorisation ..................................... 45

6. Organisation ........................................................ Page 47

Notes to Chapter 1 .................................................. Page 49
Chapter 2: THE PSEUDO-DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES OF MICROSTATES

(Pages 51-131)

1. The Argument . . . . . . . . . . . . Page 51
   1.1 Summary 51
   1.2 Justification 52

2. Bursting the Bubble: Theorising Pseudo-Development Page 53
   2.1 The Theme 53
   2.2 Confounding Expectations 55
   2.3 Penetrated Societies 55
   2.4 Small Size as Inherently Problematic 61
   2.5 Regionalisation as Non-Event 64
   2.6 A Non-Strategy of Opportunist Pragmatism 65
   2.7 The Economics of Productive Diplomacy 67
   2.8 A Shameless Survival Strategy... 69
   2.9 ... with a Different Notion of Viability 70
   2.10 A Paradigmatic Divide? 72
   2.11 Industrial Prejudice 75
   2.12 The Triumph of Dependent Development 77
   2.13 Discussion 79
   2.14 Operationalisation 80

3. Malta . . . . . . . . . . . . . Page 81
   3.1 Introduction 81
   3.2 Thirty Years of Going Wrong 83
   3.3 Scrapping the Plan Concept 92
   3.4 The Spinoffs of the Planning Form 93
   3.5 Elusive Viability 94
   3.6 Industry and its Perilous Giant 96
   3.7 Take Off into Incorporation? 99

4. Barbados . . . . . . . . . . . . . Page 103
   4.1 Entry into Colonialism 103
   4.2 Colonial Grooming 106
   4.3 The Imperatives of Planning 107
   4.4 Industrialisation: Hope and Despair 110
   4.5 INTEL: Inside and Out 113
   4.6 Development? What Development? 115
   4.7 We Take What We Get 119
   4.8 Agency Responses 120
   4.9 Rescinding or Increasing Dependency? 121

5. Taking Stock . . . . . . . . . . . . Page 124

Notes to Chapter 2 . . . . . . . . . . . . Page 126
Chapter 4: LABOURING IN LILLIPUT - I: LABOUR RELATIONS IN TWO MICROSTATE HOTELS (Pages 209-299)

1. Introduction . . . . . . Page 209

1.1 Focus on Two Hotels 209
1.2 A Setting for Labour Relations 210
1.3 Layout 214

2. The Environment . . . . . . Page 215

2.1 Tourism in Developing Microstates 215
2.2 Tourism in Malta: A Poisoned Chalice? 217
2.3 A Village 'Developed' 219
2.4 Tourism in Barbados, By Default 224
2.5 An Oasis in a Desert 229

3. An Exploration of Labour Relations . . . Page 232

3.1 The Infection of Smallness 232
3.2 Recruitment 234
   Mechanisms of Brokerage 234
   Formality versus Practice 235
   Reaping the Benefits and Costs of Lilliput 237
3.3 The Labour-Management Dynamic 243
   The Nature of Tradables 243
   Security 246
   Discipline 248
   Familiarity 251
   Accommodation 256
   Expertise 258
3.4 Trade Unionism 263
   A Vision of Social Organisation 263
   Personalisation at SBH 265
   Non-Industrial Action 267
   Trade Union Consciousness at TDR 268
   Industrial Action 269
   Clannish Unionism 271

4. Breaking the Circle? . . . . . . Page 274

4.1 Negation 275
4.2 Therapy 277
4.3 Recognition 278

5. The Microstate Labour Syndrome . . . Page 282

5.1 Agency & Structure 282
5.2 Class, Gender & Ethnicity 284
   Social Class 284
   Gender 288
   Ethnicity 291

Notes to Chapter 4 . . . . . . . . . . Page 295
Chapter 6: CONCLUDING REMARKS

1. Summary . . . . . . . . . . . . Page 370

1.1 Objective
1.2 Content Synopsis

2. Labour Process Insights . . . . . . . . Page 376
   Tensions
   Creatures ...
   ... and Creators

3. Smallness Is . . . . . . . . . . . . Page 379

3.1 A Rare Popularity
3.2 Application of the Microstate Syndrome
   The Notion of Small Scale
   Implications beyond the Microstate
3.3 A Galapagos Effect?

4. Epilogue . . . . . . . . . . . . Page 390

Notes to Chapter 6 . . . . . . . . . . Page 391

APPENDIX . . . . . . . . . . . . (Pages 393-398)

I - Management Questionnaire, SBH & TDR 393
II - Employee Questionnaire, SBH & TDR 395
III- Questionnaire Intended for UWICH 397

BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . . . . . . . . . (Pages 399-442)
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Last but not least, thank you Anna, for proving that you can be a partner even in relation to your husband's wild pursuits.

28th September 1993
DECLARATION

The following material in this thesis has either been published or is awaiting publication:

From Chapter 2:


From Chapter 3:


From Chapter 4:


From Chapter 6:


x
### FIGURES & TABLES

#### Figures:

**Figure 1:**
The World's Small Developing States, 1993: Location  
Page 9

**Figure 2:**
4-Star & 5-Star Tourist Complexes in Malta, 1993  
Page 221

**Figure 3:**
Hotels & Tourist Complexes in Barbados, 1993  
Page 227

#### Tables:

**Table 1:**
The World's Small Developing States: Basic Data  
Page 10

**Table 2:**
The Organisation of Empirical Research  
Page 11

**Table 3:**
Manufacturing, Quarrying & Construction Industries,  
Malta: Analysis of firms by size of employment  
Page 97

**Table 4:**
Manufacturing Sector in Barbados - March 1992  
Page 113
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<td>ACP</td>
<td>African, Caribbean &amp; Pacific States signatory to Lomé Agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMP</td>
<td>Articulation of Modes of Production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BDTS</td>
<td>Barbados Digest of Tourism Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIDC</td>
<td>Barbados Industrial Development Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BWU</td>
<td>Barbados Workers' Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARICOM</td>
<td>Caribbean Economic Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBI</td>
<td>Caribbean Basin Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDS</td>
<td>Caribbean Data Services</td>
</tr>
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<td>Central Office of Statistics, Malta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC</td>
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<tr>
<td>EEC</td>
<td>European Economic Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food &amp; Agricultural Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCE</td>
<td>General Certificate of Education Examinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNP</td>
<td>Gross National Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWU</td>
<td>General Workers' Union, Malta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRD</td>
<td>Human Resource Development</td>
</tr>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEA</td>
<td>Ministry of Economic Affairs, Malta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAFTA</td>
<td>North American Free Trade Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Cooperation &amp; Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBH</td>
<td>Southern Bliss Hotel, Marsascala, Malta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDR</td>
<td>Tropical Dream Resort, St. Philip, Barbados</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNC</td>
<td>Trans-National Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TQM</td>
<td>Total Quality Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UM</td>
<td>University of Malta, Msida, Malta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCTAD</td>
<td>United Nations Council on Trade &amp; Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific &amp; Cultural Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Fund for Population Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNITAR</td>
<td>United Nations Institute for Training and Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UWI</td>
<td>University of the West Indies</td>
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<tr>
<td>UWICH</td>
<td>University of the West Indies at Cave Hill, Barbados.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Tourism Organisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

1. THE PROJECT AT HAND

1.1 Prologue

Back in autumn 1985, I started a Master’s Degree programme at the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands. One of the courses for which I registered was titled *In Search of Cultural Freedom*, aimed at making us ‘developing world’ students come to better terms with our own reality in an emotional and experiential rather than in an academic and intellectual way.

Early on, my wife, who had joined me for this course, and I were in for a shock. One of the first themes proposed for group disclosure and sharing was the struggle for independence of our respective countries. The choice seemed obvious enough, influenced by the allegedly universal nature of this experience in most neo-colonial territories from which the students hailed. Alas, while our African, Asian and Latin American colleagues articulated their experiences and histories, my wife and I were silent. As it struck us then for the first time, for us and for Malta, our country, the notion of a struggle for independence was an empty one. The ‘battle’ had only been waged at the level of rhetoric, with an eye to whipping up popular support and nationalist sentiment. When political sovereignty was ‘achieved’ by Malta in September 1964, this was not in the wake of an armed struggle; rather, it was the alternative to an aborted
integration proposal with Britain. The actual date of independence had been postponed by some six months upon the request of the Maltese authorities. Later on, the acclaimed 'encounter with destiny' of March 1979, which saw the departure of the last British troops from the islands and the winding up of its fortress economy, had actually been mercifully extended by the British following persistent protests by the Maltese.

This was one of a series of episodes which, in the course of my research, observation and experience, built up a nagging concern as to the comparability of Malta and things Maltese with other events and issues of apparently global relevance. With the advantage of hindsight, I can now trace back a fair number of intuitive formulations, some preserved in written form, raising the question as to what extent Malta and the experiences of its workers and citizens were comparable to those of other countries, and if so, which countries. The absence of an independence struggle and the option for independence as a panacea to failed integration was actually an experience shared by a number of similarly small states. Was Malta's smallness in some way a significant variable in this equation? And were there other similarities bound to spring to attention when adopting this discriminatory perspective?

This chapter articulates the manner in which such a research question has been generated, defined and operationalised, this dissertation being the major outcome. It explicitly propounds the main hypothesis being researched, the unfolding of the research
design, the variety of sources utilised in the course of theory formulation, empirical application and analysis, the methodology pursued in primary and secondary data collection, an appraisal of the main problems encountered as well as a brief preview of the forthcoming material.

Statements about method are located up front because they provide crucial guidelines to the reader as to how to approach and 'read' this thesis and to recognise the status of forthcoming material; they are a recognition of the importance of problematising technique and its outcome; and they involve an interpretation of the dynamics of access and interviewing as integral components of the process being investigated.

1.2 The Thesis

All situations are in some respect unique; but this does not mean that they lack features which lend themselves to some degree of generalisation. It is in discerning the common denominator of different situational encounters that learning takes place and experience is accommodated into new settings. The process is a continuous one, as the contours of applicability of generalised notions are defined with increasing sophistication with the passage of time and still more experience, possibly unlearning and discarding previous conceptual configurations. Conceptual models are also strengthened when, in posing different and pertinent questions, they uncover patterns which had not
otherwise been discerned, while dismissing stereotypes which fail the test of application. This thesis illustrates such a learning process; it is also an unlearning experience in the sense that it harbours a shift away from grand and deductive explanation.

The thesis of this project is that labour relations in developing microstates are influenced by implications of small size. It argues for a methodology which explicitly operationalises smallness for a better understanding of the predicament of the world of work in certain developing states; and it tests this same methodology to assess its validity and contribution as a novel perspective towards the exploration of labour policy and labour relations issues in these states, with interesting application potential to sites elsewhere. Put differently, the thesis is that smallness matters; not deterministically but in a variety of ways which intervene and therefore colour, in unique but comparable strokes, the behaviour entered into by microstate producers in the process of managing, and being managed by, their working environment.

1.3 Germs of an Idea

This idea developed slowly and rather imperceptibly over the years: I am a professional social scientist in the developing microstate of Malta, as well as a microstate citizen armed with the critical baggage of sociological reflection. I became conscious of how readily one resorted at home to categories and models of social behaviour which were of foreign provenance. This
was not simply a realisation of the fallacy of modernisation, of how the practices and theories which may have worked in an industrialised, often large scale, society were dutifully replicated in the world's newly independent nations, with rapid and sustained development being the expected, though not always resultant, outcome. Nor was this a plea for the socio-cultural and historical specificity of my country, which would have implied that it was so exclusive as to make meaningless any attempt at comparative analysis. Rather it was an intuition that the implications of relative smallness could carry explanatory potential. They were not just fickle obstacles to be overcome, disregarded or wished away in the savage pursuit of imported doctrines; or ready depositories for bland and fanciful attributes. Somehow, smallness, mediated and operationalised in real life encounters, could be conceived as another pertinent feature, along with others, to promote a better understanding of the small-state, social universe.

1.4 The Small Developing State as Lilliput

I have decided to resort to a widely popular yet somewhat cynical representation of the small state: For its ideator, English satirist Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), Lilliput was a stage on which to project a caricature of his own society. But I am opting for the same fictitious territory because it captures the frame of mind in which the world's small developing states are generally conceived: They remain mysteriously aloof, out of sight.
and out of mind, occupants of the world's "empty" quarters (Ward 1989); they only spring into reality through the eyes of Gulliver, whose sojourn is brief and touristic; whose self-imposed cultural superiority makes him an automatic consultant; whose diagnosis of small state affairs is inevitably couched in a pettiness which is more likely to betray ignorance. Gulliver does not allow us to read Lilliput from lilliputian eyes; the evaluation is always through a western, large-state, lens.

Small developing states thus oscillate between negation and triviality; and, echoing a microstate academic:

"Perhaps the time has come to call a halt to the professional and academic horsemen who [like Gulliver] gallop through the area with ready made solutions for every conceivable problem and who leave it with only one certainty: That after solutions have been proposed and the horsemen galloped away, the problem...would still be with us". (Harrigan 1980:i)

Being a microstate citizen, I have attempted to adopt an inductive, emergent approach to the problem: I purposely steered away from ready-baked, hypothetico-deductive assumptions of how small state dynamics 'ought' to be, opting instead to try and first document what is. This more exegetic approach thus opts for theory generation rather than, and prior to, theory testing; the problematisation of practical, good sense rather than prescribed, given, common sense (Hoare & Nowell Smith 1971:323).

The lilliputian label also synthesises my argument of the smallness effect as a condition rather than an attribute; an
environmental feature which exercises a particular influence; not a causal factor which determines outcomes. Hence there is a recognition that lilliputian phenomena, while emergent from an analysis of developing small state situations, may be discernible even in other settings.

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1 Purpose of Enquiry

How then, was I to go about testing my intuitions? My technique was first of all informed by the purpose of the enquiry. In hoping to illustrate how the nature, processes and evolution of labour policy in a development context could benefit from a methodology alert to the smallness effect, the approach has a variety of useful implications. Some deal with policy, thanks to the light that the perspective sheds on the activities of microstates and the behaviour of their citizens and institutions. Others are heuristic, identifying how a novel conceptual category - smallness - can tease out component characteristics which, in their interlocking manner, have a potential leverage on labour and development. There is also a critique of the behaviour of my own country and its people as they struggle to survive and 'develop'. Last but not least, it is a poignant exploration of the self and his journey as microstate citizen and worker.
2.2 Resources at Hand

The second set of dictates concerned the resources at my disposal. With the regrettable fiscal limitations imposed by self-financing, and the long period of part-time research status that this implied, I could not envisage any ambitious research adventures. The timeframe and academic criteria governing doctoral studies also meant that the material had to come together as 'an original contribution to knowledge' within some 3 years. Gone therefore very early on were any notions of large-scale, comparative fieldwork involving a cluster of fairly disparate, small developing states on one hand; a second cluster of fairly disparate, non-small developing states on the other; with an attempt at drawing results from any significant differences.

2.3 Choice of Population under Study

My choice for a population for the research design was therefore limited to the world's small developing states. My definition of these territories is such as to comprise those former colonies and now politically sovereign states with a resident population of less than one million (See Figure 1 and Table 1). Such a decision was an arbitrary one and would have important implications on the value of any results; but all definitions of smallness are arbitrary and mine has been guided by the most widespread definition which obtains presently.
Figure 1: The World's Small Developing States, 1993: Location
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Population (000)</th>
<th>Area (sq.km)</th>
<th>GNP per capita (U.S.$)</th>
<th>Former colonising power or protector(s)</th>
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<td>14,763</td>
<td>1,150</td>
<td>GB &amp; P aI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Belize</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>22,965</td>
<td>2,010</td>
<td>GB C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>GB AI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Brunei Darussalam</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>5,765</td>
<td>17,570</td>
<td>GB C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Bahamas</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>13,935</td>
<td>11,750</td>
<td>GB AI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>6,630</td>
<td>GB I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Equatorial Guinea</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>28,051</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>GB C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Solomon Islands</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>28,446</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>GB AI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>4,033</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>7,280</td>
<td>GB aI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>14,770</td>
<td>GB C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Suriname</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>163,265</td>
<td>3,630</td>
<td>NL C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>7,130</td>
<td>GB aI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>1,210</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Comoros</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>2,171</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Swaziland</td>
<td>681</td>
<td>17,362</td>
<td>1,050</td>
<td>GB C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>9,251</td>
<td>8,640</td>
<td>GB I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>The Gambia</td>
<td>688</td>
<td>11,295</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>GB C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>18,274</td>
<td>1,930</td>
<td>GB AI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>214,969</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>GB C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Guinea-Bissau</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>36,125</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

1: Just over the 1 million threshold one currently finds Mauritius (1.04m); Bhutan (1.17m); Gabon, United Arab Emirates, Botswana (1.21m) and Trinidad & Tobago (1.24m).

2: The number refers to that on the accompanying world map.

3: 1991 data.

4: A= Australia; P= France; GB= Great Britain; NL= Netherlands; NZ= New Zealand; P= Portugal; S= Spain; US = United States.

5: I = single, island mass; aI = major island with one or two outlying islands; AI = archipelagic island state; C= continental mass; typically an enclave.

2.4 Empirical Fieldwork

Empirical fieldwork was envisaged to provide concrete encounters with microstate workers. Such would be useful to operationalise the abstract conceptualisations derived from the theory building chapters and the literature search; it sets up opportunities to evaluate the dialectic unfolding of the smallness effect as workers act and are acted upon; it also proposes a mechanism for the justification or otherwise of a methodology sensitised to the ecology of Lilliput.

Four case studies were undertaken over a span of 20 months. A 2 x 2 case study matrix was set up, with cases divided according to geographic location and production site (See Table 2):

Table 2: Organisation of Empirical Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production Site</th>
<th>Geographical Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOTEL INDUSTRY</td>
<td>BARBADOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tropical Dream</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resort (TDR)*</td>
<td>MALTA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Bliss</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel (SBH)*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TERTIARY EDUCATION</td>
<td>University of the West Indies at Cave Hill (UWICH)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These are pseudonyms, designed to conceal the identity of what are going concerns.
The choice of hotels as case foci recognises their importance to tourism and service sector activity generally in developing microstates. Indeed, hotels would challenge factories as the largest private employers in these small economies. And with their transnational character, foreign-owned hotels would be even better test-sites for the validity of a 'lilliputian imagination': If a methodology alert to the smallness effect proves pertinent in such milieux, in spite of an organisational regime bearing little concern for cultural nuances, then the thesis may be expected to hold in other, more domestic settings.

The foray into tertiary education is meant to take upstream the concerns surrounding labour relations and human resource management, tackling issues dealing with human resourcing and labour formation. The correspondence between education and work suggests that the power relations extant at a university rehearse and reproduce social inequality (Boudon 1974; Bowles & Gintis 1976). If a microstate generates some degree of "ordinary knowledge" (Lindblom & Cohen 1979:12-14) about how things get done, then a microstate university will, at least as its invisible agenda, carry out that function. Such may be discerned by focusing on how the 'making sense' and coping strategies of actors, including academic politics (Burns 1961; Kersell 1992; McCall 1984:60), are textured with the ecology of smallness.

There is also the added colour of government involvement: A university must somehow justify its funding by the state through its contribution to the intellectual, social and economic life
of the nation. This can be very pressing in small countries and territories where the university, if it exists, represents the one and only institution of higher learning, and where the omnipresent state is also virtually the sole paymaster. Campus concerns would invariably throw light on the management of the relationship between a state apparatus and microstate workers.

At the same time, the repository of academic expertise is bound to place the microstate university at the hub of national research initiatives in many fields. This may include the consideration of the smallness effect on the nation's citizens and workers. I stood to gain, therefore, from my campus research, by extending the collegial circle of peer review. This notwithstanding that a microstate university may be prone to a "macro-state emulation syndrome" (Harrigan 1979:14) with its foreign tutors, foreign examinations, foreign textbooks and foreign language of instruction.

Last but not least, I have my own personal interest in probing into the microstate university. I am a de facto university academic, even though as yet without tenure, having been working full-time already for 10 years at the microstate University of Malta. I am thus 'blessed' with access, information and informants plus personal experience. I harbour a powerful reason to understand better this milieu in which I operate and of which I am a constituent member of sorts.
2.5 Ideology

It is also important to declare my guiding ideological principles since these will no doubt colour my interpretation of data, suggest research questions and therefore to a considerable extent prejudice the research findings and their implications.

My fascination is ultimately with the human condition, the problematisation of the mundane as individuals go about their daily lives constructing reality while resorting to devices to manage it. Exposure to the various social sciences has however made me aware of the large variety of features and forces which circumvent and shape the condition of men and women. I remain nevertheless committed to imaginative human initiative, and even more so since I started doctoral studies. I am thus struggling to do justice to both the micro-phenomenological and the macro-structural; and my grappling with smallness is meant to come across as a particular consideration of the interplay of structure and agency, a portrayal of this human capacity to form and be formed by environmental features, as well as the possibility of conceptualising this capacity.

Secondly, since my particular focus is on individuals as producers, I also envisage conventional labour relations as subsumed within this larger dialectic. From this follows my concern with the procedural and substantive aspects of the workplace as inherently contestable; the corporate work ethic is seen as a managerialist interpretation of ideological cooptation.
Again, I introduce smallness as an extra, explanatory principle towards a novel recognition and understanding of such negotiation.

2.6 Literature Bias

I have felt obliged to resort to various sources in order to implement such a research design properly. First of all, literature on small developing states is hard to come by. The population is itself a relatively new historical category, politically sovereign developing microstates (as per my definition above) only appearing on the scene in the mid-1960s. At just about the same time, Demas (1965), Benedict (1967), Blair (1967), Vital (1967), Lloyd (1968) and Rothstein (1968) pioneered the deployment of small, newly independent states as a population for comparative research, particularly in issues relating to economic development and international diplomacy. Thus we can only speak of a developing microstate concern which is a quarter of a century 'old'; much of this remains grounded within the disciplines of development economics, international relations and, more recently, public administration, educational organisation and environmental management.

Some of this literature nevertheless presents problems. A number of studies originated on the basis of an armchair, philosophical or statistical project which encouraged a common sense or private intuition, based on an unquestioned hypothesis, to inform what
was expected from the ideotypical small state. Such approaches are shorn of concrete, emergent explorations of particular small state polities, economies or societies. For such reasons, the developing microstate generalisations pervading the literature can easily turn out to be naive, imprecise, truistic or simply false: They may either state the obvious, postulate a general category which then fails to explain the behaviour of certain developing small states, or else explain just as well the behaviour of other sites (such as small territories, island units of archipelagic states or large developing countries).

All too often, it seems to me that, having pursued the attraction of smallness as a new organising principle, certain authors may have avoided "the Charybdis of neocolonisation", only to fall victim to "the Scylla of closed frontiers" (McDonald 1989:175), by projecting emphatically the peculiar 'ecology' of small developing states. In various other cases, the urgency to reform and upgrade takes precedence over the imperative to understand: Here one can sense the subtle workings of a dependency orientation whereby the analysis, for all the lip service paid to distinctiveness, is nevertheless driven by macro-generated, imported, normative considerations.

2.7 Smallness as a Pertinent Methodology

My own assessment is somewhat less categoric; this may come as a disappointment, and indeed I have myself felt at times let down
by this self-inflicted anti-climax of sorts. My thesis suggests that the smallness effect is a pertinent methodology to deploy and exploit, with various interesting results, although I limit my analysis to labour policy and labour dynamics in a developing microstate setting. It does not suggest that small developing states are a distinct category, a population which harbours a unique and common collection of behaviour patterns traceable to implications of small size. The repertoire of application of the smallness syndrome ranges across a large variety of socio-political and economic scenarios, the small developing state being one candidate out of many. These go beyond the territorial state as a unit of analysis for the exploration of the smallness effect in action. Small developing states, because of their relative geographical insularity and the full panoply of a local political apparatus, present themselves as more likely candidates for illustrating the smallness effect in action, as well as for presenting it in more intense manifestations. But for the potential to become actual depends on an infinitely large variety of other variables; all one can do here is invoke the ceteris paribus condition or tackle each case on its own merits, in its own space-time domain.

3. MULTIPLE SOURCING

3.1 Other Literature

To develop this proposition, and fully aware of the dangers of relying too much on the specific microstate literature, I have
opted to subscribe to a variety of research strategies, hoping that different, valid insights will gather corroboration from other sources. This approach permits a superior hybrid, although I am running the risk of losing depth for breadth.

With a population of some three dozen developing microstates, I did not miss opportunities to explore the literature which treated socio-economic and political issues in one or more of these distinct territories; it was geographical focus, rather than the issue or the discipline, which dictated my search. This initiative proved time consuming but productive since, while confirming how smallness remains a non-organising category in most cases, it has been entertained directly or incidentally by others to explain social phenomena. I thus managed to espy flashes of behaviour in a number of generally obscure sources which corresponded to my search agenda precisely because I was attuned to look out for them, at times teasing out scraps of information and detail, the nuances of which may have escaped their own author, engrossed in the specificity of the case at hand. Such sources are rather scant: Publication is no doubt influenced by print run and marketability issues, always painful where small states are concerned. Luckily, my 36-country strong population in part compensated for this dearth by extending the search net.

After all, size does not come readily to mind as an organising principle for primary material. Prioritisation for data analysis depends largely on one's academic socialisation, the interests
of one's sponsors, one's inferred audience and publication venue - factors which reinforce the usage of classical, analytic categories and therefore inhibit the formulation of new ones - a case of trained incapacity or of a paradigmatic regime. Categories are invariably categoric: In referring to class, gender, race, systems analysis, long waves and so on (or a combination of these) to structure arguments, researchers invariably sift and manipulate data and experiences, making it difficult for any reader to pick up potential, alternative categorising schemata in the outcome. This quandary may lead one to look perniciously into the text, reading between the lines as it were, to unearth the presumed camouflaged or dismembered residue of small size effects - a rather dangerous operation, liable to influence by the self-fulfilling prophecy.

3.2 Empirical Fieldwork

All the more reason therefore to substantiate any findings from secondary sources by resorting to an equally diverse variety of first hand informants. Case studies were devised to test out the principles which suggested themselves from the literature audit, oriented as these were by the unfolding conceptual framework. They were intended both to validate or refute these and at the same time to capture and humanise the dynamics as they occur, illuminating and proposing refinements in turn to the existing theoretical framework. The fieldwork and theory building sections thus connect and feed each other dialectically.
Semi-structured interviews were carried out with some 100 respondents in all, nationals and expatriates working in Malta and Barbados, two small developing states which fall within my population. Respondents were drawn from two large luxury hotels, one in each microstate, as well as from among the academic staff of two microstate university campuses. These encounters with chambermaids and managers, lecturers and professors, anchored abstract ideas and arguments in real life settings; they reveal how considerations of the small can shed valuable light on the labour process and on labour relations in such small societies, particularly since what they highlight is generally either dismissed as non-existent or downplayed as criminal or pathological.

3.3 Popular Wisdom

In these situations, the particular cultural reservoir of the society was also tapped via a resort to popular sayings and proverbs to trigger comments on the deployment of the smallness effect:

"Proverbs may be defined as short sayings in common use that strikingly express some obvious truths or familiar experiences, characterised by terseness, rhythm and striking imagery. They are probably the most useful linguistic device, in any language, to warn, to encourage and to trigger reflection".
Idiomatic expressions were used to catalyse comments and experiences, acting as short cut unlocking devices, a relieving way out of the impasse I found myself in asking:

"Do you feel that country smallness has any effect on people and worker behaviour?"

Which, as I found out both in Malta and Barbados, is beyond the grasp of most people. The proverbs thus come to the rescue, not only to identify the practical expression of smallness effects but also to generate an evaluative disposition on the validity of the statement itself. This is also done without prejudice as to whether the relevance is exclusive to small territories.

How were the proverbs themselves identified? In the Malta case, the decision was taken to inquire whether two local proverbs which are popularly resorted to and which are indicative of the effects of smallness explain what happens at the hotel and to its workers. The persistent recurrence and usage in everyday parlance of these Maltese idioms bears testimony to the still valid philosophy of life which these expressions capture.

Translations never render proper justice to expressions of cultural wisdom; but a close interpretation of these proverbs is:

Malta is small; its people are well known - suggesting forced intimacy, lack of anonymity and familiarity;
It is not what or how much you know which counts but who you know – suggesting effects of personalisation, patronage, clientelism, favouritism and their importance relative to other criteria such as skill and qualifications.

In the case of Barbados, I could not resort to insider knowledge. So, local and Caribbean publications dealing directly or otherwise with proverbial expressions were first consulted (Barrett 1976; Valls 1983). The most resourceful text was found to be Blackman (1985) and her collection of 383 Bajan sayings, some of which stood out because they were almost exact translations of their Maltese counterparts, and with a similar message.

But one limitation of secondary texts is that their selections do not indicate the extent of diffusion and currency of proverbs in everyday parlance. So many idioms may look very fresh and relevant but prove to be archaic and inert. Therefore various casually encountered individuals and acquaintances were questioned as to the usage of certain proverbs. Such direct encounters also revealed other, perhaps more commonly used, expressions, not captured in the texts consulted. The frugal choice at the end of the day fell on the following candid expressions, each of which was highlighting a pertinent cultural nuance:
Small town, Big bell - Bush has ears, Wall has eyes - Every bush is a man - dealing with the issue of lack of privacy and secrecy; the rampant circulation of information;

It's not what you know but who you know - dealing with the issue of personalisation, networking and perceptions of social organisation, power and mobility;

If you play with the puppy, the puppy will lick your mouth - dealing with the issue and consequences of familiarity.

The technique worked well. A few respondents failed all the same to get the cue; others tuned on to it immediately, sometimes even before the questions were asked. Others spontaneously referred to the proverbs earlier in the process of the interview, or else proposed their own specimens of personalised idioms. The select samples of the respective cultural code thus provoked relevant remarks and behavioural sketches.

3.4 Autobiographical Material

The last case study could not be approached like the other three, given my status as a living and active participant within the production site. In recognition of the sensitive, even subversive, tenet of my approach, I have resorted to yet another research methodology, opting to probe the idiosyncrasies of smallness in action via an autobiographical ethnography; hence
a rendition of a microstate university milieu from the subjective vantage point of a single, involved individual.

Further autobiographical support is forthcoming from a research diary which has been kept to record different stages of the thesis as process, preserving the various emotional, intellectual and logistic hurdles encountered en route.

This technique also pays tribute to the experience of being and living in a microstate as an important source of 'insider knowledge' which may not be documented. The absence of small size as an organising category is partly to be explained because the mind frame of microstate citizens, policy makers and producers habitually reproduces structures and procedures from metropolitan, typically larger, scenarios. This is a mimicry with which microstates are equipped, given their across-the-board, structural and functional, penetration by 'alien' languages, legal instruments, administrative practices, merchandise and cultural artefacts. And even if there are inconsistencies between the practice and the imported models - and it is one of the premises of this thesis that indeed there are - then it is the practice which is often looked down upon as negative, a deviation from a hallowed norm and therefore to be somehow rectified. Hence, it is rare indeed to come across explicit, written acknowledgement of the smallness effect; experiential accounts are therefore as, if not more, important than written material. While it is generally true of all situations that formal appearances need not be coincident with total or
functional practice, a perspective sensitive to the imprint of smallness may identify comparable patterns within the diverse experiences of small settings.

3.5 Peer Review

Another important component of this learning experience was the flexing of my maturing ideas in the academic camp. I had already attended an international conference on the socio-economic development of small island states, held in Malta in May 1985, during which I co-authored what, in retrospect, is an armchair piece based on a naive interpretation of 'small is beautiful' (Zammit & Baldacchino 1985). Full-time, doctoral student status at the University of Warwick during the 1990-91 academic year permitted the resort to a spate of correspondence, most of which met some positive response. I presented my first paper, informed by doctoral research, at another international conference, once again held in Malta in May 1991. I was also privileged to be awarded an Academic Exchange Fellowship by the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, enabling me to visit Barbados as a Visiting Research Fellow attached to the Department of Management Studies, University of the West Indies at Cave Hill, during summer 1992. I was also invited to present a paper at an international conference on islands organised by the Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island, Canada, in September 1992. Another paper is in the pipeline, this time
at an international conference on sustainable tourism in small and island states due in Malta in November 1993.

Such opportunities of sizing and being sized up are important milestones in the development of an academic expertise; they are fora for sharing results, theories and insights; as well as favourable occasions for building relationships with others engaged in similar or parallel work. A comparable richness is forthcoming from the possibility of publication. The satisfaction of getting a paper in print is matched by the most instructive experience of being refereed. Since commencing doctoral studies, I have managed journal articles based on my work published in Development and Change (1993) and one shortlisted for Tourism Management (1994). Another paper, debating the similarities between small developing states and territories, was submitted to the Journal of Commonwealth & Comparative Politics but was not accepted. I have also been invited to co-edit one of the three volumes comprising the papers (including my own) from the 1992 Canada conference.

Back at home, being one of the few individuals to have developed a specialisation in small state considerations, (and this being in itself an exposition of monopoly in the lilliputian context), I have been writing press articles, participating in interdisciplinary university boards, and commissioned to write a review article for a forthcoming special volume on education in small states being prepared by the University of Malta's Faculty of Education. I must not forget to mention how the 'smallness'
orientation has spilled over to my own courses on Development and Labour and Labour Policy, as well as other writings, including the introduction to a new sociology volume on Maltese society which I am co-editing (Sultana & Baldacchino 1993).

The epitome of peer review perhaps lies in the student-supervisor relationship. I must say that I have been particularly blessed with a highly supportive supervisory duo. One is an incisive, sharp and powerfully concise labour relations connoisseur. Richard Hyman unwittingly inspired awe when he had his intellectual cap on; but his receptivity and sensitivity did much to ease my discomfiting self-consciousness and to establish a proper rapport. He has helped me weather various intellectual and logistic setbacks with a concern which has gone far beyond the course of duty. My co-supervisor is less inhibiting and in a way easier to associate with on a more equal and relaxed standing. Peter Fairbrother has been a pleasant personality with a critical eye for detail and organisation. Either with both together or individually, I cherish our synergetic encounters.

4. FIELDWORK

4.1 Hotel Case Studies

Two luxury hotels were identified as sites for in-depth interviews with managers and staff, seeking to provide substance to the microstate labour syndrome, to which the deliberations of
the previous chapter have been leading. The first is Southern Bliss Hotel, (henceforth SBH), a large, luxury, foreign-owned complex employing 210 full-time staff and opened in an erstwhile fishing village in Malta in 1982. During confidential, semi-structured interviews totalling some 44 hours held in summer 1991, 38 respondents (16 management and 22 line employees) drawn randomly from all departments, along with 2 other key informants, expounded on their concerns, strategies and counter strategies. They have provided a first hand account of recruitment practices, countertrade labour-management deals, the sensitive terrain of flexibility, polyvalent occupational aptitudes, the resort to trade union action and the politics of promotion. The nature of and the process involved in dealing with these and other issues suggest a strong element of personalisation, of individualistic discriminatory treatments, overridden however by a strong and stable bonding of networks. These exploit categories of social cleavage, rampant information and issue escalation which influence the labour-management dynamic of the organisation. A rich sample of the respective components of the smallness effect and of their multifarious interconnections at work was thus made available.

Seven thousand kilometres away, perched on the desolate east coast of the Caribbean island state of Barbados, Tropical Dream Resort (henceforth TDR) was the referent case in this comparative exercise. This is a large, luxury, foreign owned hotel in St. Philip Parish, Barbados, with 334 full-time employees on its payroll. The objective was, via a duplication of the SBH research
instruments and methods, to identify the nuances of labour-management dynamics in an alternative microstate scenario: Fairly similar results would support the relevance and usefulness of the microstate labour syndrome thesis. With this in mind, 38 employees (16 management and 22 line representatives drawn randomly from all the hotel departments) and 4 other key respondents were interviewed in summer 1992, totalling some 36 contact hours.

In both hotels, the decision taken was to go for narratives, vivid documentations of relevant slices of microstate producer behaviour which capture the vision and action, the tensions and dynamics ascendant in Lilliput, as well as its overarching contextual conditions. The specific topics and leading questions around which to gravitate the interviews were teased out from the drafted theoretical framework and the abstract, general discussion which it suggested.

The two resulting questionnaires (one for respondents in a managerial capacity; one for line staff) consisted mainly in prompts which elicited subjective responses or reactions to real or realistic work experiences (See Appendix I & II). The same questionnaires were used in both case studies, the difference being in the language of administration (Maltese at SBH, English at TDR) and in the selection of cultural expressions evocative of presumed goings on in small territories. In both hotels, the proportion of males to females in the sample was contrived to be roughly similar to that in the respective workforce of each site.
Questions directed at employees were fashioned so as to elicit information on occupational histories, with details of which skills were required in each job, why jobs were changed and how new jobs were found; feelings of job security; what one appreciates most/least at work; opportunities for alternative cost-reducing or income-inducing activity; the option to migrate; how particular disputes at work experienced personally were handled; perceived positive and negative attributes of management; how to handle certain work situations (dealing with the thwarting of a positive sanction - loss of a justified promotion; the reception of a negative sanction - a warning issued unfairly; and a collective problem - pressure of work); and the perceived function of a trade union. Two final questions requested comments, if any, on a judicious selection of local proverbs having wide local currency and which suggest social consequences of smallness: totality, monopoly, the absence of anonymity and privacy and ramifications thereof.

Managers were asked broadly similar questions, but from an alternative perspective: Occupational histories, how staff were recruited, the difficulty of finding suitable human resources; most common reasons for disputes with their subordinates; the effects, if any, of exogenous events on the hotel operations; the effects, if any, of the hotel on the locality and its people; the trade union role and function at the property; implications, if any, of small country size on the operation of the hotel and on the behaviour of its workers and managers. Certain other questions were customised to specific respondents.
Formally, there were 20 questions to be asked. But very rarely was it necessary to pose all the questions formally, and in the order set out. The answers were coming, sure enough, without my need to prompt. My role often settled down into an occasional request for detail or clarification. Interviews were conducted casually and informally in a private, comfortable environment, often over a complimentary *capuccino* in the SBH lounge or patio, or over a cool drink in TDR’s staff canteen or spacious landscaped grounds.

My efforts could thus be concentrated on the taking of detailed field notes. I resort to my own brand of bilingual shorthand, with occasional quotations when statements deemed worthy of verbatim reproduction were expressed.

Initially, I started using a small cassette recorder to tape the SBH interviews. However, though the equipment was physically discreet, it made my respondents more wary, defensive and inhibited, less willing to in some way or other incriminate themselves in anything improper or unofficial, even though I made it amply clear from the start that information was being requested voluntarily and in the strictest of confidence. So when a manager actually requested that I turn the recorder off there was no turning back. Of course, the price to be paid is that I do not have full and detailed recordings of interviews. Regrettably, the samples of worker expression reproduced in this report are thus not necessarily the exact words spoken (or the translation thereof) even though great care has been taken to
take down comments faithful to the spirit of the message". Of course, admittedly, such reportage is always dependent on the manner in which I understood the utterance at that point in time. But then I would not have gleaned what are, by and large, articulate and sincere remarks, vital in this genre of research; and the exercise of filtering remains obligatory, even with the most sophisticated of recording techniques.

4.2 University of the West Indies

The purpose of the third case study exercise was, briefly, to explore microstate dynamics influencing labour policy and labour relations by venturing into the sphere of tertiary education and a sample of naturally critical respondents. In selecting the University of the West Indies campus at Cave Hill, Barbados (henceforth UWICH), the aim was to explore a different set of perceptions and behaviour patterns, yet these being operant within contours whose shape could be similarly traced to consequences of smallness. It was also hoped and expected that the naturally more critical disposition of academics would throw fresh and welcome light on the research problem. I was expecting to carry out fieldwork methodologically similar if not identical to my SBH and TDR case studies. The main difficulty I had not taken into consideration here was that I was dealing with academics. As one of my respondents insightfully remarked: "Doctors make the worst patients".
In the case of the SBH and TDR case studies, my role was relatively sharply defined. The definition of the situation by myself as researcher and the respondents as the researched, duly socialised and significantly preset by apposite signals in advance, circumscribed the interview encounter: I was meant to ask questions, to probe, to seek information and clarification, to take notes. The respondent was meant to provide answers, to describe and put forward experiences and opinions, to speak to the researcher. None of this was possible at UWICH - one of the three regional campuses of the University of the West Indies, and having around 1400 students and 150 members on the academic staff. Each encounter thus nurtured its own unique relationship.

There are a number of reasons which suggest themselves as post hoc explanations for this absence of standardisation and research rigour. In summary, the power relationship entered into between researcher and researched within the hotel case studies could not realistically be duplicated at UWICH. I was a guest in a foreign academic institution and was expected to show at least some courtesy in dealing with my hosts. I was also a relatively white coloured specimen of the human race operating in an environment where white represents, along all imaginable dimensions, a domination and exploitation to which black Barbadians have reacted by developing a distinctly proud, at times overbearing, indigenous cultural form. I had been warned several times prior to arriving in Barbados to be 'tactful' because of this condition. I was also professionally among peers, even superiors. I could not use my academic baggage to extract any right to enter
into short encounters of power unequal relationships. Or, to be more sincere, I might have tried to discipline the encounter more rigorously but I would have probably obtained catastrophic consequences: Relatively insipid and formalistic fieldnotes, plus a large proportion of refusals.

After all, I was trying to get academics to play respondents in a game they know only too well; and in which they usually pull the strings. I was, as I wrote in my research diary, as if I was inviting a chess grandmaster to nothing less than a game of chess. That makes the relationship so much more complex to unpack. There are different levels of interaction and of inflexion; with either party bringing to bear professional skills of accommodation, probing, guarded disclosure, authoritative declarations of expertise not meant to be contested and so many other tools and tricks of the trade. And again, as a function of this particular combination of action and reflection, my own research hypothesis could not be assumed to stand aloof, beyond criticism. Rather than providing answers, academics philosophically grapple with questions and would perhaps opt to stop there.

I conceded this reality, accepting that this seemed to be the one and only way to engage into encounters which could be fruitful. I shifted my primary objective to the creation of the atmosphere to enter into a collegial discussion, a sharing of ideas, with invitations for specifics where these were deemed to be acceptable. My concern was to extract some 'confessions' from
each engagement, some cameos of microstate living, also because of my alienness to the local culture and the local University. I was banking on the notion that people may be more likely to disclose certain opinions to outright foreigners precisely because they are so, and therefore in whom they harbour no suspicion of blackmail, of extracting professional or political advantage, of competition (Dann 1984:40-1).

The outcome is a set of interview scripts which are admittedly difficult to interpret under a single research domain. In certain occasions, my knowledge and reading of texts authored by some of my respondents enabled me to customise questions in advance, making them fresher and more likely to generate useful comments, though then less amenable to comparison. In a number of cases, I was allowed for all/most/some of the time to ask my preset questions, in which situations the responses are roughly comparable. These questions were couched more like statements eliciting reactions (See Appendix III).

But these are definitely not the most insightful of my fieldnotes. The most precious data emerged from encounters where the atmosphere facilitated a disclosure of relatively sensitive information. In certain situations, the richness of the encounter made it impossible for me to take fieldnotes there and then, not only because of the division of attention but because somehow, it seemed unethical; it would also have spoilt the relationship being delicately developed. The note taking had to wait until the encounter was over. These were occasions of a meeting of minds
from which I emerged feeling stronger, bursting with self confidence and an agenda for imaginative action. In other cases, the researcher and researched welled up to each other at a more human level, resulting in invitations to houses and families for lunch and for informal chats over a cool drink.

Other, less noteworthy, encounters involved various interruptions with telephone calls and visitors knocking on the office door. This was inevitable given that most interviews were conducted in the respondent's office. When the conceded interview time was too short - and made even shorter by necessary preliminaries - not all the issues could be put forward for treatment. Responses were terse and not accompanied by the frills of experiential sketches which make scripts so much more interesting. Exasperating features which, all in all, may explain why academic research on academics and on their behaviour and opinions is a rare occurrence indeed.

Interview time at UWICH totalled approximately 33 hours: Just under 80 minutes on average per respondent. As far as I could tell, there were no outright refusals by would be respondents to being interviewed. The glaring under-representation of female respondents in this sample reflects the population from which it has been drawn. Academic reactions were also forthcoming from a select 24-person audience during an open seminar presentation on my research topic held at UWICH on 21st October 1992.
4.3 The Option for Introspection

Writing about myself and my predicament from a microstate perspective proved to be surprisingly easy. In a way, it was putting to paper what I have been ruminating for many years, but particularly since I presented the microstate theme to embody doctoral research. Invariably, I have found myself during this period connecting together abstract ideas or the documented experiences of others besides my own, assimilating similarities, and mentally noting discrepancies, omissions, imperfections, naive remarks. Even before October 1990, when my doctoral pursuits began, I had been on and off juggling with similar concerns, although in a more sporadic, disjointed and even less self-conscious manner. But the concern was there; and it was strong and sustained enough to surface as a major research hypothesis.

But, whereas the autobiographical component flowed out so painlessly over a weekend in March 1993, it was the decision to resort to the format which was much more excruciating. It was almost two years before, around spring 1991, that, in consultation with my supervisors, the tacit agreement had been reached that a case study of the University of Malta (henceforth UM) would be included, along with 3 others, in the overall doctoral grand design. The choice appeared obvious - then, the University was being considered as an exponent of public sector labour relations and of the service sector in general, both of which are so crucial to developing microstates. Gradually, the
raison d'être for the choice shifted: Labour relations comparative case research was already in the pipeline, in the context of two hotels, themselves service sector establishments. Thus, key questions were raised. What would be gained by yet a similar research focus? Would not that amount to overkill? And, as it systematically dawned upon me, how could I manage my own location as a university researcher within the case study?

The first two questions suggested that I could extract much more, and different, insights by resorting to a different research design which would concurrently serve as a validity check. The final question however was almost leading me to conclude that any research design with UM as the focus would not prove executable: So close and yet so far, it seemed, because I was so close and involved.

The final decision as to what to do was determined by a fundamental change of strategy. Rather than seeking to tone down or somehow keep out the personal factor from the case, I opted to put the personal factor on centre stage. The legitimacy of "stymied" social research with an evident involvement, physical and emotional, of the researcher, seems to have come of age in recent years (Massey & Meegan 1985:6-7). The one and only UM case respondent therefore is the self as political, laden with (in this case, his) hopeless prejudices, baseless assumptions and delusions of grandeur and ambition, no doubt. But the self as he perceives himself, his environment and others close at hand.
Only UM could have permitted this immersion and autobiographical indulgence, although the extent of disclosure is obviously restrained by the necessity to manage my own occupational profile. Still, UM allows me to bring to bear yet another facet of the prismatic complexity of the microstate predicament. At the same time, it introduces an expression of comparative research, different from the hotel fieldwork, with the UWICH material being informed and punctuated by autobiographical ethnography.

5. PROBLEMS

Subjecting theories to rigorous testing pulls one back from the lure of the obvious truth (Popper 1979). Having decided to do so with respect to received doctrine, it would be impertinent of me to withdraw with respect to my own argumentation. Hence the critically reflexive style in which this introduction is written. The following section makes more explicit some of the major difficulties encountered in going about the research problem as set.

5.1 Location

The issue of 'location' commented upon in passing is an important issue for the understanding of small state dynamics; but it has serious implications on this and any social science research which is carried out in such circumstances. On one hand, alien
observers may miss the microstate behavioural universe completely, especially if they come armed with preset questions and research orientations. On the other hand, microstate researchers, while more likely to be aware of this unacknowledged reality, are themselves constituent members and actors.

I was not expecting this difficulty: I had been warned in discussions as well as from the literature that the research encounter in the Caribbean, with a [relatively] white researcher and a black respondent was steeped too strongly in a historically and culturally ingrained power inequality, resulting in an unavoidably strong 'halo effect':

"The acute colour consciousness of the West Indian inhibits him [sic] from giving information to someone who represents the values he is lacking but trying to attain. Some information will be forthcoming; but much of it will be garbled and dressed to suit what the informant thinks are the ideas of the white investigator". 13

This is bound to have occurred at TDR; not only for the debatable reasons mentioned above but also in conformity to my own tenet of the producer respondent as agent rather than a mere mouthpiece. This notwithstanding, my presentation as a fellow small islander from a fellow ex-British colony, as well as my strategy of chatting with rather than questioning employees may have contributed positively to the eliciting of more genuine, frank and intimate information.

The surprising element here is that in Malta, on my own home turf, I experienced a more cagey and guarded reception. There are
two reasons which come to mind as valid explanations for this unexpected anomaly.

The first is 'location': My sharing of the Maltese behavioural universe is bound to have influenced the research setting and its outcome. It is not unlikely that I was screened, differently by managers and workers, possibly even before I started my interview rounds at SBH. I myself discovered that some employees knew me already, just as certain worker respondents eventually discovered that I knew them; whereas other workers soon framed me within their personal schemata of Maltese society in the small talk preceding the first question. This was to be expected: After all, I have been living at Marsascala since 1985; and my house lies only some 150 metres away from the SBH property.

Certain employees knew me in the role of a social scientist I was living up to when at the hotel (for example, because of my participation in a number of television and radio programmes). Others knew me in a bewilderingly different repertoire of role sets altogether: As a regular patron of a particular bus stop; as the son of the neighbour of a friend with whom one employee used to work part-time; as the parent of a boy who used to go to school with the two daughters of an employee; as the nephew of a former sales assistant in the employee's home town; as the husband of a former cashier at the village main supermarket. Even my family nickname, on which I am generally reticent, was brought to light.
This observation is particularly disconcerting and exemplifies the limitations and possibilities of intimacy; the comfort lies in that these fragmentary facets of one's person are not collectively known to one or more individuals. The employees being interviewed possibly experienced a similar fix when it was I who took the initiative in exposing prior knowledge as the basis for an interview encounter. Having done so, I did not, could not, remain the anonymous, aloof interviewer the respondent, and perhaps even I, may have wished to construct and maintain. Prior knowledge and location may have helped to establish a working relationship and break the ice; which is both more and less comfortable for either or both parties to speak their mind. A degree of increased mutual familiarity could be an inevitable condition in Lilliput and this is likely to intervene in the research process; in my SBH experience, it may have dampened the likelihood of triggering a more sincere disclosure of practices at work.

The second reason to explain the difference in intimacy in spite of following a practically identical questionnaire and interviewing strategy is that it may be based on what amounts to a real difference after all. Perhaps contemporary Malta, with its larger population and lower physical isolation from the metropole, is indeed not as far along the continuum of Lilliput as Barbados; or else, it is TDR proper which stands out much more strongly as a world within a world on the Caribbean island's east coast than does SBH at a Maltese village.
5.2 Generalisability

I was already lucky enough to enlist enough funding and time to permit a fleeting adventure in the Caribbean, thus avoiding a very common accusation with Maltese doctoral research (and perhaps microstate research generally) as being parochial and struggling for acceptability in a foreign university. Nevertheless, in spite of the cross-national organisation of the material, it is important to defend not only the choice of sites but also the terrain and limits of applicability of any policy or theory outcomes of the research. It is possible to retort that both SBH and TDR are exceptional cases in their respective territories, expousing higher than ordinary levels of isolation and thus intensifying the smallness effect even further. And even Malta and Barbados may be exceptional in the sense that, among small developing states, they are relatively compact and enjoy a location as well as a historical legacy conducive to a diversified entrepôt economy (Brock 1984:13; 1988a:170; Brock & Parker 1985:45).

Had circumstances proved otherwise, I may have entertained to include further microstate candidates as loci for fieldwork, including a Pacific example. Nevertheless, Malta and Barbados were my initial choices, for reasons already declared in my thesis outline of April 1991. The selection of Malta was natural, considering that one ultimate objective of the study was a coming to better terms with my own microstate predicament. The choice of Barbados was determined by a set of factors: First was its
location in an area with the world's largest concentration of politically independent small states (See Figure 1). Secondly, the fact that its inhabitants converse readily in English, which I could therefore understand: This was a prerequisite to enable semi-structured interviewing to be properly administered and maximum benefit derived from such encounters. And, thirdly, because Barbados hosted a campus of the University of the West Indies, permitting academic and research support facilities as well as encounters with academics who appeared to stand out from the literature as ongoing critics of the smallness effect. The campus eventually became a separate, case study focus.

The research design has obviously also been dictated by logistic, temporal, financial and even political considerations: My preference for SBH was in part related to my active commitment to promote a wider understanding of the socio-economic character of my home village; whereas the 'choice' of TDR was a result of prior refusals by the managements of two other hotels. All the same however, the pertinent comment to be made here is that since the smallness effect is posited as being not a causal variable but a condition, then to some degree every socio-economic environment is bound to reflect a measure of its imprint. The effect is however minimised and subdued in most situations (although perhaps not in as many as one might think) because of wider choices, greater possibilities of circumvention, an ampler distribution of roles and resources. It is as these alternatives constrict - as obtains, albeit not exclusively, in small developing states and to different extents within these
territories - that the smallness factor may be expected to take on increasing significance. In spite of the distinct settings of TDR, SBH, UWICH and UM, of Barbados and Malta, the analysis is hopefully grounded sufficiently in the manner in which each specificity feeds the theoretical and conceptual framework so as to serve as valid, illustrative case material.

5.3 Inductive Theorisation

The novelty of the adopted perspective carries a fatal attraction, whose significance increases given the inductive nature of the research design. Having ventured into the uncharted territory of Lilliput, there are obviously few reference points and guides along the way. Most of the available ones are tangential or marginal to my real interests but so much (provisional) trust had to be placed in them nevertheless. The territory being scrutinised had also to be somehow demystified from various stereotypes but which had first to be identified as such; not an easy task for a researcher who must first undergo some kind of disengagement.

The case study technique presents itself as one methodological rescuer. Firstly, it provides a particular environment within which theories and related strategies and policy implications can be tested and subsequently validated, rejected or refined. Secondly, it grounds what is superficially and theoretically addressed, still aloof from empirical contextualisation. Thirdly,
the unique and case-specific become united as disparate manifestations of the smallness effect, an assorted assemblage of the microstate labour syndrome at work.

The symbiosis between theory and practice proceeds even more boldly with multiple case data and multiple methodologies. This strategy presents itself as more suitable, not only for its crossnational, comparative flavour and its inherent recognition of the rich complexity of microstate life; it also acts as a safeguard, bringing to bear deeper and wider supporting material to validate abstractions more strongly.

All the same:

"In the final analysis, there is no substitute to the detailed study of each country's experience that leads to a careful diagnosis based on direct evidence". (Harberger 1988:263)

The detailed study of a few key variables for many countries, let alone for simply two, cannot go beyond the tentative. This study, for all its attempts at methodological rigour, must limit itself to exploratory conclusions.

All the more so when one admits the sheer impossibility of theorisation without any prior exposure to data. Even the most rigorously inductive of research techniques remains trapped within the indelible experience of the researcher. My experience in Malta may have helped to feel the pulse of good sense throbbing in my micro-society; but I have no guarantee that I
have extrapolated what may be Maltese into a grand, and in its own way procrustean, microstate perspective. To what extent has data been deemed to be relevant and selected from the great historical and literary supermarket, on the basis of a Malta-specific, theoretical shopping list (Post 1987: 81-2)?

6. ORGANISATION

The organisation of the text strives to respect the unfolding character of the exercise, without however leaving the reader struggling unduly to locate the different sub-sections within the overall architecture.

The text builds up an argument in favour of a distinct concern for small developing states which is at least spared from the theoretical strictures of proven and tested grand principles. This is initially borne out in Chapter 2 with respect to the macro-economic development policy and strategy of these small states. Gleaned from a wide-ranging literature review, the proposal is that 'pseudo-development' - the stubborn, (recognisably?) hopeless yet in their way sustainable and potentially productive pursuit of development trajectories - may be a better way of understanding their economic growth, economic planning and the creation and circulation of wealth. The fates and fortunes of two developing microstates, Malta and Barbados, serve as referents to this exercise.
Having cast a macro backdrop to the dénouement of labour relations in Lilliput, what are the guiding and organising principles around which to meaningfully gravitate labour dynamics? Chapter 3 is a journey through the various pitfalls and traps of deductive microstate theorisation. The sifting suggests a home-grown typology for understanding microstate producer behaviour in the light of the smallness effect. The implications of this typology on a cluster of socio-political and organisational variables is also documented to highlight its various ramifications.

Case study material drawn from two luxury hotels, one in Malta and one in Barbados, is brought in at this point. Chapter 4 proposes the relevance and ingenuity of utilising the smallness typology proposed earlier on the concrete labour relations setting of Southern Bliss Hotel and Tropical Dream Resort, contextualised within an account, alert to the pseudo-development argument, of the state of the extant tourist industry in the respective countries. The orientation brings to light practices whose lilliputian idiosyncrasies would be otherwise lost out of omission or trivialisation. A case is made for the enriched and animated appreciation of the practice of the management of, and by, human resources in conditions where Lilliput obtains: What is referred to as the microstate labour syndrome.

