THE PROCESS OF WORKING CLASS FORMATION IN ALGERIA

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by

Layachi Anser M.A. (Leicester)
Department of Sociology
University of Leicester

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Abstract

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Layachi Anser

The main question raised in this study is that of whether under conditions of colonial domination, underdevelopment and integration into the world capitalist system there was a possibility for the emergence of a working class in Algeria.

This study has shown that the conditions for the emergence and development of a working class existed in Algeria since the colonial period. In this early period the processes of pauperization and proletarianization of large sections of the population through land expropriation and destruction of crafts and local communities have led to the formation of the first groups of wage labour on colonial farms and enterprises. However, the process of working class formation was hindered by the uneven development of colonial capitalism, political repression, racial discrimination as well as internal cleavages based on ethnicity and religion.

The post-independence period provided new possibilities for the process of working class formation yet it has, at the same time, revealed its limitations. These were related to the weakness of the working class and the hostile political and economic environment. The experience of Self-management and the struggles which developed around it highlighted the extent to which specific historical conditions have affected working class formation. However, a new impetus to this process was provided by the rapid and intensive process of industrialization. The working class-in-formation not only saw its size expanding may times over in a short period of time (1966-82), becoming one of the main social groupings in the Algerian social structure, but has also acquired a rich and varied experience through its struggles.

Despite many unfavourable conditions such as, recency of industrialization, disorganization, subordination of unions, and continued influence of traditional structures the Algerian industrial workers have developed embryonic forms of class consciousness expressing their common identity and shared interests. They have also shown an awareness of societal division and cleavages based on an unequal access to resources, generating antagonisms and conflicts. Most importantly, a majority among workers developed positive orientations toward collective forms of resistance and were prepared given the "right" conditions to engage in forms of collective action.

Although expressed views on radical forms of resistance such as strikes, were not too favourable, these must be understood in the historical and situational context of the time. Overall, Algerian workers despite differences relating to the environment, working conditions and management policies, have shown a great deal of cohesion and homogeneity.

New conditions have emerged recently following the collapse of the one-party state, an achievement for which part of the credit, at least, must go to the Algerian workers. These emergent conditions offer the working class new possibilities for an autonomous development leading to the realization of its potentialities as a major force in the Algerian social structure.

To the memory of my father