The microstate labour syndrome is operant once again in Chapter 5, this time at the campuses of the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill, Barbados and of the University of Malta. Such serve
to provide further corroborative and substantive material drawn this time specifically from the educational milieu, couched in the context of the microstates' pseudo-development predicament. The choice of site also permits the opportunity to espy the correspondence principle between education and work in action in Lilliput, as well as to indulge in a spate of autobiographical ethnography.

Chapter 6 concludes the study. It summarises the thesis argument, while also entertaining how the research methodology and findings may have a bearing beyond the relatively marginal realm of the small developing state. This is one area which suggests itself for fruitful, further research in the field, in due recognition that life goes on after doctoral studies.

The bibliography dutifully provides full entries to the references within the text; it also serves as an interdisciplinary collection of literature which considers the possibilities of a smallness effect.

Notes to Chapter 1

1. Lewis(1991) adopts a similar argument in defending 'giantism' as a heuristic notion in his analysis of Indian politics.

2. Gulliver is shipwrecked on the remote territory of Lilliput, where all things are one twelfth 'normal' size: Swift(1965). I am not the first to adopt the lilliputian concept in academic work. I am following a tradition which goes back at least to Keohane(1969) and since then applied by Plischke(1977); Villamil (1977); Dommen(1985); Baker(1992a:6) and Houbert(1992a:111).

3. On the status of small but politically non-sovereign territories within the research design see Chapter 6 below, Section 3.2.
4. It was only dogged, even irrational, persistence which led me to embark on doctoral studies in October 1990, without peer, financial and institutional support. The details of this experience are not pertinent to this thesis, but its outcome has bolstered my confidence in myself and in humanity generally.

5. Recent and notable contributions to this literature include Bray et al. (1991), Bray & Packer (1993) and McKee & Tisdell (1990) and the edited collections of Bray (1991), Ghai (1990), Hintjens & Newitt (1992); Bray & Packer (1993); Lillis (1993) and Lockhart et al. (1993). The text edited by Baker (1992) mostly comprises articles previously published in Public Administration and Development. International journals which have dedicated special numbers to issues dealing with islands and/or small states include World Development (Vol. 8, No. 12, 1980; Vol. 21, No. 2, 1993) and Prospects (Vol. 21, No. 4, 1991).

6. One of the limitations I recognise and acknowledge concerns my literature sources. I have consulted what seemed to be relevant texts written mainly in the English language; and the bulk of my library work has been carried out on the campuses of Cave Hill, Malta and Warwick. In recognition of this bias, as well as of the nature of the subject matter, I have tried to consult as many other sources of literature apart from books as possible. These include unpublished pamphlets and monographs, conference papers, journal and newspaper articles, plus over five dozen items through the Inter-Library Loan facility.


8. This methodological technique has already been put to good use by myself and others in describing succinctly a particular behaviour pattern. See, for example, Baldacchino (1990); Boissevain (1969); Richards (1982); Zammit (1984).

9. The two proverbs in the vernacular are: Malta zghira, nies maghrufa and Mhux kemm taf jew x'taf ighodd imma lil mia taf.

10. Norwell E. Harrigan, one of the earliest 'Lilliputians' to operationalise the microstate syndrome, referred to small developing territories (and his own Virgin Islands in particular) as Raran societies. The term is a corruption of the Yoruba rara which literally means dwarfed, in recognition of such states as "poor carbon copies" of larger ones: Harrigan (1972, 1979).

11. This also explains the usage of 's/he' and gender neutrality within quotation marks, which may otherwise strike the reader as odd utterances from respondents. I have consciously adopted this format, also because the Maltese language readily permits a neuter sense.


13. Philpott (1973: 6-7); also Henriques (1953: 45).
1. THE ARGUMENT

1.1 Summary

This chapter argues, on the basis of emergent and inductive theorisation, for a different, alternative conceptualisation of 'development', one which is, for all its negative connotations, both plausible and consistent with the peculiar predicament of microstates.

This is done by, first, exploring the manner in which mainstream development theory and strategy, in both its liberal and radical traditions, has borne little relevance to small developing states and continues to be confounded by their practice. On looking closer at the survival strategies of these developing microstates, fresh theoretical insights are proposed to explain how, out of sight and out of mind, most of the world's smallest territories are intrinsically poor yet establish a standard of living significantly better than that enjoyed by much larger, intrinsically richer neighbours.

These deliberations are then contextualised, utilising this alternative theoretical baggage to critically review the 'development' experience and trajectory of two small states, Malta and Barbados.
1.2 Justification

The choice of material perhaps warrants a brief justification. First of all, the notoriously limited microstate literature is dominated by developmental considerations. My exploration of the field of study was therefore dictated by existing material; the grappling with developmental concerns about, and for, various microstates and territories, singly and collectively, was an obligatory *rite de passage*; the inevitable point of entry.

Secondly, the concern proved fruitful because it immediately suggested the spurious relevance of mainstream and grand theorisation to which microstates are expected to conform, not least by their own local policy makers and academics. Early on, therefore, there were confident indications that certain microstate practices appeared idiosyncratic and that such idiosyncrasies may be somehow conditioned by smallness.

Thirdly, this chapter proposes an explanation of microstates in a world context, in recognition of their economic and cultural openness. The macro level discussion may read as rather lifeless and mechanistic, dominated by a concern with development policies and strategies from a national perspective. Such will however be hopefully adequately redressed by the focus on real people and their social dynamics as producers in subsequent chapters. This enables a faithfulness to an orientation, problematised in more detail in Chapter 3, with a nexus of structuralist transformation and historical events which are shaped by economic events but
mediated and possibly usurped by the imprint of humanity. This thesis should read as one more holistic approach combining these two worlds (Bjorkman et al. 1988:63; Munck 1988:3).

Fourthly, the emergent microstate theorisation does provide precious clues towards understanding labour policy and labour relations issues. The cunning but risky management of mendicancy and dependency has implications for producer behaviour and employment relations; the dominance of market and non-market services has a bearing on the respective role of tourism and the state in the micro-economy and on their key role in creating jobs and economic 'growth' (in spite of rhetoric in favour of industrialisation and privatisation). These and other implications will be reviewed in Chapter 3; while they will serve as backdrop to the case study settings of Chapters 4 and 5.

2. BURSTING THE BUBBLE: THEORYING PSEUDO-DEVELOPMENT

2.1 The Theme

It was a combination of imperial retrenchment and grass roots agitation, fed by the appeals to rights of self-determination and national liberation which, in the aftermath of the Second World War, led to a profusion of independent states. There were around 80 politically independent states in 1952; now, just 40 years later, there are more than twice that figure. Of these, 36 are
small or micro states, each with a resident population of less than one million. There also remain around 42, still politically dependent, small territories which may be considered as potential microstates and which exercise different degrees of self-government.

Smallness is of course a relative term, and there are a host of different ways by which smallness may be, and has been, defined. We are however spared most of the confusion by the remarkable combination of different measures of smallness. While smallness of population, of natural resources and of territorial size are the dominant competing variables, the saving grace is that most microstates are small on all of these counts (Schiavo-Campo 1975:187; Selwyn 1975a:11).

Developing microstates may be bountiful on the world's contemporary political map. Nevertheless, the concept of smallness, apart from being a relativistic one, also conjures up a sense of anomaly. This is indicative of a subtle discrimination which implicitly assumes that large is normal and preferable whereas small, if at all considered, is at best, petty and lilliputian. This section explores the economic-diplomatic survival strategies of developing microstates, their departure from the dictates of mainstream development theory and strategy, and proposes a different, emergent conceptualisation of 'development'.
2.2 Confounding Expectations

In spite of various prognostications to the contrary (e.g. Butter 1985:76; Ward 1967:96), there is substantial evidence from recent history to suggest that, when compared to larger developing states, very small countries have achieved and maintained a significantly better track record: A higher GNP per capita (Jalan 1982a:1; Lloyd & Sundrum 1982:20; UNCTAD 1985a:129); higher school enrolment ratios (Bray & Fergus 1986:100; Dommen 1980b:942); lower mortality rates (Dommen 1980b:937); more development assistance per capita, and on softer terms, than larger countries (Bray 1992a:53-4; De Vreis 1975; Knapman 1986:140,147; Luteru 1993:179-81; Singleton 1990:6; UNCTAD 1985a: 143-4). This goes against the fundamental expectations of both liberal and radical perspectives on development and underdevelopment. Indeed, it is perhaps astonishing that microstates have not long ago discarded these models in the stark realisation of their inapplicability to their different, perhaps even peculiar, condition. Yet, when one considers the historical and colonial heritage of the world's small states, then it is no longer so surprising to see them cling so tenaciously to models derived from the metropole.

2.3 Penetrated Societies

First and foremost, within the global process of decolonisation, there is a definite languor with which most microstates sought
to obtain independent status. Among those territories which did achieve political sovereignty, microstates have been among the very last to do so (Doumenge 1989:51). Few actually struggled for independence. Indeed, the process by which independence was achieved was often undramatic and even somewhat haphazard and sudden: Micro-territory domestic political forces have been more enthusiastically engaged at forestalling independence than clamouring for it: The initiative behind such "upside down decolonisation" (Hoefte & Öostindie 1991:93) has often been due to the readiness of the former colonising powers - particularly the British, Dutch and Portuguese - to let their erstwhile colonies go their own way (Chin & Buddingh 1987:1432; Farrell 1983:3; Newitt 1992:80-2; Wiltshire 1976:118). So many small dependencies, the outposts of empires, cling tenaciously and proudly to their colonial status (Guillebaud 1976; Miles 1985; Winchester 1985). For them, cashing in the independence cheque is not only a wild proposition but an impoverishing one as well: If independence means secession, that would be an illogical and foolish choice (Connell & Aldrich 1989:160; Guillebaud 1976:59).

Secondly, it is to the international dynamics of colonisation and imperialism that microstates owe their original entrance into civilisation. Most small territories were uninhabited and, elsewhere, indigenous populations were decimated or wiped out anyway, soon after the first contacts with European culture, falling victim to superior use of force, merciless physical exploitation or new, and therefore lethal, contagious diseases,
passed on (unwittingly?) by the European invaders (De Smith 1970:82; Moorehead 1966:88; Wolf 1982:133-5). The net result is that colonisers started off with a *tabula rasa*. So many microstates have thus not been colonised but *created* by penetration from outside, a penetration often involving relatively massive influxes of immigrant labour (Houbert 1980a:146). They conform to "manufactured societies, labour camps, creations of empire" (Naipaul 1972:254). They may be states, and take pains to proclaim that they are such; but so many are still searching painfully for a sense of authentic nationhood⁴. If they can speak at all of a local culture, this is generally a non-indigenous creole one, itself a byproduct of colonialism. Even radical reactions to imperialism have not managed to escape the strictures of inverted imagery⁵.

Thirdly, microstates prove to be extremely prone to a wide repertoire of external intervention. Economically, they suffer from the 'concentration phenomenon' (Lloyd & Sundrum 1982:27): a dependence on a very narrow range of tropical agricultural products (typically sugar, bananas, copra, pineapples), light manufacturing (textiles, screwdriver industries, data processing) or services (tourism, tax havens, banking) with little or no influence on the terms of trade. The weakness of this arrangement is that it is wide open to potentially erratic market fluctuations which microstates cannot predict or preempt⁶. With a limited range of available resources, microstates will tend to be heavily dependent on international trade, not only for the provision of luxury consumer goods and raw materials for
processing but also for a high proportion of essential foodstuffs. Given also that microstates can generally command limited domestic investment, overseas market capture, engineering know how, design acumen and marketing skills to operate export oriented production successfully, the outcome is typically a reliance on a few, foreign owned enterprises, operating on highly privileged terms. The linchpin of the local economy becomes an enclave beyond domestic control. Financially, a large number of microstates receive considerable largesse from beyond their shores. These include remittances from emigrants as well as official visible and invisible aid. These inflows constitute a regular, vital share to the national balance of payments (Doumenge 1985:100; Sutton 1987:20-1). Militarily, microstates have obvious limitations and while they usually behave in ways which do not alienate or anger more powerful neighbours, a pretext is seldom lacking if the stronger party deems it fit to invade - witness the cases of Cyprus(1974), Falklands/Malvinas (1982), Grenada(1983) and Kuwait(1990) in recent years, not to mention various other unsuccessful attempts (Alford 1984; Espindola 1987). Ecologically, most microstates are prone to natural disasters - such as cyclones, epidemics and droughts. Larger countries can often take such mishaps in their stride whereas microstates are likely to suffer shattering and long-lasting consequences (Dolman 1985:42; Dommen 1980b:936; Doumenge 1985:86; Wood 1967:32).

The common theme of openness with which microstates are allegedly plagued stands out clearly. Indeed, there are indications that
the strong influence of such externalities spills over into cultural and psychological dependence. Smallness appears to increase the likelihood, pervasiveness and legitimacy of penetration.

Penetrated social systems are characterised by a perceived shortage of capabilities and resources which provides legitimacy for the participation of 'imports'. Such a receptor orientation is typical of most developing post-colonial states. But smallness may be understood to hasten and improve the assimilation of citizens - when and if they are imbued by colonialism's 'civilising mission'. The effects are likely to be spread over the whole population, if anything because of the weighty, often intimate, presence of European establishments (Green 1984:114; Shaw 1982:106). Imports, like colonialism, could be incidental to large territories; but they could constitute a microstate's whole history and reality (Acheen & Rifaux 1981:194; Sherlock 1966:12; Taufe'ulungaki 1991:583). There is virtually no physical or cultural hinterland to retreat to (Hintjens 1991:38).

"Assimilation" (Miles 1985:198-206), "creolisation" (Will 1981:135) and "dependency inclination" (Khan 1976:49) has indeed been so complete and thorough that microstates have hardly ever looked at themselves critically, in terms which are not of foreign, typically western, provenance. They may thus have failed to come up with proper answers to their problems because they have failed to raise the proper questions, which also determine what the problems arguably are. Missing is a praxis informed by
local experiences and guided by endo-generated, locally determined objectives; a formal intellectual tradition which is authentically native to their habitat (Atchoarena 1993:62; Girvan & Jefferson 1971:1; McIntyre 1971:165). Even following the achievement of political independence, the inductive and reflexive stance remains largely absent, with the microstates' intelligentsia either opting to join the brain and skill drain for a better future elsewhere or otherwise socialised into western constructs by exposure to western pedagogy. They have thus been among the most enthusiastic in embracing and championing uncritically the doctrines and associated methods and policies devised by others. This betrays a lack of sensitivity to arguably different social experiences in different geographical milieux.

Microstate decision makers appear generally oblivious, if not proud, that their perception of their interests, problems and prospects are significantly shaped and determined by externally constructed, western biased theories and models of what should be. This has led to a widespread neglect of a specific concern for the microstate condition. Little original and innovative is evident – in nearly every case, the microstate is offered tried and tested theories and procedures, with the accompanying prescriptions. Adaptations, if any, of these hallowed canons have generally been limited to proportional scaling: Scaling down the doctrines to suit the circumstances of microstates; or microstates somehow scaled up to suit the doctrines by, say, the use of regional institutions and region-based specialisations.
Yet, unaware of any sense of fallacy, microstate policy makers and academics continue to resort to these concepts and painstakingly try to employ them in normative, analytic or even predictive endeavour. If the practice fails to match the theory, then it is the practice which is somehow wrong, and is readily labelled as anomalous and pathological. This phenomenon is clearly visible in the realm of development theory and strategy.

2.4 Small Size as Inherently Problematic

The cardinal recommendation of the orthodox liberal theory of development is the Ricardian one of specialisation, the securing and defence of international market niches, reaping wealth from trade based on comparative advantage and economies of scale. It comes therefore as no surprise that the microstates bursting in quick succession on the world political map were discounted as inherent problems: Through the neo-classical lens, their small size was seen as a structural inhibitor to the prerequisites of the development path.

The taxonomy of identified constraints is impressively insurmountable: On the supply side, total land area on most microstates is scarce, and land with specific exploitable properties even more so. The labour force is likely to have a narrow spread of specialist skills; as a result, specific skill shortages could be frequent and unpredictable. Slight demographic
imbalances may lead to sudden, critical shortfalls or surpluses in labour market segments, not easily resolved because of the logistic difficulties involved in recruiting/shedding labour across national frontiers. Capital is likely to be locally scarce and therefore must be sought from overseas. Entrepreneurship is also perceived as lacking, with the locals being dismissed as deficient in organisational skills, technical know how and risk orientation.

On the demand side, the limited domestic market renders almost all productive activities - except subsistence agriculture and traditional cottage industry - quite uneconomical let alone profitable, unless a substantial export outlet is developed. But exports are, at best, restricted to a few commodities and the microstate, again because of its size, lacks the capacity to influence the terms of international trade in any economic way: Its produce is internationally insignificant in terms of volume or financial value.

Microstates, it seems, have everything stacked against them. They fail to meet the credentials of the closed-economy basis of standard development models on all imaginable counts. And open economy elements such as trade, capital flows, migration and exposure to world prices are not an appendage but rather constitute the main economic flows of such small states. If their options are starkly limited to restructuring, austerity or borrowing (Crusol 1980, Chapter 9; Helleiner 1982:176,179), then
it becomes impossible to escape considering them as problems (Bray 1987).

The Dependency School introduced a structuralist and transnational dimension to the debate concerning the causes and persistence of underdevelopment: It was not enough to blame microstate underdevelopment on smallness *per se* but on the instruments which controlled the small economy. Microstate economies could thus be developed; yet, the avenues to do so were most elusive. While radical underdevelopment theory opened up theoretical possibilities for microstates, the associated strategy prescriptions were, regrettably, often rhetorical.

The policy recommendations of dependency theory were fuelled by the long term objective of achieving self-sustained growth. But the means to do so appear physically beyond all but the larger countries. Self-reliance and self-sustained growth may have an emotive, nationalistic ring, and they may travel a long way when espoused by a charismatic leadership. But the evidence of history has shown these pronouncements to become soon politically indefensible, economically catastrophic and culturally impossible to sustain. Socialist self-reliance (*e.g.* Thomas 1974) with its spectre of marginalisation and destabilisation, does not appear *per se* so attractive. Microstate leaders, perhaps most of all, would find it most difficult to sell such notions to their citizens even for a short spell, accustomed as these are to the reception and consumption of alien imports. Developing
microstates may be bicycle societies, but they have cadillac tastes. Microstates in search of policy guidelines thus find themselves engulfed into a functionalist and tautological world order not even large states can influence. Smallness, they are advised from all policy quarters, is either irrevocable or must be otherwise overcome (Marshall 1982:464). The possibility to develop is thus neatly "defined away" (Best 1971b:29).

2.5 Regionalisation as Non-Event

By proclaiming the theoretical or practical impossibility (in spite of implicit desirability) of nationally-based development, the competing mainstream development paradigms share the recommendation for microstates to strive for supra-national, regional integration. This is suggested either for the achievement of the scale necessary for a viable export-oriented development strategy or else for collective self-reliance, a division of labour among socialist countries preferable to national autarchy. There are quite solid arguments in favour of regional integration as a strategy for alleviating the burdens imposed by smallness: The wider market which regionalism creates - not only in terms of goods and services but even in less orthodox commodities as administrative facilities, higher education, diplomatic efforts, consultancy, finance and military capability - offers the chance of capturing otherwise most

Yet, the experience of microstate regional integration systems shows that these have fallen victim to an uneven distribution of costs and benefits, a slow and ponderous decision making machinery as well as policy decisions taken on the basis of national (rather than international) self-interest (Abbott 1975:110; Wallace 1977; Wiltshire 1976). It would also seem to be the case that, where microstates are concerned, there are judged to be wider (and more profitable?) possibilities for action by being an autonomous policy making unit. This is perceived to outweigh the more secure but lower profile and more constraining effects of regional collusion (Clarke 1987:84; Thorndike 1987:102).

2.6 A Non-Strategy of Opportunist Pragmatism

It would seem closer to the truth to argue that, for most microstates, the decision has never really been which development strategy to choose: A free choice has never really existed. It is rather to pursue any available strategy consistently and nevertheless be prepared to ditch it when the situation so demands. Development policy and strategy is basically a balancing act (Seers 1983). To succeed in development is to perceive and exploit the possibilities and mitigate the obstacles as these emerge, in conformity to basic formulations of what development
is understood to mean in particular contexts (Selwyn 1975a:20). The strategy, to be relevant, must remain flexible and responsive to concrete strategies applied to what are understood as constantly and unpredictably changing conditions.

"...Economic development is a problem of management – of timing, sequencing and manipulating in an unending effort to perceive or create, and in any case to exploit, a multiplicity of little openings and opportunities". (Best 1971b:30)

Contrast this reality of microstate contingent and opportunist pragmatism (Moen 1982:345) to the western idea of development as organic, directional, cumulative, irreversible and purposive (Hettne 1990:80; Preston 1982).

The room for manoeuvre is arguably most limited for microstates, which is why they must do so with skill to clinch successful outcomes. For microstates do have choices to make, and they embrace a set of options, certainly wider than that of complete acquiescence to international dynamics: Certain elements in dependency may be structural, but others are contingent on actors' policies and decisions. If there is such room for manoeuvre it is in the interest of all states, but of microstates most crucially, to recognise and exploit it to the hilt.

Smallness – and its usually accompanying characteristics of insularity and remoteness – rather than a trinity of despair may represent an opportunity for many microstates. Insularity has automatic defensive and locational advantages: Given these, a number of small states have developed as centres where
'merchandise' could be stored and/or transhipped'. Historically, this has included prisoners and slaves; today it comprises fish, chemicals, fuel and cargo (Dommen 1981). Remoteness carries the advantages of military and strategic uses as well as crop gene pool isolation (Cohen 1983a:16-18; Wace 1980). Perceptions of strategic location and global insecurity almost inevitably result in the installation of military or telecommunications bases. These advantages in themselves starkly highlight the problems of microstate powerlessness which these small states may well prefer to exploit rather than avoid.

2.7 The Economics of Productive Diplomacy

Given that their political status and national sovereignty vastly exceed their economic influence, it is likely that microstates will seek to shift this balance to their net advantage, opting for non-market solutions to their problems (Commonwealth Consultative Group 1985:68). The history of economics in the real world is after all none other than a continual attempt to distort and usurp the free market to one's perceived advantage. Microstates can hardly nurture illusions as to the influence which their small product range, value or volume commands in the international economy. They are thus quite aware that, behind the rhetoric of perfect competition and free trade, those who control access to technology, markets, material resources and finance have a predetermined lead. Microstates would therefore be guaranteed losers if they abide by the official rules of the
game. They cannot afford to jeopardise their survival by putting all their eggs into one basket - the international economy - over which they then forfeit control. Here, microstates find another unexpected advantage in their smallness: The importance of being unimportant - the power of being powerless - enables them to clinch favourable deals which concede special advantages. This helps them avoid playing the inevitable role of price-takers. Comprising a minuscule proportion of total transactions in the international system, microstates may be successful in these transactions and avoid retaliation, even though they may infringe the system's rules (Demas 1965:91; Reid 1974:30). It is often only by being diplomatic, political actors that they can get their prices right (Brookfield 1987:56-7; Taylor 1987a:1-3).

Recent historical evidence suggests that microstates, even those without marketable natural resources, have fared well. There are, admittedly, some exceptions to this trend; but these are microstates whose dominant cultures are Indian and/or African; whose main religion is non-christian; and where the majority of the population speak no european language. The anomalies may thus confirm the general rule, namely, that such countries have not been penetrated enough, not having been sufficiently groomed as products of a European maritime culture, or having otherwise forfeited this legacy in search of a different vision which however failed to materialise (Caldwell et.al. 1980:954; Bray & Packer 1993:45-6; Jones 1993:161). The few, particularly poor microstates are actually those which have failed to establish (or abrogated) intimate relations with a prosperous protector". 
2.8 A Shameless Survival Strategy . . .

Being small, resource poor, disaster prone, environmentally precarious and facing logistic and transport constraints, many microstates do not appear keen to sever the umbilical cord with the external world. Once resigned to 'dependent development', microstates may well establish a life-line, an umbilical cord to a richer country (Hoetjes 1992:142-3; Hoogendonk 1989:104; Sutton 1987:20-1). Most appear determined today that their best bet is for even better (though dependent) integration within world capitalism. Surprisingly, such dependence seems to allow for these peripheries of the periphery the miraculous possibility, negated by radical theory, of turning unequal exchange topsy-turvy: Thriving on a net transfer of value from the core, a carry over of the heavy cost of colonial administration (Connell 1991b:96; McKee & Tisdell 1990:170; Philibert 1981:324). They may have decolonised, but they have no intention to disengage (Houbert 1986:145).

Such an evaluation of a continuing experience falls far short of any of the espoused theories of development. It is rather a crude realisation of a survival strategy which is shamelessly seeking to maximise consumption (rather than production) levels, preferably on a par to idealised western standards. Small size and all it brings with it makes any other 'development strategy' unsustainable. But then, the microstate can tap resources elsewhere to assuage its needs: Relying on the receipt of aid in various guises; and exporting the most extraordinary of
commodities and services to earn a living. Products for export include postage stamps, exotic seashells, petty handicrafts, sun, sea, sand (and sex?) as well as human resources as migrant workers; services for sale include tourist-appeasing plastic cultures, fishing and mining rights, flags of convenience and suitable locations for drugs transshipment and money laundering.

2.9 ... with a Different Notion of Viability

It was as late as 1975 that it was suddenly boldly proposed that small countries need not be assumed to be problems - there were both economies and diseconomies of scale (Selwyn 1975a:11-2). And soon after, it became also possible to identify some advantages of spatial isolation and remoteness (Wace 1980). These advances were significant examples of paradigmatic iconoclasticism: Increasingly, the academic and policy world was coming to terms with the irrefutable fact that microstates exist and obstinately show no signs of withering away. This could only imply that they were viable in their own peculiar manner: *Sum ergo sum* (Selwyn 1975a:12; Jacobs 1991:1). Viability can mean simply survivability or livability, and thus need not imply anything close to self-reliant development, with an economy generating internally the productive requirements for expanded reproduction through time (Abbott 1975:107-8).

So many microstates today survive by thriving on a 'rentier status' in the world economy. Rents are revenues which are cut
off from any directly productive activity on the part of the recipient (Bertram & Watters 1985:500): These include aid, remittances from abroad, dividends on foreign securities, licences, stamp duties, customs receipts, land or fishing taxes, leases, loans and payments for the provision of various services - tourism, banking, tax havens, finance, military bases, casinos, yacht berths, space tracking facilities, transshipment, flags of convenience, bunkering, waste dumping sites, philately and other collectors' items - what are collectively known as invisible receipts (Dommen 1981; Legarda 1984:43). Ricardo's aversion to rentiers and Marx's predilection for productive over unproductive labour may both be responsible for the way in which such a survival strategy "from subsistence to subsidy" (Connell 1992) looks anathema. It is looked down upon as parasitic, fragile and non-entrepreneurial (Connell 1991b:97; Peoples 1978:549). It does not contribute to any basis for local accumulation (Dolman 1985:54; Selwyn 1975a:18; UNCTAD 1985a:138).

Even where microstates are beneficiaries of expanded territorial resources, their rentier orientation persists: The United Nations draft convention regarding the Law of the Sea, with its provision for a 200 nautical mile exclusive economic zone, implies an astronomical increase in coastal zone jurisdiction, especially for dispersed archipelagic microstates. Yet, this has not led to self-reliant, productive activity by microstates but a leasing out of extractive rights, and even of their enforcement, to distant and richer nations (Connell 1988c; Dolman et.al 1982; McKee & Tisdell 1990:Chapter 11; Waugh 1987).
2.10 A Paradigmatic Divide?

In looking at the experiences of various developing microstates through the lens of such mainstream vision, the result is to consign them to exceptionality as "paradoxes" (Amstrup 1976), "special cases" (Kaplinsky 1983:195) or "genuine puzzles" (Rosenau 1983:4). Traditional analysis persists in bearing little relevance to these territories and continues to be confounded by their practice (Bryan 1983:237).

Development Theory has for many years struggled primarily with the problem of explaining why in countries which are intrinsically richly endowed with resources and possibilities and containing all the necessary economies of scale, economic development failed to occur while poverty and misery actually increased. In the meantime, out of sight and out of mind, most of the world's smallest territories, although intrinsically poor, managed to establish and cling to a standard of living which is above what could be realistically obtained on the basis of local production; a quality of life which is even significantly higher than that of much larger neighbours. The Protestant Ethic, the notion of viability implying "standing on your own feet and earning your keep" (Schumacher 1973:65) and the notion of "internally propelled development" (Bacchus 1989:16), continue to exert a paradigmatic stranglehold on theorisation. It is difficult, if not impossible, to throw such fundamental parameters overboard, even in the face of incontrovertible
evidence and to boldly seek out an alternative hypothesis with superior explanatory powers.

Yet, survival does not always depend on industrious autonomy. Is not parasitism, for all its connotations, viable in its own way? The question to ask is not whether such a symbiosis (read dependence or neocolonialism) is good or bad; but whether it is a rational strategy (Cohen 1987a: 212):

"There are viable paths to modernity and welfare that do not rely upon a repetition of the European large country model of industrialisation and primitive accumulation". (Bertram 1993: 248)

Most microstates policy makers, imbued as they are with the unassailable force of mainstream western logic, continue to chase the elusive phantom of viability. Development Plans continue to harp on the advantages of local value added, industrialisation, the amelioration of the national balance of payments (e.g. Luteru 1993: 175). The projected image is often that of a ready-to-go enterprise; a state-of-the-art turnkey project. The micro-economy awaits the proverbial kiss of Prince Charming (read foreign investment) to launch into a Rostowian take-off (Rostow 1956).

But, whereas microstate economic development policy may read as rational and in search of viability, microstate politics remains essentially the art of the possible (Connell 1988a: 81). The task of the planner approximates an exercise in tea-leaf reading (Higginson 1987: 145). Policy making becomes mainly reactive, saying yes or no — but almost always yes — to whatever kind of
investor applies, resulting in a rag-bag of initiatives with virtually zero local integration (Seers 1982:78).

The developing microstate condition may be better expressed as an insular or enclave territory for sale or for rent, providing a dignified basis for aid reception (Bertram & Watters 1985; Munro 1989). Income accrues through the provision of services and/or by withholding these from undesirable third parties (Ward 1989:242). The rational development policy façade appears tenable only as a sop to actual and potential sponsors and rentiers. These may at least be led to believe that their contribution, even if a pittance by international standards, will wean the microstate to some kind of viability - blatant hand-outs are not so readily justifiable from the donor's part and embarrassingly unacceptable in such a format from the recipient's (McKee & Tisdell 1990:37). After all, even a few million dollars go a long way on a speck of land.

So many microstate development plans actually come about from the need to present a serious undertaking by the recipient to utilise development loans and investment, actual or potential, offered from abroad. It may be a tokenistic exercise (Ogden 1989:369); nevertheless, it must be taken in with its own rhetoric or it would otherwise alienate the all important transfer of largesse. Once successfully obtained, such largesse may not increase but rather reduce the ability to produce real income, killing the micro-economy through kindness by eroding self-reliance and
2.11 Industrial Prejudice

Industrialisation is generally earmarked in this context as the engine of growth, and thus also treated as being synonymous to development (Seers 1982:74). The industrial orientation is furthermore encouraged by respectable international agencies like the World Bank whose experts entice microstate policy makers to refrain from considering themselves as some kind of special category\(^\text{14}\), and to persevere in an industrialisation drive based on the promotion of investment in the productive sectors of the economy: manufacturing and commercial agriculture\(^\text{15}\). There is also the undeniable demonstration effect of the 4 Asian Tigers, including Hong Kong and Singapore, two relatively small states, which serve as successful third world examples of the articulation with global markets\(^\text{16}\).

Nevertheless, the picture does not tell the true story, much as the World Bank says it should and much as microstate governments hope it would. There are after all very formidable obstacles to industrialisation in microstates. In contrast to large developing countries, industrialisation in small states is largely absent, other than of basic import substitution and food processing (Broadfield 1978:19-20). Microstates tend to be high cost producers because of their relative affluence and geographical

isolation. Most have very limited natural resources, tiny internal markets which preclude economies of scale; they may also lack technical as well as managerial skills. They do not have the critical mass to first initiate and then sustain processes of technological innovation. Any products they manage to produce will be faced with fierce competition even in the domestic market from both more efficient, lower cost products as well as higher cost but more attractive products, given foreign oriented consumer tastes. Inefficient industrialisation may survive, more as a matter of national pride, behind protective tariff walls or because of preferential access to foreign markets (Connell 1991a: 262-3; Dolman et al. 1982: 15; Dolman 1985: 44-5; Kaplinsky 1983). In a situation of free trade, a small, isolated, often insular, developing country is indeed likely to de-industrialise unless its indigenous industry is insulated from international competition (UNCTAD 1985b: 25; Connell 1991a: 263).

Some success has been admittedly achieved in terms of that "seductive option", export-oriented industrialisation by invitation (McKee & Tisdell 1990: 14, 153). But the price is heavy and the perceived gains may be largely illusory: With few exceptions, there would be virtually no significant export industries without considerable positively discriminatory legislation in their favour (Connell 1991a: 263-4; Waugh 1987). Such "screwdriver" industries are often heavily subsidised by tax concessions, accelerated depreciation, the facility to repatriate profits, dividends and capital, training programs for employees and new recruits, cheap land, even cheap power, to set up
operations, as well as guaranteed preferential access to metropolitan markets (Bacchus 1989: 10; Barry et al. 1984: 64-5; McKee & Tisdell 1990: 18; Ramsaran 1989: 1139). Political and financial stability, a low cost yet literate, trained and cheerful labour force, plus weak (or no) trade unions would be extra enticements. Other costs incurred as a consequence of industrialisation may include irreparable ecological and environmental implications, difficult to contain on a limited land area (McKee & Tisdell 1990: 23); the capital attracted may be typically footloose and may thus fall short from generating the sustained export-led growth so many microstate governments desire (Faber 1992: 133-4; Taylor 1984: 34); and there is also the crowding out of cash benefits from the offer of services (Bertram 1986; Dolman 1988; Waugh 1987). Otherwise, paradoxically, these very same industries may be respectable operations which disguise aid and concessionary finance (Taylor 1987a: 1-3).

2.12 The Triumph of Dependent Development

If this is the stark contemporary evidence, perhaps an alternative proposition could be put forward to understand otherwise pathological microstate behaviour. It appears that the central economic concern for microstates with respect to the outside world can be posited as being the active preservation or, better still, the enhancement of their status and desirability as rentier states (Bertram 1993; Connell 1988a; Kaplinsky 1983: 203-4; Payne 1991: 18). The pressures and benefits of doing
so appear to increase inversely with country size. The only semblance of "self-reliance" to speak of is the reliance by microstate citizens upon their abilities to negotiate what sums of money they need in return for whatever marketable rights they are willing to surrender (Connell 1991b: 115). In this pursuit of "reinforced dependence" (Lemon 1987), the enhancement of vulnerability and shopping for the fiscal sympathy it evokes in others is a profitable technique: Why else do microstates continue to present themselves in international fora in this guise? (Bray 1987; Commonwealth Consultative Group 1985; Harden 1985). Similarly, the cultivation and packaging of the myth of paradisiacal quaintness and natural exuberance is another suitable and necessary tune to play, knowing that this enduring human fantasy will strike a chord in many alien, western hearts (Cohen 1983a: 15; Diggines 1985: 192; Lowenthal 1972: 13).

One has only to look at the Diego Garcians and the Marshallese (transported away from their island homes when these were sold rather than rented in the interests of military strategy) to remind oneself that sanguine and idealised conclusions need to be tempered with caution (Houbert 1992b: 468-475; De Smith 1970). Yet, thanks not least to their small size, and in spite of the obvious differences between various kinds of developing microstates, most of these seem to be after a dignified and enviable mendicancy, the achievement of a brittle prosperity without accumulation, of growth without development. So many appear miraculously to be living beyond their means, characterised by a 'jaws effect': A widening twin deficit on the
commodity trade (exports less imports) and government budget (local public revenue less local public expenditure) accounts. They are thus eking out an existence as a "pampered periphery" (Bayliss-Smith et. al. 1988:289; Bertram 1993:249-253; Hughes 1990:168-9). They may be fated, or fortunate, in always having been meant to form part of something larger (Naipaul 1972:270).

2.13 Discussion

Even in the contemporary epoch of relative fiscal austerity, a cut back on "development aid" and strident assertions that competition and restructuring cannot be indefinitely postponed (e.g. Delia 1991:38), the lessons of practice suggest otherwise. Smaller developing territories survive rather well (better than their larger neighbours) as remittance, rent or welfare (rather than value) socio-economies. They do so within a pattern which has become sustainable in its own way because of various influxes from abroad, cemented institutionally by bilateral agreements. Among these, the protraction of colonial status, political integration or associated status are contemporary options which are jealously guarded. While keeping in mind that the rhetoric of mendicancy is never respectable, the imperative, (as well as the possibility), to stand on one's own two feet and indulge in at least sectoral self-reliance appears to increase with size.
The negotiated balance between increasing and rescinding client status promises to be a key issue in a global political economy characterised by pan-national blocks. The novel scenario heralds concerted economic policies by powerful regional groupings, of which the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the European Economic Community (EEC) are contemporary protagonists. The unfolding American, European (German?) and Japanese spheres of influence may suggest a configuration reminiscent of superpower, cold war, international relations from which small states have largely benefitted, in spite of very serious risks. Survival depends on the centripetal attraction of such Lilliputs as nodes, hubs within a global architecture, sites for the transfer and transshipment of merchandise in all forms. Diplomatic efforts by microstates are well advised to continue to, if possible, identify and exploit broad strategic considerations to ensure that their territories and people remain of some, even if tokenistic concern, to powerful regional actors aspiring to a powerful presence. Malta's re-negotiation of the lease of the British facility on the island in 1971 remains a key lesson in the power of powerlessness (Micallef 1979).

2.14 Operationalisation

The following sections operationalise the pseudo-development theorisation, applying it within the context of two resource poor island developing micro-territories: the island states of Malta and Barbados. The application is based on a variety of mainly
secondary sources, but including interviews carried out with key resource persons and academics during summer 1992 in the case of Barbados. The exercise of application hopefully serves to identify the usefulness of adopting the theoretical framework outlined above towards an understanding of microstate practices, uncannily similar at a conceptual level in spite of the diversity of detail, geopolitical setting and historical experience. Such practices include: the experience of development planning; the rhetoric of self-reliance and the unacknowledged search for aid with dignity; the excessive dependence on externalities. In this way, there is a departure from the tightly-packed, heavily enumerative argument which has teased out the case for pseudo-development in an abstract, non-country specific way. This empirical engagement also enables an early identification of what characterisations of pseudo-development are expected to come to bear on the sphere of labour policy and labour relations.

3. MALTA

3.1 Introduction

"As independence was attained in 1964, the haphazardness of the past was abandoned and a scientific approach to economic management was introduced...For the first time...Malta was free to determine its fortunes". (Busuttil 1988:162)
The Maltese Archipelago consists of a series of limestone blocks with a surface area of 312 square kilometres, the main island of Malta being the largest and supporting 94% of the population. These islands command the centre of the Mediterranean Sea between Italy and Libya. Such a strategic location, plus a series of sheltered and deep water harbours, has made the small territory a prime target for successive regional powers. These included the Arabs (870-1090); the Knights of St. John (a buffer state for Catholic Europe against the Turkish threat: 1530-1798) and the British (1800-1964). Being intrinsically resource poor, bereft even of fertile soil or ample fresh water supplies, the islanders' main means of livelihood has been the refurbishing of successive military establishments and associated administrative and infrastructural public works, financed ultimately from abroad. Colonial interests actually successfully groomed a 'fortress culture', with an indigenous population harbouring a positive (though at times begrudging) disposition to its alien occupiers not limited to its small comprador elite. This was mainly sealed by virtue of the employment and social mobility which such an association promised and indeed often delivered. Such a colonial inheritance (Zammit 1984) spills over into a variety of behaviour patterns, including western inspired conspicuous consumption; a 'welcoming society' disposition which is amenable to a tourist economy, and an affinity, role-modelling and predilection with metropolitan, particularly British, practices (Sultana & Baldacchino 1993a). This historical rentier 'welfare economy' supported a population now reaching 360,000. The figure would have been much higher had not heavy out
migration occurred, particularly between 1945 and 1974 (Camilleri 1973; Delia 1982a:6).

Malta’s approach to development planning has been praised by international observers for being indicative, avoiding a pompous air of surety and rigidity which was bound to falter. Still, the actual results achieved after each of Malta’s development plans had run its course never approximated to the projections; indeed, they dramatically exceeded or failed to meet the hoped for targets.

3.2 Thirty Years of Going Wrong

Malta’s First Development Plan (1959-1964) followed hot on the heels of the British Government’s decision to run down its military facility in many overseas bases, including its Mediterranean fortress colony of Malta. The island’s economy was in for an unexpected, radical shake up: At that time, the British colonial establishment directly employed no less than 23,000 Maltese – more than a third of the labour force (4th Plan:3); most of the remaining 40,000 were employed directly by Government (1st Plan:5).

British military personnel and associated expenditures were going to be drastically cut. While this was a stark and sombre reality, the securing of an alternative source of livelihood for the Maltese was another matter. Even eminent foreign advisors
disagreed about the prospects of restructuring the Maltese economy: Woods (1945) had little faith in anything except mass emigration; indeed, he may not have realised how correct he was when he declared that Malta could prosper more from "the handling of wealth rather than its creation" (ibid.: 7). Schuster (1950) was mildly more encouraging; Balogh & Seers (1955) would be best described as cautiously optimistic (Sant 1984: 5-7). All in all, the small economy had some interesting potential - industry, tourism, commercial ship-repair - related to the island's natural assets: climate, human resources and maritime facilities in a strategic location (1st Plan: 2). It was Government's task to develop the policies and concomitant economic, social and physical infrastructure in these departments.

Claiming that the success will depend in the last resort on the enterprise, skill and productivity of all sections of the community is one spirit rousing way of putting it (1st Plan: 8; 2nd Plan: 16). But whether investments, tourists and ship-owners would be actually attracted, and in sufficient and steady numbers to provide a relatively secure source of income and employment was the all important corollary. What the Plan could and did do was a statistical exercise in fortune telling, hoping that, like a self-fulfilling prophecy, the desired dream would take flesh.

The First Plan, seeking full employment yet acknowledging the difficulty of putting a precise figure to the decline in the services and crown employment levels, foresaw the need to create 19,000 new jobs, 5,000 in a fledgling manufacturing industry. It
was deemed reasonable to assume that 10,000 job seekers would emigrate over the 5-year Plan period (1st Plan: 6). Possibly, the meticulous nature of this plan was a necessary condition for the securing of the 29 million pounds sterling the British Government was providing to finance the Plan's capital spending requirements. In a sense, this Development Plan followed naturally as the expression by the Maltese Government of its undertaking to utilise this development loan effectively:

"In January 1959, the British government announced its intention to contribute 28 million sterling over the next five years towards a development programme and this resulted in the launching of the first development plan for Malta". (Briguglio 1981: 2; my emphasis)

The hoped for results, however, did not materialise. Indeed, the plan had to be reviewed as early as 1961 after an Anglo-Maltese study group set up to examine the repercussions of the rundown of the British military apparatus concluded that Malta was in for a rough ride, rougher than had been envisaged, unless ulterior measures were taken: A GDP drop of 15% and an unemployment figure of 29,000 (28% of the labour force) by 1967 were expected (2nd Plan: 2). When the plan period expired, few of the promised goods had been delivered: "The plan did not achieve the projected aims mainly due to the fact that it was overtaken by events...the anticipated employment figures were not attained" (2nd Plan: 1):

"The plan was not a complete success...Too much was expected of the private sector in too short a time and the employment objectives were not, in fact, met". (3rd Plan: 7)
The targets of the Second Development Plan (1964-69) were set with extreme caution. A report by a United Nations Mission confirmed a bleak future and advised a mass yearly emigration quota of 10,000 to maintain extant living standards (Stolper 1964). The once bitten, twice shy, government functionaries were not carried away by the euphoria of political independence, achieved in 1964. They envisaged this Second Plan as an instrument of containment:

"Little more was expected of it than that it should keep the economy ticking". (3rd Plan: 8)

The Plan envisaged the creation of 3,600 jobs in industry and tourism, a doubling of exports and an annual emigration of 7,500 persons. An increase in the female participation rate was also hypothesised. The idea was to maintain the current level of unemployment with an absolute decrease in the labour supply (2nd Plan, Appendix II: 112).

Britain's sudden decision to devalue the pound sterling in 1967 did not help matters: The Maltese pound was then pegged on a par with sterling. Yet, the outcome went beyond expectations: "The Second Five-Year Plan has been an experience of rapid economic expansion in circumstances which did not initially bode well for Malta's future" (3rd Plan: 17). The main challenge had been to contain: the actual outcome was altogether more favourable. Gainful employment at end 1968 had been expected to fall to 83,000 per plan from 86,000 in 1964. It was actually 95,800 in 1969. GNP in real terms had risen by some 38% from 1964-68 (ibid.). Optimism was suddenly riding high: A Joint Anglo-Maltese
mission early in 1967 claimed that a target of 15,000 new jobs by 1972 was now feasible (Robens 1967).

The Third Development Plan (1969-74) sought to maintain the same basic recipe for economic growth. The one major novel initiative was an Association Agreement with the European Communities (EC). This meant "to provide an export market in Europe for Maltese output free from tariff barriers and quota restrictions" (3rd Plan: 56). An employment target of 106,400 was envisaged by 1973, a net increase of 4,700 in the labour force to be achieved via new job opportunities in manufacturing and tourism, plus an annual exodus of 2,400 emigrants.

The actual state of affairs in 1974 was of a gainfully occupied population of only 102,300 and of an unemployment rate of almost 6%. But the planners were this time spared the embarrassment of explaining what had gone wrong (exogenous reasons were not lacking: the 1973 energy price hike being one significant explanatory factor). The planners, and the Plan with them, had been changed.

The Fourth Development Plan (1973-80) cut short the life of its predecessor. A different political party had come to power in 1971 on a platform of neutrality and non-alignment and it proposed a much stronger presence by the state in economic development. Yet, while the rhetoric was distinctly different, the plan's growth leaders were the usual ones - manufacturing, ship-repair/building and tourism. It looks in retrospect much
like a case of old wine in new bottles. After all, most Maltese politicians would have us believe that significant shifts in economic indicators can occur at the point where a change in government takes place; however "one can barely identify any such significant break" (Scicluna 1991:2). What had definitely changed was the irreversible termination of the British base. The closure had been mercifully extended to March 31st 1979 and annual rent until that date tripled, following hard bargaining, to US$42 million (Howard Wriggins 1975). 1979 was therefore 'the year of destiny' and the Plan sought to meet the challenge which the loss of substantial fortress rent and other multiplier effects would inevitably cause.

The Plan targeted GDP at factor cost to grow at 6% per annum. It also assumed emigration levels of almost 3,000 persons per year. The projected labour supply was thus about 115,900. Therefore, provision had to be made for around 20,600 jobs, of which 13,500 in manufacturing, to match the redundancies from the Military Base closure and an increasing female participation rate — projected to reach 35.5% (4th Plan: 51-2, 59, 96-103).

The Plan's targets were introduced with an indicative, cautionary note:

"The Maltese islands are heavily dependent on international trade. Planning in Malta must therefore be particularly flexible. Flexibility means the creation and encouragement of attitudes and institutions that are capable of making good use quickly of a favourable turn of events in the world economy, and of adjusting speedily to unfavourable circumstances". (4th Plan: 51)
The results? Instead of a net population decline of 1% which the plan had forecast, there was a net increase of 5.7% over the period 1973-79, mainly because of unforeseen tighter immigration controls by the traditional destination countries of Maltese emigrants. Nevertheless, the gainfully occupied had soared by 16,300, of which just over 8,000 in manufacturing. This was still a shortfall to the plan target; but, mercifully for the planners, the female participation rate had only increased marginally: 14,000 women had not joined the labour force contrary to what had been projected. Increases in productivity had been higher than envisaged, leading to a reduced demand for labour. GDP at factor cost had grown at the fantastic annual rate of 14.3%.

And so, the planners could, for the second time, afford themselves the luxury of demonstrating publicly their good fortune (and their hopeless predictive powers!). As in the case of the unexpected success of the Second Plan, the unexpected success of the Fourth Plan was meticulously documented and proudly paraded in the introduction to the subsequent planning instrument. The Fifth Development Plan (1981-85) exhibited the fortuitous discrepancy, for which some credit would spill over to the government of the day (5th Plan:10, Table II.1).

Having overcome the 'year of destiny' in apparently very good shape, the Fifth Plan could once again venture to look ahead with optimism. Reverting to the more conventional five-year planning period, this document had a target of 7,000 new jobs in manufacturing and 3,000 in market services, with a freeze on
public sector employment - then at a 'low' of 20% of the labour force. This to tally with a labour force increase of 10,000, reaching 133,100 (5th Plan: 92, Table IV.3).

The Plan went totally wrong: The targets set out by the plan for exports, employment and investment were not reached. A 'containment strategy' had to be introduced to stave off the effects of a damaging international recession (coupled with an overvalued local currency and declining standards in a tourist industry which had grown too fast). Manufacturing employment actually declined from 33% of the labour force in 1979 to 28% in 1985, particularly in the increasingly wage uncompetitive textile and apparel sub-sectors. Unemployment reached a record 8% over 1983 and 1984 (Baldacchino 1988a: 66, Table 2).

There had been some storm clouds on the horizon: A study by a foreign visiting economist warned that it was not in the best interest for Malta to put too much emphasis on manufacturing since, given that exports from the island were mainly of the labour intensive type, Malta was dangerously exposed to the danger of losing its competitive edge (Metwally 1977). These observations however, suggesting that the services sector promised greater potential for expansion and control, incurred government's hostility.

The euphoria of planning was again replaced by disillusionment. The sixth, latest (and last?) Development Plan covers only a three year period: 1986-88. It appears that the dangers of bold
projection had been learnt, and the confession appears quite sincere:

"Recent experience has shown even more sharply the exposure of the Maltese economy to international economic developments and their impact on the country's overall growth process. In these unsettled conditions, planning has been rendered more hazardous and it has become less meaningful to formulate development plans, spell out broad sectoral targets and draw up projections for future years, when outside shocks can be so frequent and unpredictable and prove so disruptive". (6th Plan:2)

This time, there is no elaborate review of the achievements of the previous plan; no comparison of past projections with achieved results. The numerical exposition of targets - investment finance, labour force participation rates, demographic figures, import and export values - is noticeable by its low profile. There is indeed only one table in the document. The Sixth Plan limits itself basically to a description and discussion of projects and incentive schemes which government felt in a position to accomplish. Nevertheless, the Plan's practically only target of 5,400 jobs "which should be provided in the directly productive and market service sectors", was not reached. The increase in labour supply, augmented by further shedding from the private sector, was handled by 'workfare' employment in the public, paramilitary and parastatal sectors.

3.3 Scrapping the Plan Concept

If "it has become less meaningful to formulate development plans", why have them at all? Interestingly, the present Maltese
government has opted in February 1990 to ditch the ceremony of development plans and switch to 'planning', particularly in areas and policies where local planners have wider spans of control and where a stronger degree of predictability can be assumed.

The change could be merely academic, as one shall see below. But the 'turnabout' did not fail to generate strident criticism. A senior economic consultant (now Leader of the Opposition) criticised the sudden demise of formal development planning as "a failure of nerve", a repudiation of government's responsibility to provide an overall and long term coordinating framework for total economic management and the disowning of a tool of accountability of government's economic policies. Possibly, the political discretion suggested by the latter criticism may be one important consideration which led to scrap the plan concept: There are now no glorified targets about which one can be criticised if not met. One must not fail to add here, however, the stark realisation of the unenviable predicament in which any local policy maker is likely to find him herself, having to justify plans and planning which always go wrong, one way or the other. A senior financier and ardent government sympathiser has nevertheless argued that, with such a shift in policy, economic management is changing to hidden mental strategism or (perhaps worse) ad hocism. A shocking insight into what dare not be explicitly admitted?

In the Prime Minister's own words, a development plan, indicative though it may be, makes for rigidity, as the experience of past
plans has shown that they have "gone totally wrong, and what they forecast had nothing to do with what actually happened." The advisory National Economic Development Council has counselled that "a formal [development] plan could serve as an obstacle and rigidity if it is implemented and, if not implemented, then it would become no more than an irrelevancy."26.

3.4 The Spinoffs of the Planning Form

The admission of ceremonious formalism and deceptive rhetoric is a bold statement indeed, but one which is supported by the evidence. Development Planning, as with other institutions of a micro-territory, may flourish but not function. Yet, the symbolism is effective and indicative that governments govern (Brewster 1973:93-4; Sutton 1984a:50). Malta's six development plans were to a considerable extent intended as public relations exercises, with one eye on the reaction of investors and another on that of the electorate. Projected growth rates may often have been based on dubious and unrealistic assumptions (Brincat 1989:5). Still, they were laced with a pseudo-scientific calculability designed to carry along the reader and imbue an atmosphere of confidence in the singer of the tune. Planning may boil down to a tokenistic activity which is nevertheless carried out because it reaps political, economic and diplomatic spinoffs. The propensity to dazzle; the mistaking of consistency for truth and the attention shift from policy to arithmetic (Lewis 1966:16-17) become assets rather than dangers.
If public opinion and potential foreign sponsors/investors thrive on planning exercises and the discipline and control that they inspire, then such target audiences ought to be thus appeased: the baby will not be thrown out with the bath water. If anything, they may be even better appeased by sectoral specific planning: The EC have in fact funded a new 20-year Structure Plan for the Maltese Islands; FAO is assisting in setting up an Agriculture Master Plan; the UNDP has funded, alongside the Italian and Brazilian Governments, the formulation of a multi-year telecommunications investment plan by the International Telecommunications Union for Malta.

But why should it prove so difficult to plan successfully in the Maltese context? The blame could be easily placed full square on the incompetence and shortsightedness of planners and/or of those entrusted with the plan’s implementation. But a comprehensive evaluation must perforce consider the impact of external events over which Maltese development planners, for all their lip service to economic management, have very little control. Put differently, much of the aim of the development trajectory has probably been precisely to move away from this embarrassingly volatile situation (Baker 1992b:213; Fairbairn 1971:102).

3.5 Elusive Viability

Such a state of vulnerability has long been endured in the Maltese Islands. It is not only a recent historical phenomenon,
even though the gap between the rhetoric of planning and the unfolding of economic fortune recently has highlighted the pattern even more starkly. A fortress economy meant an almost total dependence upon military expenditures. This "offered no stable means of livelihood but brought fluctuations according to the prevailing international situation and the strategic decisions taken by the Colonial and War Offices in London" (Zammit 1984:12). "The economy of the Maltese Islands under Britain took the form of an artificial cycle determined not by the vicissitudes of the market, but by the exigencies of military security. War marked the upswing of the Maltese economic cycle; the return of peace was the harbinger of a downswing" (Busuttil 1973:1). "A pattern of affluence and poverty established itself" (Baldacchino 1988a:64).

The onset of political independence must have impressed on the Maltese policy makers the importance of breaking out of this chaotic mould, striving for a more noble state of viability; an economic growth pattern in which Malta would be as sovereign as its political independence implied. In this, expert advice from abroad was not lacking. As spelt out in the introduction to the Second Development Plan, development planning in Malta was required in the context of a long term objective:

"...to create a competitive economic structure largely oriented towards the export market ...U.N. experts estimate that it would take Malta between 15 and 25 years before ultimate viability can be achieved... During this period, Malta will require outside help... until the economy reaches the 'take off' stage of development, when endogenous forces will be expected to support growth and lead the economy to eventual maturity". (2nd Plan:1)
The mirage of "ultimate viability" and "eventual maturity" has persisted stubbornly on the distant horizon. Today, some 30 years after that statement was boldly pronounced, Malta is still perhaps just as far from any notion of endogenously led, self-generated development.

3.6 Industry and its Perilous Giant

A sober assessment of the country's manufacturing capacity is well borne out from the avis (opinion) produced in June 1993 by the Commission of the European Communities (EC) with respect to Malta's bid for EC membership. Accounting for 28% of value added, 23% of total employment and 52% of the country's exports of goods and services suggests a sound and healthy performance. A more discriminating analysis proves that the sector's buoyancy is restricted to a few, relatively large, mainly foreign firms (See Table 3); whereas the remaining large majority are serving the domestic market and depend on protectionist policies:

"Malta is a small economy, in which the great majority (more than 75%) of its industrial companies employ fewer than five people. Of the 2,300 companies registered, only 61 (less than 3%) employ more than 100 staff and only 12 more than 300.

And:

The vast majority of the smaller companies are engaged in sectors such as construction, machinery repairs, food and furniture and primarily target the domestic market. These companies account for more than 70% of industrial employment on the islands: Their productivity is very low and their wages generally poor. In most sectors, they are sheltered from foreign competition by protective trade legislation and by extremely stringent tariff and non-tariff barriers."
Table 3: Manufacturing, Quarrying & Construction Industries, Malta
Analysis of firms by size of employment

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<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>2310</td>
<td>2206</td>
<td>2323</td>
<td>31906</td>
<td>32021</td>
<td>33184</td>
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Employment Levels:

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<th>1645</th>
<th>1752</th>
<th>3635</th>
<th>3347</th>
<th>3524</th>
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<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>1571</td>
<td>1412</td>
<td>1541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-19</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>1940</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-49</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>3948</td>
<td>3992</td>
<td>3717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-99</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3891</td>
<td>4228</td>
<td>4253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-19</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>6241</td>
<td>6168</td>
<td>5491</td>
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<tr>
<td>200-299</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>1873</td>
<td>3283</td>
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<tr>
<td>300+</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8829</td>
<td>9033</td>
<td>9435</td>
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One case which merits being singled out for analysis is the largest private company operating in Malta: The assembly and testing subsidiary of the French/Italian semiconductor multinational SGS-Thomson. Maltese national export statistics are dominated by the export figures of this relative giant, which currently employs some 1,200 workers, 300 of whom are graduates. The latter include some 75% of the island’s total stock of engineers. Close to 60% of total domestic exports by value over 1992 have been attributed to this one company. One shudders to think what would be the overall economic and social effect of relocation or restructuring decisions taken with respect to the Malta based subsidiary by the company directors abroad:
"...the Maltese economy is now dangerously dependent on continued foreign investment and the upgrading of the local SGS-Thomson plant". (Zammit & Mintoff Bland 1992:17)

And:

"There are undoubted risks associated with Malta's extreme dependence on this one company, bearing in mind that its new investment and other aspects of future performance are factors largely under the control of the management of the one company, rather than the government". (Coopers & Lybrand Europe 1991:34)

And again:

"SGS-Thomson can go in a single day". 32

One expression of the "economic, political and cultural vulnerability" (Bacchus 1989:10) engendered by this one firm on the Maltese state was the firm's successful 1988 campaign to lobby the Maltese Government to rescind its commitment to an ILO Convention prohibiting night shift work for women in manufacturing33. In the meantime, a prominent press article based on the 1992 national economic survey extols the electrical machinery sub-sector's performance without even hinting that 95% of its turnover is attributable to one firm, SGS-Thomson34.

This concern is not without historical precedent in Malta: Other large employers like Plessey and G.K.N., which had stood out as strong, model, foreign firms (e.g. Jones 1971:136) have relocated elsewhere.

Upswings and downswings of particular discrete industries or particular discrete contributions to the Maltese national balance of payments can be thus vertiginous - even though their effect may be concealed in national data or by smooth curving.
3.7 Take-Off into Incorporation?

Certain observers point out that the hoped for Rostowian "take off" would seem to have occurred in Malta in the late sixties (Metwally 1977:51; Zammit 1984:19). The illusion of self-induced growth is established and cultivated, thus imbuing confidence in the planners of the day and incentivising further the provision of aid and investment from abroad and of political support at home. Whether any such take off has actually occurred is debatable. A wry observation - whether a tourist influx and a building boom could be justified as a 'take off' in the proper meaning of the term; and whether this was actually the result of conscious development strategy or of unforeseen forces of outside demand (Jones 1971:130) - had best be allowed to pass by discreetly.

After 20 years, the dilemma has not abated. Malta's GDP has been increasing at the respectable rate of some 6% per annum at constant prices over recent years (Delia 1993:6; Streeten 1993:199). But to what extent is this "significant exuberance" (Scicluna 1991:39) due to inward looking impulses; namely, a high discretionary state expenditure on infrastructural projects which include a new power station, new freeport and airport terminals, and an overhaul of the telecommunications system?:

"One cannot ignore however the not so invisible strong hand of government behind the job creation in our present day economy. If not directly in keeping the overblown public sector [directly responsible for some 40% of total employment] as is, government is indirectly providing about half of the new jobs created in the private sector, through
The general economic climate for the attraction of new foreign investment into Malta is meant to have improved enormously since 1988, when a generously revamped Industrial Promotions Act was passed through Parliament. The official targets for new foreign investment anticipate up to 35 new projects with 50 or more employees each per year, generating some 2000 annual jobs in mainly export-oriented activities (Coopers & Lybrand Europe 1991:38). The liberalisation of trade has been pushed to the forefront of the government's political and economic agenda (Scicluna 1991:4). The entire manufacturing sector is meant to be passing through a restructuring phase which should increase efficiency and competitiveness on both the local market and with a view towards a deeper penetration of European markets (M.E.A. 1990:23).

But the country's competitive attraction has been reduced by its inability to compete with newly industrialising, low-cost economies (such as Tunisia, Morocco) or the lower freight costs associated with Eastern Europe (Coopers & Lybrand Europe 1991:34,39). Approximately 40% of private manufacturing employment survives by virtue of insulation provided by high import controls35. This has enabled:

"...the majority of Maltese firms selling into the domestic market to survive reasonable comfortably but provided little or no incentive to increased investment, enhanced labour productivity and improved productive efficiency more generally". (Coopers & Lybrand Europe 1991:22)
Government rhetoric in favour of liberalisation has in effect involved the replacement of one form of restrictive practice by another: The introduction in 1989 of hefty import levies to goods previously restricted through quantitative controls:

"The present system continues to be highly restrictive and protectionist...many individual businesses are motivated at present to continue to lobby for protection instead of getting on with the task of restructuring their companies". (Coopers & Lybrand Europe 1991:37-8)

Orthodox business sense in Malta indeed continues to imply the sense of merchant capital, the sense of importation and distribution, the sense of the Chamber of Commerce (Vella 1993).

The Maltese Government's lip service to liberalisation and industrialisation by invitation is not only a case of playing the tune which international significant others (including potential investors, aid agencies and the EC Commission) want to hear. The perpetration of protectionism, for all its foul connotations, is not so unwarranted, given that even the country's export-oriented flagships are dependent on concessionary agreements: Malta's trade statistics over these last years consistently report an extremely high dependence of industrial export earnings on just two sub-sectors: electrical machinery (62% of total in the period January-September 1992) and clothing products (16%). The 1970 Association Agreement of Malta with the EC, and its extensions, ensure duty free access of these products to European markets, effectively providing a "high external protection" (Coopers &
Lybrand Europe 1991:34) which grants the sectors a reasonable basis for continued existence and steady expansion.\textsuperscript{36}

The irony is that the process of chasing the viability phantom has proved to date productive. Malta can today boast of a success story which reads as a lesson in incorporation and even stronger dependency on exogenous forces. This may not be palatable from a nationalistic perspective; and it carries high economic risks; but such may be brushed aside or camouflaged as long as the incorporation delivers the economic goods.

It appears only natural to assume that Malta's bid to join the EC is mainly intended to cement institutionally this incorporation and to guarantee even more solidly the transfer of largesse from the core to the small Maltese periphery.\textsuperscript{37} Malta's small size is introduced into the debate as a bargaining asset; and this may well work in Malta's favour, the EC becoming a signatory to what otherwise looks like being a blatant economic rip-off, a case of intensified and institutionalised parasitism:

"Malta would be a net beneficiary from non-agricultural transfer payments and should have an easier passage in obtaining these because the magnitudes involved will hardly impinge on the overall Community budget".\textsuperscript{38}

Even Malta's promotion as an offshore banking site, incompatible with the EC's broad tax harmonisation principles, and still a dynamic issue within the Community, is argued not to be an insurmountable problem for Malta's membership, "especially in view of Malta's small dimensions;...our smallness could be a
truly saving grace in the final analysis" (Frendo & Bonnici 1989:171,165).

Both main political parties in Malta remain keen to establish a privileged relationship with the EC, the main local quarrel being whether this ought to be negotiated as a component, or to the exclusion, of full EC membership (Bartholy 1989).

Interestingly, Malta's first development strategy, even prior to development planning in the 1950s, was to seek integration with Britain. Malta's smallness was one variable which was indicated as contributing favourably to Malta's bid even here:

"He [Mintoff, Malta's Prime Minister] assured Bevan [Deputy Leader of the British Labour Party] that Malta's smallness, historical continuity and her geographical position in the midst of democracies...were all factors which militated in favour of integration". 39

4. BARBADOS

4.1 Entry into Colonialism

"It must be appreciated that small dependent Caribbean countries are not able to cut themselves off in the way that China has done from time to time". (Potter 1990c:289)

Barbados, a coralline limestone block 414 square kilometres in area, entered into colonialism when it was settled by the English in 1627. The island was found to be totally uninhabited, although
there were obvious indications of earlier Arawak and Carib civilisations. Starting therefore practically from scratch, the early European settlers soon established themselves as independent farmers with a thriving and self-sufficient agricultural economy, producing a variety of food crops and exporting primarily tobacco, but also indigo and cotton.

The economic, and consequently the social, basis of production in Barbados went however through a radical transformation within two decades with the supplanting of tobacco by sugar as the main crop. The clayey and porous soils, the ideal topography, weather and rainfall conditions, the crop cycle of the sugar cane plant and high price that prevailed for the product in European markets at the time, soon made it the ideal cash crop for the island’s community. But sugar, unlike tobacco, required heavy capital and labour investment (Lowenthal 1972, Chapter 2). Soon enough, the island was carved up into extensive sugar plantations, crowding out the small independent farmers, most of whom left the island. In their place, the transformation brought about a need for a cheap and continuous supply of a strong yet docile labour force. For almost 300 years, Barbados was a rigid sugar monocrop economy, a floating plantation whose raison d’être was the appeasement of Europe’s sweet tooth. An essentially white plantocracy owned and controlled the land; a multitude of black slaves provided the necessary labour power.

The fortunes and fates of Barbados were practically identical to the cycle of prosperity and adversity experienced by the quality
and quantity of the 'King Sugar' monocrop and by the price it fetched on the international market (Hoyos 1978, Chapter 14). The industry has, however, been going through a slow but steady decline for decades now: Europe is now a net sugar exporter; the necessity to maintain competitiveness has meant an investment in technology which has led to reductions in employment as well as to a concentration of plant; the association of the industry with slavery makes the work involved unattractive and of low status to Bajans; wage rates are regionally uncompetitive; and typically preferential prices are liable to collapse if the EC's Common Agricultural Policy and its existing trade barriers and subsidies is eroded. The Barbados Sugar Industries Limited is now heavily indebted and in receivership; In spite of a local consortium (self-styled Agro-Industrial Management Services) vying to take over, U.K.-based Booker Tate is preparing to assume control and is set to further "rationalise" the ailing industry.

Commerce remains very much the lifeblood of the country. Wholesale and retail trade, dealing mostly in imported goods, and related services, are the main sources of employment as well as GDP. The source of power of the economic elite is similarly distributive not productive (Barrow & Greene 1979; Beckles 1989). The capital city, Bridgetown, and its suburbs, which together constitute the one and only semi-urban sector of the island, owes its existence and relative prosperity to this primarily exogenous function as an international trading outpost (McKee & Tisdell 1990:62,159; Potter 1990c:267; Potter & Dann 1990:174-5). The strategic location of the island at the eastern end of the
Caribbean basin is partly responsible for this entrepôt role, Bridgetown becoming historically an obligatory port of call to outgoing and incoming Atlantic traffic. The same comparative advantage explains the early establishment of quite satisfactory airline connections across both sides of the Atlantic.

The main net contributor to foreign exchange in the country is however tourism. This contributes close to half the country's foreign currency receipts gleaned from the exports of goods and services. The sun, sea, sand (and sex?) package, the insular attraction and, some would add, the welcoming character of its people contributed to the growth and development of a vibrant industry starting in the early 1960s. Barbados, as with other Caribbean islands, is particularly attractive as a tourist resort when it is winter in the northern hemisphere.

The island, already one of the most densely populated territories in the world, now sees more tourists annually than it has citizens. With its quarter of a million residents, Barbados welcomed 394,000 stay over visitors and 372,000 cruise ship passengers during 1991, generating an estimated tourist revenue of US$500 million (B.D.T.S. 1991).

4.2 Colonial Grooming

This dense tourist presence is a facet of the island's cosmopolitanism: The breadth and depth of the colonial impact on
the island of Barbados has led it to conform to a case of near-total colonial penetration (Atchoarena 1988:57). Barbados is one "example of the capacity of colonialism to effect an infiltration of culture to the point where it becomes endemic" (Brock 1982:123). The trappings of metropolitan mimicry are everywhere: The names of people and places, the clothes, language, bureaucratic procedures, architecture and mind frame of the locals:

"The influences of mass tourism, and the operations of Hilton Hotels, Marriott's, Best Western Hotels and Kentucky Fried Chicken has assured that each passing North American fad is meticulously mimicked as the population becomes caught up in a whirlwind of jazzying, breakdancing, beauty pageants, discos, health clubs and aerobics. The imitative lifestyle is further reinforced by the frequent exodus of thousands of Barbadians in search of relatives and US dollars, courtesy of Eastern, American or Pan Am". (Potter & Dann 1987:xix-xx)

Historically groomed as 'Little England', Barbados qualifies better nowadays to the notion of 'Little America'. But the very same exogenous orientation which makes the country so easily at home with the principles and guise of 'modernisation' (McElroy & Albuquerque 1986:32) reveals its vulnerability when its lack of local infrastructural correspondence - in cultural, political or socio-economic capacity - is exposed.

4.3 The Imperatives of Planning

The ascendency of both trade and tourism did not emerge as a result of a deliberate and conscious development strategy but in
spite of it. Visiting British economists were also not favourably disposed to an industrial strategy which might reduce the colony's imports of goods manufactured in Britain. Early development plans were still gripped by the notion that the greatest well-being for the country and its inhabitants was to be secured via the increase of agricultural productivity, given that, apparently, sugar constituted the country's only and obvious exploitable resource (Howard 1989:23):

"In general, the policy of the Barbados government towards tourism since 1946 had tended to be passive or reactive, rather than active... In the first three Development Plans: 1946/56, 1952/57 and 1955/60, one can discern no real policy towards tourism. Rather, planners saw the economy as being based on sugar and therefore went no further than recognising the potential contribution which tourism might be able to make to the development of the economy". (Marshall 1978:4-5)

The main thrust of these and subsequent development plans was rather the combating of chronic unemployment via two broad policies: The first was an expanded public works programme, including work on the deep water harbour (Howard 1989, Chapter 3; Marshall 1978:5). Planning for economic growth was primarily conceived in terms of the generation of construction activities and their extensive local multipliers:

"Government has played an active expansionist role, directly and via the construction sector... Government has played an important role in generating construction activity. Major government contributions were harbour construction $28m (1957-60) and $33m (1976-79); industrial estates $2m (1964-66) and $7 (1977-78); replacement of the island's general hospital $7m (1959-65); airport improvements and extensions $28m (1977-80) and housing $18m (1973-79)".43
This does not exclude the resort to workfare, with the State, ever since the bankruptcy of the capitalist economy in the late 1930s, becoming by far the largest employer of labour and responsible for at least 20% of GDP\(^4\).

The other component of government policy was supply oriented and consisted in promoting emigration since this directly reduces the number of job seekers, lowers the birth rate and encourages transfers of foreign exchange from the migrants back to their families still in the country. Barbadians had already developed such a transnational survival orientation:

"In general, it may be said that Barbadian emigrants went wherever work was obtainable, along the shipping routes touching at Barbados. Barbadians worked as sailors on Caribbean vessels, as servants in the cities of the Eastern USA, as labourers along the shores of the Caribbean, and as agricultural labourers in Cuba, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad, British Guiana and Central America". (Starkey 1939:130)

Early in the twentieth century, many went to work on the construction of the Panama Canal. For a number of years, the earnings of Barbadians in building this canal - *Panama Money* - were the chief source of foreign remittances into the island's economy (Hoyos 1978:185-6; Karch 1981:219):

"During the zenith of the [emigration] movement, 1904-1920, these remittances were sufficient to pay for between one-tenth and one-fifth of the annual imports of the island". (Roberts 1955:282)

State-aided migration from Barbados in the immediate post-World War Two period rested on three basic schemes: Sponsored permanent migration (especially to the United Kingdom between 1950 and
1965); loan guarantees for migrants and temporary contract migration, especially to the United States and Canada, the latter primarily under a farm labour contract scheme (Howard 1989:76-8).

The 1965-68 Development Plan is typical in explicitly advocating the training of Barbadians in skills which were scarce and sought after in other countries so as to increase their chances for emigration - in this way continuing the policy which was stated in previous planning documents of encouraging emigration as a means of eradicating the unemployment problem (Marshall 1978:6).

High levels of unemployment have not been eliminated in Barbados. Yet, without an active migration policy, would not unemployment have been an even more acute problem?:

"...without past emigration, Barbados would be substantially more populated than it is today. From 1950-70, 25 per cent of Barbadians emigrated. This represents half of all the males and nearly half of all the females born between 1931 and 1945. If they had not left, the current population would be over 370,000". (Pariser 1990:42)

And, in the early 1980s, money sent home by overseas Barbadians was still the country's third largest source of foreign exchange, after tourism and sugar (La Boucherie 1983:68).

4.4 Industrialisation: Hope and Despair

The temptation to copy Puerto Rico and its Operation Bootstrap ushered in an industrialisation drive from 1958 (Barry et.al.
This was based on a regime of fiscal incentives designed to reduce the cost and increase the rate of return of investment in the manufacturing sector. The incentives offered were of the usual type: tax holidays on profits, dividends and interests; duty concessions on imports of raw material, machinery and other inputs; factory space at concessionary rates made available on a series of newly built industrial estates (Worrell 1982: 77-8). By the early 1980s, around a hundred enterprises were in operation, of which half had exclusively foreign ownership; together, these employed around 15,100 workers, or 15% of the labour force (Potter 1981: 225). The future looked promising: 5,000 more jobs were targeted for creation by 1983. "The manufacturing sector...therefore seems set to play a leading role in the development of the Barbadian economy" (Potter 1981: 228).

This assessment has turned out to have been rather optimistic in retrospect. Out of 10 industrial parks constructed, only 4 had managed to attract more than 9 enterprises by 1980, when foreign investment and employment in manufacturing were most buoyant (Potter 1981: 226). The newest industrial estate, built at Six Men’s, St. Peter, in the 1980s, has had to be embarrassingly converted into a residential housing project. The production of clothing and furniture has fallen in 1992 to 20% and 70% respectively of 1982 levels (Central Bank of Barbados 1992a: 2).

A combination of factors is likely to have been responsible for this turn of events: The country’s relatively high wages have
dented its international competitiveness (Howard 1989:67; La Boucherie 1983:68). Significant trade union activity and militancy has also apparently dissuaded companies from setting up shop or else to relocate (Barry et al. 1984:265): After all, in the Caribbean, footloose capital is a relatively commonplace affair, given that there are so many competing territories (e.g. Kelly 1986:833-4). Furthermore, the surviving manufacturing industry displays an excessively high dependence on the domestic market (Howard 1989:67,89). A substantial proportion of these industries survive because of preferential protectionist policies in any case47; or else because they tap the equally protected but fickle captured tourist presence on the island48. The profile of manufacturing industry in Barbados today reflects a preponderance of domestically oriented, small scale industries with very low employment levels per unit, along with a very few medium-scale foreign companies which government is hard put to keep at home. There are today 220 manufacturing firms employing in all 7,780 workers, two-thirds of whom are female, half the number in manufacturing employment 10 years ago. All but 5 of these firms each employ less than 250 employees; and the large majority of firms - 143 - employ up to 24 employees, with a mean of 6 workers per firm (See Table 4).

The crisis associated with the relocation of any one of these five medium sized units can be substantial. Even the otherwise militant Barbados Workers' Union (BWU) seems reconciled to the fact that so many, mostly female, workers engaged in the data-
processing industry are effectively denied union membership, this apparently being the price to be paid for job preservation\footnote{49}.

Table 4: The Manufacturing Sector in Barbados - March 1992 \footnote{50}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic sector</th>
<th>Number of Employees by category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food, Beverage &amp; Tobacco</td>
<td>159(19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles, Apparel &amp; Leather</td>
<td>199(22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooden Products</td>
<td>220(21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Products &amp; Printing</td>
<td>89(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemicals &amp; Toiletries</td>
<td>77 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastic Products</td>
<td>80 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Metallic Mineral Products</td>
<td>49 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricated Metal Products</td>
<td>104(15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precision &amp; Electrical Equipment</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Equipment</td>
<td>15 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handicraft</td>
<td>51(21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Manufacturing</td>
<td>62 (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Processing</td>
<td>77 (7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 1182(143) 4434(72) 1231(4) 936(1) 7783(220)

Number in brackets refers to number of firms per category.

4.5 INTEL: Inside and Out

A case in point is the trauma associated with the decision by a giant subsidiary of the electronics firm INTEL to relocate in the mid-1980s. The company was one of the proud jewels in the island's manufacturing crown, used as bait to entice other equally prestigious firms to set up shop:

"The country's development corporation proudly boasts 'You can judge an island by the companies it keeps'. These companies include U.S. Industries, Becton Dickinson, TRW, Caribbean Data Services, Esmark's Playtex, INTEL, Bristol-Myers and Berger Paints(U.K.)." (Barry et.al. 1984:265)
Considering that, out of the above list, only CDS and Berger remain operant in Barbados in 1992, the retention record is rather poor. Employing a peak of 1,100 workers, some of whom with highly specialist skills not in demand by any other firm in the country, the decision by INTEL to close down was a grave psychological blow, even though it was staggered over a number of months. The unfortunate employees did at least receive severance benefits. But the closure went totally against the grain of declarations made by a senior company official. These had intimated a strong commitment to stay in Barbados:

"At...INTEL Barbados Ltd., a subsidiary of the California-based computer components giant...Fred Hopkins, INTEL’s Kentucky-born manager, showed me around the new plant, where the mostly female day shift sat before machines utilising ultrasonic waves to "weld' connecting wires to the integrated circuits. "Why Barbados?" I queried, knowing the country’s wage rates, while low by U.S. standards, are considerably higher than those in many nearby developing nations. Mr Hopkins replied:

Political stability; a well-educated, English-speaking work force; and close proximity to the States. We’re happy here. We plan to double our labour force within a few years. And this building isn’t leased; we built it and own it ourselves. We feel that owning it is a statement to the community that we plan to be here for some time to come; a demonstration of corporate citizenship". (La Boucherie 1983: 38-9)

The production of electronic components declined by 67.2% when this major company closed down; the value of total domestic exports in 1987 was half that pertaining in 1986, when INTEL was still operating(Central Bank of Barbados 1992b:69, Table H5).

For over six years, the sprawling factory site remained unoccupied, a silent monument to the country’s vulnerability. In summer 1992, it was opened as a shopping mall, even though its
location leaves much to be desired. It is surprising indeed that whereas the University of West Indies Library at the Barbados campus is replete with computer science literature concerning various INTEL co-processors, there is no reference to any study on the socio-economic impact of this episode.

4.6 Development? What Development?

Meanwhile, in the early 1990's, the party seems to be over. The momentum of affluence which has kept the island state going so well since independence, has suddenly shifted into low gear. The jewel of the Caribbean, the proud capital of the short-lived West Indies Federation, is facing the worst socio-economic crisis of the last two and a half decades. A crisis which, as an emigrated Barbadian academic has commented, results in the explosion of the myth of the modernisation principle which the country adopted wholeheartedly (not necessarily as a deliberate, conscious effort) as its development priority.

"Look at unemployment, declining standards, insecurity. The model of development as modernisation, as unlimited progress, is on the way out."33

The writing was thus suddenly on the wall: The Barbadian economy was not as strong as had been imagined: An envious per capita GNP figure is not a sufficient indicator; nor is a prestigious ranking (20th out of 160 states) on the Human Development Index published by the UNDP for 1992:
"In the 1960's we were made to think that there were a lot of prospects for development. But we don't seem to be heading anywhere right now." (economist)

Each of the country's main money spinners was now in deep trouble: The paradise package attracted tourists and foreign exchange; this appears caught in a vicious spiral of stagnation. The bastion of conservatism in a strategically turbulent Caribbean attracted some investment under the Caribbean Basin Initiatives; but the Communist threat in the region is now history and the main concerns of the region's sponsors have shifted inward, from CBI to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). A preferential sugar protocol under the ACP-EC Lome' Agreements used to fetch a good price for an otherwise uncompetitive crop; this seems to be going up in smoke following successful lobbying by the World's efficient agricultural producers to reform the EEC's Common Agricultural Policy. Import tariffs provided substantial revenue to government and at the same time protected the infant, local industry - there are now strong demands by external players to liberalise the economy. A conscious emigration policy attracted remittances in cash and in kind from abroad; but now most of the escape route hatches are adamantly closed.

A sober diagnosis is not difficult: Barbados has never challenged its dependency status. It had always sought to maximise the benefits accruing from being a satellite of larger, more affluent economies:
"We have been playing the prostitute, looking for a patron, for a sugar daddy. Our markets are driven by privileged associations and preferential access - a continuation of colonial relationships. We are not challenging the structure of dependence and we are not upgrading ourselves to be able to challenge the world order because we are not competing." (political scientist)

The Barbadian policy maker therefore does not have much control over the variables which are expected to bring 'development' about:

"In such a [small] economy therefore, in which consumption, investment and government expenditure are largely indirectly determined by exogenous factors, it is apparent that the effectiveness of economic programming, per se, in achieving major policy objectives like a desired rate of growth of output, is quite limited. The crucial variables controlling growth are, in fact, the attitude of the British Government to the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement, the level of economic activity in North America, the economic policies of the governments of the U.S.A. and Canada, and the relationship of the island with all of these countries. It must be recognised then, that because of very small size and external dependence, economic programming as narrowly defined can never be the decisive determinant of growth and structure of the economy". (Emtage 1969:204)

Pan Am is no longer there; nor is Eastern Airlines, their air seat capacity lost to the island. And the bad news spills over to other carriers:

"American Airlines is also experiencing financial difficulty as is British West Indian Airlines. Without these two carriers, and in the light of Barbados' inability to attract Delta or United, the island's U.S.A. market/transportation links would be in real trouble".54

The sugar industry is bankrupt, tourism receipts declining, IMF conditionalities lead to hitherto unheard of public sector

117
redundancies and higher than normal unemployment figures. All the same, there is promulgated a rhetoric of 'development' planning which proclaims faith and confidence in an economy which is allegedly transforming itself into a modern nation state. But modernisation is not development; progress may actually turn out to be auto-suggestion, hype and a valuable public relations stunt, for local and foreign consumption. The turmoil currently experienced by Barbados reveals the startling successes but equally striking economic disasters which a transfer cum welfare economy can and does experience:

"We are in a wire trap, with the impression of movement and change. We borrow enough money to keep us in this trap."

(political scientist)

It is in such a situation of dire straits that the developing microstate economy reveals its structural weakness. Being a small polity and economy, a drop of international charity is sufficient. But the converse also applies: The loss of the same drop could spell catastrophe. The economy reveals itself, both in a benign and malign sense, to be prone and sensitive even to relatively small developments. As has been commented:

"The closure or opening of one business may alter the demand in one particular specialism by 50 or even 100 per cent".

(Jeffcock 1978:37)

In this manner, the economy exposes its true character: A heavy dependence even on relatively modest investors, employers, tour
operators and international aid donors, each of whom can easily establish a monopolistic position, with serious repercussions on the labour force:

"A firm like INTEL, in full swing employing hundreds of workers making capacitors, suddenly pulled out. There's a lot of that happening. The guys come in, they get a tax holiday for 10 years. After 9 years they start to make noises. Then they leave. So you invest in the specific skills required by a foreign company and when this leaves, their employees are unemployed and perhaps unemployable." (educationist)

4.7 We Take What We Get

Development planning actually reads as the attempt to diversify the transfer and welfare portfolio, accepting all that is offered, hoping to be able to ensure enough pebble stones to ride the torrent of economic instability and quickly replacing those which suddenly get carried away by the current:

"Small islands find it very hard to indulge in any kind of forward planning. But you have to plan, using the collective wisdom of who the planners are. It's a hit and miss which leads to a wastage small countries can ill afford". (educationist)

The question to ask is not whether plans will go wrong but when:

"There is a degree of ad hocism in planning. People write development plans but these diverge from the way that the plan works out. Crises, recessions...these altered significantly some of the targets which were set. Even some of the yearly budgeting diverged from the long term plans". (economist)
Ultimately, beggars cannot be choosers:

"The presence of turbulence and uncertainty does not mean you shouldn't plan. But if you appraise the success of development planning in terms of international inputs, then the results are not rosy at all. See the sugar industry and the different platitudes of each development plan. The manufacturing sector is getting a beating, notwithstanding what government is saying and in spite of what the Industrial Development Corporation does or can do. We take what we get. Do we plan the type of industry which comes to Barbados? Are we conscious of the impact of particular technologies? No. We are glad when Corporation X or Y, whatever it may produce, shows an interest in setting up shop locally". (management lecturer)

4.8 Agency Responses

Nevertheless, the values of sovereignty suggested by political independence and by the scientific rigour of the planning procedure per se remain forceful and ascendant in the perception of many Barbadian social science academics. This is in part a natural defence mechanism, reflecting notions of nationalistic pride and professional competence. But there is also a strong, belief in environmental mastery, a feeling that the country's current economic mess could have been avoided and can still be put right given effective management, because it emerged as a consequence of unprofessional handling by the policy makers:

"The erratic nature of economic behaviour is more likely to be explained by ineffective management". (economist)

Smallness, vulnerability, sensitivity and the tendency towards monopolisation, may be discarded as merely convenient geographic excuses.
Such interpretations of social reality are however also likely to reflect the pervasive, near hegemonic influence of a technocratic, quantifiable and strategic management paradigm, bred by American institutes of higher education, to whose doctoral programmes, conferences and textbooks West Indian academics are typically socialised:

"Our thought systems in the Caribbean have been trained up North - trained to define causation, to reject the non-scientific. And the more positivistic the orientation, the greater the collegial acceptance". (educationist)

4.9 Rescinding or Increasing Dependency?

A sober diagnosis of the condition typically takes one of two broad packages. If Barbados never challenged its dependency status, then it could either try and do so now or else seek to negotiate its dependency better. A third option would be to combine flexibly and strategically these two policy platforms.

If the contemporary economic trends are seen as a reprimand for past behaviour, the policy suggestion is that the country's best bet is to adopt a different development path. But this is well nigh expecting the impossible from a country which can barely even conceive of such alternatives, let alone implement them, while autarchy is recognised as a pure fiction. The only conceptions with a grain of potential viability are those of a Caribbean Economic Community, a natural economic and fiscal
extension of the historically and culturally united Caribbean people:

"The people are very much in favour of integration. But the politicians do not want this. We are a Caribbean people, and colonialism has kept us apart". (educationist)

Unfortunately, the economic structures of the different Caribbean nations, with their disproportionate reliance on and competition over a few cash crops for which they themselves lack a large enough market, makes even this task a utopian fantasy; this not to mention the political feuds and resistances which had undermined the West Indies Federation of 1958–62:

"Our national identity goes beyond the territory, perhaps even the region, to Africa and the diaspora. This would be a more genuine nationalistic position. Unfortunately, nationalism has led to petty parochialism and insular prejudice". (political scientist)

In contrast, the diagnosis of the current situation may be expressed in terms of a failure to extract greater rentier income from the attraction of the country to foreign interests: The lack of cultivation and preservation of a rather particular tourist package; the lost opportunity of developing yacht marina and more extensive shipping and transhipping facilities in what remains geographically the last or first port-of-call for transatlantic journeys; the failure to tap the finances of Barbadian nationals and their families living abroad in funding local projects; the promise, and dangers, of providing financial services:
"A foreign company sets up a hived off insurance company which is then set up in Barbados. But government does not know how much money is flowing in. And when dealing with foreign money you have to be careful: There's the danger of money laundering. We can't survive without such a strategy. But we have to market carefully. I think that offshore business is the leading arm of the economy. The nature of the game is taxation". (management lecturer)

The objective is to engender economic security via more prosperous links with the metropole, then perhaps the ultimate here is to be taken in tow by a benevolent sponsor - such as in or without the nascent NAFTA. Small size comes in here again, hopefully to the rescue:

"The hope is that through the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI), the small Caribbean nations would obtain benefits in NAFTA that would not have to be reciprocated...small states have peculiar problems because of their small populations and [these] concessions would make relatively little difference to the economies of the three main NAFTA nations ...Do we have a strong enough lobby in Washington to find backing for special concessions under the CBI...?" 56

seems an enviable destiny for a small country like Barbados strive for integration; but not with its equally poor estate companions. Its policy makers have not been the only in the region to suggest making "a bold bid to become the state of the United States of America, or, probably better, ida's 11th province" (McDonald 1989:175).

5. TAKING STOCK
The above accounts identify a large number of comparable situations and experiences, too many to prove coincidental given the large substantive differences between the two countries. It thus appears appropriate to suggest that the Maltese and Bajan episodes are manifestations of microstate 'pseudo-development' at work. The rapprochement with the EC and NAFTA, the impact of SGS-Thomson and INTEL, the protected nature of most manufacturing activity, the inducing of economic growth via state sponsored infrastructural work and other workfare; the doubly deceiving yet useful rhetoric of development and planning; the persistent hopes of viability via industrialisation; the historical legacy of colonial grooming which makes cultural and economic incorporation with a metropolitan sponsor attractive, if not inevitable... these and other interesting parallelisms are highlighted by the critical accounts of the experiences of Malta and Barbados when these are problematised within a theoretical framework which is disengaged from mainstream development discourse. The successful streak that Malta is passing through at the moment, and the economic crisis of contemporary Barbados, are glaring and contrasting reminders that, in spite of the island states' basically similar lilliputian predicament, the high-risk and fickle nature of the survival game must not be underplayed.

The manner with which external events impinge on the open micro-economy wreak havoc with the principles of directionality and irreversibility attributed to sound economic management. Planning becomes perforce based on projections of past behaviour; desirable assumptions; unfailingly, a ceteris paribus condition,
plus a few wild guesses (Atchoarena 1988: 58; Fergus 1987: 39). Yet, if the fundamental targets of economic development - foreign investment, GNP per capita growth, employment provision, higher export revenues - are achieved, then would not the planning exercise be deemed successful? 57

Katzenstein (1985: 211) concludes his review of industrial policies pursued by the 'small' (developed) European states 58 by resorting to an ancient fable:

"The adjustment strategy of the small European states is summed up by the story of the snake, the frog and the owl. Fearful of being devoured by the snake, the frog asks the owl how he might survive. The owl’s response is brief and cryptic: learn how to fly. None of the small European states has learned to soar like the eagle. What they have learnt to cultivate is an amazing capacity to jump. Although they appear to land on their stomachs, in fact they always land on their feet and retain the ability to jump again and again in different directions, correcting their course as they go along. In a world of great uncertainty and high risk choices, this is an intelligent response".

The predicament of the small developing state is similar, with a dose of extra disadvantages resulting from smaller size, colonial heritage, insularity and distance from world markets. Development Plans may chart "take offs" to prestigious flight paths whereas the practice may be the less stylish but equally productive jumping which characterises 'pseudo-development'. The failure of a microstate to develop may be just as rational a question to ask as querying why a frog does not fly.

It seems that, in much the same way, the microstate citizen as producer has to play the frog. "Manoeuvrability" (Craig 1991: 129)
or "adaptability" (Naipaul 1972:258) can transform relations of dependence from obstacles to opportunities (Chiew 1993). How does a macro-economic setting characterised by changes of fortune filter down to mould and influence microstate labour at the institutional, collective and individual level, without determining the latter's courses of action? And how does colonial penetration foster a discrepancy between labour policy proclamations and labour policy practices? What other dimensions, exacerbated and intensified by smallness, are pertinent to a discussion of microstate labour policy and labour relations? These and similar questions will be addressed in the next chapter.

Notes to Chapter 2

1. A number of studies on the effects of country size on various socio-economic variables have used population, gross national product, gross domestic product, land area, energy consumption and even self-perception as measures of country size. These are considered in Chapter 3.

2. Documented examples of this are found in Payne (1991) and Hoefte & Oostindie (1991) on the British and Dutch Caribbean respectively. Both Malta and Mauritius sought integration with Britain prior to the granting of independence whereas [Greek] Cyprus sought enosis with Greece.

3. When the Surinamese Premier Arran asked the Dutch Antillean Prime Minister Evartsz why the Antilles would not opt for independence, the reply was crude: 'If you allow yourself to be hanged, it does not mean I will do the same': Quoted in Hoefte & Oostindie (1991:75).

4. Microstates have been described as "states without nations" (Cohen 1987a:212) and "states in search of nations still to be formed" (Beetham 1984:209). "The concept of a nation is implied in proclaiming: 'We are too small'; yet, the nation does not exist" (Parris 1974:1); emphasis in original.
5. This applies to such reactions as Black Power, Ras Tafarianism, cargo cults and the Pacific Way: See Howard(1983), Lowenthal(1972:291) and Worsley(1968).

6. This observation has been made ad nauseam. A sample of exponents includes Benedict(1967a:2); Commonwealth Consultative Group(1985); Demas(1965:90-1); Dolman(1985:41); Doumenge (1985:96); Harden(1985); Knox(1967:37); Reid(1974:13); Selwyn (1980:946).

7. These arguments are adapted from Knox (1967) and Ward (1975), and also summarised in Bray & Packer(1993:28-30); Jacome (1992:236) and Payne (1987:52-3). Kuznets (1960:27) argued that "small countries are under a greater handicap than large in the task of economic growth"; small, at that time, meant a cut-off point of ten million population. The litany of woe is repeated in most subsequent international conferences organised on the theme. Possibly Kaminarides(1989:xi-xvi) holds a record for describing 29 'special constraints' which beleaguer microstates in the space of just two pages of text.

8. Evans(1979) argues that only large economies like Brazil and Mexico have the necessary and sufficient condition to undergo "dependent development". Both Fitzgerald(1986) and Thomas(1974) argue that the experience of small countries warrants special consideration based on the size of the economy. Their small country population - Algeria, Angola, Cuba, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, North Korea, Mozambique, Tanzania, Vietnam - is not quite as small as could be. See also review in Rosh & Gonick (1990:365-6).


10. The unlikely cargo has included Napoleon Bonaparte (1815); Saad Zaghul Pasha of Egypt (1922) and Archbishop Makarios of Cyprus (1956).

11. So, for example, the Maldives depend economically on Sri Lanka, itself a relatively poor country. The Comoros for many years 'failed to touch the heart of France', the latter's bountiful patronage limited to Mayotte; São Tomé & Príncipe, as with Cape Verde, has not yet found a more dynamic patron to replace not so prosperous Portugal(Harden 1985:46). Suriname forfeited substantial Dutch aid following the 1980 coup(Thorndike 1990), yet recovered it after the 1991 elections. The Gambia's putative protector, especially after the political crisis of 1981, is just as poor Senegal(Hughes 1983:61).

12. See for example the insightful comparative critique by Hayes (1991) on the conflicting stances held by social scientists on the issue of emigration and microstate dependence in Polynesia.

14. "Many of the problems allegedly faced by small economies are either not peculiar to them or can be addressed through suitable policy measures" (Srinivasan 1986:217).

15. See, for example, the 1985 World Bank country studies of Caribbean microstates, and their review by Dolman (1988).


17. The last developing microstate to achieve full, independent sovereignty was actually oil-rich Brunei Darussalam in January 1984. In spite of there being some 40 potential independent microstates (see Chapter 6 Note 3 below), the process of decolonisation has ground to a halt. The Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands, which became independent nations in 1991, did so only after concluding a compact of free association with the U.S.A., guaranteeing them a substantial aid package in exchange for forfeiting control over foreign policy. Dependent development without political sovereignty appears a rewarding contemporary strategy for small territories.

18. I was reminded of this when former prime minister of Malta, Dom Mintoff, savagely attacked the notion of mendicancy I had proposed in a conference paper to laud microstate diplomacy (Baldacchino 1992a).

19. See Elek et.al.(1993) on the liberalisation and diversification of the Fijian economy since the 1987 coups, and Bheenick & Schapiro(1991) on the industrialisation 'miracle' in Mauritius. The latter, however, needs to be seen in the context of the country's revenue from highly privileged sugar exports under the Lome' ACP-EC agreements.

20. I am grateful to Peter C.W. Gutkind (University of Warwick) and Jamal Khan (University of the West Indies at Cave Hill) for both independently suggesting this approach.

21. References to plans in this and subsequent sections of this chapter refer to the six development plans published by the respective Maltese Governments covering the period 1959 to 1988 and listed in full in the thesis bibliography.

22. See also "Time Proves Metwally Right", The Times (Malta), 2nd June 1992, p.36.

23. A. Sant, 'No Development Plan for Malta', The Times (Malta), 11th March 1990.


25. In A. Sant (1990), op. cit. See Note 20 above.

27. The material from this section has been researched from this Avis, excerpts of which were published in The Times (Malta), 2nd July 1993 and It-Torqa (Malta), 4th July 1993.

28. This is according to 1988 data, reported also in Coopers & Lybrand Europe (1991, Appendix A-1).

29. Of the latter, one may add, only 4 are locally owned. Of these, the largest two in terms of employment, the shipbuilding and ship-repair firms, are heavily subsidised by the state. Malta Drydocks, the largest of these (with a full-time workforce of 3,800), may be more suitably defined as a service industry since it is the commercialised carry-over of the naval service base for the British Admiralty (Jones 1971:130).

30. A similar caustic point is made by Coopers & Lybrand Europe (1991:21).

31. 'Dramatic increase in electronic chip firm's sales', The Times (Malta), 15th September 1992, p.17; 'Kollox f'idjejn SGS-Thomson' (All in the hands of SGS-Thomson), Il-Helsien (Malta), 20th December 1991, p.3. The comparable figure for previous years was 56% (1991) and 40% (1990).

32. 'International Market Fundamentals', The Sunday Times (Malta), March 21st 1993, p.6.

33. 'Ghandhom in-Nisa Jahdmu Bil-Lejl? ' (Should women take up night work?), Perspettivi, Workers' Participation Development Centre Newsletter, University of Malta, No.5, 1989, pp.4-10.

34. 'Exports up by nearly Thirty Per Cent', The Times (Malta), 11th January 1993, p.3; M.E.A., Malta (1992:152-3).

35. I have estimated that this proportion has not changed between September 1988 and September 1992 (latest available figures). Time series analysis of quantitative statistics relating to Maltese manufacturing is difficult mainly because "published government statistics have over the years provided some five or six versions of who actually falls under the manufacturing employment umbrella" (Scicluna 1991:22).

36. Out of 61 identified industrial sub-sectors, only 16 are involved in export activity. Of these, 15 enjoy from moderate to high levels of protection. The sole exception is professional equipment, a sector which comprises 4 firms with an insignificant level of export turnover (Coopers & Lybrand Europe 1991:41-3, Table 1.3).

37. Malta's application to join the EC was formally lodged in July 1989. The 1970 Association Agreement between Malta and the EC and subsequent provisions sought to eliminate progressively the obstacles to trade. Particularly beneficial to Malta has been the suspension of customs duty and tariffs on Maltese textiles and clothing exports. Malta has also benefitted from 3 financial
protocols providing altogether 28 mecus as grants and 65.5 mecus as loans. For details see EC Directorate (1990, Chapter 5).


40. From 1967 to 1975 and again in 1980, immigrant labour was needed to assist with the sugar harvest. At its peak, the inflow of St. Lucian and Vincentian labourers reached 9% of the industry's workforce. This occurred in spite of a 10% unemployment rate. See Oxtoby (1977: 235); Worrell (1982: 89).

41. Barbadian cane cutters, field labourers and sugar factory workers earn around five times as much as their counterparts in Jamaica and Guyana. See 'Sugar Workers Overpaid', The Barbados Advocate, 29th August 1992, p. 3.


43. Worrell (1982: 77-8). These prices are in Barbados Dollars (1 Barbados $ = 2 U.S. $ approx.).

44. Bolland (1988: 278-81) proposes a similar explanation with reference to Belize. The estimate was provided by the university economist Michael Howard during an interview (15th October 1992).


47. A unified tax structure on imports from countries not members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), with a top rate of 45%, has been instituted to give regional manufacturers a competitive edge and protection. The Barbados Manufacturers' Association has alleged that thousands of jobs and massive manufacturing capacity would be jeopardised if this tariff ratio is reduced. See 'Change in Common External Tariff can be dangerous', The Barbados Advocate, 15th September 1992, p. 21.

48. "Given the nature of manufacturing on the island, it is not unlikely that a considerable proportion of demand is tourist induced" (Doxey 1971: 28). This is particularly true for food, handicrafts, beverage and construction. See also Todman (1979: 42).

49. Interview with Clifford Mayers & Levere Richards, senior BWU officials (10th September 1992).


52. Discussion with Richard Gill, Town Planner (18th October 1992).


54. Personal communication from Graham M.S. Dann, Reader in Sociology, University of the West Indies at Cave Hill, dated 8th March 1993.

55. Reference is here made to a press release in The Daily Nation, 20th October 1992 with the threat of the U.S.A. relocating its offshore insurance business from Barbados.


57. Ferguson(1990:20) identifies the "complex relation between the intentionality of planning and the strategic intelligibility of outcomes" as the key theme guiding his critique of development planning in Lesotho.

58. These being the not so small countries of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland.
Chapter 3: TOWARDS A MICROSTATE LABOUR SYNDROME

1. THE THEME

The previous chapter has highlighted a number of issues stemming from the application of the pseudo-development conceptual toolbox. Their elaboration suggests a compendium of conditions which appear to be typical of developing microstates, as the applications to Malta and Barbados attest. The implications of smallness, profitably explored in the discussion on development, dependency and planning, can be also argued to condition the human environment therein, shaping and influencing, without however determining, certain behavioural responses.

This chapter will therefore seek to explore the character of idiosyncratic features associated with smallness as they impinge on labour policy and labour relations in the developing milieu. It therefore proposes a microstate labour syndrome, this being a composite dialectic of, on one hand, the universe of peculiaristic, environmental, tendential elements exacerbated by small size; these may be gleaned from most secondary sources, especially of a general, non-country specific bent. And, on the other, their contestation, adoption, negotiation and/or manipulation in practice by social actors as producers, individually or collectively; the latter, more difficult to identify, are evidenced mainly from acculturalised behaviour patterns, good sense and insider knowledge.
"...as a lens might be capable of inverting, distorting, magnifying, reducing, blurring, bringing into sharper focus, polarising and creating chromatic aberration, so might the scale factor be perceived, even to the extent of its potential to create aberrations of the 'rose coloured glasses' type: epitomised by the clichés 'small island paradise' and 'small is beautiful'". (Smawfield 1993:29)

To carry out this task effectively, the chapter first attempts a deconstruction of standard paradigms and common fallacies ascribed to small territories and to labour therein, a technique resorted to with good effect in the previous chapter. It is necessary to unlearn the given characteristics of third world labour in general and demystifying the nature of lilliputian labour in particular. The impressions conjured up when discussing labour in developing microstates are readily screened by a conceptual lens which constructs a model of reality, of structures and processes, of men and women, often carried along with an imputed, internally driven logic - infused more by a priori assumptions, political agendas and marketing strategies than by a concern towards a critical, interpretative and grounded analysis of what is actually going on. Naive extensions of western labour (often industrial) relations, often by western born or bred observers, fuelled by western models of developmental objectives and accompanying strategies, have been proposed over and over again with almost missionary zeal. The lilliputian lens is furthermore burdened by metropolitan mimicry and the absence of a home-grown reflexivity. There is therefore ample reason to doubt the validity of such a passing parade of deductive pursuits. Rather, they are likely to lead to a sterile, conceptual and operational paralysis (Chiew 1993:50).
Generalisations, while remaining useful theoretical clipboards, ought to consider and be inspired by the concrete condition of developing microstate labour; charting clear of stereotypes, both positive and negative, which all but seek to be subject specific.

To introduce this exercise, it is proposed to tease out two arguments. The first is a justification for resorting to a dialectic between structure and agency as a methodology for understanding labour policy and labour relations, steering a course between popular and academic, both generally deterministic and mechanistic, images of labour in the developing world (Lambert 1990: 381). The second is a similar critique of stereotypisation, but this time addressed more specifically to the realm of small, typically island, states.

The latter will involve a critical review of common fallacies associated with smallness before proposing a combination of variables, which comprehensively suggest a microstate labour syndrome. The collection of features as composed and described represents a synthesis, a reworking and an extension of existing theory, inspired by primary and secondary sources of information.

The chapter will therefore seek to problematise the character of human resource management and labour policy in developing microstates on the basis of a set of abstract, generalised tendencies. Their deployment in space-time specificities in a variety of microstate settings will follow in the two subsequent chapters.
2. FROM ECONOMIC DETERMINISM TO CULTURAL DIALECTICS

2.1 Popular Images

Popular images of the labouring condition in developing economies as held by non-participants are substantially fuelled by the mass media. The press and television may have helped to bring to the general public's attention developing world events and situations of which many may have otherwise remained totally oblivious. But the manner in which such events and situations are brought to attention positions audiences in particular ways, fuelling particular interpretations of the subject matter (Munck 1988:1).

Perhaps object matter is a better term. So often, the labouring masses of the developing world are represented as amorphous and impersonal millions who lack the will, let alone the ways and means, to influence, much less to control, their lives. They are portrayed as generally idle and lazy, silent and expressionless, subdued in the mock-heroic bearing of perpetual misery. The concrete situations may change: The Kurds one day, the Somalis the next. But the subliminal message remains the same. An image of deficiency reinforced by the selective media reportage on third world events, which generally constitute news value only occasionally to report yet another flood, famine, earthquake or epidemic. This perspective may evoke short term pity and sympathy but not empathy and understanding. It serves rather to foster a discreet, contemporary form of benevolent imperialism.
Otherwise, when not depicted in this sullen and dejected stance, third world labour comes across as composed of uncontrollable revolutionaries taking part in demonstrations, civil wars or military coups. While in themselves indicative that there is more than mere resignation in the third world character, such episodes are often reported out of context and suggest violent mobs easily manipulated by power-hungry demagogues - invariably chiefs, trade unionists or generals. For most observers, therefore, their understanding of the people of the Third World remains a stubborn re-enactment of the modernisation principle: One of primitive, lethargic masses passively waiting for their death knell, a knowledgeable western consultant or a First World food convoy (whichever providentially comes first), with the occasional uprising or revolt adding a dash of adventure to an otherwise dull and drab existence.

2.2 Radical Images

More academic perspectives to third world Labour has generally departed from such constructions which perpetuate 'civilising mission' and climatic prejudice responses. In the literature which theoretically acknowledges conflict among social classes as a powerful causal dialectic, labour does at least enjoy the pride of centre stage. Nevertheless, the preferential focus on the labouring condition has tended towards one of two extremes. The first is a romantic and optimistic indulgence in the search of a revolutionary working class, a marxism which concentrates
on the otherwise few and fleeting episodes of explosive unrest by a class conscious peasantry or industrial proletariat. The logical outcome appears to be to cry farewell to the working class altogether, with its imputed messianic role when this falls short of such expectations (Burawoy 1985:6; Gorz 1982; Skopcol 1979).

Alternatively, for those bent on discerning structural features and global tendencies, it is easy to become gripped with pessimistic functionalism. The temptation here is that, irrespective of focus, the bottom line tends invariably towards the same deus ex machina — that "restless machiavellian ectoplasm" (Lipietz 1984:82), comprising the reproductive needs of global capitalism. The explicit recognition of the international dimension to labour affairs makes it so much easier to emphasise the global structures and processes which impinge upon and victimise workers than to assess the sporadic, weak and often invisible reactions of workers to these.

2.3 A Role for the Human Actor

Yet, global determinism is a far from homogenous affair. The shaping of actual labour relations and labour policy is carried out in the context of uneven capitalist development, where potential internationalisation is rendered historically via concrete local social formations, including the workings of the local state, local culture, local economic conditions and
resources. There are real distinctions of nationality, race, gender, skill and status which separate worker from worker (Munslow & Finch 1984; Waterman 1983).

Nor is the terrain of labour organisation and reaction necessarily straight-jacketed to the level of structures, albeit different ones. One cannot simply turn a blind eye to the natural tendency of human beings to respond to objective socio-economic conditions. Continually and inexorably, people both influence and are influenced by human and impersonal factors and forces in their lives as workers. Admittedly, other persons, plans, markets or organisations shape the quality of their lives, define the coordinates of their potential, influence their aspirations, tastes, skills and consciousness in different and significant ways. But to such a reception, workers may individually or collectively, consciously or otherwise, react, seeking to transform or influence intended effects with different degrees of success. One cannot dismiss the existence of action strategies and alternatives by individual actors who are "boundedly rational" and ingenious (Brookfield 1972:159; Pitt 1970:265). After all, structures which appear to have a life of their own are, more often than not, historical products which trace their origin to social dynamics. Hence social structures may be better understood as epiphenomena, reflections of a process through which different people try to sustain or advance their interests (Cardoso & Faletto 1979:14; Giddens 1984). The responsive mechanism of the management of circumstance by and at the human interface can thus be easily lost within a panoply of powerful
and seemingly inescapable structures. Overstating the objectivity and passivity of workers is tantamount to overkill.

The danger here is to consider the human response as a relatively autonomous project, as the "consumer is king" philosophy would have us believe. The terrain between the dangerous pitfalls of neo-liberal humanistic reductionism and politico-economic structuralism is to be skilfully negotiated: Is this not one of the key transversal themes of sociological inquiry? Global forces, along with histories, cultures, resources, personal qualities and skills, do limit possibilities but that does not mean that they determine outcomes. They always allow a number of alternatives, condoning some room for manoeuvre within which workers as actors individually or collectively realise, or fail to realise, their conflicting and contradictory projects and, as a result, bring about social change (Bergquist 1984:15; Bjorkman et.al. 1988:64; Mouzelis 1980:373). To rehash a hackneyed theme, men and women make history, though not just as they please: They make it under circumstances directly encountered and transmitted from the past, which they cannot avoid. But they make it nevertheless. There is always something which can be done; nor is the choice in doing so forced upon us4. Resignation to the status quo is neither natural nor inevitable; there are typically political interests at work to suggest that only strict conformity occupies the agenda of possibility. The seeds of response are not least occasioned by the techno-social experience of work itself (Burawoy 1985:7). Indeed, the diversity of response
increases in proportion to the understanding of the objective diversity of work and wider cultural experiences.

2.4 Labour Relations beyond Industrial Relations

Moving on to the technocratic model of conventional industrial relations, the plea is once again to move beyond, but in a different sense: In the western context, industrial relations has emerged naturally given the industrial character of the workforce, working in formal, stable, urban, organised, male dominated, large scale establishments. But this has only been the exceptional case in the developing world, and apparently becoming exceptional in the now de-industrialising 'developed' economies as well. Following on the narrow wage earning segment is the limited extent of trade unionism, not only in terms of absolute numbers and membership density but also given the more heavily regulated and institutionalised curtailment of other than pre-programmed trade union action (Bean 1985, Chapter 10). And while trade unions may be recognised as legitimate bargaining agents, all other forms of labour organisation and action, whether individual or collective, may easily be relegated to a marginality which may incorrectly be mistaken for non-existence.

The very selective orientation of industrial relations studies in developing countries may perhaps be seen as a reformist concession to the most strategic and potentially most troublesome labour segment. But, in isolating this elite for special
treatment, the descriptive and explanatory powers which
industrial relations studies bring to bear become pathetically
limited: They cannot vouch for the far richer, more assorted and
complex reality of the developing world condition. By the
standardised criteria of industrial conflict, third world workers
would prove to be surprisingly docile, if not content: Many are
non-unionised, they do not strike and do not play truant. But
worker resistance can, and does, take different forms apart from
the ones expected when using the industrial relations lens. These
forms may be easily overlooked therefore, all the more so because
they tend to be hidden, silent and unorganised (Cohen 1980a:8).

The deficiency in scope must be twinned to a deficiency in
method. Industrial relations has been dominated by structural-
functionalist and cyberneticist systems models which serve as an
indirect apologetic to the forces of order and authority, such
that the essence of social order is not questioned. The
perseverance of this approach and its promulgation by respectable
international bodies is perhaps indicative of its socially
cathartic effect in channelling labour protest into tolerable
expression and sterilising it from the more sensitive area of
political mobilisation (Cohen 1980a:8-9; 1987b:4-8).

Indeed, in today's cold, neo-liberal climate, the emphasis on the
orchestrated reification of labour appears even further advanced.
Labour relations specialists in both industry and academia may
have been obliged to come to better terms with the spirit of
human resource management and human capital theory which seek -
in the name of market discipline, efficiency and global competitiveness - to re-establish the primacy of a functionalist perspective. Perhaps this even transcends its previous pluralist framework by suggesting that there is now only one recognised policy making elite, enlightened management, and only one, tolerated form of labour mobilisation, responsible unionism.

2.5 Labour Formation, Control and Response

Conscious of these trends and their implications, the perspective colouring my critical engagement with the subject matter is one which moves most comfortably within the 'labour studies' paradigm (Cohen 1980b; Munck 1988:18-23; Southall 1988:3). This espouses a concern for a labour process approach, textured with a sensitivity to social history and culture, questions of gender, consciousness, ideology and organisation, posited in a framework appreciative of international dynamics. It is not industrial relations, trade union studies, labour history or technicist labour studies. The focus hence approximates to a paradigmatic shift and "gestalt switch" (Kuhn 1962:119) proposed to more conventional treatment of labour relations. My producers are equipped with possibilities, bringing along their own personal and collective agendas (including systemically dysfunctional ones) to the site of production (e.g. Burawoy 1985). That such "tacit skills", the ghost in the labour process (Manwaring & Wood 1985) exasperate enterprise management - perhaps even trade union officials - who seek to impose and maintain authority by denying
the existence or, failing that, the legitimacy of such non-corporate interests is unfortunate. Labour control is understood to include invariably an element of labour consent and therefore productive activity is intrinsically negotiable; being continually reconstituted (e.g. Strauss et.al. 1971:104). Human resources are both managers and managed in their productive circumstance; labour relations and the unfolding labour policy is held to be a product of the management both of and by producers. It is the enacted diversity and dynamism of control and resistance which is held to characterise labour relations, inclusive of routine, informal and non-dramatic interaction (e.g. Crisp 1984). In contrast, these mundane manoeuvres may be readily dismissed as non-events by personnel officers, labour mediators and trade union secretaries, strangely uncomfortable allies in keeping the peace.

The actual balance between orchestration and possibility, the necessary and the contingent, is by nature unspecifiable and cannot be set up a priori. The outcome - or better, the process - depends on space-time, power and even human configurations. It is also embedded in a cultural context which transcends economism in recognition that working people are also social members and actors, creatures and creators of history (Wolf 1982). Thus oral history, popular wisdom and narrative constitute important 'data', even to the labour studies researcher. The argument being proposed is that the developing microstate milieu constitutes one such specificity: It engenders a repertoire of characteristics which shape and influence the agenda of possibility in particular
directions; such that the terrain over which contestation occurs and the eventual unfolding of history carry imprints occasioned by such features. This means that the contest is liable to influence by environmental circumstances; but the actual manner of unfolding and extent of influence of such and other factors will prove to be peculiar to each encounter, in recognition of human and cultural diversity and imaginative action.

The terrain of Lilliput is thus understood both to constrain and widen the choice of behaviour patterns involved in the labour-management relationship, which is itself embedded in the throes of the general constitution of culture. The new contours are not structurally pre-determined, just as is the behavioural outcome of human relations. But picking out the tendential specificities of Lilliput can have powerful explanatory value.

It is the critical identification of these tendencies, separating the naive and deductive from those highlighted by inductive analysis, participation and observation, which is the broad objective of this chapter.

3. DEMYSTIFYING LILLIPUT

3.1 A Sociology of Negation

There is indeed a fairly obvious sociology of absence at work here, a pervasive process of negation which manifests itself in
the absence of recognition of the population of developing microstates as a conceptual category; but also, beyond that, to the very right of existence of these states.

Microstates harbour small yet total societies, with their full panoply of structures and processes. This makes social research much more manageable in logistic, temporal and financial terms. Ironically, therefore, such territories are singled out and identified for scrutiny on the basis of being such research havens and convenient laboratories for social investigation (Baldacchino 1990:68; Bayliss-Smith et al. 1988:284; Cammish 1980:55; Halsey 1984:vi; UNESCO/UNFPA 1977:1; Zammit 1984:2). But concurrently, most observers have failed to question whether the smallness condition engenders its own set of conditions or "ecology" (Commonwealth Secretariat 1986:6). Other than for its convenience, their interpretation of Lilliput is that of a microcosmic replica of the big world (e.g. Henry 1985:2; Trouillot 1988:17). No wonder therefore that the element of smallness per se does not give rise to much concern or study (Lloyd & Sundrum 1982:23; UNITAR 1971: 11-12):

"There has rather been somewhat of a tendency to assume that small island politics [or any other policy issue for that matter], when not examples of political exoticism, are mini-versions of big island politics and hence the theories appropriate to the latter will suffice". (Emmanuel 1976:6)

Furthermore, the inconsequentiality accorded to small size is related to the domination of a generalising tendency in the social sciences in which diversity is very often overlooked for
the sake of similarity. "People are easily seduced by cosmic explanations" (Baker 1992a: 5). The desire to generalise and claim typicality constitutes an "old sociological itch" (Thompson 1976: 392): Our conception of social processes is readily shaped by what we know of the largest operations. The social science literature has therefore often voiced the concerns and realities of the large and complex. Such cases are much more readily visible, more likely to generate positive status, career and sponsorship spinoffs to the researcher, more likely to stand the claim of representativeness. If indeed, the worst comes to the worst, and the representativeness of the study falls under suspicion, then one can always claim that the case under examination, being large, carries intrinsic importance (Granovetter 1984: 333).

The relative isolation of small states and territories from major traffic hubs as well as from each other generates also logistic and financial difficulties of communication and interaction, the magnitude of which may only strike home if one is organising a small island/state conference. No wonder that the comparative experience of small states and territories remains a rare research methodology.

The refusal to consider microstate specifics can be taken further: To the very question of survival and the right to exist. When, some 20 or so years ago, microstates were becoming independent entities with a fairly rapid frequency on the world stage, certain big state observers were seriously concerned with
Derogatorily referred to as "damned dots", the interference in sensitive global geopolitics by these microstates was close to being deemed intolerable. Ways had therefore to be found to somehow pack up these potentially destabilising quirks of colonial retrenchment, with their absurd claims for sovereignty:

"The United States and other powers need to examine, and soon, how unchecked proliferation of lilliputian nations is likely to affect the existing international system ... Already the problem threatens to get out of hand. The longer action is delayed, the fewer the options that will be available to responsible [sic] powers for amelioration or resolution of the problem and the more difficult it will be to make a firm stand against the momentum, bring proliferation under control and undo the damage that has been perpetrated". (Plischke 1977:9-10, my emphasis)

Such chauvinistic paranoia and self-righteousness may be an extreme measure; but it is symptomatic of how the universe of Lilliputs (and note the loading of the term) straddling the globe has been wished away, conceptually if not politically. Indeed, the smaller the developing country, the less global attention it has received (Kowaleski 1982:10).

3.2 Myths of Microstate Labour

A common alternative to outright exclusion has been to construct small, especially island, territories as outposts of exoticism. Already, the ancient Greek and Roman epics concocted notions of
mystical, magical folk inhabiting small, arcadian, insular environments scattered over the Mediterranean Sea. Later on, in the (European) Age of Discovery, the island-studded Caribbean and Pacific provided fertile ground for imagery in poetry and fiction, as well as for scientific, religious and social comment. Columbus, one of the earliest commentators on small island indigens, extolled the Caribbean islanders' innocence and generosity (Lowenthal 1972:14). The published works of explorers, castaways, traders, missionaries and travellers provided the background for some of the great bestsellers of all time, like Robinson Crusoe, Treasure Island, Swiss Family Robinson and Mutiny on the Bounty. Tropical islands and their inhabitants readily became symbols, sometimes erotic, more often permissive and exotic, of an enviable carefree way of life. The same discourse echoes in the Caribbean, Pacific and Indian Oceans:

"[The island locals] are naked and not ashamed...they are perfectly happy. They have no aspirations to make them restless".9

And:

"The native inhabitants, as yet uncontaminated by association with white men, moved about the peaceful vales of this Eden".10

And again:

"The islands were breathtakingly beautiful...and, some thought, the site of the original Garden of Eden...The women were to be had for the taking...laughing beauties whose only desire was to bed a white man and have a white baby...a land of black magic, of sorcery, where everybody believed in witches". (Benedict & Benedict 1982:10-11)
Painters like Gauguin and pioneer anthropologists like Firth, Malinowski and Mead perpetuated this myth. And even though it has defied corroboration via empirical research, the image of "Eden without apples" nevertheless lingers on (Pitt 1970: 13). The cultivation of the dream of a terrestrial paradise, the proverbial Shangri-La, is not difficult, given that it is an enduring human fantasy which is deeply embedded, certainly in Western culture. The image remains up front in the discourse of the contemporary microstate tourist industry. It serves as the principal tropical appeal to tourists from the stereotypically cold, drab, urbanised, polluted, anxiety-prone and repressed industrial north. The islands and their folk thus represent to the untrained western eye an alternative vision: a return to the state of nature, an adventurous escape into warmth, exuberance, fantasy and romance.

The cultivation and packaging of the image and taste of paradise as a consumer good does have its costs: The industry strains the local ecology, exacts high demands on land, infrastructure and the trappings of modernity, fosters escalated import bills for the provision of food and luxuries, degrades local culture into a plastic tourist commodity, deskills the labour force... and all for an activity which remains essentially seasonal, erratic and whose profits may just as likely filter to foreign pockets as to domestic ones. Yet, the microstate predicament is such that, in spite of the risks and limited benefits, the small country is bound to congratulate itself heartily for having turned
intrinsically unproductive sun, sand and sea into foreign exchange earners and employment generators.

The paradisiacal image remains a necessary and continuous hypocrisy, a phoney or ersatz disguising harsher, much less enticing microstate socio-economic conditions (Hiller 1976:106; 1978:12). It has been used before in history to mask the more terrible reality of imperialist subjugation and genocide (Moorehead 1966; Naipaul 1972). Nowadays, politically sovereign microstates themselves persist in cultivating such images which indeed resemble a portrait drawn by masters of slaves. It is bitterly ironic that such stereotypes, based on colonial moral superiority, are now resorted to in the promotion of post-colonial progress and development. The microstate and its people go through the motions of tourist appeasement, "...becoming in effect intensively organised advertising machines" (Lewis 1972:129). And the tourist, fantasy fulfilled, becomes a precious itinerant advertisement of what the microstate and its people have to offer.

But the package tourist is soon departed while, for microstate citizens, life goes on. It is not easy to dispel the enduring myths of idleness, innocence and familiarity. Surrounding the labour and employment situation with an aura of paradisiacal peace and quaintness also gives the impression of happy workers and harmonious labour relations - more so if trade unions are still young or non-existent15. Is there more to a microstate worker's fare than relaxing on the sandy beaches in the shade of
palm trees, ever ready to provide a service with a smile to foreign guests or foreign investors? Is there more beyond the coy depiction of microstate labour as deferential, culturally incorporated, driven only by the will to carry out the bidding of Master? After all, even Swift's Lilliputians demonstrate remarkable skills which go beyond the naturally submissive to include the pinning down of Gulliver (Keohane 1969:310).

3.3 Celebrating the Minuscule

The insular paradise package is further bolstered by the celebration of the minuscule and its purported characteristics. Microstates are, in this vein, accorded a number of envious assets: They are represented as natural building blocks in the social structure, entities which presumably people want and which represent an ideal. The leitmotifs here are self-reliance, authenticity, self-management, intensive and extensive popular participation, non-violence, interpersonal tolerance, harmony with nature, greater communication, team spirit, a workable reaction against alienating mass anonymity or insignificant peripherality; in short, small is beautiful (Berreman 1978:235; Kohr 1973, 1977; Max-Neef 1982; McRobie 1981; Schumacher 1973, especially Chapter 5).

For many years mainstream development, economic and administrative theories remained grounded in the firm belief that large size and scale were beneficial and small size, by
implication, inhibiting and non-viable. The tables seem to have been turned of late: Against a global context of turbulence, dynamism and uncertainty, smaller systems are currently argued to stand a better chance of coping with and surviving rapid changes in their environment than do larger systems (Blazic-Metzner & Hughes 1982:86; Chiew 1993; Morgan 1988; Piore & Sabel 1984; Srinivasan 1986:211; Sutton 1987:18; Trist 1980). Small entities are more likely to adopt the flexible and creative personality associated with vibrant, organic, just-in-time enterprise rather than the more staid, monolithic, just-in-case, mechanical, larger counterparts (Burns & Stalker 1961)\textsuperscript{16}.

The danger with these assertions is that many are unfortunately rather bland and not rigorously tested for. When the celebration of the small becomes euphoric and it is stated (prior to the advance of the Iraqi armies in August 1990) that "Kuwait will be more viable than Saudi Arabia, Malta more viable than Italy" (Mellah 1989:121), then there is some serious cause for concern.

The contention that small countries are likely to practise benign politics and to enjoy social cohesiveness (Dommen 1980b:942; Knox 1967:44; Kuznets 1960:28) appears dubious (Benedict 1967b; Butter 1985:35; Lowenthal 1987:39; Richards 1982:155). It appears naive to declare that the "societies of some small countries are harmonious because everybody knows everybody else very well" (Bray 1992a:26, my emphasis): Muted conflict must not be mistaken for the absence of conflict. The assertion that smallness is an asset in economic affairs must be confronted by the evidence -
applicable to small states as much as to small firms - that smallness is particularly vulnerable (Commonwealth Consultative Group 1985; Harden 1985; Rainnie 1985). Some small but archipelagic states strewn over massive expanses of ocean may have even worse communication flows than large but continental counterparts. And finally, the condition of paradise may be intriguingly akin to that of Gulag and imprisonment: Micro and insular extremes of heaven and hell, of cosmos and chaos, may be intrinsically identical:

"The seclusion and containment that characterise [small] islands feature paradise and prison alike". (Lowenthal 1992:21)

It may thus have proved simply too tempting to Rousseau-inspired, gemeinschaft starved researchers from 'developed' nations to attribute this state of romanticised communication, an extended happy family setting and ideo-typical serene attributes to the people of small, especially insular, developing territories. At the same time, these armchair fantasies and platitudes are proposed as structural determinants of the micro-insular system, without entertaining reaction space by the system incumbents.

3.4 Vulnerability: A State of Fate?

A totally different extreme perspective has become popular in considering developing microstates, especially following the U.S. invasion of Grenada in autumn 1983 (Bray & Packer 1993:20). There
has been since then a sustained, often strident, international concern with the general vulnerability of small developing states (Bray 1987; Bune 1987; Commonwealth Consultative Group 1985; Diggines 1985; Harden 1985; Lyon 1985). The initiative, fuelled initially by the British Commonwealth, found fertile ground both in the vocabulary of microstate policy makers as well as of mainstream neo-classical economic advisors.

Natural disasters, commodity price fluctuations, the whims of aid donors, tour operators and foreign investors are factors external to the microstate over which it has little, if any influence, let alone the possibility to exercise control (Diggines 1985:202; Dolman 1985:42; Dommen 1980b:936; Doumenge 1985:86; Wood 1967:32). The state of microstates is equivalent to their fate:

Hurricane Janet in 1955 destroyed or damaged 80% of Grenada's cocoa and nutmeg trees, the mainstay of the economy (Brierley 1974; Ambursley 1982:430); in 1979, an outbreak of swine fever killed the entire pig population of São Tomé & Principe (UNCTAD 1985b:187; Connell 1988a:3); a drought in Cape Verde in the 1940s caused a 25% drop in the population (Carreira 1982:167); the hurricane of January 1960 rendered 83% of Niue's population homeless and suspended native copra production – the main export crop – for 2 years (Ward 1967:83); two cyclones in Fiji in 1983 led to a 43% fall in sugar output (Bune 1987:87); cyclone Val in 1991 left 80% of the Western Samoan population homeless; in 1989, hurricane damage to housing and crops in Montserrat was almost total (Bray 1992a:19).
These observations have been chiefly inspired by the ravages of tropical storms and, in practically all cases, vulnerability is couched as an intrinsically negative attribute. This may make ample diplomatic sense, if weakness and fragility are expected to lure interest and assistance. They cannot however stand the test of a serious and empirically grounded critique which is also bound to reveal benign examples of vulnerability:

Botswana had the highest growth rate in Africa, with an annual GDP growth rate of 12.3% over 1965-73 (Ochieng 1981:124; Streeten 1993:199); Malta had the highest growth rate of any European country: During 1973-83, Malta's GNP per head grew by an annual rate of 8.1% (during 1970-78, by 11.6%) (Streeten 1993:199); real annual growth over the globally stagnant period of 1980-89 hit 5.9% (Grenada); 6.6% (St. Lucia); 6.8% (Antigua & Barbuda); 7.3% (Solomon Islands) and 9.5% (Maldives).

There seems to exist a general incapacity to escape the strictures and discourse of dependence and proneness to disaster. And when disasters do not happen, and instead, staggeringly positive results are achieved, these are either conveniently unreported and under publicised or else uncritically labelled as quirks or miracles. This is not surprising if the small developing states are stricken by:

"Smallness, remoteness, constraints in internal markets, lack of marketing expertise, low resource endowment, lack of natural resources, heavy dependence on a few commodities for their foreign exchange earnings, shortage of administrative personnel and heavy financial burdens."
What is often uncritically dismissed is that these very same characteristics need not necessarily be handicaps. Small state vulnerability appears to imply equally well a proneness to spectacular growth. Rather than debating how disaster-prone microstates can emulate growth-prone ones, it is likely to prove more rewarding to understand how these two, apparently mutually exclusive, features are actually manifestations of opposite ends of the same process. This process is itself indicative of the nature of 'development' in the microstate setting:

"The economy seems to be going up and down, not forward".

Thus, for all its international currency, vulnerability does not suggest itself as a useful, critical, conceptual tool. It persists within a structurally debilitating paradigm which disguises and distorts microstate dynamics. At the same time, the orientation smacks of a predilection for the exceptional, forgetful that beneath the booms and troughs there are real people negotiating survival.

3.5 Smallness as Physical Phenomenon

When one remembers that concerns about small developing states have been historically motivated by an interest in the implications of independent status on sovereignty and viability, then it is not surprising to find the field being explored by mainly U.S., positivist theorists. In these endeavours, the
objective has been, by and large, to devise a scientifically and methodologically rigorous definition of smallness - in terms of size or scale - subsequent to which the smallness effects could be measured, explained and even predicted. The tendency among these has therefore been to view size as a purely physical phenomenon (Howard 1989:17).

Such investigations have typically used population, gross national or domestic product and/or land area as a measure of country size, seeking subsequently to study the effects of such on various political (Dahl & Tufte 1973) and economic variables (Chenery & Taylor 1968; Demas 1965; Khalaf 1974, 1976, 1979; Kuznets 1960; Lloyd 1968; Shand 1980a:3-20). The more mathematically inclined have deliberated the formulation of a composite and weighted index (Downes 1988; Jalan 1982b; Taylor 1971; Thomas 1974:28). Alternatively, graph-theoretic and sociometric techniques of network analysis have sought to measure the inter-connectedness of members and the relative isolation between societies of different scales (Davis et.al. 1965:141 et.seq.; Homans 1951:82-4).

There is also, within this vein, a different but longer tradition within economic history which has assessed certain socio-political and economic development patterns in terms of population pressure on available land, identifying in the process the access to hinterland and population density as key determinants of social phenomena (Beckford 1972:96-7; Green 1976, 1984; Hoyos 1978:128; Ward 1985:32; Winch 1965).
This approach is obviously attractive in so far as it purports to provide an objective, absolute conceptualisation of what is small in the manner of the natural sciences. There are however a number of related difficulties.

Firstly, in spite of the elegant complexity of statistical manipulations, the question of size is bound to remain a relative one: different observers resort to different conceptions of smallness, dependent on historical time frame, the regional focus of study and/or the interests of the commissioning agency.

Secondly, every microstate is, in its own way, a unique assemblage; and the uniqueness is indeed enhanced by the insular character. Because small states are usually geographically distinct and remote from one another, they have therefore had quite different histories and are institutionally as well as culturally diverse: A feature which is bound to be intensified by insular xenophobia (Brock & Smawfield 1988:231; Lewis 1968:19; Lowenthal 1972:9). It is thus most difficult to find, let alone validate, adequate comparable data (Lowenthal 1987:31; 1992:19).

Thirdly, it is not to be excluded that geographical parameters are somehow involved in the consideration of how and what occurs in Lilliput. The flaw, as I see it, lies rather in extrapolating these traits in abstracto and then assigning these deterministic powers. Such mechanical attempts at sound prediction are bound to flounder in the face of flagrant, empirical violations of the imputed rigid formulations (Broadfield 1978:1; Lloyd 1968:127).
Population size, land area or any other factor are *conditions*, not *attributes*: They only influence contours; in themselves they do not cause anything.

This is understandable for two main reasons: The chosen traits, while analytically distinguishable, are practically inseparable from so many others; the sum total of these and their relative weighting is well nigh an impossible task (Berreman 1978:236; Lloyd & Sundrum 1982:21-2). Furthermore, the mechanical approach negates a sensitivity to the mediation of such variables: Outcomes are invariably exceptional, but this is not to exclude that they are products of different interactions operant in, and to some extent shaped by, the common condition of smallness. In going for scientific rigour, tight definitions and causal explanations, the risk is to dismiss scale as non-operational in the face of the evidence, excluding the possibility of considering size and scale as a valuable frame of reference.

3.6 Thinking Small

One other extreme epistemological position is a consideration of smallness as merely a frame of mind, a subjective condition which pervades the mind-set of the actor thus moulding horizons and agendas for action and perception. One such definition of smallness applied to the sphere of politics is by Rothstein (1968:29):
"A small power is a state which recognises that it cannot obtain security primarily by use of its own capabilities and that it must rely fundamentally on the aid of others".

Another widely accepted interpretation, this time in the sphere of economics, is illustrated by Prachowny (1984) who argues that a small, open economy is any country which considers itself to be a price taker.

Thinking small, by virtue of being strictly phenomenological, is devoid from any objectively identifiable consideration of smallness. It is a debilitating psychological block which can be readily blamed for the alleged failure to maximise benefits, reap opportunities and advance initiatives on the world stage. But the victims can be large states apart from small ones; and even in terms of the latter, numerous exceptions stand out all the more sharply (Jalan 1982b:40). It is a feeling which has a powerful cultural dimension in the sense that it is engrained by a regular exposure to a positioning process by peers, media and incidental cues which collectively inculcate a sense of inferiority and inconsequentiality, a process all too familiar to many small island travellers or emigrants to larger states:

"Thus, as a result of our small size, it is easy to fall into a small island syndrome, which at the economic level expresses itself in the local joke that we only produce samples". 25

The conceptual relevance of the stance appears however limited to the interface between small state citizens and larger state
referents. It is only in relation to Gulliver that territories exist as Lilliputs. Their internal dynamics, social interactions and policy processes may appear small - often meaning by implication petty and frivolous 'teacup storms' - only to non-participant observers. Microstate actors are not likely to concur. Even Gulliver acknowledges the bitter lesson when the tables are turned in his sojourn in Brobdingnag.

3.7 Into the Hidden Realm

"But we are torn... Perhaps colonialism has produced a new sort of being, a dual man [sic], aimed two ways at once". (Pynchon 1963:309)

In a way, just as the label micro/small which acts as a prefix to a state implies some kind of anomaly with respect to an imputed, 'normal' condition of largeness, the lens through which small states are so frequently perceived reproduces this relation, eschewed in a positive or negative tone.

This chapter has so far sought to explore, and explode, the major axiomatically derived characteristics and epistemologies of smallness, identifying the fallacies of agony and ecstasy which inhabit the subject matter. The exercise has served to extend the demystification of development, viability, peripherality and sovereignty entertained in Chapter 2. The developing microstate discourse seems to betray itself as being saturated by jaundiced interpretations and uncorroborated assumptions: A process of
fabrication possibly fuelled by microstate authors and policy makers and, in a sense, another extension and expression of colonial penetration.

A discrepancy between the formal structures of institutions which circumscribe social processes and the processes as they actually operate is probably a characteristic of all social behaviour (Hirschman 1970:1). After all, laws and structures are mediated by human agents and impinge on human actors; both of these can exercise differentially significant leverage. But, in the case of developing microstates, it can be argued that the difference between the formalities and the practice does also reflect consequences traceable to the ecology of small size, in both extent and form (Singham 1967:134).

A phenomenon of normative dualism appears operant in many creolised micro-territories; a national dichotomy and identity conflict (Harrigan 1972:5) or a group schizophrenia (Clarke 1976:12). Symbolic appeasement and pious servility are mediated to the externally concocted, imposed and desired myths surrounding the workings of the micro-society. The latter thus presents an image which, being attractive, meets precious peer approval - necessary conditions for concrete development (sic) assistance, concessionary trade deals, investment flows and tourist arrivals.

But, concurrently, possibly unacknowledged, there is another world, perhaps with totally different, unwritten laws of motion.
and principles of behaviour. It is here that the workings of small size and scale are mainly to be discerned. Most of this remains undocumentd and invisible to the outside world, essentially because it may be presumed not even to exist:

"[There is] a measure of pride in the knowledge that the expatriate cannot really grasp the inner workings and nuances of indigenous societies. This leads in many cases to a patterned and artificial set of behaviour...in the presence of most expatriates in contrast to the more casual and more real responses in the company of familiar local people. This is not dishonest behaviour. It is simply a natural reaction to a colonial status...this is the sort of feeling and situation that is not likely to be immediately apparent to expatriate observers, thus missing study and analysis". (Lasaqa 1973:309-10)

One can conceptualise a dual identity orientation by microstate citizens as they react to a stifling and pervasive colonial experience. While serving these in good stead by making their economies open enough to embrace modernisation and to align themselves profitably as focal points in transnational flows of goods, services and people, there is all the same a recognition of an intimate, local, autochthonous, domain which affords some escape and solace, even if often imprisoned within the restrictive discourse of inverted imagery. Maltese and Barbadian literature, at least, are both riddled by characters longing to resolve what may be a false dichotomy - the inner and outer worlds, the informal/oral/aural and the formal/written, the vernacular and the metropolitan language, the open economy and inherent totality (e.g. Ebejer 1969; Sammut 1973; Lamming 1983; 1984); when the microstate's own history of survival reads as a symbiotic integration and accommodation, the forging of a culture
out of multi-culturality which serves as a natural base for the execution of brokerage functions:

"The Maltese have shown a preference for, and excellence in, work as catalysts, brokers, middlemen, entrepôt traders, interpreters and translators". (Serracino-Inglott 1988:370)

Nevertheless, for the few who have identified the existence of the hidden, backstage realm, it proves most painful to diagnose it other than as an inconsistency, a pathological condition (Murray 1981:245). And any deviation, once labelled as such, loses status as a rational, meaningful reaction to a given, peculiar condition. Cultural penetration makes microstate citizens themselves victims of this readiness to try and fit the practice to the doctrines, rather than seek to reform or reformulate the doctrines to fit the practice.

3.8 An Emergent Compendium

I now move from demolition to construction. I propose next to present a compendium of factors which capture the condition of Lilliput more faithfully, inspired as these are by and from a multiplicity of research strategies and sources inductively derived from both primary and secondary origins, including the analysis of assorted real-life microstate situations and personal, insider experience and knowledge. The collection strives for a greater appreciation of the hidden realm of Lilliput and is inspired particularly by the processual and
interactive dimension of policy, relations and dynamics immanent
from work and production relations therein.

The result is a set of three theoretically and conceptually
distinct but operationally related features: Totality, Monopoly
and Intimacy; with a fourth, Emigration, as a significant exit
option. They include a retooling and reworking of certain
hackneyed themes (including vulnerability, particularism and
critical mass) as well as the addition of others, only sketchily
encountered in the literature, and, in such cases, not typically
problematised beyond a very specific empirical domain.

The features do not necessarily denote characteristics which are
shared by all small developing states and/or only by these
states; they are presented as heuristic devices, conceptual
clipboards on which one can organise, compare and contrast
material emergent from different, and, at face value, non-
comparable, developing microstate, space-time configurations.
That they stubbornly merge and meander into each other is further
recognition of the diverse and complex interplay of the processes
being investigated.

Concurrently, the themes encourage and conjure up fresh insights
on behaviour patterns in small developing states such that these
observations can lead to useful policy implications. This
exercise is, however, not so much a process of discovery as of
presenting an alternative, arguably fairer, picture of the inside
universe of the subject at hand. The conceptual and normative
lens is therefore different, although it is a lens nevertheless and as such still screens and filters reality. But such remains at hand only through lenses; the hope is that better justice is done to what is otherwise often forgotten, discredited, exoticised or clouded beyond recognition.

4. A TYPOLOGY FOR DEVELOPING MICROSTATE LABOUR

4.1 An Admission

I must here first confess that, when the material for this chapter was first drafted in spring 1991, the ensuing typology was exclusively drawn from secondary sources, an extension of a literature review. The prior existence of readily available typologies from this literature also exercised significant influence on my eventual choice. The compendium at that point in time comprised: Scarcity, Vulnerability, Intimacy, Indivisibility and Non-Viability. Furthermore, these variables were referred to as causal idiosyncrasies, and most carried an obvious negative tinge.

Scarcity was eliminated late in the day when it dawned upon me that my definition was terrestrially biased. It was refusing to get its feet wet (Dolman 1988:175) because it only considered land-based resources as constituting the sum total, potential assets of the microstate. When fishing, deep sea mining and sea ranching/farming are added to the resource list, developing
microstates may present themselves as intrinsically resourceful and indeed perhaps no longer intrinsically small, at least as far as resource endowment is concerned.

Non-Viability was discarded early on because of the poverty of the term in explaining microstate behaviour and survival. The process of conceptualising pseudo-development ushered an early awareness of the emptiness, indeed of the non-viability, of such terms as viability and development to the set of territories under study.

Vulnerability was also conceived initially as an umbrella concept for a vast array of deficiencies - when the term evidently stood to gain from an appreciation of its double personality. It was the cause of such openness rather than its demonstrations (with, at face value, its perplexing mutually exclusive characteristics) which carried heuristic capital. Only the specific cultural expression of vulnerability was preserved in the notion of cultural penetration described earlier (Bray & Packer 1993:42-3).

Intimacy and indivisibility survived the transition, the latter being comfortably subsumed within the notion of monopoly.

The resulting categories: Intimacy, totality, monopoly as 'voice' notions with emigration as the 'exit' notion (Hirschman 1970:4) are arguably superior for a number of reasons. They do not conjure up normative associations; they are not implicitly good or bad, but merely suggestively different (Clarke & Payne
Nor are they causal attributes but contextual conditions likely to obtain in Lilliput; they illuminate the political, social and economic dynamic but they do not determine it (Thorndike 1987:96). They are therefore likely to serve as raw material which can be profitably deployed and activated in a multitude of behavioural encounters (Butter 1985:65-6). The set actually finds ready corroboration when confronted with primary microstate data, popular literature, narratives and ethnography.

This is not to suggest that the typology is rigid and exclusivist. It appears a tenable and useful construction at this point in time and with respect to the state of microstate research, inspired as it is by and from a particular approach to the microstate experience. One cannot therefore exclude the possibility of different but equally pertinent typologies being put forward with respect to other facets of microstate life (e.g. Bertram & Watters 1985; Brock 1984; Selwyn 1980; Shaw 1982). In this sense, there is not likely to ever be one, 'best', general typology (Schahczenski 1992:37). This particular conceptual compendium is however perhaps different in the sense that it has been conceived in the light of and from microstate processes and dynamics and with due attention given to the various distorting discourse surrounding the subject. With its processual, behavioural bias, it is less concerned with static and structuralist issues - as are isolation and scale - or with the exploration of transnational linkages - such as aid and peripheralisation - but with what is going on in Lilliput.
4.2 Totality

"An island is a world". 29

Totality can be understood as the resulting combination of critical mass and indivisibility constraints on one hand and of social compactness, visibility and interconnectedness on the other. Insular identity already fosters a condition of a "self-contained universe" (Brock & Smawfield 1988:232), all the more so if accompanied by political sovereignty. Proclaiming that a small state is nevertheless a total society suggests that there is practically the same absolute total of institutions and official capacities one is bound to find in a larger state. Certain items of expenditure, especially capital items, occur in large discrete amounts - hence the choice is often between excess capacity or going without (May & Tupouniua 1980:428; Richards 1982:158). The smallness factor will however increase the likelihood and necessity of role multiplicity, role enlargement as well as natural monopoly by the system incumbents. The workings of an independent sovereign state demand the availability of basic, role-specific, personal services and infrastructure. But their provision at both an economic and social level is only possible by fostering economies of scope and differentiation which intensify interconnectedness. The ramifications of totality can be explored with respect to the impact of the state on the micropolicy/economy, social claustrophobia and the management of intimacy.
Small state government is characteristically heavy and omnipresent and, as a result, omnipotent. Any state requires an irreducible amount of infrastructure, a minimum 'lumpiness' or critical mass. The smaller the country, therefore, the larger the state looms in its economy and society. Its aggrandized roles make it party to every significant venture. The distinction between state and civil society becomes close to a theoretical quirk. As it controls access to most funding, perhaps even to most jobs, few can move up any ladder of enterprise without bumping into it (Benedict 1966:30; Ghai 1990:23; Richards 1982:158; Taylor 1990:106). State ubiquity is further accentuated by the relative incapacity or non-interest of private, local or foreign capital in setting up shop and generating employment opportunities or by the collapse of an economic pattern (Broadfield 1978:52; Ingram 1980:ix; Looney 1988:519; May & Tupouniuia 1980:427; Shaw 1982:100). Both of these cause an inevitable shift to a "welfare economy".

The state can thus become, even unwittingly, the domestic dispenser of financial assistance forthcoming from abroad, a large employer in its own right and the financier to substantial private sector economic activity (Ogden 1988, 1989): A formidable combination which enhances acquiescence and accommodation. There are strong pressures to play ball with the government of the day (Clarke 1987:84-5; Lewis 1972:320). The provision of 'welfare' as a state monopoly acts as an insurance against disorder and as an incentive for good conduct. The alert and ambitious become adept at protecting themselves from, or, even better,
ingratiating themselves with, politicians and civil servants. A small country government can, in exercising such dispensation, veto many initiatives that clash with its own prerogatives (Lowenthal 1987:43).

Concurrently, however, the black box of this awesome state apparatus is inhabited by real people. These tend to be few, well known, relatively accessible and readily associated with particular organisational capacities (Lowenthal 1972:321-2). One therefore comes across a transparency and personalisation of structures which makes lobbying and intervention, identifying and accosting particular incumbents to influence decisions or to encourage interest-specific policy directions, almost spontaneous affairs. This manifestation of a pervasive yet "soft state" (Hyden 1983:60; Schahczenski 1990:75) carries serious implications on institution building.

The uncomfortable and lifelong experience of rubbing shoulders with 'Big Brother' is reproduced with respect to other social institutions and even discrete individuals. Relationships are weighty, can easily go beyond role-specificity, are bound to recur over one's whole lifetime. The spread of information is facilitated at all levels and news, even of the private kind, travels quickly by word of mouth (Singham 1968:292). Only emigration, temporary or permanent, provides solace; but territorial isolation, remoteness and insularity may reduce the opportunities to escape.
"No matter how wide and developed the range of the individual's associations and relationships abroad, the island provides a natural and psychological boundary". (Singham 1968:26)

Microstate life could thus make one feel very hemmed in. It could feel "like growing up in a straight-jacket of community surveillance", given the dense psycho-social atmosphere(Weale 1992:9). The condition approximates a Goffmanesque scenario of total institutions. The pressure of conformity is intense (Boissevain 1990:17). Strategic, political reactions to such social claustrophobia include: a conscious, rigid adherence to role specificity; a conscious clampdown on the overriding of role sets; the screening and withholding of information; a cautious resort to "baited breath" since everyone is a potential informant; an appeasement of power holders; the management of intimacy. All in all, much like a counterfeit society. Does not such a combination suggest an intriguing juxtaposition of face-to-face and back-to-back relationships (Van Vijfijken & Faber 1991)? In the context of totality, familiarity is a double-edged sword (Bray & Fergus 1986:97).

4.3 Monopoly

"We have one of everything".35

Related to the incentive in keeping information to oneself is the ready tendency, within the small scale/size environment, of
obtaining monopoly power. It is, after all, in every producer's interest to distort the market mechanism to one's net advantage, shifting preferably from a price taker to a price setter orientation, especially where the milieu permits differentiation.

Smallness appears to enforce a pattern of social compression, expressed also in a monolithic institutional order. The smallness of the polity thus carries implications on the distribution of power. There is a tendency towards convergence of the elite structures in the economic, political and social fields (Richards 1982:157). The absence of a plurality of systems and levels where different degrees of political power may be legitimately exercised restricts the space for power-sharing and reduces the scope for effective and constructive operation by political groups out of government (or out of its favour). The result is 'in' and 'out', 'friend or foe' politics, where there is no honour in defeat - only outright winners and losers (Duncan 1980:2; Mills 1972:5). Faced with big, monopolistic government in both a political and economic sense, there is nothing left for the opposition to do but to oppose (Richards 1982:169). The lot of those opposing the group in power is apt to be miserable in a microstate: There may be no effective refuge, no place to hide, no alternative source of remunerative or prestigious solace (Benedict 1967b:53; De Smith 1970:94). The ultimate 'out' result of the political contest is institutional death and/or emigration. The latter may actually improve the likelihood of the incumbent political party remaining in office.
No wonder that the political style which tends to operate in microstates has been described as one of "a siege mentality" (Ostheimer 1975:182). Rivalries between personalities and their local power bases, mediated by existing socio-economic, territorial, ethnic or religious divisions, explain much of the growth of political parties (Jones 1977:187; Ostheimer 1975:177; Richards 1982:164-6; Verton 1990a:73). Secondly, given that there is only one level of politics - the national - such petty squabbles as may emerge cannot be redirected and moderated: There is no possible lateral movement. Thirdly, add the insular psyche "whereby everything outside seems remote and unimportant compared to the excitement of the local drama" (Lewis 1972:320). Even insignificant events become momentous and magnified; people lose their sense of humour (Ostheimer 1975:182; Tunteng 1975:42). In contrast to the expectations from a pluralist democratic system, opposition politics is seen as subversion or treason (Ostheimer 1975:187). Fear of reprisal is often genuine (Richards 1982:169).

The cultivation of expertise is one technique towards achieving such a monopoly orientation. In the microstate setting, such an achievement can be almost spontaneous, even unavoidable, particularly if one is establishing oneself in a new domain of knowledge, product, competence or responsibility. As soon as an individual develops even a modest edge in an area of skill, study or research, the person may encounter proclamation as an expert and the ascription with authoritarian standing in that area by others. Expertise can be achieved thus almost by default. Presumptuousness may also pay dividends: Because, sincerely,
there may not be anyone around locally to challenge one's bluff or fragile claim to authority. The diversification of knowledge and functions that the small territory needs to accommodate imply that one person (or even parts thereof) equals the society's total sum requirement of expertise in a particular field: The loss of one individual could thus constitute an irreparable loss because of non-substitutability (Bennell & Oxenham 1983:31):

"The departure of just a few workers, school children or medical personnel may close a factory, a school, a cottage hospital and erode the entire social structure" (Lowenthal 1987:36)." Systemic fragility is equivalent to incumbent indispensability and therefore power:

"With the manpower chain thinly stretched in the public sector, a single break in it, through sickness, absence for training or emigration, can cause disruption and considerable loss of efficiency". (Shand 1980a:16)

It is thus relatively easy to become a big fish when one operates in a small pond, provided that one does not consciously overwhelm the relative isolation. Given that human beings suffer from biological and social critical mass, they can readily carve out a series of expertise niches, successively and simultaneously.

A similar phenomenon is observable in the realm of economics where firms and organisations easily find themselves to be the one and only dispensers of a product or service. The small market
may simply be unable to sustain a rigorously competitive distribution system (Armstrong et al. 1993:317). Critical mass constraints, topped up by nationalist and parochial or insular sentiments, imply that a certain amount of fixed plant is necessary even if that would mean excess capacity; but such an investment would make a second, competitive institution very unlikely. Large scale systems can afford an element of waste, of casting bread upon the waters; "small systems do not generally have much bread to cast" (Rodhouse 1987:23). The indivisibility constraints of totality facilitate monopoly: For example, there may be only one university on the small state but a fully fledged one at that; but the excess capacity which accompanies critical mass makes it unlikely to justify a second university.

Similarly, the scale conditions of totality suggest that even relatively unambitious projects can find themselves wielding disproportionate, monopolistic power:

"A factory employing one thousand men [or women] is not large by any standard. But to set it up in a very small economy will create tensions in its restricted labour market and may even induce an immigration wave". (Butter 1985:84)

4.4 Intimacy

"Don’t make an enemy out of your neighbour". 35

The small size of the social field fosters what has been described as managed intimacy: Microstate inhabitants learn to
get along, like it or not, with one another, knowing that they are likely to renew and reinforce relationships with the same persons in a variety of contexts over a whole lifespan:

"In a small nation, you may never be sure when you may need the other person's assistance, especially in government service". (Coyne 1992:75)

To enable the mechanisms of society to function without undue stress, microstate citizens minimize or mitigate conflict. They become expert at muting hostility, containing disagreement and avoiding dispute, in the interests of stability and compromise. Smallness fosters a sophisticated mode of accommodation and this is enhanced by the complexity and durability of most social relationships.36

Most microstate inhabitants grow up within an interdependent network where each person figures many times over. As in Gluckman's multiplex societies, nearly every social relationship serves many interests37. People relate to one another on the basis of extensive and intensive mutual knowledge (Berreman 1978:234):

"Because of the smallness of the total social field, many roles are played by relatively few individuals... The same individuals are brought into contact over and over again in various activities... decisions and choices of individuals are influenced by their relations in many contexts with other individuals... Impersonal standards of efficiency, performance and integrity are modified by the myriad relationships connecting the individuals concerned". (Benedict 1967b:48-9)
This particularistic relationship of persons to each other is thus contrasted to one based more or less on fixed standards and criteria, presumably a characteristic of large scale societies. The suggestion is however, not that relationships in one society are fashioned one way, ideotypically and in stark contrast to the other; rather, that the area over which relationships in small scale societies are particularistic, functionally diffuse, affectively charged (harbouring strong positive or negative attitudes between persons) extending over a considerable time span and usually ascriptive is likely to be wider (Hagan 1962:121-2). Particularity is likely to be more typical, universality more exceptional, in Lilliput.

One manifestation of this is the greater tendency, in small nations, of coming across a pure form of nepotism, cases of relatives working together:

"In one office, the senior officer was noticeably reluctant to tell his typist what to do; she was his niece". (Coyne 1992:76)

Or:

"The public works department in Dominica's second town reportedly consist of one family of six clerks".38

It is perhaps because factional differences can be so damaging, that microstate citizens take great pains to prevent them from erupting. One strong reason for this is that any conflict among organised groups in small scale societies is likely to entail personal conflicts among the individuals in the groups.
Situations are likely to be gripped by "the small conflicts and petty rivalries of parish-pump politics in gold-fish bowl societies" (Lillis 1993a:6):

"Individuals cannot take refuge in anonymity. Each knows the other's group affiliations. Hence a group conflict, particularly if it endures for long, is likely to reinforce - and be reinforced by - personal antagonisms. In the larger social system, on the other hand, the individuals in the antagonistic groups are much less likely to confront one another, and indeed may never meet". (Dahl & Tufte 1973:93)

Hence if individuals foresee that whenever group conflict emerges they will have to pay dearly for it in their personal relationships, conflict is likely to be less frequent than in a larger social system. As a result, group conflicts are rarer but explosive when they occur and more likely to polarise the whole community (Dahl & Tufte 1973:93; May & Tupouniua 1980:423; Sutton 1987:13-14). Where differences exist, they are likely to be "more personal, more intense, more emotionally charged" (Richards 1982:158). Intimacy and monopoly in conditions of totality engender escalative potential; there is little redundancy, little spare capacity to enable such personal conflicts to be absorbed or redirected:

"[In a ministry], two individuals in particular have been in fierce competition for nearly a decade, and their tussle has gradually reached higher echelons as each has been promoted. The personal rivalries have thus had increasingly severe implications for the entire system and the issue still has not been resolved". (Fergus & Thomas 1991:180)

The intensity of face-to-face interactions characteristic of many societies may be expected to grow in conditions of totality,
restricted space, high population density, critical mass demands and multiplex social relations. But, with the occurrence of factionalism, the interaction may accentuate cooperative relationships among some individuals and conflicting ones with others. The actual pattern of interactions is thus distorted and mediated by socio-political and other geographical and economic realities such that social cohesion between hostile factions is bound to be low and thus foster and legitimate greater competition for prized resources, including political power (May & Tupouniuia 1980:425). Ethnicity is one factor which has created social divisions and which provides a ready socio-biological condition on which to graft networks. Social class, territorial identity, indigenous versus settler animosities, religion or pure partisanship serve similar anchoring cleavage functions, providing ideologies which legitimate in-group cooperation and ethnocentrism while fomenting out-group hostility and closure tactics, reminiscent of pillarisation. The dynamics of factionalism are such that particular factors may become ascendant, by themselves or in combination with others, at different times and in relation to competition for different, scarce resources prized by different groups.

5. EMERGENT GENERAL DISCUSSION

The interplay of intimacy, totality and monopoly helps to capture conceptually the ecology of Lilliput. This section will now elaborate on how this ecology could be deployed over the broad
terrain of labour issues, proposing departures from conventional assessment and serving as an insightful critique to key themes referring to the microstate condition.

5.1 Modelling Vulnerability

The constructed, dynamic typology reveals itself to be a rewarding alternative frame of reference to the hackneyed and loaded concept of vulnerability. These conceptual labels help to disentangle the rapid and total character of the booms and troughs typically operant within a micro-territory.

One component concerns the 'concentration phenomenon', but this concept implying more than a typically narrow range of products and services for which there is an equally narrow range of customers (Benedict 1967a:2; Demas 1965:90-1; Lloyd & Sundrum 1982:27; Reid 1974:13; Selwyn 1980:946). My concept of monopoly can actually be construed as an extension of the concentration phenomenon into other areas of social, political, and economic life in Lilliput. Monopoly in micro-territories is not a mere quantitative distortion, a faithful microcosmic representation of macro-world situations. The effects of monopoly are far from being proportionate calibrations of larger, more competitive environments (Lewis 1991:367).

The second component of vulnerability can be postulated to be the manner in which the concentration phenomenon is contextualised
in a spatially and socially dense and interconnected environment. There seems to be in place a relatively more intense structural totality in microstates, one which is typically geographically bounded. This is enhanced by territorial compactness and population density but also by social visibility and intimacy and extensive role multiplicity and enlargement at the social level. The result is a relatively discrete social system which engenders rapid spillover and multiplier effects:

"Approach to a single, isolate problem leads extraordinarily rapidly to all parts of the complex more quickly and completely than we have observed elsewhere". (Bowen-Jones 1972:59)

All things being equal, the intensity and impact of totality and monopoly are expected to become more ample with increasing smallness of territory.41

The revamped notion of vulnerability is therefore more akin to a condition of hypothermia42 or combustibility43, but both shorn of a necessarily negative connotation.

5.2 Collective Mobilisation

How do the intimacy, totality and monopoly associated with the microstate syndrome come into play in considerations of collective action? Multiplex relationships involving role diffuse networks and alliances among individuals, mediated by
salient factional divisions, may lead to a particular set of characteristics which either dissipate or enhance collective labour mobilisation. Horizontal (client - client) and vertical (patron - client) networks may successfully inhibit feelings of labour solidarity, the worker perceiving more benefits to be forthcoming by persevering in a role of subordination and cooptation than otherwise. The decision is important because, given the intense personalisation of relationships, the impossibility of anonymity and the high opportunity cost of 'exit' (often implying emigration), the factional label is likely to stick and to pre-determine choice in similar future events. Otherwise, if the worker's network is already crystallised and is aligned with the opposing faction, then joining the opposition is typically a foregone conclusion. The composite effect is that labour disputes can get blown up beyond proportion and assume political motives, becoming naturally aligned along existing political cleavages. Recurrent 'political crises' of this kind, strengthen and cultivate the "segmental cleavages" further (Eckstein 1966:34). The maximum of compromise and the minimum of ideology (other than symbolic) which separate these political factions enhance the role of gut feelings and sentimental appeals in mobilisation.

The typical, institutionalised channel for the canalisation of labour protest is the trade union. Trade unions in microstates, where they exist, tend to be of the general, catch-all type\textsuperscript{4}. They are therefore structurally disposed towards the articulation of general grievances, even those not strictly within the brief
of responsible business unionism. General unionism in small
developing states can thus carry the same function of a mass,
broad based, social movement or of a political party. Trade
unions tend towards becoming the brokers of interests which go
beyond strict worker grievances and articulating protest or
disenchantment along established social cleavages. The union can
be a very powerful lobbying device when manipulated by labour
segments enjoying (temporary?) monopoly and relative
indispensability. Such lobbying power by labour may increase in
areas of employment sheltered from the strictures of
international competition or where the threat of capital
relocation is deemed unlikely.

As with other mass mobilisation in opposition to state or
employer policy in microstates, trade union action can become
bitterly personalised. Various petty disputes may be expected to
occur because of questionable treatment by, or to, just one or
a small group of workers. Larger industrial conflicts could
tend towards wars of attrition, accompanied by the full blown
rhetoric of quasi-clan warfare, with only a temporary patching
up of sorts achieved in the end: Industrial peace may be more
like a truce, and labour relations more like a continuously
combustible atmosphere, as the contending parties wait for the
opportune period to spring once again into action. In such and
similar situations, the formal structures of interest mediation,
conciliation and arbitration - faithful to metropolitan models
- may exist; but the resolution of conflict when it occurs is
more likely to be engineered informally, thanks to the
intervention of mediators who enjoy trust on both sides of the dispute (I.L.O. 1985:48-9): Such is possible thanks to "intersecting networks" which, facilitate the bridging of an acrimonious gulf between positions.

5.3 Networking and Role Diffusion

The cultivation of networks and person-to-person coalitions is encouraged by narrow social parameters as played out in a small social universe with limited resources (Benedict & Benedict 1982:107). A network is a set of interconnected points; the points are people and the connections, social relationships; it can therefore be described as an ego-centric social matrix (Boissevain 1968:546). Friends of friends and kin of kin can be more rapidly constructed and manipulated selectively in such circumstances, serving as gatekeepers to improve access to scarce and desirable resources and therefore acting as mechanisms of interest satisfaction:

"Engagement in network strategies is a matter of choice in the face of changing opportunities and constraints. The wider a man's network spans, the more chance he has of furthering his interests and reducing the possibility of overall failure".

To have such "lines" is simply to utilise other than official or publicly approved channels to obtain certain needs. This is one area of widespread public, tacit approval of bureaucratic corruption.
These circumstances suggest that the cultivation and management, conscious or otherwise, of potentially interest appeasing human networks is a characteristic of microstate life. Citizens assess the possibility of mutual assistance when new contacts and acquaintances are made. This reciprocal manipulation percolates within the sphere of work and employment. Informal, person to person recruitment is common, not only because the scale of the enterprise or the particular labour market is small in relative terms; but also because personal attributes - stressing allegiance, acquaintance and other ascribed criteria - may be seen to juxtapose or even override merit and functional ones in the selection or otherwise of employees by employers, and even vice versa (e.g. Trouillot 1988:284). Forged personal bonds infuse the atmosphere of labour relations, workers becoming a kind of extension to family labour. This condition could permit a greater exploitation and victimisation of labour, but the situation is double-edged: For instance, it becomes difficult to remove an employee on the grounds of inefficiency because of attachment to the employer by kinship, partisan or other ties (Benedict 1967b:50).

The diffusion of the otherwise impersonal and instrumental cash nexus to comprise relationships at the workplace reminiscent of feudalism is thus a reflection of the wider microstate ecology which brings persons together in recurring interactions where they do not present to each other one, and always the same, clear-cut and distinct role.
5.4 Job Enlargement

The intimacy, monopoly and totality which characterise the microstate environment promote a diffusion of role relationships. They are also features which enhance opportunities of relative specialisation: In a microstate, jobs may be moulded by individual workers to a degree and with effects that provide a significant contrast to larger contexts. This is particularly, but not exclusively, so in the tertiary services sector, which has greatest potential for job discretion, professionalisation, greater control over the job by the worker (e.g. Rus 1984). This means that individual workers can, and do, to varying degrees, fashion jobs in a particular way. Often, until a worker is appointed, there is no one to define, except in a loose way, what the job is that has to be done. People in senior management roles also tend to be abroad more often than their peers in larger countries (Jacobs 1989:88). The wider range of responsibility, including that of defining the job itself, provides the worker with opportunities to act without the need to carry along and implicate a host of other workers and private interests. Very soon, workers may feel confident enough to boast that they are experts in their own field and can claim an authority based on expertise - there are very few around, if any, to challenge their supposedly authoritarian pronouncements. This is perhaps the closest that one can get to proclaiming indispensability.

Personalisation - in the guise of periodically weighing up an individual to determine his/her potential - results in certain
workers being assigned to regular, and therefore more clearly defined and routinised tasks, while for others is fashioned unofficial space to create and show initiative, without requiring strict assent or supervision from others (Murray 1981: 254); a revamped version of core and periphery in the labour market. Accountability and discipline, already strained by person-sensitivity, contract still further in person-specific ways. The potential is there "to build monuments" (Kersell 1985: 376-7); but in situations which do not include a commitment to sustain and continue what has been initiated.

5.5 Role Multiplicity

"If you lose the dog, grab the cat".52

Role diffusion is related to the phenomenon of role multiplicity. Diffuse and particularistic role relationships are enhanced because there is a greater tendency by individuals in microstates to occupy a variety of social roles. Individuals commonly assume multiple roles within government as well as within traditional social structures, churches and other social organisations as well as in private business, a far cry from the western/Westminster doctrine of the separation of powers (Bray & Packer 1993: 174; May & Tupouniua 1980: 425). This is reinforced by the exigencies of critical mass and frequent shortage of appropriately qualified people, necessitating the stretching of a small number of people over a wide range of activities:
"The economy requires somebody to do the jobs and there are not always enough skilled people to go round". (Bray & Fergus 1986:95)

Occupational multiplicity, is also a natural survival strategy assumed by microstate labour, on an individual or small group basis. The pursuit of several occupations, either simultaneously or successively, is one characteristic of areas where employment opportunities are limited; and more so where they are seasonal or precarious (Brookfield 1975:71; Frucht 1967:296; Trouillot 1988:32). These may involve both wage and non-wage labour: petty commodity production, peasant subsistence agriculture, homeworking... It is a natural defence mechanism, a "security centred survival algorithm" (Brookfield 1975:56-7), especially if the small economy's experience is typically 'hypothermic', a collection of stop-go phenomena (Looney 1989:76): Short bursts of hyperactivity being followed by decline and stagnation, at the national and various sub-national levels. Specialisation and diversification can thus be concurrent, even lucrative, tactics in the face of uncertainty.

There are further pressures for occupational pluralism in a microstate. There is much less room for specialisation at the individual level. Even should specialist techniques be required, there is usually not enough work for an individual to earn a living through a specialisation alone. This may mean that a small territory must train and pay a specialist for performing only very few services each year, or must otherwise import an expatriate specialist at considerable expense whenever one is
needed (and assuming that one is available at the critical time). One other alternative is the regionalisation of specialist services. But this could pose considerable political, linguistic and logistic difficulties. The most likely outcome, therefore, is that the specialist post is indigenised - serving at the same time as a source of national pride - but the incumbent specialist is forced, not least for the containment of costs, to become a jack - or jill - of many trades (Benedict 1967b:54; Firth 1951:47; Jacobs 1989:86). Smallness, after all, increases the chances of soon becoming a master or mistress of most, even though one might not have had adequate training in any (Shaw 1982:98). Specialisation and the division of labour remains, in other words, incomplete (Bertram & Watters 1985:511; Brock 1988b:306).

Becoming such a "polyvalent handyman" (Bennell & Oxenham 1983:24); or even the resort to over-employment (Manning 1979:160), may obtain in the pursuit of greater consumer power. It must be borne in mind that the desirable standards of living in microstates tends to approximate metropolitan levels for most of the population (Connell 1991b:87; Nevin 1977:25-6: Will 1981:136). A second, or a third, job may satisfy the demand for extra cash. The networking of social relationships can also serve as a ready market and publicity medium for one's goods or services. The ingredients for a potential informal, even black, economy thus exist. Microstates generally have higher tax to GDP ratios, largely to finance the 'lumpiness' in administration (Codrington 1989; May & Tupouniuia 1980:428). An unusually high tax ratio incentivises economic activity which remains invisible

5.6 Effects of Personalisation

In spite of the formal appearance of being in a particular office or post, the reality is that in microstates there is a form of administration which frequently centres more on person than office (Kersell 1992:292; Reid 1974:21-2). According to the formal model, such a personalised approach constitutes bad administration; but in practice, this is a feature of microstate society and is likely to remain so, giving rise to considerable inventiveness so as to exploit potential benefits (Murray 1981:254).

Personalisation is difficult to avoid in microstates, given that the narrow social field intensifies face-to-face interactions (Danns 1980:17; Schahczenski 1992:38); and it is likewise difficult not to put a face or name to a condition rather than dealing with the underlying issues (Singham 1968:309). Administrative models may be based on the hallowed canons of anonymity, secrecy and political neutrality, along with the mythical separation between the sphere of policy formulation (politics) and that of policy execution (the bureaucracy)\textsuperscript{55}. Admittedly, it is problematic to define precisely the degree of historical adherence to such notions; but this belief system nevertheless runs in the veins of the traditional state
bureaucracy: Numerous training courses stress and reinforce these values, which the civil servants may have also tried valiantly to implement.

But the achievement of such goals is more often than not a hopeless enterprise: Access to supposedly secret administrative decisions is widespread; every movement by anyone of importance is closely monitored. The civil servant is under constant scrutiny, running the gauntlet between being either too friendly or too hostile with politicians, colleagues or clients, seeking to come to terms with the pressures of microstate life (Harberger 1988:252; Rajbansee 1972:217,221; Singham 1968:217-222). Excessive political partisanship exacerbates the problem and increases the temptation to settle the dilemma once and for all by taking sides - not least to protect one's interests and advance one's career prospects. Sticking to political neutrality may be tantamount to professional suicide, becoming an object of mistrust and suspicion from all sides:

"It may thus prove very difficult to find able persons with the requisite degree of impartiality, or at least persons who are generally accepted as being impartial, to fill posts in which impartiality is of paramount importance". (De Smith 1970:94)

The stakes are high because in conditions where universal adult franchise exists, small size increases the political capital of each adult (Emmanuel 1976:7-8). A few votes either way can, and do, determine national election results.
If it is who you are, not what you are, which really matters, then this is going to impinge strongly and decisively on labour affairs:

"Whom one knows or gets to know and not what one does is regarded as the key to personal betterment". (Hope 1985:34)

Considerations of kinship, friendship, social status, personal background and allegiance tend (and/or are seen) to matter more than merit and objective attributes where questions of leadership, promotion and recruitment are concerned. Even in the enactment and formulation of its labour policy, the state must face the emergence of pressures by individuals or select groups, each demanding a particular bending or an outright modification of the rules. Intimacy, networks, economic and political power can be brought to bear, in covert or overt means, to get one's demands seen to. There is a continuous pressure for particular and exceptional accommodation on the very accessible and transparent executives of the state. In this manner, both politicians and bureaucrats are targets for approaches based on person or group sensitivity.

No level or aspect of policy is immune from such pressures. Microstate governments are already under pressure to reward friends and punish enemies as part of the hidden agenda of democratic politics. Accusations of nepotism and corruption abound:
"Social ties in island microstates are so powerful and pervasive that anonymity, impersonal role relationships and informality are difficult to maintain. Hence the public service can rarely be politically neutral and corruption is almost inescapable". (Connell 1988a:5)

There nevertheless tends to prevail a "loyalty of self-interest" (Danns 1980:30): The rules of this game are tacitly agreed to by most. No one is thus denied the chance (or at least the illusion) to share in the spoils, including the achievement of desirable social mobility:

"...bureaucratic corruption and public maladministration continue to be institutionally supported, accepted and socially tolerated to such an extent that nobody considers that anything need be done about them". (Hope 1985:36)

But such a personalisation means a rescinding, or distorting, of objective, across the board, treatment. Hence a tendency towards "kleptocracy"(Andreski 1968): Informal, unwritten and unrecorded means of communication. The conspiracy of silence is essential to preserve the lack of accountability and maximum of discretion, already enhanced by job enlargement, in what may be popularly a rampant pastime but, as far as the formal law is concerned, constitutes a gross abuse of justice and a practice certainly inimical to 'efficient administration'. Yet, can the very characteristics of smallness be rejected? Rather than stubbornly upholding the hallowed, rational, Weberian, administrative canons (e.g. Hope 1983), it may prove more profitable to avoid an a priori rejection of and revulsion to this propensity towards

Another consequence of such arrangements is that, being person-specific, they are vulnerable to change: When their architect(s) leave the scene, renegotiation may become necessary (Danns 1980:30).

5.7 A Centrifugal Spiral

It is pertinent here to document the composite effects of personalisation and specialisation on the organisational fabric. The opportunity for individuals to manipulate organisational structures appears much greater in a microstate as institutions are more visibly embodied and identified with outstanding individuals. Persons not only mould the job they occupy to a significant extent — but jobs are formally modified or even created to suit the availability and requirements to and for particular persons.

A set of dangers associated with this intriguing behaviour is documented when a structural functionalist systemic perspective is adopted. The accommodation of organisational structures to discrete personalities and the pervasive activity of networking can render the formal institutional fabric progressively redundant and hollow. A vicious spiral may set in: External, personalised interventions and internal edification and rewarding
pursuits towards monopoly 'expertise' positions erode the legitimacy of the bureaucracy and its capacity to operate regularly, according to its formal rules and procedures. This makes it even more probable that individuals on the outside resort, perhaps begrudgingly, to particularistic, personalistic, practices for interest satisfaction. Meanwhile, those on the inside, carry on undisturbed building an unassailable position within the organisation but in many ways irrespective of it, with even lower levels of accountability. Such behaviour induces exasperation among the upholders of formality and consternation among clients, particularly those whose networks do not exercise leverage on this particular organisation.

This has the making of a centrifugal, anarchistic dynamic, individuals branching out into their own self-regulated pattern of behaviour, irrespective of forming part of a wider institutional set up. In this way, there is little spill over from the person to the office being occupied: The particular achievements are often all too easily credited to and associated with particular incumbents. When these leave the organisation, or when they branch off to try new pastures, their 'expertise' is suddenly, perhaps irretrievably, lost.

The loss of a discrete individual can be therefore a shattering one in the microstate environment. When the person leaves the scene, s/he takes along a unique configuration of expertise, each with its own particularistic set of contacts and relations. Even these are lost to the organisation. There is forfeited a bank of
accrued knowledge and information in terms of content and contacts. This is very rarely passed on by the individual to the organisation. It will very often never be stored in a retrievable format and only occasionally break surface in public demonstrations of expertise, rarely before that, since the position would then be more prone to a takeover. It may be this withholding of information which defends one's expert status and prevents its usurpation by a competitor.

These are very lucrative rewards in embarking on secretive, anarchist adventures, even if the system suffers as a result.

5.8 Emigration

"Universalistic conduct becomes inefficient as the perpetrator will soon be ostracized. The politician will not be re-elected and the official, if not fired, will be moved to a position where he will do no further 'harm'". (Butter 1985:36)

Although it is tempting to consider microstates as "closed systems" (Marshall 1982:454), not all escape hatches are shut. Emigration is the medium which permits a flight from totality, intimacy and monopoly, the ultimate management via usurpation of the ecology of smallness; the "conquering of the tyranny of space" (Wood 1982:300).

Developing microstates differ from most of their third world counterparts in having low death rates, lower birth rates and
much higher emigration levels (Caldwell et al. 1980; Connell 1988c:434; Dommen 1980b:939-40). International migration in fact appears heaviest from the smallest territories (Ward 1967:95). In the literature on developing countries, migration figures usually in terms of models which focus on the decisions of individual workers, often embedded in rational life-cycle considerations responding to relative price symbols and opportunity costs (Harriss & Todaro 1970; Ranis & Fei 1961); or else to the dynamics in the metropolitan host countries (such as tight labour markets) which act as the main instigators of migration and which also effect its duration, volume, seasonality, skill spectrum and target sending population (Rubenstein 1983:301-3; Sassen-Koob 1978:514-5; Wood 1982:303-5).

Models based on the articulation of modes of production approach have suggested more recently a symbiotic relationship between the subsistence economy and the modern sector, with the former serving as a cheap labour reservoir for the latter by bearing some of the costs of its reproduction, this in return providing cash remittances. Where the two sectors are geographically separate, commuting can take the form of periodic, open-ended or permanent migration.

A more recent development in migration theory has been a reappraisal of the balance of costs and benefits of out-migration from the point of view of the sending community. In contrast to the traditional approach of treating out-migration as a net developmental loss to the community of origin - the brain or
skill drain idea - this approach focuses on the extent to which migration is seen also as a "profitable" allocation of (human) resources by the sending community (Bertram & Watters 1985:498); through which, apart from earning foreign exchange, one could also tap culture-friendly consultancy and environment-friendly tourism.

The movement of 'Lilliputians' is considerable: A large proportion of (ex-)microstate citizens is already today living beyond their country's territory (Lowenthal 1987:41-3). Auckland, Sydney, San Francisco, Miami, Toronto, London, Paris and Amsterdam are poles of attraction to microstate citizens and more of these may today be resident abroad than in their particular homeland. In archipelagic microstates, the migration effect is at times just as pronounced at the intra-island level, the attracting growth poles being mining, tourist and government employment centres (Bertram & Watters 1985:504; Marshall 1981). Such movements as do occur tend to take place without severing the links with the kin group of origin (Arutangai 1987:272-3; Lowenthal 1987:41; Pitt 1970:264; Rubenstein 1983:296).

The reasons which induce emigration may vary. A combination of push and pull factors is usually suggested: A perceived lack of economic opportunities at home and a perceived promise of economic opportunities abroad; increased demands for consumer goods, the spread of education resulting in higher economic and social aspirations, increase of information about the world beyond, the alluring 'city lights' glamour of the metropole.
Youths educated abroad, perhaps at the expense of their governments, discover on their return that what was once a home now seems a prison: Low salaries, lack of social facilities and of opportunities for specialisation and career advancement may be too much to bear (Bray 1990:268; De Smith 1970:94; Jacobs 1989:86; Reid 1974:20). Migration takes on the character of a voluntary exile. Pervasive intimacy, rigid monopoly, stifling totality can constitute a far cry indeed from the image of terrestrial paradise.

Emigration reads as a rational option, extending the microstate's boundaries, usurping the limitations of smallness and its ancillary effects. The flow of remittances in cash and in kind from emigrant to microstate-based kin acts as an important supplement to the family budget, permitting a higher level of consumption than would otherwise be possible. The repatriation of earnings is influenced mainly by the obligation to support particular individuals, especially close kin, as well as by the notion of an insurance deposit within the general expectation of eventual resettlement (Meintel 1979b:17; Philpott 1973:176; Rubenstein 1983:296). In certain cases, the option to emigrate is a pre-planned or calculated affair on a transnational scale, part of the phase of one's life cycle which fits in well into the mosaic of global survival. Parents may actively plan to have more children, hoping that some will take up the role of remittance-providers overseas (Connell 1988a:29; 1989:6). The experience provides young adults with the opportunity to taste freedom, live in the bustling metropole, indulge in a consumptive lifestyle -
an experience denied to the less fortunate ones stranded at home. Contacts established overseas pave the way for other microstate citizens to join in, extending this "transnational corporation of kin" (Bertram & Watters 1985:499).

Thus, in recognition that necessity is the mother of invention, migrants join the list of exotic and unlikely exportable commodities - seashells, postage stamps, petty handicrafts - held by resource poor microstates (Hezel & Levin 1989:42; Yusuf & Kyle Peters 1985:14). Periodic return of the absent migrants helps to rebuild relationships, rekindle community involvement and exerts an influence on the local society with metropolitan contacts, concepts, tastes and repatriated investments (King & Strachan 1978; Lowenthal 1972:222-32; Pitt 1970:185-9). The available evidence does not suggest that remittances and returned migrants are catalysts for indigenous economic development (Gmelch 1987); they tend to reinforce consumption patterns and a "remittance society" orientation (Manners 1965).

The migration orientation suggests itself as yet another transnational, metropolitan orientation by the developing microstate citizenry, a rational and functional disposition which, even at the individual level, is appreciative of the imperative to seek 'rentier income' as well as breathing space from abroad. There is an uncanny juxtaposition here of openness and closure (Villamil 1977): The world's Lilliputs exhibiting high relative levels of isolation and totality yet equally high relative levels of 'exit' and extra-territorial mobility; the
latter can be understood to assuage and usurp the stark effects of the former. The small developing state is therefore, in more than one sense, much more than its physical, political manifestation. Emigration is one dynamic which reflects a revamped, larger-than-life, notion of viability:

"It is clear... that a body of land entirely surrounded by water is no longer an island". (Manners 1965:83)

6. TOWARDS EMPIRICAL DEPLOYMENT

Having critically explained that it is living with smallness, rather than solving its presumed problems or basking languidly in its mythical bliss, which is my main preoccupation, I now turn to concrete space-time configurations of such living. The discussion undertaken with respect to general themes above will now be focused much more sharply. Chapter 4 will explore the behavioural cluster of employment and labour relations, with a comparative critique of the goings on in two luxury hotels, one in Malta and one in Barbados. Chapter 5 will seek out labour formation and human resource development issues with a separate investigation, mainly interview based, at the University of the West Indies (Barbados Campus); this is supported by an autobiographical exploration of the passages of the self as academic at the University of Malta.
The case studies provide precious substantive material within which to ground the abstract formulations elaborated upon in this and earlier chapters; but, perhaps more importantly, they structure opportunities to test out the proposed typology of smallness, appraising its operational and analytic value.

Notes to Chapter 3


2. See, for example, the Passfield Memorandum of 1929, commented upon by Harrod(1988:50).

3. The presumed, self-righteous authority of the state and of the legal system and the symbolic equilibrium between the forces of capital and labour in collective bargaining are cases in point. See Schuller (1985, Chapter 2) and Fox(1974:207).

4. See Dunn(1990); Hyman(1989:13). Kerr et.al.(1960) and Pombrun et.al.(1984) may be a generation apart; but they uphold the same authority to industrialising elites and to strategic human resource management respectively.


7. A key word search of microstate country names on the University of Warwick Library Database was carried out in June 1991. Guyana was the best represented with 72 references, followed by Grenada(37), Cyprus(37), Malta(26), Botswana(16), Antigua(15), Bahamas(13) and Fiji(10). Note that all these are former British colonies and most have been geo-politically noteworthy, hence their attraction to [British] scholarship. Other microstates had a mean of 2.7 references each, including none at all for seven of these. In contrast, there were 897 references to texts on India.

8. Amerigo Vespucci, for example, describes how "wanton" Caribbean women use an animal poison, sometimes lastingly fatal to virility, to increase the size of the male member" (Naipaul 1972:205).


11. See Firth (1936), Malinowski (1922) and Mead (1949). A similar point is made by Pitt (1980:1051) and is also paraphrased by Cohen (1983a:14-15).

12. Diggines (1985:192); Lowenthal (1972:13). For instance, New Zealand was promoted by Victorians as having the promise of a new democracy away from the evils of social stratification of Europe. The novelist Rudyard Kipling called it "last, loneliest, loveliest". Katherine Mansfield eulogised "the little island cradled in the giant sea bosom" in poetic verse (Pitt 1985:34-6). Not surprisingly, those who wrote in this manner did not spend much time, if at all, in such and similar places.

13. Benedict & Benedict (1982:10-11); Cohen (1983a:15); Crocombe (1987:31); Moorehead (1966, Chapter 3); Pitt (1980:1051). The television and motion picture industry has also exploited this image in such productions as Fantasy Island, Blue Lagoon and James Bond's Live and Let Die. These "...perpetuate earlier stereotypes of happy-go-lucky children of nature, living in a state of primitive affluence, untroubled by the traumas of competitive and combative 'advanced' societies" (Roy 1979:169).

14. On the impact of tourism in developing, especially small, countries, see Bastin (1984); Bryden (1973); De Kadt (1979) and McKee & Tisdell (1990, Chapter 5). See also Chapter 4 below.

15. Simi (1987:22). For example, in Tonga, trade unions are outlawed to attract foreign investment. In Fiji, chiefs exhort workers to accept what is given to them. Vanuatu workers are advised to follow those in authority (Howard 1983:197).

16. The association of the small, developing state as a ready-to-go, efficient enterprise - e.g. Bermuda Incorporated (Kersell 1985) - is an often used marketing gimmick.

17. See, for example, the critique by Freeman (1983) of Mead (1949), reported also in Shipman (1988:34).


19. A microstate economist has been commissioned by UNCTAD to develop a vulnerability index. This is expected to serve to make a case for additional help from the developed world to small island states. See Briguglio, L. (1990) 'Constructing a Vulnerability Index for Island Developing Countries', The Sunday Times (Malta), 4th November, p.26.


21. See, for example, Vella, M.R. (1992) 'Malta hailed as Economic Miracle at Islands Conference', The Times (Malta), 7th November, p.6.

23. The proneness to spectacular growth may in part be a consequence of near total devastation; the aftermath of disasters may indeed induce a Keynesian expansionary effect. My thanks to Richard Hyman for alerting me to this possibility.

24. Neville Duncan, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, UWI, interviewed on 31st August 1992. Also, "tourist locales go through cycles, so that some islands may be 'in' one year and 'out' the next" (De Kadt 1979:22).


26. The failed attempt at democratising the Board of Directors of 'The Mutual', a white-controlled insurance company in Barbados, was reported as "a storm in a teacup at the start of the hurricane season" in The Economist, July 8th 1989, p.58: (Beckles 1989:10-11). Another example, drawn from the Pacific: Jimmy Stevens, who staged the 1980 attempted coup in Espiritu Santu, Vanuatu, was released from prison in 1991. The event was reported in The Economist, 31st August 1991, p.50, as "A Memory of the Coconut War".

27. "In this terrible agitation of mind, I could not forbear thinking of Lilliput, whose inhabitants looked upon me as the greatest prodigy that ever appeared... I reflected what a mortification it must prove to me to appear as inconsiderable in this nation, as one Lilliputian would be among us" (Swift 1965: Part II, Chapter 1). Quoted also in Eddy (1963:99).

28. Chircop (1993) refers to this trait in Maltese culture as the Mdina defence syndrome, identifying the meandering, narrow streets of the former Maltese capital city where foreigners throng but are nevertheless bound to get lost, as a suggestive metaphor. The indulgence in a secret realm is also witnessed and reproduced via local languages or dialects which, unknown to the foreigner, protect the indigenous speakers from recrimination and construct local identity. See, for example, Baldacchino (1990:74) on Maltese, Hintjens (1987) on Réunionnais and Meintel (1977) on Cape Verdean Crioulo.

29. Title of a Caribbean novel (Selvon 1955); quoted in Clarke (1976:8).

External grants accounted for between 18% and 40% of budget receipts in 1987 in Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and Western Samoa (McKee & Tisdell 1990:41).

31. Still, small state citizens (in proportion to total indigenous population figures) are amongst the world’s most enthusiastic emigrants. The same may perhaps be said with respect to travelling ‘abroad’ (including inter-island hopping). It has been suggested that the popularity of boating in one small territory, Bermuda, may be due to “the fact that the ocean provides a temporary, easily accessible sanctuary from the pressures of a 54 square kilometre island of some 60,000 souls”. Walton Brown Jr., Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, Bermuda College, personal communication, dated 17th July 1993.


33. A comment overheard while in a Maltese bookshop in June 1993. The shop assistant, who voiced the term, was describing her succinct interpretation of Malta’s infrastructural endowment, in spite of its puny territorial size, to a fascinated foreigner, during a recent trip abroad.

34. Also Barrett (1986:207); Lowenthal (1972:213,217,222); Mills (1970:13).


40. As suggested by Bahadoorsingh (1968), Lal (1990) and Minogue (1983) with respect to Trinidad, Fiji and Mauritius respectively.

41. Supportive evidence can be obtained with reference to three unrelated sources: Dommen (1980b:936) and his discussion and graphical representation of epidemics and their different impact on small/island as against large/continental areas; Carse (1992, Figure 3) who ingeniously succeeds in holding most variables constant, documenting graphically the “greater fluctuation in
economic fortunes" (ibid.:5) experienced by the Isle of Man in contrast to the U.K., in whose orbit the former is totally engulfed; Jonsson(1993:65) in a graphical comparison of Iceland with the other Nordic European countries and the OECD group.

42. In an attempt to make a case for a specific concern with the problems of small island states, Blackman(1991:1) argues: "After all, a separate discipline of paediatrics has evolved in medicine for the treatment of the young. Children are not regarded simply as small scale versions of adults". Although I would intuitively object to the paternalist irony of the metaphor, hypothermia is nevertheless a condition associated with smallness, children having a greater organismic responsiveness to ambient temperature change, owing to a larger body surface area with respect to body volume.

43. "A very small society may be compared to a dry forest in summer, where at all times the temperature is uncomfortably close to the flash point" (Butter 1985:42).

44. Because of small size of territory and working population, and given the limited development of industry, the general union has been deemed to be the most suitable trade union form: Blenk (1990:108); ILO(1974:14). Also Henry(1972:73-4).

45. See, for example, Henry(1972:94) on Trinidad.

46. The concept is an egocentric variant of the "economy of affection" (Hyden 1983:8-9,19).

47. For a review of networkers see Pitt(1985:31-2). The classic text is Boissevain(1974), based on field research in Malta.

48. Price(1988:158). The gender bias is instructive here, as will be commented upon in due course.

49. See Danns(1980) on corruption in Guyana. Lines is the Guyanese popular version of networks. Wantok is a similar system based on clan identity in the Solomon Islands(Institute of Pacific Studies 1983:72, Note 19; Ramo 1991:283). They are known as bobol (literally, grafts) in Dominica (Trouillot 1988:279).

50. For example, in Fiji, family-run enterprises consisted of 90% of the total and each employed at most 5 persons in 1970 (Samy 1978:25). In Greek Cyprus, 28% of the non-agricultural labour force was engaged in establishments with less than 5 workers; and only 30% in plants with 100 workers or more (House 1984:404-5). Note that Fiji and Greek Cyprus are amongst the largest developing microstates. On Malta, refer to Table 3 above.

51. These ideas are gleaned from Jacobs(1989:87); Murray (1985:190 et.seq.); Robinson(1960:xviii).

52. A St. Lucian proverb, quoted also in Carnegie(1982:11).

54. See Price (1988:1) on occupational diversity in the context of a 'hypothermic' labour market on Bequia Island, St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Frucht (1967:295) argues with respect to the Caribbean that "particularly for the smaller islands...the people are categorically neither peasants nor proletarians".

55. "Colonialists left a myth that public servants should be apolitical and should not be involved in politics": A Guyanese Minister quoted in Hope (1985:34).


57. For a review article on the 'AMP' thesis, see Foster-Carter (1984). For microstate studies of migration within this tradition see Bayliss-Smith et al. (1988, Chapter 3) and Sofer (1993).

58. This theme is elaborated in more detail in Chapter 5 below.

59. Wood (1967:34). Rubenstein (1983:298) refers to this as a "migration mentality".

60. See Philpott (1973) and Richardson (1983) on emigration and its effects in relation to Montserrat and St. Kitts-Nevis.
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Focus on Two Hotels

If smallness and its consequences have implications for relationships between people, particularly between people at work, then labour relations in the hotel industry ought to be typical. After all, a hotel constitutes a site of production, possibly the most representative one for non-public sector labour relations in a developing microstate, given the ascendency of tourism and other service occupations. It is therefore a suitable backdrop to the exploration of labour relations played out within the microstate milieu; as well as a welcome departure from a sociology of work based on studies of industrial production workers (Crompton 1989:129; Shamir 1978:285; Whyte 1948:v).

Small and island states have figured rather prominently in fora debating the relationship between the tourist industry and such themes as commercialisation of host culture, environmental management and socio-economic development (e.g. Britton & Clarke 1987; Bryden 1973; De Kadt 1979; Lockhart et.al. 1993). Yet, they owe their exposure not to suggestive conceptual distinctiveness, but mainly to the fact that they are plentiful in number: Multum in parvo (Brookfield 1975).
The task at hand is to document the shifting and ingenious but comparable expressions of totality, monopoly and intimacy in the context of the management of, and response to, the circumstance of smallness. The challenge therefore is to analyse the labour relations pertaining at two specific production milieux, illustrating the manner in which the smallness effect is brought to bear. Meanwhile, behavioural features will be teased out which, in spite of the uniqueness of each case, suggest consequences inherent from operating in similarly (lilliputian) conditions. This configuration of process is referred to as a microstate labour syndrome.

This chapter thus helps to contextualise, by means of comparative empirical grounding, themes and dynamics so far limited to general abstractions; while organising this grounded data around these same principles, exposing their explanatory power, as well as indicating refinements.

1.2 The Setting for Labour Relations

The case studies revolve around the sphere of labour relations; alternatively referred to as the management of, and by, human resources. This proposes to capture the notion of how the function of enterprise human resource management - the marshalling and organising of labour inputs to get the necessary work done - is problematic: What and even whether work is necessary is not naturally self-evident; although, obviously,
there are managerial interests which would like it to be and, indeed, whose job comprises making it so. Workers are more than passive factors of production: They confront the apparent dogmatism of managerial control, labour laws and company regulations in a permanent attempt at making the inevitable work experience approximate their own self-structured and self-regulated hierarchy of objectives, material, political and psychological, individual and collective. It is the success or otherwise in parrying such tactics which lies at the heart of the personnel management function. Such tactics, where legitimate, find their institutionalised expression in collective bargaining; but these are played out with perhaps even greater significance in an informal, low key, day to day manner. The defusing or pre-emption of such 'dysfunctional' elements may be occasioned via the socialising effect of the routinised behaviour of compliant peers; the successful implantation and cultivation of an alternative ideology of work where managerial authority is legitimate and where workers espouse an allegiance to the enterprise goals; perhaps even by feelings of work obligation. Such would denote a still higher measure of success for human resource management: Commitment and motivation being the ultimate form of labour control.

Labour relations therefore are primarily constituted by the interplay of labour inputs on the production site; of the tensions, contradictions and mismatches which result from the merger of different conceptions of how to structure, and behave within, the technical and social organisation of production.
Workers cannot be forced to work without a modicum of consent on their part; nor do workers agree to sell an exact quantity of labour. This dialectic is perhaps most glaringly idiosyncratic in a service industry seeking to provide a high quality product to a discerning foreign clientele.

Various studies in the hotel and catering industry have documented the moulding and nurturing of such a negotiation of order. The invisible proposition is for both parties to go out of their way to provide what would otherwise prove too costly or difficult to enshrine in formal, structured contracts. This constitutes the social and often personalised bind beyond the cash nexus and is the basis behind informal countertrade. Workers are thus encouraged to have a personally customised stake in the enterprise goals which increases their disposition to move beyond strict job descriptions and union demarcated tasks in return for tailor made concessions. Such "fringe benefits" (Boella 1988:139-140) however typically remain managerial prerogatives: Assignment of vacancy leave, overtime, a convenient roster, turning a blind eye to petty theft, allocation to duties which render lucrative tips or which involve light work.

Managers are generally game to this practice: They will "purchase their subordinates' goodwill" (Hyman 1980:315) not only because this is, to some extent, a prerequisite to any functioning work site, but also because this fosters the building of person specific loyalties which can strengthen their authority, allow them a freer hand to indulge in divisive strategies and at the

The challenge set for this chapter is to highlight how such and similar organisational behaviour, notorious in the hospitality industry, stands to benefit from a perspective coloured by the *leitmotifs* of the smallness effect. Is there a microstate labour syndrome at work, apart from a hospitality industry labour syndrome? Are there dynamics which accentuate, distort and somehow influence, in culture-specific but conceptually comparable ways, the labour relations encounters prevailing in large hotels in developing microstates? Do the concepts of intimacy, monopoly and totality add to our understanding of what is going on in these scenarios, sensitising us to new, interesting and relevant detail?

The response to such interrogatives will be set up in such a way as to preserve the specific flavour of the two selected employment sites, referred to by the pseudonyms Southern Bliss Hotel (SBH) in Malta and Tropical Dream Resort (TDR) in Barbados. The organisation will also reflect my understanding of the human resource management function as fundamentally dynamic rather than strategic; therefore management and worker responses will be generally juxtaposed and treated in combination. Suggestive quotes drawn from interview scripts are intended to enrich and ground the text while acknowledging the empirical inspiration behind the analysis; these will however be kept to a minimum so
as not to break the unfolding narrative. The categories which structure the discussion are salient themes which suggested themselves from the analysis of field notes, reflecting those features which bore significance to my respondents at the time of the research.

1.3 Layout

This chapter therefore illustrates the microstate labour syndrome in action: By comparing and contrasting the negotiation of labour relations in two production sites, the discussion anchors, as well as evaluates the significance of, a lilliputian imagination for the analysis of specific labour relations settings in small developing states.

The adopted format first charts the national and immediate environment in which the two sites operate. This exercise ties in with the 'pseudo-development' framework elaborated in Chapter 2, with reference this time to the tourist industry. Its mixed blessings are features embedded in the microstate fabric, and these have a bearing on what goes on inside the hotels in question.

Next follows an exploration of the details of human resource management in action at the two hotels, derived mainly from semi-structured interviews. The perennial problem of motivation and control at the heart of the labour process is approached via a
consideration of the handling of pertinent issues. The conceptual typology of smallness will be deployed to test its contribution towards illuminating these tensions. These include a consideration of trade unionism.

The third block of arguments reviews the evaluation of the microstate labour syndrome by managerial staff. These expound on the dilemmas involved in negating, fighting or strategically exploiting their lilliputian predicament, while being locked in its embrace.

The final section captures, in summary form, the implications of the conceptual framework for the data. In doing so, it draws on how the material contributes to conceptual refinement.

2. THE ENVIRONMENT

2.1 Tourism in Developing Microstates

A cursory glance at recent World Tourism Organisation statistics for Europe reveals that the highest contributions by tourism to GNP are enjoyed by Malta and [Greek] Cyprus, the only two small island developing states in the region (W.T.O. 1991:41). This observation is more than sheer coincidence: Contemporary evidence suggests that natural beauty and exotic culture may prove to be marketable assets in which certain countries may enjoy a comparative advantage. This holds true particularly for the
world's smallest states and territories. Thanks to sun, sea and sand, countries like Antigua & Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Fiji, Maldives and Seychelles have developed a flourishing tourist industry which remains the largest contributor to direct and indirect employment, exceeding in significance any other economically productive activity (Connell 1988a:62; 1993; Legarda 1984:42-3).

While the net foreign revenue and multiplier effects of tourism are significant and readily witnessable, the leakages and costs are less transparent. Developing economies in general are caught in a vicious circle whereby they bear many of the costs but few of the fiscal benefits accruing from the tourist industry. Their general inability to control markets, tour operators, airlines and particularly up market hotel investment means that they only marginally tap tourist financial flows. This is especially so for the smallest, typically most open economies. These are prone to manage a seasonal industry, dependent on a variety of conditions obtaining in one, main, sending territory. Meanwhile, as host destinations, they often have to bear the full cost of refurbishing the tourist plant. Tourism places strong physical demands on infrastructural, beach and marine resources. This strain appears to be inversely proportional to the smallness of territory and constitutes another, environmental facet of totality3. Indeed, many of these small territories receive annually many more tourists than the number of resident population. Considerations of sustainable development appear
especially critical to small island developing ecosystems (Bennett & Towle 1981:22-3; Butler 1993; De Kadt 1979:16).

The experiences of Malta and Barbados are illustrative of such and similar manifestations. This section documents these, zooming in to describe in particular the environment immediate to the luxury hotels which comprise the main foci for this chapter's discussion.

2.2 Tourism in Malta: A Poisoned Chalice?

"Malta is the perfect place for a peaceful relaxing holiday ... The rocky island is dotted with sheltered bays and you will find much of historical and architectural interest, with exploring made all the more enjoyable by the friendly welcome that the locals extend...".

Apart from a fairly diversified manufacturing industry, commerce and a ponderous public sector, tourism provides Malta with one of the few realistic options for broadening employment, as well as earning substantial foreign exchange. All told, tourism accounts for some 39% of the total registered output of the Maltese economy.

In common with other Mediterranean resorts, tourism in Malta has grown rapidly from a very low base: In 1959 there were only 25 hotels providing 1,200 beds and 500 jobs. Tourist arrivals then numbered 12,600, most of whom were British, and earnings amounted then to a mere US$2.4m (Inguanez 1993). Moreover, many of these
visitors were friends and relatives of British service personnel stationed on the island. The flow of foreign currency and employment generation were the main motives which induced a formal tourism policy within the framework of consecutive development plans from 1959; but no specific zoning strategy was adopted, tourist areas springing up in a rather impromptu manner (Pollacco 1988:62-3).

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, tourist arrivals grew rapidly as Malta shared in the jet travel and holiday package boom (Boissevain 1977). The expansion led to the construction of large isolated hotels in northern Malta and the islands of Gozo and Comino, the transformation of Sliema and St. Julians from desirable suburbs to resort towns where hotels line the seafront, and the building practically from scratch of the new town of Bugibba\Qawra consisting of small, at times haphazardly built, family run hotels, time share allocations and self-catering accommodation. The era of expansion reached a peak in 1980 with 730,000 tourist arrivals, 75% of which occurred during the period May to October. In that year, gross foreign exchange earnings amounted to US$330m. The number of hotels and holiday complexes had shot up to 112 while full time employment was reported at 5,159, 5% of the gainfully employed (Delia 1988; Lockhart & Ashton 1987).

The industry then suffered a sudden and unexpected contraction: the tourist market had remained dominated by British visitors who constituted almost 2 out of every 3 arrivals in 1980. So the
market plummeted when the number of British arrivals dropped by almost 50% over the years 1982-86. Occupancy levels in tourist accommodation fell from 61% in 1980 to 46% in 1984; while gross foreign exchange earnings were halved (Howarth & Howarth 1989:118; Simmoleit 1991:111).

New vigorous infrastructural investment, a preferential rate of exchange for the tourist sterling and a calmer political atmosphere, plus the ever expanding character of the international tourist industry have, since 1987, collectively helped to see Malta out of its worst and latest recession. There are now some 45 five-star and four-star hotels and tourist complexes in the Maltese Islands. The tourist figures have indeed burst through the magical one million threshold in 1992; but rumblings of danger remain stubbornly in the air. Also, in spite of attempts at diversification, the Maltese tourist industry remains heavily dependent on the U.K. market.

2.3 A Village 'Developed'

"Brighton Beach has relocated to Marsascala. The beach is often littered with eponymous takeaway pizza boxes".

Only the south eastern part of Malta and the rugged west coast have been spared from intensive coastal development (Anderson & Schembri 1989); see Figure 2. Among these Marsascala, traditionally a quiet and remote fishing village. Local produce,
apart from fish, was limited until some years ago to petty agriculture and salt panning. Its population, as per the census exercises of 1957 and 1967, was 888 and 876 respectively (C.O.S. 1986:155).

The latest (October 1985) census however reveals a dramatic increase, the village resident population then reaching 1,936, and with 56.5% of dwellings vacant on census night (C.O.S. 1986:281). Marsascala has enhanced its appeal as a permanent residential area as well as of a domestic holiday resort, with various families moving to premises which they own or rent for the summer months. Marsascala, St. Julians and Bugibba/Qawra now carry the ignoble privilege of being Malta's main entertainment and leisure localities.

The opening of Southern Bliss Hotel in 1982 - then the hotel with the largest number of beds on the island - is likely to have been a spur towards the 'development' of the area.

The positive spinoffs accruing from the hotel are various. Some are direct: Opportunities for secure, full-time employment to workers who, in their large majority, hail from the surrounding towns and villages; sponsorship over the years of various parish activities; and the 'embellishment' of the area where the hotel is built, with the building of a jetty, landscaping and enhanced facilities for swimming, fishing, diving and other water sports.
Figure 2: The distribution of 4-star & 5-star hotels & tourist complexes in Malta (1993). Source: National Tourism Organisation, Malta.
Even the local infrastructure has been vastly improved: New roads, a new promenade lining the coast and an extended public transport service whose terminus lies in the shadow of the hotel edifice. The cause and effect relationship could not be more obvious:

"Before the hotel, Marsascala was dead. It grew up because of SBH. The hotel made Marsascala known and this eventually helped in making the area more accessible. The hotel served as a great magnet. The area was thus 'discovered'" (manager, SBH).

Marsascala may have had all that the tourist in search of a quiet holiday desires: Sea, sand, rocks and marine life, located in a small and picturesque village with 'friendly natives' embracing a culture revolving around salt, agriculture and fisheries:

"Marsascala is a nice area, not excessively developed, a natural village environment famous for fish and fishing". (general manager, SBH)

Now, however, the fields have given way to self-catering apartment blocks; the salt pans which remain are ready depositories of plastic bottles, aluminium beer cans and take-away pizza cartons. The old houses of character lining the seafront are readily transformed into burger and chips outlets. There is now only one full time fisherman, most of those plying the trade now doing so for a few weeks a year in late summer, when the popular swordfish and lampuki season has its course.
Otherwise the traditional boats are there for joy rides and as a colourful backdrop to photographs and postcards.

Tourism has given Marsascala a different lease of life. It has been a catalyst which tapped inert resources and transformed them into revenue accruing, natural capital. Half the full-time employment currently available at Marsascala is accounted for by SBH\textsuperscript{13}.

The unavoidable corollary to this success story is the commercialisation of the area: The locality has shifted its survival strategy and discovered the various ingenious ways of making money from foreigners as well as from Maltese adapting to a more consumeristic lifestyle, converging on the village in search of food, drink and fun. Cultural forms risk perseverance as plastic appeasements or else face disappearance, their crime being non-commercialisation.

There are also ominous signs of environmental degradation: Water shortages, power cuts and drainage overspills - the bane behind the tourist contraction of the early 1980s - tend to recur, especially in the peak summer months\textsuperscript{14}. Towering apartment blocks threaten the coastline. The "Bugibbisation" of Marsascala is nightmarish to entertain but remains a dramatic possibility. And Marsascala Bay itself, until recently a primarily rocky ecosystem, is fast changing over to a sandy bay\textsuperscript{15}. A better deal for the tourist who may not wish to prick his/her feet, one might say. But this is a danger signal for the marine fauna and flora.

223
of the area: Sand means death. Unless controlled and moderated, tourism may yet kill tourism, and much else with it.

2.4 Tourism in Barbados, By Default

"In an area of growing[?] industrialisation, Barbados remains an unspoilt Eden of golden sunshine, blue skies kissed only by scudding white clouds and transparent azure waters, a quiet haven for those who would avoid for a brief respite the strains and stresses of modern existence". (Lynch 1964:79)

"By 1985, the Barbadian economy had become almost completely dependent on tourism for its survival"(Howard 1989:68). This powerful statement reflects why Barbadian governments have increasingly adopted explicit programmes to promote the growth of international tourism as part of their 'development' strategy:

"The fact of the matter is that the survival of our country has depended, and will depend, on our ability to earn foreign exchange. If you think of our total foreign exchange capacity as a column ten feet tall, the tourist industry accounts for well over six feet of that column". (Lynch 1992:13)

Of course, one may question whether the opportunity cost involved in achieving such a result makes the activity, with all the fiscal concessions and environmental costs involved, at all worthwhile'.

As is typical in the Caribbean, the principal beaches and therefore tourist accommodation areas in Barbados are
concentrated on the sheltered west and south coasts of the island, particularly in the parishes of St. James and Christ Church (Potter 1983:47); see Figure 3. Since these areas coincide with the main urban settlements, pressure on the coast is formidable and land use conflicts abound\textsuperscript{17}. The building of tourist accommodation on the seaward side of the major coastal roads, acts - barring a few 'windows to sea' - as a visual as well as a physical barrier to the local inhabitants. An active environmental lobby highlighted this issue in 1982:

"As a result of thoughtless building construction in the name of progress, the irony of a small, island community which, from the beginning of its history, was given to regard 'the encircling sea' as the richest of its possessions, being gradually denied so much as a glimpse, was seen in all its tragedy\textsuperscript{18}.

Yet, the 'windows to sea' continue to dwindle. The "arrestive action" encouraged by the environmental group was countered by a Prime Ministerial pledge to preserve most of the eastern coast for the free and unencumbered enjoyment of the Barbadian people. The irony is that most of this desolate stretch of coast is either inaccessible or unsafe for bathing.

Substantial leakages occur from the income accruing to the Barbados economy from tourism because of heavy importation of food, furniture and other items\textsuperscript{19}; as well as the foreign ownership of the major airlines, tour operators and hotels, particularly in the up-market bracket\textsuperscript{20}. To enhance local participation in the tourist economy, the Barbados Government approved the construction of self-catering apartments and
aparthotels. Here, local ownership is admittedly strong. Yet, apart from a construction spurt, fiscal contribution is low because such accommodation generates much less revenue per capita and far fewer jobs (Potter 1983:49).

More seriously, these initiatives seem to have tarnished the image of Barbados as a tropical haven for the wealthy and extravagant which has so far distinguished it from most other Caribbean destinations. It has been this up-market orientation which has, to date, legitimated the island's higher costs of service. A recent series of regular declines in tourist arrivals and gross receipts may be an indication that Barbados is losing out to up and coming, relatively undiscovered, tourist destinations like Aruba, Antigua, Grenada and St. Lucia. Barbados, it seems, is relegating itself to just another Caribbean island.

A reflection of such an unwelcome market switch is the increasing proportion of cruise ship day-trippers in relation to stay-over tourists (B.D.T.S.:1991). The shift is also bound to imply that recession in the tourist generating territories - particularly the U.S.A. and the U.K. which together account for over 50% of arrivals(B.D.T.S. 1991:12) - will increasingly spell downturns in Barbados tourist figures and receipts. The niche orientation has so far spared the island from such implications because up-market tourists are generally less vulnerable to such economic fluctuations(Doxey 1971:5).
Figure 3: Hotels & Tourist Complexes in Barbados, 1993. Adapted from Potter (1983).
This phenomenon is also related to Barbados' predicament as a "mature tourist destination". In recent years, coastal areas have come under stress primarily from the seepage of sewage, the run-off of agricultural chemicals and other dumping of waste. This is most serious in winter, the peak of a still primarily seasonal tourist industry. In certain instances, coral reefs have died while certain beaches have disappeared completely. Diesel powered seacraft and effluent from oil tank installations add to the damage:

"Gazing from the balconies of the Holiday Inn [now Grand Barbados Hotel] in Barbados, vacationers can appreciate the lingering sunsets and the easy breeze of the trade winds; but a more discriminating look around the ocean front reveals a Mobil Oil Refinery, with the smell of oil hanging in the evening air. Sewage from the hotel and the crowded city of Bridgetown flows into the famously clear Caribbean sea. Warm water from seaside power plants is killing off the nearby aquatic life and ruining the attractions of snorkelling". (Barry et.al. 1984:84)

Good catches of fish are only reported off east coast fishing villages where the waters are still relatively healthy and where, one may add, the sand is truly as white and clean as the postcard photographs intimate.

There is also a cultural, critical dimension to the tourism industry in Barbados. Caribbean tourism demands an image of paradise and Barbados is hard put to maintain this fiction (Barry et.al. 1984:82). The welcoming disposition of the locals, the "cordial and friendly attitude of Barbadians" (Lewis 1979:206), has apparently been wished into existence and sold, part of the enticing tourist package. Even pseudo-academic articles have
'explained' how Bajans are naturally inclined towards abundant hospitality. In spite of continuous appeals to citizens at large for courtesy, honesty and genuine friendliness, there are definite expressions of resentment. These erupted in a crime wave during 1991, when British, American and Canadian tourists were all warned by their respective Governments to take special precautions when visiting that particular paradise.

Perhaps part of the explanation lies in a widespread though covert perception of tourism as an industry whose capital ownership, top management structures and operations are largely under alien control. There is also an awareness that the behaviour patterns which the industry demands are too much akin to, and therefore too readily identified with, the ever fresh and bitter experience of slavery:

"Being someone else's playground has meant that the Caribbean fishermen have become beach boys, its farmers have turned into waiters and the TNC hotels are defining the local culture". (Barry et.al. 1984:87)

2.5 An Oasis in A Desert

The lion's share of tourism receipts in Barbados is generated by just 15 luxury hotels currently in operation on the island. These account for 70% of hotel rooms and 75% of hotel beds available (B.D.T.S. 1991:15,24). These hotels have a relatively higher employee to room ratio; so they also rank among the island's largest employers and their employees among the best paid.
Tropical Dream Resort is one of these properties and one of the top 10 employers (by size of labour force) in Barbados.

From the way that the Barbados luxury tourist industry has been faring of late, TDR is hard put to exploit and cash in on any shred of Caribbean mystique. While some existing hotels have continued to change hands, no new luxury hotel has been built on the island since 1982. Transnational names in tourism - like Holiday Inn and Cunard - have packed their bags and relinquished their Barbadian stakes. There have been more redundancies in the remaining hotels over the past 2 years than ever before on the island.

TDR appears to be in a similar fiscal fix. Apparently, the hotel has not been matching up to what its owners define as 'a profitable operation' for many years. It has been making various posts redundant and subcontracting out a number of operations. Occupancy rates are markedly seasonal - 80% or so in winter and down to 40% in summer, necessitating resort to employment on fixed-term contract to minimise labour costs. Demand is also subject to changes defying prediction or patterning:

"The U.S. recession has had a direct effect on the quantity and quality of the tourist product... 1983 and the Grenada invasion was an excellent year for tourism: Barbados served as the base for hundreds of media journalists and crews. 1989 was a down year: Hurricane Hugo struck Montserrat. Americans are ignorant: they hear that there has been a hurricane so they wouldn't travel to the region". (director, TDR)
The situation is bleak enough for the general manager to threaten, during industrial action early in 1992, that the TDR owners could pull out of Barbados within 24 hours.

Such a decision would be a shattering one, particularly to the parish of St. Philip. When the foreign owners decided to expand the resort in the mid-1970s and move to the 256-bed, 300 plus full-time employee property it is today, they unwittingly found themselves victim of other implications of smallness. The resort's position on the island's east coast made it a natural choice of employment for the residents of the parish of St. Philip where the hotel is located. Indeed, TDR had been manned exclusively by Philippians under the earlier period of ownership. Its staff complement represents a disproportionately large figure within the small territory: TDR has found itself the largest private employer in the parish.

St. Philip, on the island's windswept east coast, is the driest and agriculturally least productive parish in Barbados. Sugar plantations and related farming are relatively sparse. This makes the land also relatively cheap to purchase - hence it is now a fast growing residential area. With 18,600 inhabitants, it is the third most populated parish in Barbados (Potter & Dann 1990:182, Table 11.2). Still, so much direct and indirect income and other economic activity within the parish continues to depend essentially on the operation of this one hotel:
"TDR has done significantly well for the people of St. Philip. Jobs, revenue into the country, provision of electricity, water...". (manager, TDR)

And:

"The impact [of the hotel] has been tremendous. It has helped employment in more than one way. The people who work here avoid the hassle of bussing to and fro; it helps fishermen who sell lobsters and fish to the hotel; and the farmers who sell fruit, vegetables and eggs to the hotel". (manager, TDR)

When the Barbadian historian Schomburgk referred to the TDR property as "an oasis in the desert" (1848:219), he was alluding to the manner in which the main edifice then eclipsed in beauty of design and furnishing any other building in the surroundings, possibly on the whole island of Barbados. But, one and a half centuries later, this observation takes on other, equally valid, meanings. The hotel becomes a case of a near total institution, a world within a world.

3. AN EXPLORATION OF LABOUR RELATIONS

3.1 The Infection of Smallness

Transnational capital may come across as a monolithic organisation, standardising site-sensitive details from its various operations, wherever they might be. Yet, this technocratic regime is perforce deployed in concrete workplaces, inhabited by real people equipped with their own cultural
baggage. The outcome is therefore not as predictable and standard. Human resource management, of all management functions, remains perennially liable to the widest degrees of tolerance (in resignation to worker 'resourcefulness'); it must therefore also bend in the face of the wider socio-cultural habitus, the home grown survival kit of people as citizens, consumers and producers\(^{28}\). This section looks closely at a human geography of the labour process; the comparable experiences of microstate producers locked within the labour-management relationship.

First on the assessment agenda is recruitment; the interface between the firm and the outside world. This exploration of recruitment practice captures the pervasiveness of the microstate predicament on the productive operations embedded within it. Already in looking at the input of labour into the two hotels, both of which substantially represent foreign investment\(^{29}\), we have an insight into the conscription of Lilliput into what, from corporate headquarters, may be simply one other overseas operation\(^{30}\).

The stage is thus set for the further unfolding of the microstate labour syndrome in the workplace: Management and workers are bound in a tension which goes beyond the typical treatment of labour relations; overriding this "contested terrain" (Edwards 1979) we come across another set of tensions, those which deal with the management of Lilliput. Intimacy, totality and monopoly are brought to bear, unwittingly or purposely, on and by system incumbents. These will be appraised below through an analysis of

233
respondent views concerning discipline and authority, security and pilferage, familiarity and the management of information, the delicate accommodation within and between networks, and the strategic equilibrium between flexibility and specialisation. A separate section will discuss the implications on trade union membership, function and mobilisation.

3.2 Recruitment

- Mechanisms of Brokerage

Word of mouth recruitment is not confined to small territories. People in the hospitality industry worldwide know well the value of word of mouth recommendations. Existing employees recruit newcomers, with the management not having to incur advertising costs. There is also a tacit recommendation process, with an existing employee recommending someone as a good employer, while the same employee is recommending the applicant as a good worker (Boella 1988:67-8). The setting is therefore one of an "extended internal labour market" where recruitment occurs "through existing employees of the firm" (Manwaring 1984:161).

This activity needs to be seen in the small territory within the wider pursuit of brokerage functions carried out routinely by individuals. People are likely to know and interact regularly with a substantial percentage of the total domestic universe of human resources, and to get to know directly and incidentally
about the needs of some and those of others; this also tends to
be done with a degree of detail more considerable than in larger
territories. Add to these the phenomenon of the substantial role
repertoire that one tends to come across more often in small
developing societies which, in emulating the institutional
framework of larger states, may be forced to combine or widen
specialisms by incorporating different tasks within a single
individual's competence. This increases the number of markets in
which one buys and sells services, and so widens the potential
basket of interests or obligations that one needs to satisfy, or
that one has available to supply.

Microstate citizens as brokers thus maintain the market of
particular products (Vance 1970:31). They may do so distinctively
because of the manner in which totality, intimacy and monopoly
reinforce each other.

- Formality versus Practice

Both TDR and SBH have an incorporated institutional procedure for
recruitment. There are, in both cases, formal advertisements of
posts on internal notice boards and, failing this technique, a
public call for new recruits:

"Normally, for front office staff, we get applicants through
the Hotel School. For administrative jobs, we advertise
internally first and then we go to the external market and
newspapers. Then to interviewing and screening". (manager, TDR)
And outsiders turn up regularly to express an interest in joining the workforce:

"We get applications even without having advertised posts. Such are kept on file for future reference". (personnel manager, SBH)

But the outcome may not be quite so formal and neat. Only two respondents, one in each property, claimed to have obtained their current job by responding formally to newspaper advertisements.

The other interviewed employees admitted a different recruitment strategy. In both hotel properties, the most common eventuality is that employees have been used to recruit their own relatives and friends into the hotel:

"Basically, recruitment depended on a request for a recommendation from someone working here. And then off they go and tell their cousins". (manager, TDR)

Many respondents owed their jobs at SBH and TDR to the network of relatives and acquaintances, good contacts and anonymous patrons in a position to pass a good word or authoritative recommendation on one's behalf. Arguably, networks improve in quantity and quality as one gets older and accrues work and social experience:

"I was unemployed. One of the supervisors at SBH knew my sister. She told her that I was looking for a job. The supervisor checked whether more staff was needed. I was told
to come and apply. I started within 2 days". (chambermaid, SBH)

And:

"My mother used to work in the laundry department. She spoke to the Personnel Director and told him that one of her daughters was not working. Eventually he sent for me and that's how I got here". (housekeeper, TDR)

- Reaping the Benefits and Costs of Lilliput

The diagnosis needs to be informed by the environmental features which explain this recruitment practice. Both TDR and SBH, although medium sized employers in their own right, are relative giants in the microstate world. They are the largest private employers in their respective localities. They therefore recruit heavily from what are in essence 'company towns' (St. Philip, Marsascala) where they command a practical monopoly of employment possibilities in a setting of near totality.

The arrangement looks innocent enough, perhaps even cost effective: The hotel managements are assured a ready supply of labour which manages its own employment agency:

"If I were to resign, people would get to know that. They will start talking. And even before the advert is out, they are already phoning to apply". (assistant manager, TDR)

With practically nowhere else to go and work in the vicinity, the hotels are also guaranteed a low turnover of staff:
"Employees will stay here for years and years; as long as one gets here, one stays here. They will not resign". (manager, TDR)

And:

"Having local labour to us is a great advantage...And the employees have no other place to go". (manager, SBH)

The hotels save on the training costs otherwise necessitated by labour turnover thanks to this situation; and neither need they offer staff transport:

"Only 30% or so of the employees have cars. But they all drive each other home. So there is no need for hotel transport". (director, TDR)

And:

"We are here bringing work to people, not people to work. Avoiding the costs of transportation to and from work also means a saving on foreign exchange (fuel, cars...)"). (manager, SBH)

Still, there are other features of this condition about which the hotel managements have little to congratulate themselves.

A total institution condition stands out immediately when one tries to get a leverage over the two hotels' human environment. First of all, so many of each worker's significant others - relatives, friends, same village acquaintances, fellow church members, hobby society colleagues, even bedfellows - are fellow workers:
"We have father-son combinations here; brother and sister; husband and wife teams. Marriage relationships are not so consistent and employees might have a wife at home but have a girlfriend within the TDR workforce. The acceptance of such liaisons creates a larger set of close relationships". (director, TDR)

And:

"Whether one likes it or not, some members of staff come from the same village, even from the same street". (manager, SBH)

Secondly, the two hotels are part and parcel of the respective employees' wider social existence; they are embedded within the wider mesh of socio-political community affairs. At both SBH and TDR, employees visit the beaches at/near the two hotels in their free time to swim or else to talk to their friends and relatives; in the case of SBH, to take family and friends out for a meal, drink or cabaret show. There is a continuous traffic across the properties as employees drive their relatives and friends to and from work.

At TDR, where the property dates back more than a century, employees have a feeling of ownership which has roots in childhood practices:

"When I was young, my brother and I used to run to the property boundaries and look inside. It looked welcoming. I thought that, if I had come to be a man, I would look for work at Tropical Dream". (manager, TDR)
TDR is a home away from home to most of the employees; it is looked upon with a certain feeling of possession. With 251 full-time employees (excluding expatriates) living within the parish of St. Philip, it is no wonder that the hotel, though owned by a foreign multinational, may feel as much Philippian as the local parish church:

"To the Philippians, this hotel is their whole life". (director, TDR)

The low levels of staff turnover, plus the existence of extensive family and kin relations working within the hotel, increase these feelings of owning the resort. In fact, out of 21 non-managerial employees interviewed, only 6 claimed not to have any close relatives employed at TDR.

Typically:

"I have two brothers working here: And there is a pool attendant who is related to me... and a waitress... and a housekeeper as well". (laundry washer, TDR)

And:

"I don't have any relatives working here, as far as I know. But if a cousin popped up, I wouldn't be surprised". (clerk, TDR)

A somewhat similar (albeit not as extreme) situation obtains at SBH. With the exclusion of the top management cadres (who are usually transferred on short assignments from one of the holding
company's hotels to another) and of the housekeeping department (where the majority of the staff are female and uphold short-term, non-careerist work horizons), the bulk of employees have been at the hotel since its opening in 1982. There is very little job mobility. With relatively satisfactory conditions of work, there are few push factors to leave; and with an inelastic labour market and scant comparable employment alternatives in the area, there are few pull factors to entice movement either. Add to this the very slim chance of internal movement via promotion, because most supervisory posts are occupied by relatively young careerists. The outcome is a quasi-closed, stagnant environment which is of managerial concern:

"Malta is small, its people are well known. This affects human relations. Most of us have lived for 9 years together. We get to know so much about each other: Families, hobbies, wives...This may have its negative consequences". (assistant manager, SBH)

Relationship consolidation through consistent exposure and 'rubbing shoulders' in different circumstances and different role-sets has a bonding effect. As individual A realises that individual B knows so many different facets of his/her social - and increasingly also private - life (and vice versa), the condition is ripe for a natural devolution into familiarity. The erosion of privacy and anonymity generates mutual intimacy practically automatically. In this way networks are forged, complementing those already established on the basis of kin. Intimacy is double-edged and management braces itself for the consequences:
"The best form of recruitment is word of mouth. But it has its disadvantages. It allows individuals to recruit networks into the enterprise". (manager, SBH)

And:

"I agree, there is a recruitment of allies via word of mouth. It remains the most powerful means of recruitment, as far as I'm concerned. Perhaps peculiar to TDR, there is some nepotism where you bring your family members in. I've seen it done... The power base and information chain is extended by this practice". (manager, TDR)

The condition therefore reads as a tight labour market, with few avenues of escape by the hotel or its employees. The two hotels are reaping the full consequences of their relative isolation and relative absence of alternative, attractive employment.

Recruitment is only the threshold and passport to the labour-management setting at the two hotels. The entry into employment at SBH and TDR is one expression of the importance of networking and good contacts in order to obtain desirable and scarce social goods.

This activity concurrently strengthens social obligations and widens/deepens the network's sphere of influence. Conscription of friends and kin and the deployment of networks intensify the likely resort to particularistic behaviour within the enterprise; the limited space for manoeuvre adds pressure to this resort by removing alternatives and increasing the stakes involved. We have here the converse of an 'occupational community" (Lockwood 1975:158) or of an "informal apprenticeship system" (Manwaring 1975:242)
1984:168,170) whereby individuals, integrated within the social fabric which exists within the wider community, carry this fabric with them to their work.

3.3 The Labour-Management Dynamic

- The Nature of Tradables

Once inside the enterprise, how does the interplay of intimacy, totality and monopoly impact on the dialectic between manager and managed at the two properties?

The negotiated consent beyond the work contract is a general characteristic of labour-management relations, particularly where control is not technologically incorporated. Service industry settings as are TDR and SBH both exhibit patterns of informal countertrade based on a mutually beneficial partnership scheme. Managers recognise the value of having a sympathetic ear, which, apart from a matter of empathy, promotes reciprocity:

"If someone has a problem and demands a day of leave, I would make the effort to accommodate. But then, the next day, when I need him/her, I can face the person squarely. There is no embarrassment. One good turn deserves another". (food & beverage manager, SBH)

Similarly, certain workers are either naturally disposed to, or else are willing to feign, acquiescence, a stance which complements the m/paternalism expected from or practised by their
immediate superior. They do so because it equips them with the ability to clinch what they consider to be favourable deals:

"I've never been involved in a dispute at work... I've only had petty quarrels which are settled there and then. Occasionally, one asks for a small favour; say, an hour's leave. You get along like that... I'm a good chap". (waiter, SBH)

A common tactic is to utilise material and financial incentives as leverage within this protracted trading session. In particular, these consist in the allocation of overtime and certain allowances, as well as the assignment to a convenient roster of duties.

At TDR, management also determines the number of hours worked by employees over and above a minimum entitlement, thus directly affecting their take home pay and, in extremis, who is liable to a redundancy. At SBH, the pressure is strong to trade off flexibility in exchange for managerial concessions, including direct financial returns.

This pressure increases with respect to one's chances and interests in promotion. The latter is a rare and, consequently, hotly contested affair in both properties. Such exercises are carried out with full discretionary powers by managerial incumbents. As such they fuel worker suspicions that these could serve as camouflaged devices to reward the compliant and punish the resolute.
Management can thus wield substantial discretionary power, where tradables can be deployed:

"I can make them work subject to me, thanks to individual negotiation. I can overload a worker and that person will be happy to accept that, in return for something extra". (manager, SBH)

But such assertions conceal the essentially dialectic nature of the relationship. And since it is a relationship of power, so much may be brought to bear to shift the balance either way. Here enter into play the infections of Lilliput.

A low rate of labour turnover; the embedding of the work site within the wider community; the recruitment of personal network members: These are bound to reflect and themselves promote and perpetuate implications on the contours of control and the exercise of power within the two hotels. From an organisational behaviour perspective, a similar condition has been evaluated in rather stark terms:

"Because of the...low turnover rate, low intersectoral mobility and limited alternative employment, position openings are few, with the result that internal departmental promotions are very limited and infrequent...Such a condition dampens morale, erodes motivation, negates job satisfaction and slackens organisational/ programmatic commitment". (Khan 1987:63)

My main concern here is to examine the manifestations and implications of intimacy, totality and monopoly on the labour management relationship at the two work sites. This is a rare
opportunity of examining the richness of detail of respondent behaviour, analysing what appears to be an underlying, often unconscious and environmentally naturalised strategy. Salient from the interviews are the following issues: Security; discipline; familiarity; accommodation, expertise as well as a consideration of trade union function and mobilisation.

- Security

Managerial respondents at TDR were quick to identify security as a sore point engendered by the implications of smallness. The friendships, obligations and blood relationships binding the staff will establish, or already constitute, networks which undermine the audit mechanism of the organisation, dependent as this is on universalistic scrutiny: Being born and bred in the pursuit of brokerage builds the human chains whereby objects can find their way outside the property gate:

"Theft is a major problem. It's quite well accepted to take stuff from the company. Toilet paper, shampoo, soap - but also big things - video cassette recorders, a microwave oven. A leg of lamb went through four pairs of hands before leaving the premises". (director, TDR)

The same networks then close ranks to defend the transgressor: They have after all been tacit accomplices or else will somehow share in the punishment which would be meted out:

"Say I'm your father. I've seen you taking some nuts. I might question you but only at home. The nuts have left the hotel for good. The group will get together and say: 'Let's
not create the downfall of the team; let's stick together'". (manager, TDR)

The saga of the security personnel at TDR reads as a case study of the difficulties in avoiding such collusion:

"I am a strong promoter of change of security companies. Familiarity breeds contempt. I myself have caught security guards stealing in collusion with staff here". (director, TDR)

An opinion which appears substantiated, and whose wisdom is well supported, by security personnel:

"The hotel used to have its own security guards. But they were all sent off. Management subcontracted security operations to a private company but, eventually, its contract was terminated. This is the fourth company to be commissioned to date. Why? Corruption, nepotism, friendships, relationships? Well, probably a collection of all these". (security guard, TDR)

The Human Resources Director tries to ensure that security personnel posted around the property have no relatives among the TDR staff. But this can be very difficult to ascertain. Kin connections can be recognised even in the most unlikely of ways and, once identified, increase the tendency towards abusive collusion:

"I know that there is a worker related to me at TDR. The Food & Beverage Supervisor was leaving the premises one day and he called out my surname. I thought that he was referring to me but in fact he was calling someone else. I
enquired whether this other person had my family name; we discovered that we are related". (security guard, TDR)

- Discipline

These episodes, while significant in themselves, suggest a more serious problem which strikes at the heart of the personnel function. The tightly-knit social environment and its internal webbing wear away the opposition by whoever is supposed to be responsible for safeguarding property:

"The relationships among employees cause problems, such as pilferage. Once people become too friendly, one would just ignore the other even though s/he would be the supervisor". (manager, TDR)

This may be indicative of how excessive personalisation of this sort can strike at general managerial competence, leading to an erosion of discipline and authority. Supervisory staff at TDR, having often themselves risen through the ranks, find it doubly difficult to discipline fellow colleagues:

"People tend to know a lot of people... And it's hard for them to take a leadership stand against their friends. Standards deteriorate and mediocrity settles in". (director, TDR)

A similar feeling obtains at SBH. The unwillingness to put your foot down here is similarly ascribed to emanate from the proliferation of personalised networks in a context of stagnant
and durable, often dyad based, dynamics which include labour-management relations but also go beyond:

"Friends of friends have a bearing. Everyone wants to present him/herself as a friend to others". (manager, SBH)

And, almost prophetically:

"You will always need someone's help. Today or tomorrow, you will need someone's help. You can never say that you can get along without any assistance". (wine waiter, SBH)

There is "a strong urge to avoid saying no" (Coyne 1992: 75). Workers may refuse to take chances, preferring not to invoke authority in situations where relationships are, or bound to become, particularistic in the small social universe of the microstate. The question of attire at SBH is one example:

"Malta is small. People are afraid of each other. They don't like responsibility and try not to get involved. For example, no one is allowed into the foyer or restaurant wearing shorts after 7 p.m. But a barman will not draw the attention of the guest. He would answer: 'Why should I tell him? He'll single me out!'". (catering manager, SBH)

And a worker respondent confirms managerial suspicion:

"After 7 p.m., no shorts are allowed in the foyer and restaurant areas. But it's embarrassing to be the one to tell someone to please leave. There is no need for this hassle. You've got to face the person afterwards". (barman, SBH)

Don't make an enemy out of your neighbour is a Maltese proverb in common usage."
The likelihood of meeting someone again, in one of the many variants of the self's fragmented social status, are not slim. In this way, the threshold of tolerance is raised. Individuals are subject to greater pains not to make enemies out of each other. There are remote but real possibilities that they may need each other in future; or, that an affront will be paid back. In this total scenario, the cost of making or breaking a personal relationship may be more onerous than respecting the law: The latter is, after all, blind and impersonal. As indeed, certain managers realise:

"Too much familiarity carries problems... It's difficult to tell someone: 'Listen, you're no good'. You must face him/her, day in, day out... And imagine firing someone whom you then meet again...". (assistant manager, SBH)

At large, there is operant what has been described as 'a crab in the barrel' situation: As soon as a crab is at the point of escape from the confines of a barrel, it is pulled back down by fellow crabs. The tightly knit community, with its rigid sense of solidarity, its mutual obligations and scare tactics acts to dampen expressions of dissent and divergence:

"50% of disputes are never reported. People do not want to mash anybody's corns. They fear that they will offend. Some will walk away from the issue; others leave it unresolved". (manager, TDR)
The clampdown extends beyond the property. This is a prisoner's dilemma situation from which, barring emigration, there is little chance of escape:

"If you go to a Manager with a problem, the problem may be justified but the Manager will hold this act against you; s/he may not give you a good reference eventually. And that would mean that you are now undesirable. The Manager would know the Personnel Manager in another company and would tell him/her about you. You get blacklisted". (Manager, TDR)

- Familiarity

Yet, there is more than the building up of durable collusion, the deployment of widespread and multiple peer pressures, which conspire to keep people's mouth shut; to get them to toe the line; to engender obligations out of which follows a tacit involvement beyond organisationally defined, licit behaviour. The mafia-esque situation, the liability to blackmail, is also facilitated by having so many fellow colleagues who know (or can easily obtain) a considerable amount of information, public and not-so-public, about oneself. Everyone is a potential 'Cynthia'.

The workplace can be construed as a mini-grapevine in itself, but with diffuse ramifications into the outside world. No one is spared from scrutiny, there is no corner safe enough to hide. As a Maltese proverb warns: The wall has ears and the sky has eyes. One must be on guard and behave properly. Otherwise, any slip, any mistake, will become widespread knowledge among the
employees. It may be used to extract leverage over managerial authority:

"You have to watch what you’re doing. If you err, you’re done for, even professionally. I always try to keep straight and be fair... If someone finds a weakness in you, you may be blackmailed over it". (assistant manager, SBH)

Extra knowledge is pertinent because it constitutes extra power. Thus familiarity breeds contempt but also leverage within the social relations of production:

"The absence of anonymity influences labour relations. While Management enjoys certain privileges and the workers don’t, the fact that one knows about management’s shortcomings and little sins increases the gap between management and workers. You now know what kind of person s/he really is; what is the stuff of which s/he is made. It undermines the basis for legitimate authority, based on respect for justice, competence, fairness, education - and is replaced by another - based on the blatant exercise of power". (waiter, SBH)

While, concurrently, there is a realisation that information can be a good servant at one’s disposal, but a bad master at the disposal of others. Hence a reference to stifling transparency:

"There exists in Malta a sense of fear of reprisal, of an oppressive and slanderous public eye: There is no openness, no sense of freedom in what one does... One has to keep things hushed up for fear of public reproach". (receptionist/telephone operator, SBH)

Totality reinforces, and is itself reinforced, by intimacy:
"Somebody is always watching you, in your personal as well as professional life. One spills over into the other. It's very close. We go to the same bars, they know my family. What I do gets back to the people, to my family, to middle management. I know people whose petty affairs have got back to middle management and it has affected their lives. Everybody is in each other's pockets. It has a vicious streak to it" (clerk, TDR).

There is also the inevitability, sooner or later, of being 'located':

"They knew me here. A close relative of mine used to work here. The connections eventually surfaced". (waiter, SBH)

Senior managers appear divided between espousing surprise and despair when facing up to the fact that nothing is a secret:

"You can't even shit in any direction, everybody would get to know. I'm convinced the telephones are bugged, and I'm not getting paranoid". (director, TDR)

And:

"The grapevine is unbelievable. I often hear things first from the people I work with. They often know before me, especially if it's something controversial". (assistant manager, TDR)

There is recognition that the control of information is a critical factor:

"I caught a worker stealing two toilet rolls. The person was a union delegate. The union raised hell. But I told them they must be kidding and I fired her. The union was insisting that someone must have informed me about this act
of petty theft. They seemed to be more interested in finding out who the informer was". (director, TDR)

A recognition shared by workers:

"A black man will kill a black man, another saying goes. There are informants galore. You think you can trust someone and then s/he is off to tell someone else and s/he reports to management. And the manager gets into your business like that". (laundry washer, TDR)

Disputes may arise from over-information which workers amass and constantly update on the work related conditions enjoyed and rewards achieved by significant others:

"Disputes occur because of lack of communication - a job is not explained properly - or over-communication - a worker performing 3 jobs gets to know that someone performing one job has the same wage". (manager, SBH)

News does not lack a carrier, as another Bajan proverb goes.

Meanwhile, there is a subtle art of management of this situation, which involves a tactful consideration of what to disclose, what to accept as true, a continuous watch out for informants lurking in the wings as well as a look out for the opportunity of playing the informant oneself:

"You could be saying something to your colleague. But someone in the next room could be listening. I am a secretive person. I tell people what I want them to know. So much would depend on what is told about me to management". (pool attendant, TDR)
Indeed, yet another Bajan proverb advises: *Tell people what you want them to know and the rest you don’t know:*

"It’s true. It’s a real Barbadian thing. We have another Bajan saying: If you want some people to know certain things, pass the details on to a ‘take back’ person". (gatekeeper, TDR)

Familiarity thus has a price tag. *If you play with the puppy,* goes another Bajan proverb, *the puppy will lick your mouth.* In conditions where perhaps a transfer of private information is almost inevitable, the best that one can hope for is a situation from which either party finds it difficult to escape, locked into a permanent relationship of obligation. This is not perhaps the notion of ‘best of friends’ that one has in mind, since it smacks of instrumentalism:

"People tend to use people... People tend to use friendships to get things. I’m disappointed when I realise that so called friends only want to use me." (clerk, TDR)

But in otherwise keeping oneself aloof from such double bind dynamics, one must seriously consider the possibility of being excluded from tapping spoils or claiming scarce resources:

"If the dog likes you, it licks you. But if it doesn’t like you, it bites you. Favouritism bestows advantages but those not favoured will be left by the wayside". (waitress, TDR)
- Accommodation

The high premium on conflict does not necessarily imply an absence of conflict: The workplace mini-grapevine also has its own internal differentiation because the intensification of personalised encounters can harden relationships both ways. Sympathies and antipathies can become fused and difficult to dislodge. There are thus both networks and anti-networks in juxtaposed operation, concurrent processes of loyalty building and fencing, each of which may recruit allies and sympathisers to their different positions. Becoming sensible to these dynamics is a crucial skill of accommodation and one important component in the construction of meaning in Lilliput:

"Smallness exerts an influence. People at the top all know each other. A good or bad name travels fast. Give a dog a bad name and hang him. It's a total chain network. It's easy to blacklist an individual. And, conversely, it is just as important to have a patron". (debt collector, SBH)

Such human articulation may prove to be either the tactical saving grace or the downfall of aspiring individual workers in the context of their dealings with superiors:

"It happens in Malta. If you know someone high up and you want someone to find a job, it helps. We here in Malta suffer a lot from this. If you know the right person, you'll get a job without any problem. If the Personnel Manager gets to know that I have a son who wants a job here, even if he is not so capable, he will get the job". (gardener, SBH)

And, in contrast:
"I had so many disputes. But I ended up a loser because I didn't know anybody. There was no one I knew to whom I could go, inside or outside the hotel". (chambermaid, SBH)

The nature of rivalry and allegiance provides fertile ground for the escalation of conflict. Petty affairs may grow beyond proportion and expectation as they rope in network ramifications:

"At the bottom line, workers are related to each other. Personal squabbles run deep. If you argue with someone's relative, you argue with him/her as well". (manager, SBH)

Delicate accommodation is a necessary behaviour pattern, given the likelihood of renewed encounter engendered by the reinforcing interplay of intimacy and totality. There is a high premium on confrontation and hostility; but, once exceeded, it is then not surprising to see the best of friends become the worst of enemies; which is one other valid reason for being extra tolerant. One insightful respondent sums it all up:

"There is increased pressure and tension to tread delicately and sensibly across the intense emotionally and personally charged loves and hates which bind individuals. You get to know that someone will definitely not speak to someone else. You find yourself involved" (porter/telephone operator, SBH)

There are no holds barred; the condition escalates rapidly as contenders bring to bear the power of networks, of widespread information, of the absence of confidentiality, to extract the maximum possible advantage. The difference between work and non-
work, between one’s professional and private life, blends into insignificance:

"If a Manager lives in the same community as an employee and the two families are not on speaking terms, that Manager may be able to bring to bear personal information because he has access to the employee’s personal file". (manager, TDR)

- Expertise

Monopoly adds an interesting twist to these dynamics. One intriguing revelation from these interview encounters is how, almost as soon as one develops a specialist task, whether this is work or sport, the individual concerned appears to be able to claim local expertise and, indeed, be rewarded for it:

"I used to play football but I broke my ankle. So I switched to darts. I’ve now been playing for 4 years and I’m the Malta Champion. My team partner is a kitchen porter at SBH". (wine waiter, SBH)

A majority of the staff at SBH seem to have taken to the hotel industry on a trial and error basis. A wide ranging dilettantism suggests itself as a scourge to the industry struggling to upgrade its image and services. Yet workers seem to suggest otherwise, with reactions which meet management’s indignation:

"Workers try and pass as experts with little proper training". (management trainee, SBH)

Or surprise:
"In Malta, you put one in a kitchen job and, presto, the person is a cook. Next year, the person has become an expert". (executive chef, SBH)

Such episodes suggest a relative ease with which, in the inelastic, monopolistic, labour market setting of the microstate, individuals can proclaim and command expertise in a particular skill or resource niche, granting extra discretion and quasi-professional status to the producers involved. Management often dismisses these attempts as upstart presumptuousness which could even be mistakenly diagnosed as threats to its own authority. Regrettably, the latter fear may be more likely to materialise when management seeks to cut the worker involved down to size. A shrewd 'indispensable' producer may take sweet revenge on a manager who refuses to acknowledge such status:

"I clashed with my head of department. He issued a warning; I paid him back by taking a week of sick leave. He eventually tore up the warning. He had better keep his distance because he will be the one to suffer. I spent a week at home watching videos". (electrical fitter, SBH)

Engineering one's own indispensability is a viable strategy which confronts proletarianisation; in the world of personalised trade, becoming the one and only dispenser of a service is a powerful and possible condition; an example of how totality facilitates monopoly.

Concurrently, there is also recognition that the demand for a service can and does suddenly dry up. Pure specialisation is
liable to lead to redundancy or underemployment in the microstate setting; failing exit, the environmental conditions advise towards flexible specialisation. This is not a contradictory project: Totality and monopoly construct the option of being a Jack or Jill of, many trades and master or mistress of all.

Most employees demonstrate an interesting repertoire of income-inducing or cost-reducing activities, over and above their SBH or TDR employment:

"The bellman drives a taxi. A barman is a disk jockey, playing music at parties. Others grow vegetables and sell them to the hotel. Another manager is bottling seasoning". (director, TDR)

A pattern which is taken up by workers...:

"I built my own house. Now we've bought a plot of land. We're building a villa and some garages. Slowly. There's no hurry. It will take us another 2 years. In fact I prefer refusing overtime". (wine waiter, SBH)

... as well as managers:

"I've taught at the local Hotel School... I am also a good cook. I used to teach cookery classes. I am an employer as well, providing catering functions. I also rear rabbits. If the tourist industry goes tomorrow, we have to be able to do something else". (manager, TDR)

Investing in a repertoire of skills, preferably specialisms, appears to be a rational strategy. More so if individuals, in the course of their working lives, react to, often sudden, economic setbacks or opportunities. Such experiences have included the option to take up overseas employment:
"I started carpentry at technical school. Then joined the Royal Malta Artillery as a cook trainee. Spent 7 years in Germany. But after that I was a victim of the British Forces rundown". (chef, SBH)

The experience of unemployment:

"I spent some time working as a quality inspector with the subsidiary of a U.S. company in Bridgetown. It closed down in July 1976. It was nice working there. I loved it. I was sad when it closed". (laundry attendant, TDR)

And the option to emigrate:

"I started as a cook with the British Royal Navy. Then went to Canada in 1961, working in catering, plumbing, welding, foundry extrusion. Worked for some time in the kitchen of a Florida restaurant. Returned to Canada as head caterer with the Canadian Provincial Government. Returned to Malta in 1973 when my wife suffered a breakdown. I started at a jeans factory canteen; next operated a canteen at a leather factory; next in the kitchen of a tourist complex". (chef, SBH)

These reactions present themselves as a cultural behaviour pattern, bred over various, even inter-generational, experiences of boom and bust economic cycles as well as bitter personal encounters with footloose capital.

A popular combination at TDR is to complement one's full-time job with a primary sector activity: Growing vegetables, tending livestock or fishing. This ensures a modicum of self-reliance, saves expenses on essential items and begets a revenue supplement through sale of surplus:

"I have a kitchen garden at home. It's my side job. It's very useful because you can sell things and eat what you produce". (pool attendant, TDR)
This arrangement is also advantageous to the hotel because food grown in such a way is typically available at below market prices:

"A number of employees are farmers. A number sell us their vegetables. One of the bakers grows cabbage which will be served in the cafeteria today. Another employee's father grows green beans. I wish they could supply me with everything but they can't. 60% of local farmers who supply food to the hotel are employees or else have/had relatives working here". (executive chef, TDR)

Role enlargement and role multiplicity are shrewd response mechanisms for enhancing and equilibrating life chances in boom and bust conditions. There is also a recognition that each option is in itself limited and vulnerable, not enough to constitute a full-time, secure operation, either because of changes in demand (shifting market trends) or supply (ease of replacement; increasing competition). Apparently, maximising role diversity and exploiting specialisms while the limited opportunities last is a proven combination in the face of uncertainty. It also does not exclude the benefits of authoritarian expertise:

"You have a phenomenon of a big fish in a small pond here. People realise that they are still small fry only when they leave the island". (manager, TDR)

Occupational pluralism is another demonstration of the survival algorithm readily utilised by workers at TDR and SBH which has a bearing on the social relations of production. Multiple human
connections - networks, manipulations, obligations, alliances - are paralleled by a multiplexing of productive activities.

3.4 Trade Unionism

- A Vision of Social Organisation

"This is a tightly knit work environment, where family and community are paramount; and the union appears to fall in line with these". (director, TDR)

Respondents in Malta and Barbados readily identify success as dependent on 'plugging in', the anchoring of the self onto one or more of the clubs or circuits of bounty which are seen to haunt the social environment. The corollary to this is the measurement and justification of failure as being a consequence of not having any, or the right, connections. Injustice is therefore not a social product, but an individual deficiency or a fall from favour. Social mobility is strictly a question of individual manipulation, with a strategic articulation of family, community, party, church and/or other relevant webs, possibly alongside expertise and educational assets. Mobility is both cause and effect of a course of action which socialises and fuses individuals firmly into membership, loyalty and commitment.

This dominant vision of social organisation spills over in the way in which line staff at TDR and SBH perceive and evaluate the role and function of trade unionism at their place of work.
The trade union is after all another organisation competing for influence within the small-scale environment. Membership within it is bound to be judged also with the parameters which obtain in other situations: From a strategic perspective, one weighs whether the new affiliation will set in motion the building of new networks of influence, or lead to the erosion of established or promising, more important ones. From a deterministic perspective, there may be no choice at all, the individual simply being carried along with the decision of the peer group or significant others. Totality, intimacy and monopoly operate to complicate social webbing, making the location of the self not only more problematic but substantially predetermined (on the grounds of previous locational exercises) as well as laden with potentially widespread implications (for future locations).

Both the General Workers' Union (GWU, in Malta) and the Barbados Workers' Union (BWU, in Barbados) are general, catch-all type unions mobilising large segments of the gainfully occupied population in pursuit of substantive and procedural goals. They operate within a clearly social-democratic ideological framework which ascribes to their function an overt political role apart from an economistic one.

Yet, how is this, largely institutional, perspective to a powerful trade union reconciled to the behaviour patterns of Maltese and Bajan workers, given that these are not in perpetual open revolt against the extant social system via the pursuit of industrial action? The trade union remains active in times of
peace as much as in times of declared warfare. Perhaps in their routine, its workings, while less exhibitionistic, are more important and at the heart of the union's raison d'être. If the workplace involves a configuration of contested spoils and energies, then, industrial action is only one out of many different tactics of a strategy for (not always legitimate) control and discretion over resource allocation.

The challenge here is to appraise how such strategies for control and discretion articulate with the trade union organisation within the context of Lilliput. The accounts of trade union activity at both SBH and TDR invoke once again references to the interplay of monopoly, intimacy and totality.

- Personalisation at SBH

The responses at SBH suggest that the trade union is intended mainly for the handling of personal requests for assistance, itself a component of overriding paternalism and patronage. Only lip service appears to be assigned to the conflict and collective perceptual plane; in practice, the dominant vision is prone to patron-client oriented individualism. Union representatives are incorporated within the vision of a one-to-one, dyadic relational environment. They join the panoply of the powers that be and are therefore to be cultivated by the rank and file as intermediaries on their behalf.
In such a situation, the trade union may become a legitimator for traditional practices which militate against collective identities and preserve the status quo. A worker may just as likely summon union assistance because of a conflict with a fellow worker as with a superordinate. While perhaps rhetorically or casually accepting the importance of a collective function for a trade union, employees appear more concerned in demands for a union official with a personalised function, based on experiential pragmatism and far removed from considerations of social change:

"So far, I've never fought through the union. I feel it's there to fight for everyone. When I went to involve it, the shop steward told me that he was busy. They turned their back on me. I'll never forget that". (chef, SBH)

And:

"From what I hear - some truth, some gossip, plus some distortion - I don't feel that the union is very effective. It is selective and does not defend everybody". (receptionist, SBH)

Managers also affirm the personalised function of the trade union, this time by assessing its influence and functions according to the antics of the particular union representative(s) with whom they regularly deal:

"A common union problem is control over the members by the shop steward or the union section secretary. Shop stewards are often under pressure to defend an employee even when s/he is in the wrong. Other shop stewards gloat on being in the limelight". (personnel manager, SBH)
"I agree that there should be a trade union. But it depends too much on who is the delegate or the shop steward. It depends on how the union representative rouses the workers". (night manager, SBH)

Interestingly, other managerial representatives acknowledge that it is also in the hotel's interests for the workers to be unionised. They recognise the importance of unions and their officials as 'managers of discontent' as well as exercising a healthy role in a competitive environment:

"The trade union is important and necessary because it regulates relationships. It is also beneficial to the industry as a whole. A non-unionised hotel would be a price cutter and provide lower quality of service. It is thus a bad P.R. exercise for Maltese tourism, since we are all in the same boat". (manager, SBH)

- Non-Industrial Action

There appear therefore to coexist at SBH a series of factors which dissuade workers from collective identity and action. There is first of all the willingness by workers and managers to resort to negotiation in the understanding that both sides have an assorted compendium of desirables which they are ready to trade (flexibility, cooperation, allegiance on the one hand; leave allocation, convenient rosters, overtime and allowances on the other). So far the economic circumstances of the hotel have never jeopardised the availability of such 'motivators'. Secondly, there are negative sanctions and pressures, real or imaginary,
associated with oppositional tactics, the ultimate result of which could be the termination of employment (accompanied by blacklisting?). There are readily available cases which indicate the real dangers of going too far along the confrontational path. Thirdly, there is a resort to individual intercession and mediation by employees which finds managers and trade union officials engaged in roles which readily depart from the stereotype.

These behavioural and perceptual patterns reinforce an individualistic perspective to labour relations and social mobility. They provide strong reasons for the existence of an almost 100% freedom from industrial action at SBH. The two notable exceptions concerning industrial action over a 9-year span — barring a couple of short, sectional protests — in a sense confirm the trend because they were not instigated from inside.

No wonder therefore that the attitude of hotel management to trade union presence and function at SBH is generally tolerant and supportive. The GWU presence is very strong; but it is recognised as an alternative channel for the articulation of grievance, a structure parallel to the organisational hierarchy and affording a choice of recourse to aggrieved employees.

- Trade Union Consciousness at TDR

The labour relations atmosphere at TDR is markedly different. There one finds a multinational holding company whose corporate
philosophy is based on the principles of total quality management (TQM). This is perhaps the most popular personnel management technique in use today in service oriented, quality critical activities. It directs the efforts of professional management towards corrective, educational and empowering directions (Kanter 1983). TQM is monist and individual based; it therefore follows that trade union consciousness, function and action have no raison d'etre within this vision. The multinational has actually maintained 'union freedom' in most of its properties, but not in Barbados:

"To me, it's a new experience dealing with trade unions. Within hundreds of company hotels, there are only a couple or so which are unionised. And one of them is TDR. With a union at hand you spend more time talking about the naughty and problem workers than about the model workers". (director, TDR)

A former employee has his own interpretation:

"A lot of disputes flare up at TDR because we find the foreign owners very anti-union. When they bought TDR, their President told us that there would be no need for a union because they treat their staff very well. But union research suggested differently. I believe most of the managers who come to TDR had been trained in Industrial Relations. They were quite surprised to see how belligerent the shop stewards were as far as work relations were concerned. They wanted to break up the union". (former union organiser, TR)

- Industrial Action

In spite of management's efforts, the BWU remains solidly present at TDR. The procedure followed by both parties in handling the redundancy, in March 1992, of a timekeeper, with 24 years of
experience at TDR and the BWU organiser on property, may be seen as an attempt by the TDR management to break the power of the BWU once and for all.

A descriptive account of the dispute is interesting but not pertinent in its detail to this report. What needs to be singled out is that management apparently felt so secure in its position to the extent that (a) it declared redundant a single post which happened to be occupied by the chief union organiser at the property; and (b) it did not follow the proper notification procedure in informing the employee concerned with the decision. Perhaps such moves were purposely engineered to stir up a powerful BWU reaction - which did occur:

"The company made a number of errors - and deliberately so. They wanted to get rid of the timekeeper". (industrial relations practitioner)

The union won only a symbolic victory, getting management to reinstate the employee and serving him the redundancy note in the proper way: The timekeeper was thus dismissed anyway.

The turning point in the dispute probably occurred when, during the strike called by the BWU, and in which 79 employees participated, hundreds of applicants crossed the picket line to take over the jobs of the striking workers. They were responding to a TDR press advertisement for the immediate filling of those posts hitherto held by the strikers37. The timing of the industrial action, from the BWU standpoint, was not ideal: With
registered unemployment in the country running at over 20%, and with the more profitable tourist winter season being wound up, the labour market was stacked against the union.

Evaluating this 'conspiracy' against the BWU is instructive because it introduces into the discussion variables not usually resorted or referred to in appraising the nature and deployment of industrial action. This provides a fresh understanding of trade union action and function within the microstate setting; and yet one markedly different from what prevails at SBH.

- Clannish Unionism

This report has already identified pertinent features of the lilliputian environment in which the TDR staff operate. Relationships are moulded, strengthened and maintained almost permanently by virtue of repeated interactions, role multiplicities and absence of escape routes. The trade union appears to operate as an extension of these networks, as well as a network per se:

"The trade unionist is a sort of extension of the grapevine and the grapevine exists within the trade union itself. S/He serves as an informant between colleagues and the union... Some union delegates have set up their own grapevine at the hotel to receive, filter and assess information. In this way, in the case of a dispute, they have all it takes to press forward their claim". (manager, TDR)
This interpretation appears crucial to understand better why workers do, or do not, join a trade union; or why workers do, or do not, go out on strike:

"During the strike what I saw was people who supported the union cause but came to work because they were scabs and did it for financial reasons - they were too scared of getting fired; and they could not afford it. But others did not come to work even though they may have agreed with our [management’s] position. They may have succumbed to peer pressure, people whom they know and relatives who work in the union. They therefore felt obliged to tow the union line. Family and neighbourhood pressure is more intense than union pressure". (director,TDR)

The peer pressure, the sympathy expressed vis-a-vis the victimised timekeeper because he’s "one of us", are important considerations in determining individual choices:

"Some people went along with the strike because the discharged timekeeper had been their union representative for many years; He’s also from St. Philip". (manager,TDR)

The trade union joins neighbourhood, community, family, political party and religion as a category of social affiliation; a source of information and a support package of social control, identity, and meaning which, as with the other packages in the small territory, becomes almost hegemonic with its networks, pressures and grapevine, in their influence on 'members': Hence the relevance of referring to it in the context of clannishness. When looked at in this way, it is as if the company's TQM policy at TDR is fighting a lost battle, competing with so many other local variables of 'associate membership'38. The hotel management

272
seems at a loss to understand that trade union membership is more than a ticket to a distant, anonymous organisation. The union is a dimension of the Bajan clan, as well as a club in itself. And TDR staff appear to note, as do their SBH counterparts, that unlike classical trade union organisations, clans are not faceless: They discriminate and exercise discretion in accordance with the power of networks:

"The trade union jumps depending on the individual; otherwise it keeps cool. The union here is a bad joke". (director, TDR)

And:

"The trade union function and activity depends on the person. Take the discharged timekeeper. He’s a relative of mine. One fights for some more than others, even though everybody pays the same dues". (housekeeper, TDR)

This perception of person-specific prejudice actually extends to other areas of microstate social and political organisation where power wielders can be singled out. This exercise in discrimination is indeed often accepted as a matter of course, a part of the natural social order. It is who you are, who you know and who you know well which matter, now what you know or how much you know. Complaints, when voiced, are not so much addressed at the malpractice as such but at one’s failure to enjoy and exploit its implicit prejudicial orientation. In the eyes of employees, TDR and SBH managers and supervisors easily join the echelons of politicians and trade union officials as personalised gatekeepers in the exercise of power. That a number of senior
trade union officials are/have also been Members of Parliament and even Government Ministers in both Malta and Barbados makes the conceptual translation of the practice that much easier.

4. BREAKING THE CIRCLE?

Overall, it appears that what had been originally identified as a blessing has proved to be more of a liability. Intimacy, totality and monopoly are hard at work. Localised recruitment conscribes networks into the properties, with their collusive tendencies, petty sympathies and jealousies, extensive networking strategies, strains on confidentiality and objectivity and 'storms in teacups' with widespread, escalative potential. The imprint of this condition was discussed and illustrated with respect to a number of the hotels' key internal operations: The erosion of authority, security failure, access and circulation of information, networking, anti-networking and the management thereof, as well as trade unionism and the resort or non-resort to industrial action.

It is a vicious circle which cannot easily be broken. The TDR Personnel Office has introduced a special job application form which expressly requests information from applicants about any blood relations already employed at TDR. Still, the existing configuration is difficult to reform. 251 out of 334 full time employees at TDR (just over 75%) are still from St. Philip; while 30 (14%) of SBH's employees are from Marsascala and another
90 (42%) live within a radius of 5 kilometres from the hotel. Networking goes beyond mere territoriality and incorporates friendships, party links, church affiliations and trade union membership as well as other contacts which have no blood basis. Such ethnocentrism could even engender its own reproduction by making it difficult for 'outsiders' to get accepted, acting as a mechanism of social closure:

"During the last 10 years, those outside of St. Philip have been the most likely to move on. There is the difficulty of penetrating the St. Philip clan". (manager, TDR)

All the same, even if the circle is broken or its effects mitigated in the long run, there is still the issue of how to face the existing clannishness. Here, managerial responses fall easily into three separate positions:

4.1 Negation

The first is the refusal to accept and appreciate this condition as a problem. This may be a genuine value position by management, a formalistic, legalistic stance which upholds what ought to be rather than what, regrettably, is. But it could also be a sour grapes exercise, a psychological reaction which wishes a problem away precisely because it is a problem which defies solution. A third explanation to this attitude is that it is articulated to defend oneself and one's establishment from the probing and
scrutinising questions of an inquisitive researcher (namely, myself):

"Networking? This doesn't concern me as long as we have efficiency. One has to go through procedures as laid out". (general manager, SBH)

Or:

"Friends of friends make no difference. News may travel fast but this has no bearing on human relations". (manager, SBH)

Indeed, the pervasive grapevine, into which I managed to plug occasionally by being taken into the confidence of a number of hotel employees at both properties, has made me aware of such defensive behaviour:

"The hotel recruits by putting an advert in the Advocate and the Nation [the two local daily tabloids]. Then you bring your credentials and a letter of reference, if you've worked before. And then you work from there... I never employed anyone related to me. Family and business don't mix". 39

This attitudinal stance has been encountered particularly among expatriate managers at the two properties. The lack of environmental wisdom and the added pressures to conform to officialdom may explain this correlation. Expatriates also typically perceive themselves as observers rather than participants in the microstate framework. They can therefore afford to project themselves as detached outsiders with respect to the games (such as networking) which the Lilliputians play.
4.2 Therapy

The second behaviour pattern is a realisation of the existence of a problem about which something needs to be done; but the problem is conceived as an anomaly which requires correction. The manager's responsibility and duty is understood to involve the erosion and clamp down on the effects of collusion. The identification of blood relationships among staff (an identifiable form of networking) and the attempt to bar their proliferation via recruitment screening is one supply-oriented expression of this strategy:

"Relationships can cause problems to management. But you solve that by putting the relatives in different departments". (assistant manager, TDR)

Or:

"Movement of people in and out of the hotel is limited. So there is no continual recruitment programme. But one of our policies now is to reduce permanent employees and have more temporary staff". (manager, TDR)

But the problem does not show signs of withering away let alone of proving liable to eradication via appropriate managerial techniques. Thus managers are prone to strive doggedly to bring the microstate practice in line with the standard doctrine. In the process, they may experience chronic exasperation:

"Take my position as a manager. You know, even if you're not trained, you have a pretty good idea of your job. Then there are these strange and peculiar forces which come to bear on your job. You are asked to adjust, or simply manage this
powerful force which the grapevine is. At times it become so frustrating. If you try and manage a particular situation whereby you say that this is the way it should be done, you're suddenly swimming upstream against the current and you could lose it all". (manager, TDR)

And:

"According to international hotel practice, people related to each other should not work in the same hotel. But if we were to do that, then we wouldn't find enough staff. We try to enforce it but we don't succeed". (assistant general manager, SBH)

4.3 Recognition

It may therefore appear to be a more fruitful, and a less stressful, strategy to recognise the condition, understand it as a given environmental variable. By identifying its causes and deployment patterns and seeing how to accommodate these, the condition may be somehow integrated into the running of one's operations, perhaps even to one's own advantage. One realises that becoming sensitive and sensible to these dynamics is an important, if not crucial, asset for effective human resource management in a microstate milieu:

"What stands out in a country like Barbados with a population of 260,000 is that it’s very easy to know a whole lot of people, particularly in a closed environment: Relatives, friends...This makes it particularly difficult for a manager to control and operate if the way s/he behaves does not enmesh with the extant relationships. The relationships come to bear very seriously on what goes on at TDR. We’ve not been able to separate our personal lives from our work". (manager, TDR)
Management's position is typically caught in a paradox because while claiming to clamp down on the various ramifications of Lilliput, such may only occur where the manager stands to lose; particularly, where the behaviour pattern is resorted to by others and would therefore destabilise a power relationship in which management stands typically at the powerful end. Management may, and does, deploy the same dark practices to secure a positional advantage.

Take networking as an example. This is to be identified and weeded out as far as internal security and the disciplinary structures of TDR are concerned; but there seems to be no harm in cultivating networks in relation to external authority. Management is keen to place itself above the erosion of its own authority; but it seems willing and able to erode the authority of others beyond the property:

"I received three speeding tickets which would have cost me B'dos$400 each. But it would have been so embarrassing because here you have to go to court. So I didn't want to go. I asked my assistant: "Do you know anyone in the police force to get my tickets squashed?" And I never received the mandate to go to court". (director, TDR)

Of course, network benefits need not be sought; they may be seeking you, if you are recognised as a potential patron:

"The chief of the security company told me that If I ever need help, all I have to do is ask. His cousin is the Chief of Police. So you see, it's such a joke". (director, TDR)
The master plan, as it were, appears to involve clamping down on the negative consequences of these forces - by consciously marking one's behaviour and using baited breath in public; by refraining from conflict eruption; by keeping tactical information, and its sources, a personal secret. Concurrently, there are typically few qualms to be entertained when the opportunity does arise to utilise these same forces to one's own advantage.

Thus, management may strive to become a true master of this game by exploiting (rather than challenging or refusing to acknowledge) facets of the microstate experience. This third, behavioural response has its risks but its own rewards:

"Familiarity is an advantage because you know more about the character of a new recruit. If you want to know something about someone, shop around for news. Soon, you'll know from A to Z about the person". (Chief security officer, SBH)

And:

"This is a small community. Sometimes people get to know about decisions before they are on paper. Sometimes we feed information into the grapevine to get a feel of things. It's powerful, powerful. After you get your information, your decision is totally different". (Director, TDR)

These are aspects of human resource management which one is not likely to come across in managerial theories and principles. These two hotel case studies have identified, if only in a sketchy manner, aspects of this pervasive condition and a few flashes of the actions and reactions by the players involved. Nor
are these dynamics typically granted any recognition within the respective companies which own and manage the properties concerned. Perhaps such research findings and their dissemination will increase the awareness within the organisations that there is indeed something going on in Malta, Barbados, and perhaps elsewhere which may be somewhat different from the labour-management scenario in other hotels worldwide. TDR and SBH management may yet become more sensitive to such a fresh approach to the issues traceable to operating in a small size and small scale setting:

"Here is an opportunity for me to take an in-depth look at what is my usual work environment... I would like to think that managers at the executive and departmental level would sit down and look at this subject in a detailed manner. I’m here just shooting what I think. How has someone else been able to deal with what s/he has come up against, because of these forces?". (manager, TDR)

And:

"Your research was so enlightening you cannot begin to imagine. This knowledge has given me insight into the socio-dynamics which continue to challenge us in managing this hotel".40

Of course, all that has been described and documented above would apply just as well to employees, perhaps less articulate than management but often just as seasoned in the art of managing Lilliput. They too are engaged in negating, fighting or exploiting the possibilities of their environment with behaviour which overrides and culturally colours the dynamics of labour control and resistance.
In spite of a recourse to a comparative critique, the narratives of workers and managers at SBH and TDR perhaps remain most striking for their diversity. Individuals, in Lilliput and beyond, partake in the weave of their own history; they are artifacts and artisans of cultural and temporal specificity. The distinct and unique unfolding of each empirical scenario is to their credit.

One tenet of the theoretical and conceptual framework of this thesis is an understanding of the mould of possibility governing the microstate labour process. Mainly for this end, a conceptual typology was constructed out of multi-country and multidisciplinary evidence and tested in the analysis of labour relations at two work sites. How is the structure versus agency dialectic, a key transversal theme of social analysis, nuanced by this perspective? And how do the fieldwork accounts and analysis inform the status of class, gender and ethnicity, equally key generative themes, within the small developing state?

5.1 Agency & Structure

Person power is enhanced thanks to an ease of achieving expertise and monopoly status. This may be fragile and fleeting; so multiple monopolies in simultaneity or succession are a wise
precaution which is made possible by totality. There is an ease of obtaining information, thanks to interactions resulting from role set multiplicities but also a claustrophobic intimacy where everybody knows everybody else or knows someone who does. There is also an ease of manipulating, at times even inadvertently, networks of power and subsequently gaining access to prized resources: Jobs, promotions, privileges. This occurs because personalisation does (or is seen to) overwhelm legal-rational, universalistic considerations. Hence a habitual operation, real or expected, by the look rather than by the book; a condition engendered by intimacy but fuelled by person-specific centres of largesse resultant from monopolistic expertise cultivation.

Concurrently, individual behaviour is predisposed by ascriptive variables: These direct, if not determine outright, the building of coalitions, the choice of affiliation, the choice of exit, voice or loyalty. Such networks provide structure and solidarity to an otherwise uncertain existence - with precarious economic conditions, uncertain niches of specialism, uncertain discretionary, particularistic, patron-client relationships. Such networks are pervasive, durable and intertwined, making escape unlikely. When the latter is entertained, the only feasible option is exile. Otherwise, encapsulation appears to be the price to be paid in exchange for the identity, supports and privileges of membership.
The above may be holistically described as the microstate syndrome\textsuperscript{41}; and this chapter's task has been to propose an appreciation of its action at the place of work.

5.2 Class, Gender & Ethnicity

- Social Class

"The locus of initiative is the metropole and the locus of control is the merchant". (Girvan 1973:17)

Small territories appear to lack all but the most rudimentary and subsistent internal capacity to fuel their own economic progress. They are arguably most and best developed when they operate as enclaves and platforms for international capital and finance. The secret of domestic economic success lies therefore mainly in the circulation and distribution of wealth rather than its creation. The state here looms large as the micro-society's main transactional agency and its contribution to a domestic multiplier effect (for example via infrastructural projects, apart from a substantial wage bill) merits further consideration. The conventional critique is that the public sector is absorbing labour which would otherwise be more efficiently deployed in private enterprise, apart from fostering a work ethic which promotes complacency rather than enterprise and industry.
It is pertinent to question the extent to which private sectors in developing microstates can live up to such expectations were the state to withdraw from its 'economic development' contribution (McKee & Tisdell 1990:26). One must also appraise whether there exists the political will to deregulate, which may prove unlikely in the context of the state managing a spoils system within a 'democratic' polity (Rutz 1982). There appears a need to redress the hype of 'enterprise' in these small territories (another facet of colonial penetration?) by evaluating the effect (and possible real alternative other than emigration) of neo-Keynesian state policies which generate 'development' via construction, public sector jobs and public works programmes, the state also serving as the obvious target in the micro-society of, and solicitor for, international aid.

With this kind of economic scenario, can we therefore talk in terms of a local elite deriving its socio-economic power primarily because of control over productive capacity (Duncan 1980:5)? Microstate social scientists may continue to harp on the sociology of industry and on the capitalist relations of production forged and negotiated therein as the casting moulds for social class location, identity and consciousness. And this may well turn out to be the case, but essentially with respect to transactions which obtain beyond the micro-economy, involving transnational flows.

But the domestic power game, at least in developing microstates, may be taking place elsewhere. The seat of domestic economic
power seems to be the distribution mechanism - where the key actors are importers, wholesalers, agents, franchise holders, real estate spectators - particularly in the oligo-monopolistic conditions which small absolute size, however defined, accentuates. We may therefore be dealing with a rather finely articulated cluster of firms, agencies, businesses and even families who comprise local merchant, service-oriented (rather than industrial, manufacture-oriented) capitalism. The ubiquitous state, impacting considerably on a sizeable chunk of (even what, at face value, may appear to be private) economic activity, joins in this articulated network, both as an actor in its own right and as a powerful medium for the preservation or enhancement of the mercantilist power of other actors (via, say, protectionist policies).

While the academic dogs bark up the wrong trees, the pinnacle of local class structure in small developing territories may primarily consist in the private/commercial and public/bureaucratic and political élites enjoying significant inter-family connections and collusions, plus an ample presence on state agency boards and directorships. This seems to be the case in both Barbados and Malta (Barrow & Greene 1979, Ch.2; Baldacchino 1993b).

At a micro-level of discussion, the overriding importance of kin and friendship networks which enable individuals to circumvent institutions, laws and procedures to maximise their interests and see to their social obligations may also have a bearing on the
processual perspective introduced above. Individuals in small-state settings are readily seen as occupiers of centres of social fields which exist and are cultivated by virtue of particularistic relations, flung far and wide within the environmentally-reinforced tendencies of collapsed hierarchies of power, role multiplicity, role diffusion and role specialisation. Such social circuits erode impersonal standards of efficiency, performance and integrity; instead they enable an often, differently economic, effective and efficient resort to desirables. The interesting dynamic to investigate here is the bearing of such networks in situations where desirables are scarce and therefore constitute zero-sum games.

Possibly, in a developing microstate social formation, the social class concept may be strongly correlated to (and apart from other considerations such as race, ethnicity, age and/or education) the influence and size of one's networks. It is not what you do (that is, occupation) or what you know (that is, skill and qualification) which may matter most but who you are (what is your role repertoire, your expertise niche(s), your network net and the social goods which therefore fall under one's jurisdiction or within reach) as well as who you know well and who would therefore, at the end of the day, deliver. The articulation of such patterns of domination with more conventional ones of exploitation may prove insightful towards the emergence of a model for social class formation in small developing states (e.g. Flynn 1974:134-5).
Also noteworthy here is a sensitivity to the influence of occupational pluralism on social class location and consciousness (Thomas 1988:189). This situation complicates, to say the least, class location and perceptions. Each work experience will tend towards its own compendium of social and technical relations of production, associated images of society, occupational class ranking, income and other variables relevant to the social class equation. How is one meant to resolve such "contradictory class locations" (Olin Wright 1979:61-2)?

- Gender

It may prove valid to propose here that a gendered perspective to social inequality would be able to trace domination also to the traditionally wider and deeper social presence of males in most developing micro-societies; permitting these to build, tend and manipulate networks with a greater intensity, frequency and confidence than would women. This where the woman's social universe and associated networks are still likely to be inordinately composed of relatively weak, socially powerless members (such as children and other women) in relatively more bounded social spaces (e.g. Dann 1987). Microstate women folk may still by and large plug into social networks which deliver through their male partners; except in cases where the nuclear family is not so widespread, as in the Caribbean (Barrow 1991) or where considerable, male out-migration has enabled women to gain social prestige, financial and network independence having
overcome the traditional sexual division of labour, as in the Pacific (Connell 1989:7-8).

These observations are not meant to downplay the gendered perspective to social inequality at work which, as the fieldwork at SBH and TDR attests, provides real and powerful evidence of the widespread, gendered closure from higher positions in the organisational hierarchy.

Similar to other facets of Maltese society, SBH is a male-dominated environment with only one female among the top eleven management grades; and this post is a traditional extension of a domestic role, that of executive housekeeper. A similar domination obtains with respect to the GWU Group Committee at the property. The lowest statutory wage at SBH is ‘enjoyed’ by the only exclusively female group of employees - the domestics - who do not necessarily perform tasks demanding the lowest skill at the hotel or with the easiest availability on the local labour market.

The situation at TDR is not very different. There are 21 men out of 29 top management posts. And, in the Beverage Department at the property, all posts higher than the lowest rung (that is, 22) are occupied by males; whereas the lowest grade in the department - waiting - is the domain of 5 females and only one male employee.
Hotel Management persists as an outstandingly male occupational preserve in Malta and Barbados; this observation readily suggests meaning to certain behaviour patterns:

"Tourism in Malta remains a man's world. It is difficult for a woman to make it to a managerial grade. Few are willing to invest in women because they might get married and leave... A friend of mine went through a 3-year course, but she is still a simple secretary". (front office clerk, SBH)

And:

"Promotion? Women don't get to that position. Food & Beverage women get nowhere. You only get as far as a waitress. There is no opportunity for women to make it to the top". (waitress, TDR)

The reactions by women who find themselves within this socially structured disadvantage may however be denigrating by male observers who often naively assume that females have equal, if not better, opportunities for social mobility. All the same, the reasons put forward to explain this are in themselves expressions of chauvinism:

"Whether a female employee works or not, she will be kept on the payroll because she's got a skirt on." (manager, SBH)

And:

"Women push themselves with their breasts to advance at work." (manager, SBH)

In this process of rationalisation, the object becomes the subject of victimisation: The structured disadvantages brought to bear on women are transmogrified into an individual ailment.
The 'local versus alien' factor appears to be the salient basis of group distinction informed by cultural and physical characteristics which dominates both the SBH and TDR human relations environments. Since the hotel case studies consisted in foreign owned properties, another interesting set of dynamics relates to the perceptions of difference between locals and expatriates, the latter being few and strategically concentrated among the top managerial cadres of both TDR and SBH.

There were 6 expatriates among the SBH full-time staff when the case study was carried out. Their relationship, real or imagined, with the property owners and their associates and the considerable clout that they wield anyway within the organisation by virtue of legal-rational authority makes them the unwitting targets of various speculations:

"Foreign interference is a problem here. It may influence recruitment". (waiter,SBH)

And:

"The first general manager was a great man, with a wealth of experience. But the owners insisted on having an expatriate from their own country, their own man, at the helm of SBH. And so he was replaced". (manager,SBH)

Apart from serving as the butt of alleged favouritism, these expatriates serve also as an institutionalised form of intercession to hotel employees, a 'help mode' parallel and supplementary to other channels. This behaviour pattern however
fuels the anxiety of Maltese managers who feel that their own position is in this way being circumvented and therefore undermined; thanks also not least to sly subordinates with an eye for identifying their own bottom-up version of 'divide and rule' strategies:

"We all serve under two masters." (waiter, SBH)

A similar situation prevails at TDR which also has 6 expatriates on its staff list. The expatriate Human Resources Director (and a graduate in counselling) in particular projects herself purposely as supportive and sympathetic to employees. The expatriate dimension however permits, possibly even encourages, a chain of command sabotage:

"Many members of staff do not resort to official channels of redress. They go to the top, to the head of the spring... If you skip people, that may seem disrespectful. But you save time and you see clear waters." (waitress, TDR)

A member of the TDR management team complains about this short-circuiting practice:

"Smart workers will consult a whole array of people when they have a problem, hoping to get a positive response. I try and find out the history of a dispute before getting involved in its solution." (director, TDR)

The circumventing of authority also extends beyond the TDR organisation chart. With their network ramifications, employees can get very powerful acts together. Every now and then, Lilliputians can effectively pin down a Gulliver:
"Networks are powerful. We had an expatriate executive chef who started working here before getting his work permit application processed. But he was disciplining staff. So the employees lobbied their parliamentary representative, who was also Minister for Labour as well as from St. Philip. They managed to block the chef's work permit." (director, TDR)

The race factor and the perception of tourism as an extension of slavery relations strengthens the resort to the local-expatriate frame of reference at TDR. Here, more than at SBH, the assessment of the expatriate manager by the local employees easily falls within the Gulliver conceptual mould. The expatriate managers are seen to come over for a spell of duty, knowing that this is brief and touristic:

"We come here on two-year work permits, while workers can play for time". (director, TDR)

In contrast, Malta is apparently blessed with the absence of religious, tribal or ethnic divisions. There is however fair evidence to support the proposition that the Maltese people can be considered as two 'nations'. In spite (or because?) of policy convergence by the two main political parties - the Malta Labour Party and the Nationalist Party - the perceived outcomes of policy decisions as well as the political behaviour of partisan supporters is at home within the discourse of ethnic conflict. The Reds and the Blues are each armed with a particular set of economic and moral values and vocabulary, each equipped with a fully-fledged cultural industry (newspapers, radio stations, flags, books, anthems...) geared to ensure the preservation and social reproduction of die-hard supporters (Baldacchino 1989:109-
110). In Malta's 25-odd years of political independence, there have already been three national coats-of-arms; and the country today boasts no less than five 'national days', an exasperated compromise which reflects the difficulty of finding acceptable symbols of national unity. Given this situation, it is not uncommon to find sympathisers of the party in opposition viewing themselves as an oppressed ethnic group:

"We are either black or white. A manager needs workers to take up overtime. But he only phones up the whites... Partisan politics should be kept away from the workplace, but not everyone does that. A white employee may do whatever s/he wants, whereas a black one can't move from one's station. And thus workers do not cooperate among themselves. I was a victim of this division. I was blacklisted for many years". (food & beverage cashier, SBH)

Political partisanship exists also in Barbados, with friction between "the Bees and the Dees", the respective supporters of the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party (Dann 1984:226); but the rivalry does not appear to be as strong and extensive as in Malta at the time when the fieldwork was being undertaken.

The above considerations suggest that existing categories of social cleavage as are social class, gender and ethnicity are not to be dismissed when adopting the lilliputian perspective; but neither is it fair to discard any consideration of a smallness effect as a "surface appearance", a bourgeois attempt at concealing underlying structures and processes (e.g. Sutherland 1984:4-5). The smallness lens profitably expands the environmental appreciation of labour relations encounters.
The universe of differentiation is set to expand still further, charting out still more diverse episodes of the manifestation of intimacy, totality and monopoly in action. The next chapter introduces two new settings for the examination of labouring in Lilliput: The University of the West Indies (Barbados Campus) and the University of Malta. Such is done in the context of the debate on the orientation of education in developing microstates.

Notes to Chapter 4

1. For an analysis of the distinction between labour and labour power, at the root of this problematic, see Marx(1970:167-8), elaborated upon in Braverman(1974, Chapter 1).

2. More elaborate monographs of each case study, which consider issues beyond the strict treatment of the smallness effect, have been presented to the respective hotel company managements.

3. The social tensions of tourism "increase as the ratio of tourists to the local population and of visitors per square mile of land area increases" (Worrell 1982:129). Also Doxey (1971:5) and Kowaleski (1982:97).


8. The suspension of a forward buying rate, by which British tour operators can buy Maltese currency at a fixed and preferential rate of exchange, would cost Malta some 24% of its British tourists, a loss of some 800 jobs in the tourist industry and a 5% reduction to the sector's contribution to GNP: Il-Helsien (Malta), 13th July 1990.
9. Being a Marsascala resident, information in this section is mainly derived from personal contacts, knowledge and experience as a 'participant observer'.

10. 'Pizza Parlour', The Times (Malta), 7th June 1993, p.23.

11. 6.5% of Maltese report Marsascala as their destination for local holidays: (Lockhart & Ashton 1990:119-120).


14. For example, 'Marsascala Residents' Complaints', The Times (Malta), 25th August 1991. These concerns eventually coalesced into the setting up of a voluntary residents association.

15. This may be related to the effect of pollution from sewage discharge. Malta's main sewage outflow takes place 2 kilometres out at sea; it "causes pollution effects all along the eastern seaboard up to Marsascala" (Anderson & Schembri 1990:19). Chemical analysis of water samples from different sites along Marsascala Bay revealed pollution from drainage and petroleum in July 1992: Axiaq(1992).

16. For example, "In the case of Barbados, non-residents use water and sewers 1.6 times more than the native population and use over 27 times as much electrical power" (Barry et.al. 1984:84).


20. Barry et.al. (1984:77); Potter(1983:47). A notable attempt at penetration in this foreign preserve was Caribbean Airways, an initiative of the Barbados Government with services to London and Frankfurt in 1970. But this airline was grounded in 1982 because of severe financial losses. I am grateful to Ian Gooding-Edghill for this information.

21. A May 1991 World Bank Report warns that hotel capacity on the island has stagnated; refurbishment and renovation have lagged; consequently the quality of accommodation has
deteriorated. Quoted in Lynch (1992:6). "Although there has been some refurbishment, there has been no new hotel plant investment within recent years. Most of our hotels are more than 15 years old": Ian Gooding Edghill, personal communication, dated 16th December 1992.


24. Husbands (1983). The explanation is more likely to be found in the 'cultural penetration' which predisposes Barbadian society with a receptor orientation to the metropole. This reinforces, and is itself reinforced by, high levels of out/return migration and by mass tourism in close proximity with the local population (Khan 1976:49; Potter & Dann 1987:xix-xx). See also Chapter 2 above.

25. Interview with TDR Operations Director (7th September 1992); also Potter (1983:49-50).


27. As intimated by TDR Front Office Manager, interviewed on 3rd September 1992.

28. The habitus is an immanent law whose effect is the production of a "commonsense world", the harmonisation of agents' experiences and the continuous reinforcement that each of them receives from the expression of similar or identical experiences (Bourdieu 1977:72-3,80-1).

29. TDR is a wholly-owned subsidiary of a TNC with a large chain of hotels and resorts worldwide; SBH is a foreign-owned hotel which is managed by a holding company, a joint venture by its owners and minority Maltese shareholding. Further details are withheld to preserve the anonymity of the two properties.

30. I owe managerial consent to carry out my research at TDR to such an insight on the part of the Human Resources Director.


32. Cynthia is a lucid exposition of the Bajan know-it-all. An incisive allusion to the pervasive intimacy and totality of a small world? Herewith a humorous excerpt of the calypsonian's lyrics, composed and sung by 'Sir' Don Marshall:

   When you want to know anything about anything ask she
   Mistress maliciousness of the 20th Century
   The woman makes it an occupation
   To collect all the information
   Then walk about and tell the population for spite
She should open a little office and put up a sign
She would be a big millionaire in less than no time
Instead of running she mouth for nothing
Inquisitive just for the fun.

The equivalent Bajan idiom would be: The bush has ears and the
wall has eyes.

34. Lanzon, J. J. (1991) 'Time to check Amateurism in Catering
Business', *The Times* (Malta), September 16th, p. 5.

35. The GWU had 130 paid members on the SBH check-off list out
of 176 non-managerial employees as at August 1991.

36. There were 183 BWU members out of some 300 non-managerial
staff on the TDR check-off system as at October 1992.

37. Published in *The Barbados Advocate* and *The Nation*, March

38. It is actually TDR corporate philosophy to refer to its
employees as *associates*.

39. This respondent, who had best remain completely
unidentified, has a wife and a girlfriend also working on
property, but he did not mention this.

40. TDR Human Resources Director, private communication dated
23rd March 1993.

41. *Syndrome* seems to be a suitable appellative because it
denotes a cluster of features which suggest a particular
condition without these features necessarily manifesting
themselves in identical form or degree in different space-time
settings. Neither do the features embody forced consequences yet
they lend themselves to critical, comparative diagnosis.
This thesis seeks primarily to come to grips with the developing microstate's own, locale-specific, universe of features which infect and colour the way in which individuals behave as producers. Like the luxury hotel, the microstate university campus is a useful scenario to illustrate the dynamics of labouring in Lilliput. Apart from this, however, the choice of a university campus affords other advantages.

There is, first of all, a glimpse into how the smallness effect constitutes part of the hidden educational agenda: If an educational system purports to socialise members into the dominant ethos of the extant social formation (e.g. Willis 1977), then the university setting, 'breaks in' its students, albeit inadvertently, also into the promises and perils of smallness, as much a constituent of the microstate environment.

The university also presents itself as an opportunity to espy the workings of smallness beyond the strict contours of a labour-management relationship. Not because labour relations on campus are non-existent; although academics worldwide may be falsely assumed to occupy individualised spheres of operation. They nonetheless appear to be differently involved in the management
of, and by, the idiosyncrasies occasioned by operating in a small developing milieu.

Thirdly, the University setting makes possible an encounter with a fairly critical sub-sample of Lilliputians who can ponder and reflect on the epistemology of the research design. The outcome is an informed critique of the methodological premises of the case approach.

Recourse to university respondents and vignettes of their microstate predicament have been organised using a two-pronged approach. This involves two case studies, again drawn from Barbados and Malta; but the relative status of these and the accompanying description and analysis of material and argumentation differ from the unfolding of the hotel case material as presented in Chapter 4.

The first case is an account of a study visit and informal interviews carried out with academics at a microstate university campus, the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill, Barbados (henceforth UWICH). The University of the West Indies (henceforth UWI) is perhaps the most successful survivor of the ill-fated West Indies Federation (1958-1962). Like its successor in Oceania, the University of the South Pacific, UWI was designed from inception as a regional institution. The move was dictated not only by considerations of scale and cost but also by a potential contribution to a "West Indian Outlook", balancing the strong insular identity of the region's constituent members.
Originally the University College of the West Indies, this was opened at Mona, Jamaica in 1948; but with the disintegration of the federal concept, the devolution from the original single campus was an inevitable corollary to the advance to independence of the region’s territorial actors. A separate campus was set up at St. Augustine, Trinidad as from 1960 and a third at Bridgetown, Barbados in 1963. The latter moved to its current site at Cave Hill in 1967 (Maxwell 1980:361-379; Payne 1980).

Although broadly unstructured in outcome, the UWICH encounters afforded an opportunity to revisit some of the themes made salient by the hotel respondents, engaging in their comparable though different unfolding on campus. The intricacies of totality, intimacy and monopoly come into play once again in understanding the idiosyncrasies of the management of information, transparency, expertise and flexibility. Certain insights are also pertinent to the academic world, such as the problematic nature of peer review processes. Being academics, my respondents also structured the interview setting to critique my theoretical assumptions, a departure which was welcome although cheating the ensuing analysis from the broad comparability which had been possible in the case of TDR and SBH.

The UWICH case is contextualised by virtue of being projected as a prototype of the tertiary education institution at the cutting edge of the contradictory tensions between more or less dependency: The choice between national relevance and international currency and credibility is enriched when posited
as a function of the 'development' trajectory of the developing microstate. The account provides an educational dimension to the pseudo-development theme outlined in Chapter 2 above.

The second case is subordinate to the first and comes in expressly to punctuate and inform it with a personal perspective. It is an intimate autobiography, based on personal experiences, emotions and recollections as seen by the self at the time of writing (mid-March 1993) in the context of his sojourn and work in another microstate University, the University of Malta (henceforth UM).

UM is the exception which qualifies the rule in microstate tertiary education. The oldest university in the Commonwealth outside Britain, and the oldest tertiary institution in today's stock of small developing states, it predates fellow microstate campuses by centuries. Still, the reasons for its setting up bear an uncanny similarity to those behind tertiary education initiatives in small developing states today: A prestigious, nation-building institution; a domestic seat of learning and training; a centre of employment; and a magnet for foreign largesse (Atchoarena 1991; Bray et.al. 1991:86-93; Peters & Sabaroche 1991:130; Smawfield 1993:278).

The Maltese institution was established when the island became, after the failed Great Siege by the Ottoman Turks in 1565, the definite seat of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem and, historically, one of the first small island states. The Order
thus pumped in large sums of money from its European properties resulting in massive infrastructural investment, including the building from scratch of a new capital city with its imposing fortifications, administrative palaces, churches and, as from 1592, its own university. This was initially a Jesuit college but was upgraded by decree to a 'public university of general studies' in 1769 (Maxwell 1980:340).

The UM case material is therefore unlike the Cave Hill data, being a distanced portrait of the institution as the terrain of a specific behavioural universe. The perspective is that of a participant-observer; an outsider-insider who is applying the lilliputian perspective towards a better understanding of his own reality. What follows therefore are excerpts from my occupational life history which I feel qualify the analysis of the influence of smallness described in some detail within the UWICH framework, but so far shorn of personal involvement.

There is today an increasing emphasis on reflexive accounts as an integral and public aspect of sociological research. The genre has gained respectability as a heuristic device which can provide privileged, even monopolistic, access to a dimension of human experience which would be difficult to approach and fathom using other techniques (Merton 1988:18; Sheridan 1993:28). Rather than a trivialisation of data or an exercise in pompous self-indulgence, an autobiographical sociology recognises, and in many ways demystifies, the inevitable location of the self in any research pursuit (Ribbens 1993:88).
The challenge therefore involves the immersion of the self into the UM milieu, complementing the UWICH responses with my own. Through autobiographical material, I am after a more detailed and powerful involvement of the self and his mindframe into the research design, plus the opportunity to assimilate the research findings and accommodate them into my life's project, seeing whether and how they make sense.

At the same time, this ethnography cannot avoid being tempered by the very same implications of intimacy, totality and monopoly I am operationalising. Therefore I must, for example, privatise any antagonism. I am not just a critic and actor but as much a product and victim of the lilliputian dynamics I am analysing.

In the ensuing discussion, recourse will be made to secondary sources which support the unfolding argument, typically by providing interpretations drawn from other, small developing state, settings. Such a literature audit had suggested the direction of discussions with UWICH academic respondents and these are therefore being revisited in the light of the research outcome.

2. MICROSTATE CAMPUS CAPERS

2.1 The Setting

- A Pincer Effect
"A major potential for rising expectations and relative deprivation exists: We are a society with champagne tastes but mauby pocketbooks".4

Like most colonially penetrated microstates, Barbados is a mental constituent of the First World (Thorndike 1987:97). It may be an island essentially bereft of natural resources except for a largely redundant cash crop; but its people are aspiring to emulate the lifestyle of the richest countries of the world, harbouring an idealised model of the quality of life of such metropolitan 'significant others', a model cultivated by frequent visits, contact with foreign tourists, investors and employers, plus imported television programmes:

"When you listen to a Bajan speaking, it is not a typically third world person that you are listening to. We have the first Parliament in the western hemisphere. We have a very long history of migration and return migration. All this promotes a lack of perception by the average Caribbean middle class that they are in a developing setting". (educationist)

There is a 'pincer effect' of rising expectations and limited means (Andre & Hoy 1975:32). Still, this contradiction remains tenable, partly thanks to the perceived bridging function of the local educational system: As long as this matches the metropolitan one, then Barbadians can continue to dream an enviable quality of life and occupational career.

How indeed? First of all, the educational system acts as a fetish, providing the justification for any failures by locating
their causes within individual incapacities. Any protest which may have been levelled at societal variables is thus blunted:

"Barbados is a politically stable society. Perhaps this is because students have been able to proceed to higher education relatively easily. They have not had to pay any fees yet". (educationist)

Secondly, the promise of educational attainment as the key to individual mobility and national development is tenable because there is a powerful demonstration effect of successful compatriots. The most demonstrable effect of metropolitan-oriented, educational systems is to affect the escape of those selected and successful (Brock 1982:126):

"Training is a ticket to the big time". (Baker 1992a:16)

As long as this aspiration is held by clients, more so if it does come true, then any attempts at reforming the orientation of the system are likely to be strongly resisted (Brock & Parker 1985:54). Hence a perseverance in training students for GCE Advanced Levels; and a continuation of syllabi, even where indigenised, with strong doses of metropolitan content.

Yet, even with such a high degree of institutional and pedagogical cloning, those who can afford to do so still send off their children to study in the U.S.A., U.K., or Canada:

"Of the 45 scholarships and exhibitions granted last year, only 1 or 2 students came to UWICH. Very few go to the other
UWI Campuses. The students apply to go to the U.S.A. and Canada. And as long as parents have money, the tendency is still to go abroad". (educationist)

- The Brain Drain Reviewed

'Education for export' may be shunned in principle because it undermines any human resource development (HRD) strategy which has as its premise that people constitute the primary, and perhaps the only, available resource; it induces a brain and skill drain which could serve as a current, legitimate variant of imperialism. Nevertheless, Barbados academics have no serious qualms with this orientation: It is a viable industry in itself and makes a rational survival strategy:

"Education is the ticket to the international labour market, until we can sustain our own. If other countries are willing to sustain Barbadians, given that there are limited opportunities locally, then why not? Export of people is a means of generating foreign exchange through remittances. This acts like an insurance policy". (economist)

It also carries demographic and political spinoffs:

"We have exported teachers to Montreal, domestics and transport workers to the U.K. Had not these people emigrated, your guess is as good as mine". (educationist)

These observations indicate a sustained vision of people as human resources: The twist is, however, that these resources are
perceived as liabilities at home and only become exploitable assets once translated to metropolitan sites:

"If skilled workers, by finding work abroad, are relieving population pressure, and if the specialised skills of expatriates are not needed in their home countries, that governments pay little more than lip service to the supposed problem of the brain drain is hardly surprising...In some cases, the lack of concern may be further strengthened by the role that remittances play". (McKee & Tisdell 1990:87,162-3)

Nor is this brain drain a once only or unidirectional flow. The microstate may yet exact sweet revenge by enticing back nationals to its home turf, generally after these have gleaned the specialised knowledge, experience and perhaps also funding, all of which would not have been possible had they stayed at home:

"A Barbadian teaching in Jamaica came back. He brought back some unique experiences: On handling drug abuses and in running a new school...Another Bajan was Head of School in Trinidad and he returned here to serve as a Head of School". (educationist)

This 'redraining of brains' via the tapping of the diaspora has an immense scope. It may be the only way to utilise culture-friendly expertise effectively, if there is no sufficient, local, sustained demand for certain specialisations:

"It may prove more beneficial for some types of manpower to be located abroad and to be available occasionally rather than being permanently resident in a small island which fails to, or cannot provide, the challenge [nor perhaps the remuneration] necessary to keep skills and knowledge up to normal professional requirements". (Henry 1990:26)
- Externalities are the Catch

This outward orientation of the educational system is not so much a result of a conscious policy as of a protracted association with metropolitan centres of learning, sponsorship and academe. The alien impact is not just demanded by the system's clients and their parents; it is not simply a strategic feature to lubricate the export of human resources (read local liabilities). It is as much an unwitting victim of an ongoing dependency on externalities with a particular metropolitan flavour:

"If the number of Ph.D.s and staff is disproportionately from the metropole, then it's a vicious circle which reinforces itself". (economist)

The snag with this kind of cultural orientation, as with the country's metropolitan-inclined, economic structure, is that the success and achievement of the objectives of the system depend on exogenous events: In this case, a willingness to accept Barbadian brain and brawn by other countries.

Thus, the system is only credible if it somehow influences positively the opportunities for employment. In the case of doctors, for instance, this seems to have been successfully managed for many years via migration, a UWI qualification serving as a crucial visa (Bird 1984:418). But such need not follow for other graduates; there is a potential danger in indulging in a policy which produces graduates without the concomitant, dignifying, occupational niches or career paths:
"Education for export is a good thing. If you don't, you could very well find a potential problem on your hands: Highly schooled people. The ideology says that once we are learning well, we should see a piece of the action. If the system does not deliver, then it is questioned. You breed potential revolutionaries. Education for export is a safety valve". (educationist)

A liberal education policy allowing relatively open access to higher education risks a skewed mismatch of aptitudes, attitudes and job opportunities. There may be a surplus of professional personnel, whose disappointment at not finding the occupational position they had grown (and been groomed) to expect fuels the migration syndrome; on the other extreme of the labour market spectrum, there may be vacancies which are felt to be beneath literate job seekers:

"Students continue being put out of the educational system. If these graduates wanted to become keyboard operators and data inputers, all well and good. But this is not likely to happen; rather...". (political scientist)

- Towards Self-Sustainability?

In the modern world, migration may no longer appear to be a feasible policy measure for population control and human 'resource' export. The imposition of emigration controls and the labour surplus problems of the traditional host economies of the Caribbean region have jeopardised the credibility of educational systems. And with mass, chronic unemployment at home, it becomes increasingly clear that many clients of the Barbadian educational system can no longer be appeased by (now empty?) promises of
transnational placement. There is increased pressure to deliver domestically relevant, educational goods (Brock 1987:14):

"The veil of affluence in the Caribbean is now being removed. And we are thus more conscious of the need to bend our resources to HRD". (educationist)

But the redeployment of the local educational system towards local requirements is tantamount to a different conception of development, one which tends towards self-sustainability. It is the model of development which is being fervently recommended for developing economies by advisors from the industrialised nations and international banking/creditor institutions:

"The heavy outflow of trained personnel can render futile the HRD efforts of small states while one is trying to produce an adequate supply of their own trained staff". (Bacchus 1992:9)

But it appears highly unlikely, and perhaps even strategically unwise, to refrain from education for export (with all its deficiencies), if 'development' patterns persist in their outward disposition:

"Increased localisation...can be damaging to the international dimension that has to be addressed in a nation state, however [or, perhaps, especially if] small". (Brock 1988b:306)

And with micro-territories historically structured in such a way to service larger units, is not talk of self-sustainability merely mock-heroic?
"The educational system depends on the development model we are pursuing. If we want to be competitive in the international market, we cannot make our piece of paper only domestically relevant, especially if we are oriented towards export-led industrialisation. It would also cut us off from further development. Qualifications must be internationally convertible". (political scientist)

Nor is the reduced opportunity for migration to be blindly accepted as a foregone conclusion:

"There is a fiction that the degree of migratory movement has dropped. It may have dropped to certain destinations. But there is inter-regional migration: Guadeloupe, Martinique, St. Thomas, St. Croix... The movement is dictated by the disposition of the [host] economy to absorb labour. There is a lot of movement out of Barbados. How else would the population have stabilised?" (educationist)

- Lauding the Elite

That most Bajan scholarship winners choose to study in the metropole is not coincidental. The behaviour pattern of these lauded role models merely vindicates an educational system, as in most developing microstates, stuck fast to its role of serving as a vehicle for upward national, regional and international mobility for the best and brightest (Bray 1990:270; Brock & Smawfield 1988:235; Fergus 1987:43; Jock Jim & Nuttman 1991:87; McKee & Tisdell 1990:87). The country in the meantime is a dump for the multitude of drop-outs who lack the educational passports to move out. The educational system appears locked in a hypocrisy, an "odious innuendo" (Kersell 1987:106) where it is serving all but local interests while consuming 25% of the
government's annual recurrent expenditure. The metropole's academic model remains engrained as the most desirable form of education, albeit the least relevant (Brock 1983:127; 1988a:177; Brock & Parker 1985:53):

"In spite of the growing recognition of the urgent need for far reaching educational reform, the old pattern of education still tends to predominate in small island states with all the adverse consequences that this normally generates: Irrelevance, elitism and selectivity, unrealistic expectations...". (Bennell & Oxenham 1983:23)

There is, all this notwithstanding, no acceptable and workable alternative in sight. This is the impasse between national relevance and international credibility which the Barbadian educational system is saddled with. The UWICH campus is thus situated within the ongoing debate of the function of (especially tertiary) educational provision in Barbados and its relationship to economic dictates, identifying in this problematic inflections which are teased from, and enriched by, a theorisation of smallness and its tendential characteristics in the development setting.

The focus of analysis now shifts from the macro and institutional to the micro and behavioural, concentrating on the description and construction of perceptions and experiences nurtured by virtue of operating in a microstate university by UWICH respondents, both as producers and academics. They are reacting to a series of provocative statements, gleaned from a literature review, and which sought to elicit slices of microstate life.
These in their own way colour vividly and specifically some of the imputed idiosyncrasies of Lilliput. The exercise is supported and enriched by my own personal accounts, drawn from years of critical 'participant observation' at UM.

The resulting set of critical perceptions can be organised around three key themes: Expertise, the absence and defence of privacy and flexible specialisation. These are followed by an exploration of the effects witnessable at the organisational level in response to the three key principles, UWICH variants of monopoly, intimacy and totality in action. The ensuing, empirical treatment also demonstrates that there are perhaps insurmountable difficulties in singling out any one of these leitmotifs for a purist analysis, shorn of infusion from any of the other two. It is rather the mutual, cross-fertilisation of this triple typology which appears to characterise events in Lilliput best of all.

2.2 Expertise

- Hitting the Limelight

Bray and Fergus (1986:94-5) argue that countries with small populations, by definition, tend to have small pools from which to draw the skilled personnel they need. However, they intimate that this imbalance may not be that critical because of the smallness effect, resulting in a disproportionate availability of scholarship quotas and in a stronger competitive urge because
of constant public scrutiny and personal rivalry. In this light, they propose, in passing:

"Smallness can also be a major stimulus, for in a small country it is easy to hit the limelight". (ibid.)

What Bray & Fergus fall short of analysing is that this achievement of public exposure is not limited to social visibility and transparency. The relative ease of hitting the limelight corresponds to an ease of achieving a condition of expertise, the correspondence on an individual basis of the ease of monopolisation by firms in the micro-economy. As soon as an individual develops even a modest edge in an area of knowledge, skill or research, s/he may find him/herself proclaimed as an expert and is ascribed with authoritative standing in that area by others.

Such a standing is substantially a function of the monopoly which obtains in Lilliput: There is a social hierarchy with few intermediate rungs in the ladder of social mobility, even though - and this must not be underestimated - the few (often single) competitors in the way may prove difficult to dislodge or overtake (Bacchus 1989:8; Bacchus & Brock 1987:5). Various specialisms also remain vacant and unrecognised until developed and proclaimed by enterprising individuals(Boyce 1991:113; Bray 1992b:150; Murray 1985:194; Peters & Sabaroche 1991:133; Rodhouse 1991:219). And with the human resource chain thinly stretched, a single break (through sickness, absence for training, or
emigration) can cause disruption and major loss of efficiency
(Bray 1991a:57,64-66; Coyne 1992:80; Peters & Sabaroche 1991:135-
136; Shand 1980a:16):

"The person in a small state is like a premier capital good, a premier national resource. You would need an army of experts [in a particular subject] elsewhere. But one person in Grenada would suffice". (economist)

Engendering one's own indispensability is totally rational from the microstate citizen's point of view. After all, there is a general understanding that it is in every producer's interest to distort the market mechanism to one's advantage, shifting preferably from a price taker to a price setter orientation where the milieu permits various degrees of differentiation. The cultivation of expertise is one technique towards such a monopoly orientation; and in the microstate environment such an achievement can be almost spontaneous, even unavoidable, particularly if one is establishing oneself in a new domain of knowledge, competence or responsibility. Expertise can thus be relatively rapidly rewarded by social, economic and political spinoffs, including public recognition and media exposure, increased discretion and authority.

Expertise is achieved almost by default: Presumptuousness pays dividends, because there is no one around to challenge one's bluff:

"When you're in a little pool you could become a big fish fairly rapidly". (educationist)
Critical self-assessment supports these views. I was one of a dozen graduates in the only Bachelor of Arts General Degree Course (full-time) with social studies as a major area of study held at UM in the late 1970’s. After a short spell of teaching, unemployment and more teaching, I made an unfortunate attempt at postgraduate training abroad (in educational psychology). I had then identified educational psychology as a potential niche in which there was an obvious demand and in which I was interested. Unknown to me at that time, however, (and being utterly naive of such workings) another individual had already been identified and encouraged to pursue postgraduate training in that area. So my adventure failed to generate the necessary support.

I was then approached to carry out social science research at a recently established Workers’ Participation Development Centre at UM, initially (1982) on a part-time and subsequently (1983) on a full-time basis. In time, I generated and directed a considerable amount of my own work, in line with the Centre’s objectives. I became Malta’s specialist on ‘Labour and Development’ issues following a Master’s Degree abroad in 1985/6. I have since then delivered courses on such and related themes to undergraduate diploma and degree students at UM. My M.A. research paper on worker cooperatives, eventually developed into a foreign publication (Baldacchino 1990), has turned me also into a local authority on cooperative affairs.
The same can perhaps be said with regards to issues concerning other realms of knowledge, which have been deployed as other specialisms. An interest in the theory and practice of worker and adult education has meant that I have been approached to speak about this subject in public fora, deliver lectures at UM and contribute articles to local journals.

Some (mostly incidental) experience in survey questionnaire design and analysis has seen me develop into a sporadic consultant on this matter to various students as well as private and public bodies. My interest in Social Studies has enabled me, following an invitation, to write a book which has become the unofficial textbook for students sitting for the subject at ordinary level matriculation (Baldacchino 1988b). Completed case studies within my ongoing doctoral research - on labour relations in the hospitality industry - has meant that I have been requested twice already to serve in local fora as an expert resource person on the subject. Over these last 3 years, I have been invited to take part in live discussions on the local television station on such diverse topics as: Government budget proposals, public transport, the professions, human resource development and the Pope’s visit to Malta.

A similar development has occurred with respect to my hobby - Astronomy; a significant variant here being that this is a voluntary activity with few financial rewards and where competition is therefore not so intense. I was one of the founding members of a small astronomical circle when still an
undergraduate UM student in 1978. By 1984, this had become the national astronomical association at whose helm I served for 4 years. I am intermittently invited to participate on television slots and radio programmes to talk about astronomy related topics, particularly solar and lunar eclipses.

My 'specialist' interest in meteor watching turned me into the local authority on the matter, even though my scientific education was stunted at age 17. A modest cyclostyled publication of mine on this subject (Baldacchino 1980, revised 1984) was lauded in the local press and this ascribed me with the honour of possibly becoming "the Patrick Moore of the Maltese Sky". This remains to date the only local text to focus on shooting stars and their observation. Foreign reviews were, however, not so encouraging. A related project in the drafting phase is to come up with a simple guide to the nature and observation of meteors in the Maltese language. This project, another first for Malta, is so pioneering that it will involve the coining from scratch of technical terms in the local language.

Possibly, I may be an exceptional individual. But then so would be many of the compatriots I know well enough. Is it not in part the microstate predicament which makes the development of such 'exceptional' individuals all the more possible?

- Heavyweights and Frothblowers
But the empirical and academic baggage behind such an authoritative standing and exceptionality may not always be there. Expertise may grant so many advantages - status, consultancies, public and political acknowledgements, material benefits - that one is easily tempted to contribute to one’s own ascription process as expert:

"One does tend to call oneself 'expert'. Many don’t want to get over that image. I would feel uncomfortable unless I was competent. But people like the image". (educationist)

The attitude of public and media organisations in their search for statements and comments by 'experts' fuels this ego trip:

"There is definitely that temptation of being a big fish in a small pond. Say, I receive a request from the TV station to speak about the family. I would tend to accept...The ease of achieving expertise is remarkable in a small country". (sociologist)

To the trained eye, there develop two classes of experts in the small society. First, the big fish who would be a big fish anywhere; experts of international stature. Second, and probably more numerous, the big fish who are only so because they operate in a micro-territory. The former have a basis in achievement; that of the latter depends on domestic recognition. Such two clusters have been termed heavyweights and frothblowers12:

"A microstate expert may not be of international stature. But every now and then you get a big fish in a big pond, like Derek Walcott [recent Literature Nobel Prize Winner from St. Lucia]". (educationist)
"Another 'big fish, small pond' issue is that of so called small experts who would become established in the eyes of the public whereas they wouldn't have the capability in larger countries". (economist)

- Being Alone

These big fish in small ponds achieve such a situation of command by exploiting, consciously or unwittingly, the implications of monopoly in a setting of totality: The small size of population; the societal demands for expertise in different branches of knowledge; the relative isolation from peer pressure forthcoming from abroad. Insularity and logistic constraints impede a regular exercise of quality matching and sizing up which occurs readily in larger territories:

"There is nobody to talk to". (management lecturer)

Indeed, this is a serious danger even to those with international stature, who must thus defend themselves from this tendency to lose one's lustre and fall in a rut:

"Like Graham Greene's Our Man in Havana, I sometimes feel run down and gone to seed. We get some expatriate traffic but so many come here just for an extended holiday. The sun jet professors, we call them. I've been here since 1975 and in fact I'm getting itchy. I want to concentrate on my area of specialisation. But otherwise it's true: It's easy to atrophy". (sociologist)
It is so easy to accept that you are alone, the acknowledged and absolute keeper of a particular skill or discipline and thus rest on your laurels:

"There is a certain degree of loneliness. I would like to have more people to talk to or discuss things. As it is, I have to discuss things with people in Jamaica and the U.S.A. I ask myself whether I am as competent as people would have one believe". (economist)

Unless one successfully usurps the concept of the physically parochial, there are real dangers of lapsing comfortably into mediocrity:

"The size [of the country] acts as a defence from what goes on outside...And if you don't really do what you should be doing, even your own personal development suffers. If I'm involved in petty affairs, my mind will itself become petty. One should not surrender oneself intellectually. A relative expertise may be seen as the end of the story. When in fact it's only the beginning". (political scientist)

I am all too much aware of these dangers. The inevitable return to Malta and the UM after the completion of doctoral studies means that I must struggle hard to maintain, let alone improve, my intellectual calibre. Discussions with colleagues at UM and elsewhere suggest that it becomes vital to go for some kind of trans-national commitment and profile, especially now that I have managed to identify and articulate this very real threat of succumbing to Lilliput and devolving into plainness.
Organisations in micro-territories are obvious potential candidates for nurturing a stock of 'second class experts', which can be referred to as mediocrats, members of a bureaucracy of mediocrity:

"Many plodders make it to the top". (Kersell 1987:106)

Or:

"In small countries, some employees rise higher and faster than similarly [and perhaps even more?] qualified employees elsewhere". (Baker 1992a:15)

UWICH operates as a monopoly institution in Barbados and the micro-insular, geographical totality of its home territory reduces the more regular interaction and dialogue otherwise available to educational institutions in larger territories. UWICH’s regional character, with various members of staff hailing from other Caribbean territories apart from Barbados, suggests that there is a second-level, regional totality at work which to some extent takes over the immediate, Barbadian, insular condition. There remains, however, as strong a gulf between UWICH and the metropole:

"To maintain big fish status you need international recognition. But there are problems. The library is not very good. People who talk your language are few. Travel costs are higher. And this makes us look inward on ourselves and makes us big fish. This does not allow us to test our ideas. There is no peer pressure unless you step outside". (Head of Department)
And:

"It's lonely: I can't discuss my work with other people. I have to wait for a conference and for editorial work on international journals. I also try to participate in journal debates and rejoinders". (sociologist)

UM operates in a similar predicament, with the important difference that the institution enjoys only one level of exit. I have observed some of the implications of this state of affairs in a letter to the local press:

"Malta, unlike Britain, is a small scale society and this tends to inhibit the rigorous and absolute enforcement of standards, regulations and sanctions. Compound these to the nature of a monopoly institution as is Malta's University which - again, unlike Britain - enjoys 100% protectionism from foreign standards and easily affords to slip into mediocrity, given the unlikely prospect both of a rival, second university and of organised, 'user' pressure group movements..."  

Such a deficiency has been highlighted by a consultancy report commissioned recently for UM from a foreign team:

"Steps must be taken to terminate the university's isolation from the mainstream of European and international university departments. The university needs a visitors programme that imports academics for short lecture programmes; it needs to participate in international collaboration in research; it needs a larger number of students from overseas and to encourage exchange schemes, ERASMUS-type programmes and study abroad parties from America and elsewhere". (Shattock 1990:4)

- Easy Come, Easy Go
Still, one must not be carried away with ebullient enthusiasm. Agency considerations need to be tempered with structural constraints to get a fairer and more balanced picture.

One of the difficulties faced by heavyweights and frothblowers alike in the small jurisdiction is that their expertise does not in itself evoke other than fickle local recognition. "Monument building" (Murray 1981:253) is thus a challenging possibility to the microstate citizen; but this promise conceals a critical vulnerability. The same ease of achieving public acknowledgement of an expertise means also that it is as easy to lose this acknowledgement, especially if one is a 'pseud', enjoying only local acclaim:

"You may wish to pretend you're an expert. But watch out: You may fall on your face". (management lecturer)

Expertise recognition may be lost or remain unendorsed if powerful individuals and organisations, notably government, refuse to acknowledge. This may occur if one's political and ideological sympathies do not tally with those of the powers that be:

"Politicians in small countries control many aspects of life. Their long hand is there. Critical people often privatise their antagonism. If one does not have a political profile, that means an absence of social credit facilities, delays, and so on. You will be isolated". (management lecturer)
One needs to possess other than anonymous paper academic credentials to gain and/or to hold on to the acknowledgement one may expect. What one knows does not suffice. Considerations of loyalty become paramount, even overriding academic qualifications:

"You need one qualification: If a plodder wants to reach the top, s/he has to earn the trust of his/her superiors. S/he must not present the image of a disloyal troublemaker. Otherwise s/he will sing the swan song. You need loyalty, allegiance and general acceptance and must not be seen as a threat". (management lecturer)

Secondly, consideration needs to be given to the extent to which the system permits the deployment of an expertise to the depth and stature considered satisfactory by the incumbent. This space may be conditional also on a process of ongoing societal differentiation. The absence of opportunities for job advancement, further specialisation, the demands of administrative trivia and feelings of being underutilised or undervalued may prove to be key factors causing 'experts' to set their sights onto foreign, greener pastures. My own brother, a professional now permanently settled abroad, is one example of such human capital flight.

Thirdly, there also seems to be a predilection of preferring foreigners to locals:

"Government prefers bringing in foreigners to carry out research. It doesn't think highly of local researchers. It is scared of them, afraid that what they disclose would impact negatively on it". (educationist)
International experts may be of better quality than local ones, but they also may not. It is more likely that the selector is in such matters guided by matters of prestige, access to foreign funds, personnel and skills, international contact-building and the resort to a human resource above local sympathies and political location, and so liable to wider local acceptance:

"Bajans may become experts but their expertise could be only locally acknowledged. Government will shop for international experts...There was a case of asbestosis affecting a school. The expertise existed here; but government brought its experts from Atlanta". (sociologist)

What comes to mind here is my own experience in relation to my interest and involvement in the issue of smallness which is the anchoring principle of this thesis. It is in a sense exemplary of the blockages which lie in the path of whoever is less prepared to consider trans-national exit options. I cannot fail to sense here the deployment of 'closure tactics' about which, the reader will appreciate, I cannot elaborate.

This and similar cases provide me with clear opportunities to understand and appreciate that, rather than simply a prophet being least appreciated in his/her own land, expertise, if academic and scholarly, needs to be laced – perhaps even replaced – by good contacts with power holders as the key form of social capital in the Maltese context. There is nothing to do but resign oneself to accept authoritative figures not so much because of scholarship and academic excellence but because they have
captured or forced, via successful mutually reinforcing obligations, a key power holder's respect and blessing:

"So much may depend on the turn of a friendly card, strategically placed". (Baldacchino 1993b)

Such is the form of dominant social capital: Network cultivation, manipulation and reinforcement may be a more promising careerist strategy than, say, academic research and publication.

This is possibly one important lesson I still have to learn. Perhaps this is one reason to explain my 'non-position' at UM even after 10 years of full-time service. My lack of tenure may be bitter evidence that strictly academic concerns do not suffice. I am still a novice at playing the "academic politician" (Cornford 1966). Others appear to have found a base more easily and speedily, perhaps using different qualifiers.

One's precious foothold in the domain of expert authority is exposed not only when there is a change in government and/or when invaded (usually temporarily) by foreign expertise. More serious threats occur when a new competitor (perhaps a real big fish?) enters the fray. Such competition is few and far between; but these few, often single contenders may prove difficult to dislodge, overtake or cut down to size. Highly personalised, charged, acrimonious feuds result from the fickleness of expertise, but also from the absence of alternative routes for
one's career path. These feuds may last a lifetime, and can escalate by roping in networks.

Given that prevention is better than cure, those building expert niches for themselves indulge in closure tactics, trying to ensure that there are no rivals aspiring to the same honour. One strategic device used in this respect is the management of information.

2.3 Living Apart Together

- Easy Communication

Even critical observers have often praised the smallness factor in at least one respect: In situations of small physical distances and acute social interaction, there appear to be few logistic or institutional constraints in the way towards effective and cooperative decision making, especially in compact, non-archipelagic territories. This because of an alleged relative ease in securing information (Baker 1992a:22; Bray 1992:37,39; Bray & Packer 1993:56; Chiew 1993:58; Smawfield 1993:42; Waheed Hassan 1990:4):

"Ideas, views, requests, complaints and proposals can be communicated easily and quickly and often personally to the officials concerned. People know the abilities, needs and idiosyncrasies of each other and tend to act or react..."
accordingly. Through close personal contact, people's reactions and feedback to political and administrative decisions can be gauged accurately". (Farrugia 1993:222-3)

The literature identifies some of the potential systemic difficulties resulting from such a high degree of transparent and interpersonal communication, as is ascribed to interactions in small territories. Opportunities appear greater for misuse and abuse, in a systemic sense, via friends-of-friends networks resulting from role multiplicity of system incumbents, leading to frequent interactions across different role-sets; there is a jaundiced, particularistic assessment of personal qualities where features such as loyalty, family background, political affiliation and religious creed perhaps totally override impersonal, legal-rational, universalistic attributes; and the pertinence of a management of intimacy where the absence of confidentiality and anonymity, plus the high premium extracted from situations of open antagonism - which tend to be emotionally charged, long-lasting and with few avenues of escape - lead to the fostering of skills in compromise and dispute avoidance. This collective baggage colours the management of information within decision making.

- A Carceral Organisation?

Possibly one relatively neglected feature of this package is that the dense psycho-social atmosphere in which small-state, social interactions occur is not an exclusively benign condition.
From the responses of those interviewed, it seems that microstate life could make one feel hemmed in:

"There is a Goffmanesque scenario of total institutions. This is a total institution environment with the people having a total institution mentality". (sociologist)

There is a strong preoccupation in somehow raising the threshold of anonymity, confidentiality and privacy, leading to a "living apart together"(Hoetjes 1992:131):

"I have very few friends in Barbados. I want to keep it like that...It's deliberate. I don't want to expose myself to be crushed". (management lecturer)

This is reminiscent of an otherwise cryptic pronouncement by a former microstate premier: "We live together very well but we don't like to live together together"(Barrow 1964:181).

- Role Set Clampdown

One technique resorted to in the management of such feelings suggestive of carceration is to clamp down where possible on the overriding of role sets. There is a particularly acute concern with trying to keep the spheres of activity representing an individual's private and professional life separate and distinct, when this seems to be advantageous:

"I try and maintain a fairly rigid separation between home life and University. In the United Kingdom, I could take my
private life for granted. Here, I have devised strategies to separate public from private. I would not buy a house in Paradise Heights [within short walking distance from campus] for instance". (Head of Department)

One can also make use of behaviour avoidance skills, introducing status, ritual and formal procedures to widen and solidify the gap:

"I try to make it very clear which hat I'm wearing at any time. Terms of address (such as first names) can be indicative. One has to be careful not to use an outside friendship or a family relationship to get through. Conversely, one has to be very careful to see that students and staff do the same thing. You make it clear that it's formal". (Head of Department)

- Withholding Information

A second strategic device which appears to be widespread 'wisdom' in microstate behaviour is the screening and withholding of information. Surprisingly, rather than information being widely and readily available in small territories, back-to-back relations may coexist comfortably alongside face-to-face ones:

"Information tends to be stored orally and cerebrally rather than in writing because in that way it becomes even more private". (educationist)

After all, disclosure may prove bitter in the monopoly of Lilliput:
"I've heard mothers tell their children not tell anything to anyone about their career choices. A friend's daughter, a doctor, was talking to a fellow female student about specialisation. The latter was saying that she was not going to specialise. But when her friend told her what she was going to do, she applied, got a scholarship and qualified ahead of her. In a small country, there could be just one slot and she got it". (educationist)

Add to this the fear of failure and the complex basis of peer review:

"People don't discuss your work or don't want to discuss their work in open form. Sometimes a colleague sends off a manuscript to a foreign journal and you don't even know about it... And if you do let them know that you are sending off an article, then they could criticise your paper with a certain effrontery. You ask yourself whether it is their competence to do that. And you do get a better reaction from people whom you don't know. It is difficult to disentangle strictly academic from personal critiques". (economist)

- Managing Intimacy

A third attitudinal mould refers to the management of intimacy already identified. Given that everyone is a potential informant, one takes the necessary safeguards to ensure one is not ostracised by power holders:

"There is a Sociology of Rumour - a transmission of gossip. The telephone is in use most of the time. People don't or can't write - it's an aural type of society. One uses baited breath just in case the person one is talking to is an informer and would inform a 'big wig'". (sociologist)

Otherwise one is risking a boycott from which there may be no escape other than exile:
"Suppose a young engineer, a graduate from UWI at St. Augustine [Trinidad], gets into a row with a Minister in Dominica. What is the engineer to do? Most likely, the person will leave". (management lecturer)

In particular, good relations with Government may be crucial:

"Sometimes my students from the Eastern Caribbean tell me that the life of a small island is like the life in a small town in the U.S.A., with the sheriff and the mayor who have a family business which employs practically everyone. And you cannot antagonise these; otherwise you’re in trouble... Avoidance behaviour is a real social force. Here things cannot be defused. A small thing can have a ripple effect across the whole society. We are very cautious. We don’t step on the toes of powerful actors. Those who do have some independent means of survival. If you’re a public employee, you wouldn’t blow the whistle in the interests of self-preservation". (management lecturer)

Over and above the reaction to defend one’s information as an expression of one’s privacy, one comes across a sense of danger of sharing such information because it may provide positional advantages to others. The indivisibility of smallness leads both to conditions of ease of ‘expertise’ and to a relative fragility of such expertise to competition. Hence there exists a dual tendency which makes the withholding of information a wise and rational decision: Since knowledge constitutes social capital, its achievement can bolster and determine a position of expertise, and it also savagely protects the domain from infiltration by contenders:

"The issue of back-to-back relations is a real one. It’s as if you’ve been listening to some of our meetings. We meet one another at work and in various local social circles; and yet we complain very frequently of the absence of
information...I don't know whether it's simply a feeling of mistrust. Perhaps it's a feeling that, if I hold on to this, I have power and control over something". (educationist)

Elaborating with respect to my own experience at UM, physical proximity among fellow departmental staff members is inevitably close, not only at the UM but also beyond, given the likelihood of renewed encounters in other social circles. Personal knowledge about each other is also widely available. Probably, each staff member knows much more about each of the other departmental colleagues than the latter believes. Contacts, allegiances, past history, embarrassing details, spouse and family background, financial and capital assets...details which accrue from regular encounters in formal and informal settings, public news exposure, as well as the multitude of informants who know both parties and inform one about the other, perhaps even vice versa, in an intricate brokerage pattern.

At the same time, and perhaps significantly in response to the pervasive intimacy described above, individuals stick doggedly to their self-regulated spheres of influence. There are benefits in remaining busy in splendid isolation, each with a private realm of activities, contacts, commitments to the organisation and beyond, gravitating round a secret corpus of expert and insider knowledge, nourished by an equally secret web of informants, crisscrossed by privileged oral/aural communication.

The element of secrecy is also in part a relative effect. Given the wide circulation and/or availability of detail, one may
expect to know so much about everyone. Heightened expectations about what one should know means that anything less may just not be good enough.

- The Review Process

'Multiplex' interpersonal relations make peer review processes very difficult. Easily, there is no local with whom one shares a proper collegial and objective peer relationship. There is likely to be a power dynamic at play; envy, emotion, feuding, suspicion to say the least, will cloud the relationship of those who operate in the same realm. It is ever so easy and tempting to ascribe what may appear to be innocent academic comments with complex intentions. The persons will be known so well - too well - to each other that proper peer review, even if actually attempted, will be misinterpreted.

An individual in the small state setting is never sure to what extent personal considerations are infecting supposedly anonymous, academic ones in peer review judgement:

"Local refereeing is a farce. I sent an article and got it back with comments. But I recognised the referee through his writing". (economist)

Professional and secure reviews may only be available from outsiders. Locally there is a real difficulty of finding anybody capable of carrying out a proper review of peer performance from an academically strong position. Not to mention that any such
person may, if available, not be willing to carry out such an exercise, or will not be willing to carry it out in a proper way, in view of the management of intimacy. With the anonymity of the process questionable, one has to entertain considerations as to whether the review will sour or improve the relationship between reviewer and reviewed. Any assessment by compatriots is thus not only liable to non-academic, power or affective considerations and 'crab in the barrel' dynamics but to a reasonable conjecture that there is nobody locally as competent to carry out the task at hand.

The accusation of lack of competence can of course be levelled not only at the reviewer but also at the reviewed. The relative inability to measure oneself rigorously and continuously with others and with international peers does tend to increase, in absolute terms, the possibility of not being up to such a high standard. Hence, disparaging attitudes towards peer review not only protect one's secrets and expose the possible presumptuousness of others but also one's own.

The insinuations could also conceal a fear of failure which, again in Lilliput, may have even more catastrophic consequences (Lillis 1993a:6-7; Rodhouse 1987:23-4; Smawfield 1993:39):

"In a small state a reputation is very quickly built up but very quickly brought down". (Head of Department)
Failure is quickly highlighted, made public and condemned in small systems. This fuels systemic inertia and 'playing safe': Better to do well what is accepted than risk poor performance of new, untried methods and techniques (Munbodh 1987: 72).

I can here document a delicate situation which was reached when one UM colleague (and a personal friend) had edited a book (Sultana 1991) which he then asked me to review. Something which I accepted to do hesitantly. He shared with me his fear that I would destroy the text; while I admitted my 'friendship' bias in the review article itself.

Ultimately, the review seems to have been welcomed as fair and balanced, and some potentially bitter feelings were happily avoided. But others who contributed to the text and whom I felt duty bound to criticise did not relish my critique - as I found out from third parties. That may have soured our relationship forever. And, lastly, I must admit that I tempered my criticism of another contributor in the full knowledge that this was a potential 'patron' in my regard and therefore, definitely not worth alienating.

I was at the receiving end of a review process in a different circumstance. My text on worker cooperativism with special reference to Malta was reviewed by two Maltese in two separate outlets, one local and one foreign. The first reviewer is a close associate of mine at the UM Centre where I work. I know that his academic exposure to cooperative theory and his experience of
cooperative practice are limited, as are mine after all. But if there was anybody around to write a studied review on such a subject, this had to be him. He had, after all, written and researched the only ever scholarly booklet on cooperatives in Malta, intended for popular consumption. I actually asked and commissioned him to write the review. And the review was a very positive one with only one modest retribution, inserted almost apologetically to suggest that the text, as with any text, was not perfect. The second reviewer, a priest who has promoted cooperative organisations in Malta for many years, could not grapple with the theory but put in some admittedly valid remarks with reference to my sources and empirical investigation.

My overall evaluation is that these were both brave but essentially symbolic, ceremonious attempts at reviewing the text. Their main merit lies in having given the publication (and themselves as reviewers in the process) some useful local and international ventilation. This was probably their main intention. I received much more incisive and pungent critique from the foreign anonymous reviewers of the text commissioned by the publishers.

'Living apart together' therefore seems to turn topsy turvy Riesman's (1961) lonely crowd and Durkheim's (1984) concern with the loss of collective consciousness. The small territory is a Goffmanesque scenario where participants are rewarded by
embarking on secretive, anarchist adventures. Indivisibility is exploited to balance the effects of vicious intimacy.

2.4 Between Specialist and Generalist

- Breadth or Depth?

"In countries where labour markets are very small, the direction of development cannot be towards maximising the diversity of specifications, but must be towards flexibility, both in terms of education and training and in terms of employability... In view of the quick change of job profiles and the difficulty to make reliable manpower requirement forecasts, too much specialisation on traditional crafts, trades and skills is potentially wasteful and dangerous; instead, strong emphasis on a solid general education is the alternative". (Teschner 1992:39)

Microstate policy makers are regularly reminded of the potential dangers of overspecialisation and the potential advantages which flexibility provides:

"Small countries certainly need the best; but in small countries the best may sometimes be defined in terms of flexibility and breadth rather than depth". (Brock 1988b:306)

School programmes in small states are encouraged to offer pupils a good general education as a basic foundation, in order that they may achieve the flexibility and adaptability which they will need within jobs and in changes of employment (Bacchus 1989:13; Bray 1992a:31). It is also advised to embrace a philosophy of
education which subscribes to the view that it is possible and necessary to break down the traditional separation between 'academic' and 'practical' studies (Bacchus 1989:14-5).

The argument as such is however functionally simplistic because it fails to engage the intricacies of strategic choice and individual behaviour patterns. Perhaps the following comment by a UWICH lecturer paints a more complex, total picture:

"There are pressures both for role multiplicity and role enlargement in the microstate environment. What suffers most is the level of research and publication. Some of us get so bogged down plugging the holes that we have little time to think about what we've done. We suffer here from shortage of numbers. My area is Science Education but I also have to teach Curriculum Development. I keep switching back and forth. Sometimes one of these areas will dry up and I would otherwise have nothing to do. And that is not advisable. One has to stretch oneself but not too thinly: You raise expectations and people will take advantage of you; they will drain you. Still, there is no room for a person who is so specialised that s/he can only stand on one leg". (educationist)

There is thus no clear dividing line between specialisation and a generalist orientation. There are systemic variables - such as the difficulty of accurate human resource forecasting - which obviously direct microstate individuals towards adopting both of these: Shortage of demand and the danger that this poses to one's livelihood, encourages a diversification of portfolios (Fergus 1991:570; Oxtoby 1977). Expertise is too scarce to be wasted by strict adherence to job descriptions (Swartland 1991:30; Waheed Hassan 1991:99). And for many specialist occupations, demand in microstates is frequently not large enough to employ even one

- Flexible Specialisation

The strategic orientation appears therefore to be towards flexible specialisation, the production of varied services and products by multi-skilled personnel (Schmitz 1990:263). The degree of specialisation is a relative constraint. To those socialised in the specialist patterns of larger states, the behaviour of the microstate citizen is similar to the belittled Jack, or Jill, of all trades:

"You have to be a lot more flexible in a small institution. My field was the Teaching of English and English Language. But I couldn't do just that. I had to take up Principles of Teaching with the whole student body at the Faculty, teaching Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology...you have to make sure that individuals in a post can bring to bear more than just their specialism". (educationist)

The crucial difference lies in the latter portion of the proverb. Rather than being masters of none, microstate citizens can and do, become relative masters of most. To be successful (which is not automatically guaranteed), they deploy core skills in diverse scenarios, in sequence or together, this diversity being a function of totality:

"For my own salvation, I have tied everything down to the Development Issue. I am not tied down to a narrow specialism, while still bringing to bear solid theoretical equipment. It's a kind of branching out while remaining a specialist". (economist)
And, succinctly:

"Multi-functionality and specialisation are not irreconcilable. They are tensions". (educationist)

There are, after all, few status and career rewards at hand by succumbing to being a generalist:

"You may be a surgeon, but not an orthopaedic surgeon. But you're still a specialist. I am an economist, which does not mean I'm a generalist. But I specialise in different interests as I go along. I still have one core and this core infuses and generates an understanding in other areas. Otherwise, you can become mediocre". (economist)

One's professional career could depend on the ability to keep temptations to diversify at bay; yet, at arm's length: Not spreading oneself too thinly, but having back up options:

"You may put your eggs in different baskets, but each of these baskets is even smaller". (educationist)

- Economies of Scope

There seems to be a basic contradiction in terms here: I am suggesting that the small jurisdiction makes more likely the development of an expertise and at the same time the broadening of one's skill portfolio. Is not one the antithesis of the other? Does not a proper expertise and its cultivation generate a kind
of trained incapacity, an automatic lack of expert competence in other areas? Apparently not in the small developing state.

First because one can get away with it. There is hardly anyone around to call one's bluff, if that is what it really is. In the land of the blind, the one-eyed is king is an apt proverb. Expertise could be simply a localised relative effect.

A foreign consultancy report identifies, in the UM context:

"The recruitment of some staff who ought not to have been recruited to university level posts because better qualified staff were not available" (Shatlock 1990:20).

And a recent, uncontested, press statement argues that:

"People who are just out of university - presumably with first degrees - have returned as part-time lecturers". 21

Monopoly is not simply a function of totality:

"If talent is randomly distributed, the quality of leaders in all fields will be lower in a small country than in a large one, since it can draw only on a smaller pool". (Streeten 1993:197)

And all the more so when the pool of expertise consists literally in one, or part of one, person. Yet, in any case, local individuals who might be in a position to challenge such mediocrity would think twice before doing so, to say the least. The management of intimacy comes into play here. Better to appease than to antagonise.
Secondly, because specialisms, where they exist, may not be enough to warrant a full person on a full-time basis. The demand for such skills tends towards the sporadic and short-term. In a number of cases, preference is granted to foreigners because they are allegedly better qualified and experienced, likely to be more aloof from local, petty, political manoeuvring which may promote hidden agendas as well as possibly allowing the tapping of foreign funding and organisational capacity.

Thirdly, as a celebration of the viability of breadth rather than depth, and of the 'easy come, easy go' cycle of expertise niches, it makes sense to go for a flexible and substitutable specialist orientation: This means cultivating a number of disparate interests, keeping track somewhat of developments in these different fields, ensuring that a wide spectrum of people who matter get to know what your research\knowledge and competence realms are. Every now and then, a customer will turn up asking you to put on a particular hat from the shop window you have been displaying - or even a new hat altogether, somehow related to one's existing range. The 'once in a blue moon' opportunity is usually grasped and fully exploited: The expertise is deployed, for as long as it lasts.

I prefer to term this behaviour 'flexible specialisation' rather than simply generalism because there is a resort to a hard core of knowledge and competence which is generally used as a base to infuse other inherently disparate projects.
The switching is considerable and may partly explain why role conflict is probably an empty term in microstate practice. Not only does one confront in Lilliput people who meet each other over and over again, in different settings and times; but these reinforced encounters also occur with people indulging in different roles or specialisms, even with different roles combined in the same space-time encounter. Western sociologists have pointed accusing fingers at such encounters which harbour "role conflict" (e.g. Kester 1986); or have portrayed role multiplicity as crisis management verging on the comic (e.g. Weeks & Weeks 1989).

This is the bread and butter of microstate life. Non-role multiplicity may be proper to the legal-rational minded; but it could spell disastrous non-survivability, the non-cashing in of a fleeting opportunity; the take-over by a competitor, a self-styled expert; if embraced, it could enable monument-building. Multifunctionality transcends administrative capacity (Farrugia & Attard 1989), characterising even the area of expertise cultivation and maintenance.

Having more than one business card is symptomatic of the opportunities for carving out different market niches; a reaction to the absence or insecurity of economies of scale is to indulge in economies of scope:

"In our Faculty, we provide what you would expect from any Faculty of Education. But in other countries you would find many more people. So here we dabble in everything. I teach one area, mark in another, advise students in yet another..."
The alternative would be to have so many areas in which we would not go into. It's like combining different portfolios in one Minister". (educationist)

Versatility in skills is advisable in small states even for changing jobs when there is no possibility of rising higher in the same field. Flexibility may be the saving grace to a blocked career path (Jock Jim & Nuttman 1991:84; Peters & Sabaroche 1991:133; Pillay & Murugiah 1991:66). If expertise cultivation can be stymied easily and indefinitely, even by one discrete person, then that is yet another powerful reason to keep away from specialisation, especially if one's position is still relatively insecure.

The UWICH pattern is reflected in the lilliputian world outside:

"Many Barbadians will grow a little bit of food, particularly the sugar workers, and mainly the women. When the crop is out, they weed the sweet potato fields, bake cakes and bread; others have fishing boats which they operate or lease; some will run taxis or cars. Women will be looking for part-time maid jobs. Plus remittances and barrels of material sent by Barbadians living abroad... Another major force of survival is the drug trade". (educationist)

This 'polyvalent handyman/woman' orientation (Bennell & Oxenham 1983:24) is striking because it approximates the ideal, communist state where one purportedly breaks away from the routinisation and alienation of work:
"Nobody has one exclusive sphere of activity but each can become accomplished in any branch he [or she] wishes... (Society) makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticise after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, shepherd or critic". (Marx 1976:47)

I can here refer to a UM department as another example of how microstate individuals cultivate, even at times without wanting to, a range of expertise hats which build up personal rather than organisational stature. The choice is quite automatic because it is the department with whom I have been associated since its inception in 1988 and with whom I have an appointment, now in its fourth year, as a part-time visiting lecturer. The department, like all others at UM, is small. But it is even smaller than most, with only 4 full-time academic staff members at present (one of whom is on long study leave).

Observe the breadth of competencies these departmental full-timers are obliged to deploy in their institutional capacities. The head of department lectures in organisational sociology, sociology of work, industrial relations and worker participation. His interest in the latter was developed into a full-blown institute for the study and development of workplace democracy in Malta, set up at UM in 1981. He is the institute's executive director since inception. Through this institute, he has pursued educational, research and consultancy activities into different experiences of worker participation and worker cooperatives. He has also ventured into other, not so closely related, projects: women workers in industrial estates, the informal economy, the
work ethic, occupational health and safety, women and development...

A second full-time member in the department is a political scientist. He teaches political theory, political thought and public policy, government and administration; his teaching load is currently more onerous because the fourth full-time member is on full-time doctoral study leave. His expertise lies in the development of the Maltese public service. He has recently been appointed coordinator of a new departmental diploma in political studies which ought to provide him with much more latitude to manoeuvre and stamp his influence. He has also a standing interest in local government, trade unionism, international security and international relations - and he gets irregular opportunities to 'perform' in each of these areas, on a national platform.

The third full-time member is the national specialist on the sociology of the family and has recently been appointed to chair a study group on this issue under the auspices of the Ministry of the Interior and Social Development. His courses at UM include the sociology of the family, basic sociology and sociology of development. The UM Rector has also singled him out to promote worker cooperatives, when he has no academic or experiential capital to his credit in this area. The listing omits his other pressing duties by virtue of being a priest in the small Maltese Dominican province. With only some 80 members, critical mass
nevertheless applies: This province demands the same roles and division of labour of other, much larger ones.

The fourth full-timer has spent only one academic year as member of faculty. But he had then to divide his time with duties at a newly established Staff Development Organisation within the Office of the Prime Minister. He is currently researching administrative practices in small states.

These economies of scope are not specific to the members of this department. The resort to part-timers, (there are at least 9 other visiting part-time staff) is an indication of the necessity to resort to parts of individuals with reasons which go beyond the purely financial: The market does not warrant full-time, specialist posts, nor are these advisable given demand shifts and career path blockages; nor are the irregular opportunities for embarking on specialist practices to be summarily dismissed. In a sense, the full-timers have built up a full-time load only by combining their core duties and interests with wider, expertise-seeking projects, some of which they seem to have consolidated via an institutionalisation which remains however, person-dependent.

I would venture to suggest that even this, my doctoral thesis, is exemplary of similar strategic constraints and considerations. First of all, there is a slow but steady development at the UM’s Faculty of Management to go for an explicit Department of Human Resource Development, including Master’s Degree level programmes.
The territory is as yet still relatively uncharted and unoccupied at UM, although contenders are not absent; it would tap proven popular choice with both Maltese undergraduates and practitioners; and encounters with mature, postgraduate, research-oriented students would also be a welcome stimulus and one form of safeguard against mediocrity. I am already somewhat involved in teaching in this field because of courses in labour policy (sic human resource management). I am, after all, so far the only Maltese with an explicitly HRD focus in his doctoral research.

On the other hand, my interest and experience in adult\worker education, my research on transformative pedagogies, my own self-perception as, first and foremost, a committed educator - has enabled me to maintain a respectable presence within the UM's Faculty of Education. Even my Master's Degree research paper topic was judiciously culled with this need for a dual emphasis in mind; then, it was education and worker cooperation.

Given my choice not to close any potential opening but rather, to cultivate these and concurrently upgrade my academic qualifications in each if possible, I am organising my thesis such that it can be used as a certificate of achievement and competence in either of these two fields, and still including 'my territory' of labour studies and labour relations. The thesis is itself living proof of how what is 'best' to microstate citizens is more likely to signify strategic flexibility and breadth rather than depth; although, preferably, all these together...
Of course, it is necessary to sell this idea to foreign supervisors and examiners - this must not be mistaken as an easy excuse for condoning shoddiness.

The portfolio range is impressive, stress can be considerable, the devolutionary tendencies towards mediocrity very real; but, from my knowledge, most UM academics operate in a similar way. And this without mentioning the just as impressive extension to this range which describes non-campus activities: My own range has been savagely curtailed at the moment because of ongoing doctoral demands.

The circumstance of course warrants its own management skills: But, contrary to non-participant observers' remarks, the very multiplicity of tasks and techniques involved may help to reduce stress; the pressure towards opportunistic and strategic flexible specialisation and polyvalent handymen and women may make individuals more whole, complete and self-actualised than would otherwise obtain:

"The closely integrated roles have some positive advantages. The varying tasks handled by individuals are bound to broaden their experience and widen their insights". (Farrugia & Attard 1989:23)

At the same time, recourse is readily made to core academic training. In my case, resort was made to sociology (particularly of work within a developmental perspective) to colour my
disparate contributions in accordance with the nature of the demand.

What comes to mind here is a description of an imputed sub atomic force - a gluon, I have been told by a colleague from the UM Physics Department - whose job is to keep sub atomic particles from escaping from the atomic nucleus. In this analogy, the centrifugal tendencies represent the demands to keep track and abreast of a specialisation:

"It is extremely demanding to shift rapidly from one task to the next, or to change from one decision making process to another, or to deal with varying groups of people with arguments that are totally unrelated". (Farrugia & Attard 1989:23)

Excessive optimism must be tempered here because economies of scope do not translate automatically into job enrichment and job control (e.g. Hyman 1988:54-5). But, with structural and economic difficulties to the establishment of a viable classical division of labour, there is a proliferation of divisions of labour, a kind of job rotation and skill broadening scheme. This prevents one from becoming a "specialised and stupified one-track genius in a surrounding swamp of ignorance"(Kohr 1973:38):

"The ophthalmologist who only understands the retina; the foot specialist who can only deal with the big toe, they need to have their education completed". (educationist)

- Lurking Dangers
There are however some very real dangers in adopting, or in being obliged to adopt, this behaviour package. There is first the haunting, and already identified, spectre of mediocrity:

"I suffer from role multiplicity...I feel the moment coming when I become superficial. I was in the U.S.A. recently when I realised that the depth of my research was slipping". (Head of Department)

Next, there is a tendency to overload the talented, given the inability to escape from a range of low level, routine, administrative and consultative activities (Butter 1985:37; Commonwealth Secretariat 1989:5; May & Tupouniu 1980:106; Peters & Sabarache 1991:132; Pillay & Murugiah 1991:73; Waheed Hassan 1991:101). These add physical strain, psychological stress and extra responsibility:

"There is a very real need for flexibility. You have to perform a million and one things and you cannot concentrate on what is really your area. If you’re strong minded, you kill yourself and burn the midnight oil. It’s possible but not easy". (educationist)

Peculiar accommodations may therefore be postulated at the interface between individuals and organisations. Given the nature of human resource availability - the monopoly character of expertise; the erratic shifting of demands; the breadth and depth of specialisation - how do these impact collectively on formal institutional practices?
2.5 Organisational Accommodations

- Personal Imprints

The organisational fabric in Lilliput appears, even in principle, to be prone to extra strain and pliability because of absolute limitations in the human resource pool. But the response apparently is not restricted to quantitative matters: Some UWICH academics identify this peculiar predicament, at a theoretical, conceptual level:

"The linear responsibility chart warps and changes in line with environmental variables. The system bends to accommodate supporters, wellwishers, patrons: It is a donor community". (management lecturer)

Totality exacerbates personalisation:

"Almost inevitably in a small community, who you are and who you know will have a greater weight, even though in larger societies you will have the same happening in small regions and localities. But in larger societies you can move around localities; not so in a small country". (political scientist)

The personal imprint is acknowledged to consist in more than simply a maximum capacity utilisation of scarce (human) resources by the system. That is only the structural-functional, demand side of the equation. There is the parallel pursuit to exploit one’s skills, expertise and networks of power and influence on the supply side to achieve prized organisational positions, especially in situations of savage competition for locally available assets. In such a setting, having the good contacts which can deliver is felt to be a most important qualification:

"Students have told me, and I can vouch for this, that to get a good job in Barbados, irrespective of qualifications, you need to know someone...It’s not what you know but who you know and how well you know. Lip service is not enough. Only a few promises are delivered". (management lecturer)

And:

"Slotting people is common. You know so and so, I know somebody else...He’s O.K.; he’s not O.K. That’s how things get done here: Through such location. I’m sure transactional analysis will be useful". (sociologist)

How does the system react to these? Of course, these behaviour patterns are officially unpronounced and unacknowledged and the going public morality is to stamp these out where they occur, given that they are ripe for corrupt practices and other person-specific favours. Yet, the behaviour patterns recur (or are at least seen to recur) nevertheless: The syndrome is so culturally at home that even when it is not seen to happen, people could still diagnose the matter as being the outcome not of propriety but only of an effective disguise:
"I am an official of a credit union whose director is my best friend. When I got the post, people insinuated foul play". (management lecturer)

- An Interplay of Formality and Informality

It appears more realistic and profitable to go along with the Bajan mind-frame and appraise the interplay of formality and informality in allocating scarce resources. Take recruitment:

"Political affiliation could result in job losses or job recruitments in the wake of elections. If employees cannot be dismissed from jobs, it is not unlikely to find that new recruits are placed alongside them to do their job. The former employees are thus circumvented and made redundant in practice". (social scientist)

And:

"You write a job advertisement to suit the candidate you've already picked. It's worded in such a way that it satisfies just one candidate. It's a matter of identifying who you want and then tailoring things to suit. The whole process must appear legitimate. In small countries, decision makers are susceptible to constraints by blood and other ties (such as the old boys networks, club membership). The choice of candidate is practically a foregone conclusion. The process at times does not even appear to be legitimate. It could be so glaring that you see through the veneer of legitimacy. It breeds resentment. The system reads as corrupt; but if the individual could manipulate it, then it's all right". (educationist)

Institutions may take great pains to pursue universalistic procedures to suggest fair recruitment (Boyce 1991; Bray et al. 1991:152). But these could still mask and condone the selection of a favourite. The process could be none other than an *ex post* rationalisation, concocting an acceptable, legal procedure as a
cover up for a person-specific, policy decision. And if such tactics are part of the recruitment process in most universities, be they in small or large countries, the likelihood of 'outsiders' meeting the job description is (or can be designed to be) close to nil in Lilliput.

UWICH is not exempt from these 'infections':

"We use a lot of part-time staff, especially where you cannot fill a post. But there is a combination of the official and the personal. Very often within the university we find that the second operates. Sometimes there is recourse to a committee to fill in a post even without an advertisement". (educationist)

And:

"You get a bit of both the official and person-specific. One of the things about small size is that if one has a good individual and you want to hang on to him/her, then you create a niche". (Head of Department)

And again:

"There are subtle techniques, informal aspects of human resource development, which are not pronounced, but they are there. Even at the junior levels of appointment, there is room for playing around. I can see it at the clerical, messenger level, even junior/part-time lecturer level, invigilators". (management lecturer)

The interplay of formality and person-specificity colours other aspects of campus life. Take the determination of what courses to offer:
"It is the expertise you have available to work with which determines the courses on offer". (educationist)

Or:

"It can be so bad that if a certain person is not around to teach a course, then the course would get shelved; or else part-timers would have to be sought". (educationist)

Apparently, the operation of modular courses is not arranged simply according to market demand (Bray 1992a:31).

The manner in which intimacy, totality and monopoly impinge on organisational behaviour is a complex combination of 'by the look' and 'by the book' criteria, which it would be unfair and naive to describe categorically. If anything, it appears that the microstate citizen qua consumer or policy maker expects a synthesis of these, the balance dependent on the extent of leverage commanded by the self, would-be clients and competitors in the particular situation.

2.6 Synthesis

The construction of a world view significantly constrained and preset by imputed conditions of smallness breaks surface in a number of critical comments by UWICH staff. There seems to be present a film of critical sensibility, an understanding of the need to escape a given mould of thinking:

Insularity and statehood may be clouding perceptions:
"Nationalism in our case is a crude sense of pride based on ignorant parochialism - a false feeling of being at the centre of the world. The insular identity encourages parochialism". (political scientist)

Small size is an all too easy excuse for lack of effort and initiative:

"I have become frustrated by the concept of size. You have to break the mould of thinking, because it condemns you. It is intimidating. Foreigners would argue that small size imposes structural limitations. I don’t believe that. You have to live in a small country and feel this in your gut, not in your head. In the throes of a technological revolution, size becomes irrelevant". (economist)

Conventional developmental arguments may be land based and therefore land biased:

"The very smallest territories - Barbuda, Saba, Anguilla, Tortola - have the highest GNP per capita. Their economic activity is unregulated. They thrive on a modern form of piracy. And they get away with it because they are so small and because there is nothing else for them to do. The only thing to do is to plunge into the sea: Seacraft, cargo handling, tourism, fish. The sea is their land. The sea is life rather than leisure. It is definitely not simply a place to swim. The sea is a natural extension of the concept of space". (economist)

At the same time, one has to be doubly wary of what the world of Lilliput is attributed to be. Ex cathedra pronouncements on one hand, and the cultivation of some very basic interests by microstate citizens and policy makers on the other, have joined forces in predetermining the answer. This study is suggesting that the analysis can be taken further and deeper yet; and what
better place than a microstate university to identify such a project?

"Some of us have been converted by experience. Sometimes we are asked to give advice to a country where smallness exercises 'constraints'. Some of us here have concluded that we need to rationalise and come to terms with what we are and what we have". (educationist)

With these gut feelings, respondents at UWICH could question, and sympathise with, the epistemology of my hypothesis:

"I would accept your thesis. I think it's a given. The social relationships of a small society would be expected to reflect their setting. Why not the labour syndrome, however defined?" (sociologist)

And:

"I am at ease with your research proposal. I think there is evidence that smallness matters, and I think my living experience brings to bear on that, plus sociological wisdom. I would naturally expect smallness to make a difference". (sociologist)

And again:

"I think I am being forced to explore differences between our type of society and others without being asked the question. But I also feel defensive and sensitive about these questions. Still, I don't think there is any doubt that these differences will appear". (sociologist)

The outcome of the UWICH case study could not lend itself to neat comparisons and contrasts with those of its two hotel counterparts. The research setting does not allow for
conventional interview encounters with relatively structured agendas. And an academic population is not the best of choices when it comes to eliciting responses to a pre-set questionnaire.

This departure nevertheless contributed to the research project by opening up some precious space for a critical and intellectual encounter with my research problem. My academic database is, after all, that sub-sample of microstate citizenry most likely to have addressed the issue of smallness explicitly, apart from intuitively. Their 'definition of the situation' professes a unique opportunity for questioning the premises of the investigation and for servicing it with still more academic baggage. The UWICH case study was thus more than another exploration of the allegedly peculiar experience of labouring in Lilliput and of the relationship between work and education therein; it also generated a welcome boost of "sociological imagination" (Wright Mills 1959:5) to the project, which would probably not have been forthcoming from a non-microstate campus.

A similar "playfulness of mind" (ibid.:211) finds an outlet in the critical evaluation of and by the self at UM. This personal account echoes the UWICH case material in capturing the disproportionate power of individuals to carve out spaces over which they have discretion in the microstate setting. This is a discretion moulded by the opportunities of the moment; but also by the blessing and support of crucial power-figures, who judge the acceptability of personnel on the grounds of a broad definition of merit. The singer matters; the song follows.
Occasional opportunities for peer review and feedback - such as, in refereeing articles - are not powerful tools of appraisal. The procedure is never anonymous; criticism is guarded because of possible future reprisal; and any comments levelled can be downgraded and blunted on the basis of incompetence or sympathy/antipathy with the referee.

The power and privilege conferred by monopoly positions are tempting propositions and embody a certain inertia. As long as opposition, usually by a younger person, is either blunted, redirected or coopted - a complex process within which networking is also brought to bear, typically by both parties - a position may remain secure and unchallenged. A wide specialist portfolio is possible, advisable and safe. Polyvalency is the microeconomic manifestation of uncertain macroeconomic realities (Brookfield 1975:54-6).

Guarding oneself from (potentially embarrassing) external peer assessment is not difficult. Opportunities to measure oneself against quality expertise and standards need to be desperately pursued.

This may throw some light on the reasons behind a dearth of research initiatives at UM:

"Research occurs only spasmodically around the university and depends entirely on the commitment of a few particularly determined individuals rather than being recognised as a necessary part of every academic’s programme. Performance
monitoring is undertaken neither in teaching nor research, neither centrally nor at faculty level". (Shattock 1990:16)

And the concern with allegedly inferior teaching standards:

"We see little prospect in the short term of avoiding greater reliance on staff recruited from outside Malta as a means of generating research or bringing teaching in some subjects up to acceptable standards". (ibid.:17)

But there is no inbuilt urgency to usurp "irretrievable parochialism" (ibid.:22). One becomes easily a towering figure in Lilliput:

"We have a situation where there are too many Chiefs and too few Indians". (Shattock 1990:18)

Although the corollary is that one may almost as easily lose one's small empire. The arrival of a more powerful and resourceful rival, or a downturn in demand, or the replacement of a sympathiser in a powerful position (as with a change in Government), would all too easily dry up one outlet of stature. But rather than spelling disaster, the 'environmentally-wise' microstate citizen would fall back unperturbed on other options, other realms of competence, other survival strategies, in many ways even expecting the worst. There is a feast and famine, vulnerability culture in place. In spite of the lurking dangers - stretching oneself too thinly, role conflict, system overload - these are not exactly grounded criticisms but pre-determined, axiomatic conceptualisations. The latter purport a caricature of
microstate life more at home in the lilliputian stereotype than in the real world.

3. MICROSTATE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT?

At UWICH and UM, the investigation had a population of respondents and a focus orientation different from TDR and SBH. Rather than going for the specific manner in which power relationships are influenced and therefore informed by a pertinent methodology, the spotlight has been on the academic, locked in his/her world of learning, research and publication. Relationships with others have been downplayed, not because they do not exist: Labour process considerations would come into play, say, in dealings between academic and secretarial, administrative and/or other, junior staff. The omission of a labour process perspective was not intended to fuel the myth that universities are spaces inhabited by isolated, self-sustaining individuals. Rather, the departure from the labour-management situation is intended to single out how it may prove just as valid to consider different consequences, but of similar workings, of Lilliput, focusing on the relatively more private and protected components of the life of an academic professional.

From hotel to university campus, the analysis of this and the previous chapter has sought to illustrate the tacit, and sometimes conscious, manoeuvres which may prove typical among workers in small developing states. In spite of the wide
contrast in employment relations, waiters and lecturers, cooks and professors, suggest a similar recognition of the interplay of monopoly, intimacy and totality on their work environment and on their relationship with fellow workers. In either case, one can sense a fairly widespread environmental wisdom, a corpus of that "mutual knowledge incorporated in encounters" (Giddens 1984:4) which assists citizens in trying to maximise the benefits and minimise the costs of their predicament; at the same time, it is a condition which is not readily admitted by the locals, and less likely to be so by foreigners, except in a confusing whirlwind of clichés which, strangely enough, microstate citizens appear just as keen and gullible to adopt.

The analysis beckons towards an inductively-informed pattern of implications: The educational system, tourist industry and other macro-institutional components of the small developing state lurch in the throes of revamped vulnerability as erraticity and combustibility, as well as of an often increasing dependency inclination. Meanwhile, individual actors operate as flexible specialists, extracting where possible positional advantages from such specialist stature but also from sensitive information and from the cultivation of contacts which deliver; often in the recognition that those with whom they will deal and negotiate are likely to resort to similar baggage. The smallness constraint acts as a vicious spiral towards personalisation and against institutionalisation. The setting appears ripe for a devolution towards a kind of 'self-employed society'22, characterised by expertise, discretion and strategic flexibility, where anarchist
tendencies are somewhat curbed by mutual obligations, friendships, blood relations and other, equally personalised ascriptive variables. It appears that labour generally retains far more of the entrepreneurial spirit and function than does the proletariat in large, more specialised societies; but, of course, becoming such well-rounded individuals constitutes a 'human resource development' not only necessitated but also substantially constrained by the socio-economic environment.

These are, at this point, rather bold and sweeping pronouncements which cry out loud for validation and empirical refinement. But the impression is that the mosaic of Lilliput in progress is rather different and suggestively much more complex that what comes across from the allegedly informed critique of small developing states as obtains in the currently prevailing literature.

Notes to Chapter 5


2. The quotations which follow in this chapter are, unless otherwise stated, all derived from scripts of interviews conducted with UWICH respondents.

3. Refer, for example, to the special issue of Sociology journal (Vol. 27, No. 1, February 1993) dedicated to Auto/Biography in Sociology.


7. There is only one other Maltese with a similar qualification to date, and he has emigrated to Italy.

8. There is only one person appointed in this area of instruction at UM: A good friend of mine, he has often suggested I ought to join his department on a full-time basis.

9. The Times (Malta), 12th November 1980, p. 6. Patrick Moore is an authority and prolific writer of astronomy books. Perhaps the contemporary equivalent of an Anthony Giddens in sociology?


12. I acknowledge the origin of these terms to Reverend Andrew Hatch, interviewed on 31st August 1992.

13. Credit for coining this term goes to A.O. Thompson, Lecturer in the History Department, UWICH.


15. Having pursued specialised postgraduate training abroad, my brother was disappointed at not being accorded enough discretion and recognition at home; and career prospects appeared blocked by one senior, but not as qualified, person. This situation made him switch his sights to a foreign land.


20. The Maltese translation is: F'pajjiz il-ghomja, min ghandu ghajn wahda hu sultan.


22. I acknowledge the origin of this concept to Geoff Bertram (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand), personal communication, dated 4th August 1991.
Chapter 6: CONCLUDING REMARKS

1. SUMMARY

It is important at this stage to take stock of the argument and evaluate its implications. This chapter will therefore synthesise the main outcomes and implications of the project. It will also suggest a number of potentially rewarding research pursuits which are seen to emerge from the current state of the research.

1.1 Objective

This thesis has tried to do justice to home-grown reflexivity. It has sought to discern the reality of the small developing state by critically reviewing and confronting the various interpretations, metaphors and slogans, constructing out of the rubble a conceptual framework, a typology and a methodological stance which are inspired by what is imputably going on in the small domain. The objective was to transcend the literature and its often dogmatically asserted characteristics and identify the, often backstage, behavioural dynamics which constitute the labour process and mould labour-management relations in these small jurisdictions. The focus has been more on process than on structure, more on practice than on policy pronouncement, more on good sense rather than on common sense; a distinction which may prove idiosyncratically so where developing micro-territories
are concerned. An attempt has also been made to propose a cross-
national comparative perspective to the issues being deliberated.

The underlying thesis has been that there are conditions which
accentuate, distort and somehow influence, in a culture-specific
but conceptually comparable manner, behavioural encounters
prevailing in developing microstates; these dynamics have now
been documented and analysed at the macro level of planning and
'development', and at the micro level of labour process
encounters in hotels and labour formation and professional
dynamics in universities. Conventional development theory was
deployed but, in the process, recast, to explain and generate an
understanding of microstate development behaviour. A pertinent
typology was set up to organise the orientation towards the
scrutiny of the behavioural encounters of producers as they
engage their lilliputian environment. It is likely that the
microstate syndrome also infects, to some and varying extent,
other constituent sites of production and indeed, other
behavioural settings in Lilliput.

1.2 Content Synopsis

The chapters as much as possible have faithfully reproduced the
unfolding process of emergent conceptualisation:

* The economic development framework of many small (mostly
island) developing states reveals a confounding poverty of
theories and principles. Unperturbed by such forgone conclusions, small states live the lie expected of them: Planning, pursuit of export oriented industrialisation, privatisation, liberalisation, developmental take-off towards viability and self-reliance. They do so ultimately because such attributes reap rewards in international relations (diplomacy and rent accrual) and domestic politics (an aura of government which governs, political credibility with the electorate, consolidation of political and bureaucratic power).

* Although not likely to be acknowledged, because of a colonial penetration orientation, what is disparagingly termed unproductive activity is very productive in small developing states: Services based on geographical positioning (including tourism), public administration and mercantilism stand out as vital economic activities topped up by transfers from abroad. Manufacturing industry tends to survive only if it is subsidised or guaranteed preferential markets.

* The contemporary development practices of Malta and Barbados stand out as comparative experiences of the above predicament with totally contrasting results, confirming that there is no predetermined outcome of such a strategy. Only that the risks and erraticity of the pattern involved are higher because of what are subsequently identified as the totality and monopoly inclinations of the small state. Such small states appear to be historically, economically and culturally pre-disposed towards a strategy of increasing dependency and linking which, for all its emotional
chagrin, vindicates the attraction of modernisation as a process of continued, metropolitan dependence (Boissevain 1977:524; Schneider et al. 1972:340).

* A departure from aggregate, national data introduces the behavioural universe of microstate producers who react to the predicament of the macro-economy while taking their own initiatives to manage their environment (including peers, subordinates and superordinates) to maximise their interests. There here appears a complex interplay of totality and monopoly at the level of the individual, along with the pervasiveness of a transparent society with a very low threshold of privacy. Role diffusion (pressure towards generalist activities) is juxtaposed by role multiplicity (the wearing of a variety of hats in simultaneity and/or succession) as well as by role specialisation (the achievement of expert status), traits associated with operating in a small yet near-total setting. These traits facilitate, and are in turn facilitated by, the criss-crossing of obligations and functional, person-specific contacts and dealings. The actual deployment and combination of these is not a foregone conclusion but is a function also of manoeuvres which seek out, identify and exploit shifting and different environmental possibilities.

* Conditions of work therefore appear to harbour a greater possibility and opportunity for job enlargement, for 'professional' discretion, for authoritarian stature, but all encapsulated within a generally boom and bust, exogenously-
oriented and dependent environment which makes diversification
and polyvalency a viable survival strategy at home, with
emigration being the exit option.

* Labour-management relations appear to be more prone to person
(rather than office) specific deals, and managers and managed,
men and women, bring to bear a repertoire of customised
accomodational strategies to lobby and influence the extant power
relationship and its typically faceless, à la carte orientation:
Lilliputian 'infections' of the labour process include: The
leverage afforded by having 'private' information; a high
threshold on conflict and the escalative potential of disputes
which emerge when such thresholds are overstepped; the resort to
personalised, non-institutionalised avenues for redress or
satisfaction; the active cultivation and preservation of a
monopoly, expert orientation; the erosion of organisational
ethos; the binding and disciplining effect of peer, quasi-clan
pressure; the options provided by occupational pluralism.

* Similarly hidden and unacknowledged agendas infiltrate the
realm of tertiary education. The antics of microstate hotel
managers and workers find an easy parallel in the guise of
microstate university professors and academics: Portfolio
widening, multiple specialisation, secrecy within intimacy and
personalisation are differently lucrative, being to some extent
unavoidable rules of the game. These processes are illustrated
within the context of human resource planning in development,
again identifying the discrepancy between doctrinaire advice and
ongoing practice: As obtains in the case of generalist occupational cadres, or of switching educational resources towards local relevance, or of the imputed ease of communication.

* The composite interplay of monopoly, intimacy and totality (at home and, emigration as escape) has been presented as a useful conceptual typology and methodological framework, a guide towards a better understanding and analytic insight into the microstate behavioural syndrome. The insights it brings up also throw light on idiosyncrasies within the research process in such settings. As a mnemonic device and, in emulation of another "inelegant neologism" (Watters 1987:34), the first letters of the four terms in the order presented above provide us with mite, a noun already associated with smallness and parasitism. The relationship between smallness and labour dynamics suggests itself as a syndrome, neither strictly causal nor phenomenological but a condition which is likely to exercise a particular influence, without however determining outcomes.

* Managerial incumbents react differently to the deployment of the microstate labour syndrome, a practice generally unacknowledged in formal textbook material and training. Some appear to stick stubbornly to officialdom, not recognising the exceptional powers of these practices; others, while admitting their occurrence, feel that they are deviations and therefore need to be weeded out resolutely; while a third acknowledge their existence as a contextual normality and opt rather to weather and
live with them, seeking to play and administer the game to their own net advantage.

2. LABOUR PROCESS INSIGHTS

The main research foci and key concerns of this exercise have been microstate human resource management and labour policy considerations in the context of development, building the argument from the general to the specific. Apart from suggesting a new typology for organising the practices which obtain between manager and managed in the small state setting, one of this project's main contributions has been to promote an acknowledgement of a distinct cluster of 'dark' practices as normal and natural in the lilliputian universe; how real-life scenarios, through pertinent methodologies and research strategies, enable one to illustrate the different operationalisation of these behavioural traits.

- Tensions

The thesis has been struggling with a series of contradictory tensions: Development and modernity; nationalism and cosmopolitanism; cooperation and conflict; openness and closure; familiarity and secrecy; specialism and generalism; legal-rationality and person-specificity; individualism and collectivism. Reference has also been made to important, and arguably globally relevant, categories of social cleavage,
particularly social class, gender, ethnicity and political partisanship. The argument has attempted to both conceptualise and document how a microstate syndrome can be profitably applied to the better understanding of such dynamics.

Yet, the central dialectic remains that of labour control and resistance. In a sense, as this project has been laid out, all the above tensions form part of the strategic baggage of Lilliput which may be brought to bear in the management of circumstance, in one's dealings with superiors, peers, subordinates or other, environmental variables. Microstate producers are suggestively adept at brokerage not only in the strict sense of the term (that is, with respect to goods and services) but also in working out the tensions above in their day to day routines. Microstate history becomes a specific and continuous unfolding of tension management; while microstate labour relations become the deployment of such tensions within the social and technical configuration of production. This is why an appraisal of the personnel management function, the recruitment process and even the trade union stands to gain from a behavioural model which, apart from the abstract-general and the culturally-specific, is also alert to the intermediary implications of the smallness effect on the negotiation of order.

- Creatures ...

Such a human geography of the labour process remains also conscious of another dialectic. The reconciliation of
deterministic constraints and human purposefulness is problematic; this thesis may have risked coming across as two distinct projects because of this difficulty. The constraints and opportunities faced by developing micro-territories generally have a bearing on the quality and quantity of employment, investment and economic growth. Such will tend to filter down into the habitus of microstate producers. Development planning, tourism, education, human resourcing and other policy (as well as non-policy) outcomes may be seen as environmental contours to the microstate worker; and therefore the repertoire of choice and action is bound to be constrained and informed by their implications.

- ... and Creators

Still, my resort to a grounded ethnography, including the autobiographical, of the behavioural universe remains faithful to my conceptualisation of people as makers of history. As would be expected from an overtly deterministic bent of focus, there exists a flagrant omission of microstate characters in the general literature dealing with small islands and small states'; my approach may have provided a better glimpse into the colour of the workings of human actors in Lilliput. Apart from this, purposeful action can generate a reformulation of environmental 'facts', apart from environmental escape.

Perhaps one of my research contributions to labour process research is precisely to offer an extra sensibility to the
research design. On the basis of a sustained concern for over 3 years, 4 case studies and an analysis of the broader literature, the Lilliput lens appears both plausible and heuristically useful. Taking aboard the *leitmotifs* of totality, monopoly and intimacy, informed by the structural and transformational agendas operated on and by workers, promises to add explanatory power to one's methodology; and, subsequently, insightful outcomes from one's research process. That these implications may be taken beyond the strict realm of the small developing state increases the domain of potential applicability of the technique.

3. SMALLNESS IS

3.1 A Rare Popularity

Smallness in the development literature has now been connected to beauty (Schumacher 1973), possibilities (McRobie 1981), practicality (Bray et.al. 1991), sensitivity (Parker 1985), vulnerability (Commonwealth Consultative Group 1985) and danger (Harden 1985). The most common association is of course that smallness means problems. Others have opted for a more prudent, factual observation, noting that smallness is bountiful (Granovetter 1983). Others still have proclaimed distinctiveness, proclaiming that smallness is different (Farrugia 1991).

Smallness is riding the crest of a rare popularity. Ethnic identity and nationalism continue what decolonisation heralded
half a century ago, a fission of independent, relatively small, sovereign states. The Weberian legacy becomes increasingly suspect as ponderous administrations deregulate and decentralise. The small, artisanal, flexible firm is ascribed with the highest likelihood of economic success in situations of rapid technological change and of fleeting yet exigent market demands.

Do small states have anything to teach us? For so long, small states have continued to rely heavily on metropolitan imports as imputs to their various needs; as far as they were concerned, the traffic of construction was one-way, from the core to the periphery.

Gullivers have presented themselves as knowlegeable advisors and experts, equipped with the authoritarianism of colonial power, esoteric knowledge or simply, metropolitan status. They have often rushed through these insignificant territories with their standard recipes at breakneck speed, fitting in such visits between more pressing, and more prestigious assignments. Now, with the discovery of the benefits of smallness, they have returned with a new vocabulary: Problems, deficiencies, scarcity and poverty are proverbially shelved and replaced with team spirit, consensus, participative decision making, social cohesion, consultative management, and most recently, sustainable development. With this new found wisdom, they now claim that those who live in large states could probably learn something from small jurisdictions as well:
"The search for viable... activities in resource poor and remote sites involving local adaptations may have important lessons for future civilisation. [The study of] small ... communities ... is valuable in modelling our likely future options on the planet as a whole." (Wace 1980:116)

The tables may have been turned but the fallacies invariably remain. Small states are generally grateful for any degree of trans-territorial ventilation they may receive; that they are now hailed as models of success rather than (or even alongside) expressions of non-viability does not perturb them so much. This has actually become common fare in the various conferences and seminars gravitating around issues pertaining to islands and small states. Indeed, even the micro-territories' own academics and policy makers are likely to indulge in a similar discourse, playing gullible to the conceptual frameworks. As long as smallness is recognised, that seems a sufficient reason for the small territory to congratulate itself; its survival may depend on sustaining this concern. For all its assumptions, totally irrelevant to local conditions, the conceptualisation of Lilliput as such is an achievement and constitutes its own brand of 'sustainable development' (Ogden 1989:370-1).

3.2 Application of the Microstate Syndrome

"In the Voyage to Lilliput ... the reader is betrayed into joining with Swift in laughing at one's own 'Tiny race, and nation void of brain'." (Eddy 1963:114)

The tables may have been turned in a different way however: This research suggests that it may prove instructive to consider
whether Lilliput may, at least theoretically, reverse its manifold, cloning disposition with a vengeance.

- The Notion of Small Scale

Analysts of microstate affairs seem to have agreed that the definition of smallness is arbitrary and relativistic. Yet it is important to discriminate between two distinct variables often uncritically lumped together or even used interchangeably in such considerations. I am here referring to the concepts of small size and small scale. The former carries a more physical and spatial bearing, referring to smallness of land, output and/or population; the latter carries a more sociological meaning, referring typically to "the number and quality of role relationships" (Benedict 1967b:45).

Such dual components may suggest a 2 x 2 configuration (Schahczenski 1992:38-9); but this is treating the variables of size and scale as relatively independent and ideal-type constructs. The implications drawn from this research endeavour are that the investigation has gravitated more around small-scale than small-size considerations: Generous stretches of role diffusion, role multiplicity and flexible role specialisation, which result from and beget intimacy, monopoly and totality, are easily subsumed within the notion of the number and quality of role relationships. From my sociological perspective, the geographical physical parameters of small size appear to be important only in so far as they foster the environmental
contours which facilitate small-scale dynamics. All other things being equal, small size appears to have a bearing on small scale because it imposes a closer, denser interaction of individuals; isolation and insularity perform likewise because of the heightened difficulties of exit options and restrictive movement (Shaw 1982: 97); while smallness, isolation and insularity together have increased the readiness towards self-identity and autonomous administrative capacity which pave the way towards independent sovereignty and the making of a state apparatus: An "insular separatism" (De Smith 1970: 63-72) which builds up still further the repertoire of critical mass roles.

It is therefore not small size per se which begets the microstate syndrome, although small sized developing states, especially remote and compact, non-archipelagic ones, appear to be the prime candidates in which to witness such a phenomenon at work.

- Implications beyond the Microstate

This observation has interesting implications which go far beyond the flotsam and jetsam of empire. The research project set off to reformulate the behavioural patterns of the small developing state, aware of how these are concealed by attributes and myths generously heaped onto the condescending small territory from outside. It may have been necessary to isolate the small developing state as the unit of analysis in order to identify and conceptualise a pertinent typology; but this does not exclude the application of such a typology beyond.
Indeed, such a venturing beyond our strict 36-country population has already been used to good effect in this thesis. I am referring to small, developing, non-politically sovereign territories, most of which are again islands and, if not, enclaves, whose examples and experiences suggested themselves as relevant to most of the arguments being developed. First of all, a cursory literature review confirms that various small territories (including France's départements d'outre-mer) while not recognised as states, are endowed with practically all the privileged implications of sovereign statehood (Baldacchino 1992b; Bray & Packer 1993:xx-xxiii). And the difference in juridical status must not be allowed to detract from what often amounts to a similar exposure to monopoly, totality and intimacy.

Another proposition would be to leave behind the physically bounded realms of small size (with or without politically sovereign status) and apply the conceptual tool-kit more extensively, including also concrete situations operant in small-scale but large-sized milieux. We are here rubbing shoulders with the concept of a "social island" (Hache 1992:8; Pitt 1980); but this does not seem to have been taken up. It may be traced back to Jean Brunhes and his invitation to "the comprehensive study of these little 'wholes' of humanity" (Brunhes 1920:513), whether they are islands of the desert, the high mountains, the sea, or, one may add, other enclave situations.
The social island concept rests on the understanding of insularity as a phenomenon of community isolation and as such may be useful both towards an understanding of relatively self-contained communities within both small territories (Marsascala? St. Philip, Barbados?) as well as within large ones. This, over and above the treatment of the small developing state as the unit of analysis.

All things being equal, therefore, being 'a world within a world' as the SBH, TDR, UWICH and UM case studies of this thesis seem to differently suggest, may prove a pertinent perspective to other behavioural settings. In spite of warnings of "illegitimate extensions" (Selwyn 1980:950), it seems a waste not to test the insights emergent from the lilliputian framework to considerations of social islands elsewhere, such as relatively isolated communities on larger and continental land masses4. The labour-management dynamics explored at SBH & TDR may find equivalents in, say, isolated communities with inelastic labour markets which depend for their livelihood on one main, relatively large, going concern5.

As with the contribution of the peripheral Galapagos Islands to Darwinian evolutionary theory, small developing state (often island) settings may provide illustrative heuristic material to the organisation and conceptualisation of fruitful research endeavours elsewhere.
A converse proviso appears to be as much in order here: That is, the physical constitution of a small developing state does not automatically imply the universal prevalence of small scale dynamics as described above. One must steer clear of such dangerous reductionism which falsely presumes small developing states as holistically distinct, sociological settings. There are bound to be situations where the legal-rational, impersonal and institutional are ascendant, perhaps even in the most extreme Lilliput. There is bound to be a tension between the microstate syndrome as described in this project and the more 'proper way' of doing things; and the balance achieved between these in human encounters is itself part of the management function.

3.3 A Galapagos Effect?

"Truth be told, the planet's most victorious organisms have always been microscopic. In all the encounters between Davids and Goliaths, was there ever a time when a Goliath won?" (Vonnegut 1985:184)

From the manner in which the thesis argument has been unfolded, one is readily forgiven for reflecting on how peculiar is the lilliputian syndrome to microstates and micro-territories. The concern is more than justifiable, when the research conclusions have suggested that the dynamics under investigation are in principle related to small scale surroundings. Small size, particularly of the state, may have helped to intensify certain dynamics but may have also, perhaps to a greater extent, simply made them more visible and demonstrable as well as more readily identifiable and admitted by system respondents. If this is the
tenet, however tentative, of the research outcome, then it would support the view that the quartet of leitmotifs impinging on work relations is only more obviously applicable in the selected researched settings. This reflects a basic assumption, perhaps a weakness, of the research as designed, this having failed to question the assumed, possibly stereotypical, norm of legal-rational, anonymous and competitive practices in societies beyond Lilliput. Are not the goings on at TDR and SBH manifest in a multitude of large, luxury hotels (or other workplaces, for that matter) established in similarly inelastic labour markers? Does not much of what has been described with respect to UWICH and UM sound remarkably similar to what other academics may know of their own tertiary education institution?

These interrogatives cannot be answered properly here; nor would a comprehensive answer be the most judicious one. Yet there are strong theoretical undercurrents, particularly drawn from the sociology of organisations, which seem to lend support to the extension of the implications of the small scale perspective and its methodology to larger sized contexts.

Dalton (1959: 224) criticises the stressing of formal organisation by students of bureaucracy. Indeed, serious difficulties arise in assuming a hard and fast, uncompromising administrative structure and logic which will then clash with inescapable social demands, brought to bear by the self, other organisational incumbents as well as by the imperative to get things done:
"The individual decision maker... who tries to match his [sic] official and unofficial moralities often finds himself without anchor or guiding precept. However, he bears the blame of compromised issues that are never settled to anyone's complete satisfaction and that reverberate endlessly." (ibid.:243)

The conflict between unswerving legal-rational loyalty and pragmatism is an echo of the documented reactions by TDR and SBH staff when confronted with the microstate labour syndrome:

"The individual manager is caught in a scheme of rational, emotional, social and ethical claims. Whatever his response, he cannot escape some measure of internal conflict. Initially seeking to reconcile what he does not know is irreconciliable, he moves, or is pushed, according to his resourcefulness, through various stages of grappling with elusive uncertainties." (ibid.:258)

Thus, within an organisation, there is always some degree of autonomy. It is when the organisation tries resolutely to replace discretion with certainty, that it then deserves the popular insult of bureaucracy; it is overconformity which breeds inefficiency (Bendix 1949:12; Dimock 1945:240; Katz 1973:191; Merton 1968:254; Whyte 1956:165). This is why pure administration, when conceived as an execution of completely rule-determined activity, cannot exist (Albrow 1973:405). Even Tönnies long ago implicitly denied the possibility of a purely official or planned organisational entity (Herberle 1948:234).

Selznick(1952) has also argued that organisations create an informal structure and that organisational goals are modified in a variety of ways by processes within them. Relationships between the official hierarchy and informal work groups are relationships of power, oriented towards attempts at control enhancement or
avoidance (Salaman 1979:164). Experienced managers know that things get done informally, and that the informal exists in management as its 'biggest intangible asset' and 'touchiest open secret' (Dalton 1959:224; Ginzberg 1955:112).

Within the organisation's contested terrain, manager and managed are obliged, choose or are encouraged to resort to a repertoire of tactics which nuance the legal-rational principles of administrative logic. Rules replaced by faces; the formal making room for the informal; monopoly replacing competition; the spoken superseding the written; networks, countertrade and brokerage displacing the organisation chart... such may obtain in specific interactions as individuals continually personalise and customise impersonal situations and seek to fashion new, and more agreeable, structures out of their reform. Totality, intimacy and monopoly constitute raw material in this historical exercise; and do not these, along with emigration/exit, apply to some extent in each and every social and work environment?

In arguing for the recognition of such behavioural transactions in lieu of negation or therapy, this thesis comes across as a dialogue with the ghost of Weber and with the tenets of a deterministically convergent theory of organisation.

Much sociological theory has been gripped by a standardising logic which ascribed to modernity an irreversible and evolutionary character. Western development discourse has been similarly targetted to non-first world scenarios seeking to
graduate to the dominant interpretation of progress. Yet, what appear to be paradoxes and 'unsustainable' deviations from the set norm carry an internal, functional logic, as the developing microstate predicament attests. In much the same manner, there are various behavioural departures from the hallowed gesellschaft organisational model which Weber regarded as symptomatic of modern society (Weber 1978: 956-963). The small state setting have helped to make such departures so much more readily demonstrable and, from there, more easily accommodated as sound reformulations of organisational goings on.

Venturing into Lilliput has in a sense been a necessary escape to the allegedly idiosyncratic, this serving as a springboard to return to the imputably 'normal', but accompanied by a pertinent methodology to delve into the "surprisingly present" (Salaman 1986:75); what is (perhaps widely?) operant but is either not recognised or dismissed. If a mixed metaphor can be condoned here, the foray to Lilliput is also a journey to Galapagos. Gulliver is also Darwin; scrutinising the marginally perplexing becomes the basis for a theory of much wider portent than the small rocky archipelago which triggered it off (Darwin 1972).

4. EPILOGUE

"Whatever the eventual answers..., they will more likely be found if there is more research both into particular and general issues in the field. This means more in depth case studies of individual systems as well as more comparative analysis across the numerous range of small states". (Brock 1988b:312).
Confronted by the vicious but thought-provoking "so what?" question, my answer is that this project does not fit within the category of studies inducing paradigmatic shifts, carving out new frontiers of knowledge. Nor am I after a systemic and functional evaluation of process, concerned ultimately with prescription and reform. Rather, I have tried to make 'the familiar strange', charting a journey of discovery into, not beyond, the ordinary and mundane stuff of which developing microstate living generally, and Maltese and Bajan living particularly, is made of. This has essentially been an exercise in making sense, coming to terms with my own reality, via a celebration of diversity and of diverse methodologies. The conceptual tool-kit - the lilliputian lens - fosters an elevation of this discovery beyond a simply, 'common sense', fragmentary and incoherent collection of ideas and opinions, a folk or kitsch sociology. At the same time, many of the themes raised in this work promise an import much wider than the small developing state.

Perhaps herein lies the thesis' main 'original contribution to knowledge'. Further, inductive research guided by similar interrogatives may help to confirm and sharpen the understanding of the management of, and by, human resources in Lilliput; the microstate syndrome at work.

Notes to Chapter 6

1. Throughout my reading, I have only come across two rounded microstate characters: Isaac Caines, from St. Kitts-Nevis (Richardson 1983:54-55) and Kawagl, from the South Pacific (Brookfield 1972:167-8). That both the Caribbean and Melanesian
come across as essentially flexible specialists and brokers is indicative.

2. Smaller territories have population densities significantly higher than large territories (Dommen 1980b:937-9).

3. These developing micro-territories include mostly British colonies (Anguilla, Ascension, Bermuda, Cayman, Diego Garcia, Falklands/Malvinas, Gibraltar, Montserrat, Pitcairn, St. Helena, Tristan da Cunha, Turks & Caicos), France’s territoires d’outre-mer (French Polynesia, Mayotte, New Caledonia/Kanaky, St. Pierre & Miquelon, Wallis & Futuna); the Dutch Antilles (Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St. Eustatius); islands with shared colonial control (St. Maarten, Virgin) and Pacific islands under U.S., Australian or New Zealand suzerainty (such as American Samoa, Norfolk and Cook respectively). One may wish to add territories which have no permanent population to this list. Colonisation in Hong-Kong and Macau should be replaced by integration in a few years’ time.

4. For example, Demos(1982: Chapter 9) describes the social construction of witchcraft in New England as a function of proximity within "little communities". Referred to also in Bray & Packer(1993:39).

5. I have discussed the possibility of carrying out comparative research in a hotel operating in a relatively small-scale setting in the U.K. with M.J. Boella (Brighton University). Another, though sketchy, attempt at applying the microstate perspective is by Smith (1990), with respect to the islands of Scotland.

6. A case in point is Dominica. Although a compact, Caribbean island developing microstate, its rugged terrain and interior have meant that a hinterland could exist in relation to colonial penetration. See Honychurch(1984).

7. My thanks to Robert G. Burgess and his classes on methodology and research design at the University of Warwick which sensitised me to this concept.
APPENDIX I:

MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE, SBH & TDR

* Introduce self, objective and confidentiality of exercise

* Elicit background information: name, age, place of residence, job classification, length of tenure at hotel.

Occupational History

Q1. What kind of work did you perform before, on both full-time and part-time basis? How and why did you switch from one job to another?

Q2. Why did you decide to come and work here? How did you actually secure this job?

Q3. If you had to leave this job, what job would you go for?

Q4. Have you ever considered seeking work overseas, if necessary?

Q5. Do you have any close relatives who are settled abroad? Do you have any close relatives working here?

About Employees

Q6. Do you find difficulties in finding the necessary human resources for this kind of work?

Q7. Is there such a phenomenon as multiple jobs at work and/or outside work among your staff? In what activities? Any patterns?

Q8. Is there significant labour turnover?

Q9. Are certain workers very difficult to replace? Is there a tendency for certain workers to become almost indispensable? or presumptuous?

Q9. How are workers recruited? Any poaching? Are workers related to each other? Does that cause problems?

Q10. What are the most common causes for disputes with workers? (Effects of race, gender, partisan politics, expatriates?) In the case of disputes, do the aggrieved workers go to whom they are supposed to or to a network contact?

Q11. Can you describe one particular dispute in detail?

Q12. What is the function of the trade union in this establishment? How many workers are unionised? (Who are the ring leaders?)

Q13. Has there been any industrial action? If yes, please elaborate.
About Economy

Q14. How stable is the Barbadian tourist industry? How is it influenced by international events? Any dependence on a particular market? or tour operator? How is it influenced by international events?

Q15. How has the hotel influenced this part of the country (positive and negative aspects)?

On Smallness

Q16. Do you feel that country smallness has any effect on people and worker behaviour? (Propose expressions of common wisdom, proverbs, etc. dealing with smallness and encourage comments. For the particular proverb set, see Chapter 1 above)

Is there anything you would like to add?

Thank You.
APPENDIX II:

EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE, SBH & TDR

* Introduce self, objectives and confidentiality of exercise.

* Elicit background information: name, age, place of residence, job classification, length of tenure at hotel.

Occupational History

Q1. What kind of work did you perform prior to joining this hotel, on both full-time and part-time basis? How and why did you switch from one job to another?

Q2. Why did you decide to come to work here? How did you actually get to know about this job?

Q3. Do you feel that you are a specialist in your work? In what sense?

Job Satisfaction

Q4. What do you like best in your work?

Q5. What do you like least in your work?

Q6. Do you feel that you have job security here?

Q7. Do you have any opportunity of earning extra, in cash or in kind, apart from your wages here - say via overtime, tips, allowances?

Alternative Survival Options

Q8. Do you have any opportunity of practising a part-time job of some kind, as an employee or as a self-employed person?

Q9. If you had to leave this job, how would you try and earn a living?

Q10. Have you ever considered seeking work overseas?

Network Mapping

Q11. Do you have any close relatives who are settled abroad?

Q12. Do you have any close relatives working here, in this hotel?

Imaginary Scenarios

Q13. Imagine that a promotion was advertised: You feel qualified and rightfully the person for the post, but someone else gets it instead.
What would you do? To whom would you go to discuss the case and see what can be done about it? Who would come to mind as persons who could help you seek redress?

Q14. Imagine that your Head of Department asks you to perform a task which you feel ought to be done by someone else. You refuse and a warning is issued.

What would you do? To whom would you go to discuss the case and see what can be done about it? Who would come to mind as persons who could help you seek redress?

Q15. Imagine that pressure of work increases suddenly for you and your section colleagues, to the extent that you cannot cope with the work.

What would you do? To whom would you go to discuss the case and see what can be done about it? Who would come to mind as persons who could help you seek redress?

Industrial Relations

Q16. Did you ever experience a dispute of a personal or collective nature, at your place of work? (For instance, a case of perceived discrimination in the granting of a promotion or in the allocation of overtime or leave; or a case of alleged insubordination...).

If yes, could you tell me about it? What happened? And what did you do? Whom did you talk to?

Q17. Do you feel that the role of a trade union is mainly to defend individual interests or collective interests?

Country Smallness

Q18. Do you feel that country smallness has any effect on people and worker behaviour? (Propose expressions of common wisdom, proverbs, etc. dealing with smallness and encourage comments...) For the particular proverb set, see Chapter 1 above.

Anything else you want to add?

Thank You
APPENDIX III:

QUESTIONNAIRE INTENDED FOR UWICH

Introduce self - status - research objectives

Q1. One of the major difficulties facing microstate policy makers is the extreme sensitivity of the economy even to relatively small developments. Starts and finishes of major projects could produce a shortage and a glut of labour respectively. The setting is one of boom and bust, hovering between prosperity and adversity, with little influence by the microstate on the outcome. What kind of manpower policy ought to exist in such a setting? Is flexibility an important component of survival? What is the function of UWI within this scenario?

Q2. How dependent is the economy on major investors, employers and tour operators?

Q3. What has been the experience of Barbadian development planning? Has it been in practice more of a case of "opportunist pragmatism"?

Q4. Is education and training the ticket to the international labour market? Is Emigration a blessing or a curse to the country? To its citizens?

Q5. Are organisation charts changed to accommodate new individuals and to fit changing patterns of human resource availability? Are recruitment and promotions assigned on the basis of particularistic criteria? By the Look as against the Book? And what looks matter?

Q6. Is there a relative ease in achieving a situation of "expertise"? Many plodders seem to make it to the top. Does this exist? What are its pros and cons? Does UWICH, as the only institution of tertiary education in Barbados, facilitate this?

Q7. Face-to-face intimate relationships in small territories may coexist with back-to-back relationships. The dense psycho-social atmosphere and the tactical power of extra knowledge leads to a condition of 'living apart together'. Would you agree?

Q8. Developing microstates approximate cosmopolitan, penetrated societies with western standards of education and idealised aspirations of what to become, what to have, what to consume. Does the educational system act to encourage such expatriate infections - curricula, exams, tutors, textbooks, examiners, consultants? Are local, home grown variations seen as of lower status?

Q9. The amount of time and energy devoted to implementing and administering foreign projects, as opposed to routine/locally funded activity, may not be commensurate to their importance. Does one accept aid because it is offered? What is your experience?
Q10. In the microstate setting there seems to exist greater pressure towards role multiplicity (wearing many hats) as well as role enlargement (a tendency towards generalist skills, overload, administrative tasks). What is your experience of these tensions?

Q11. What determines the choice of credit courses on offer at a particular time in your department?

Thank you


401


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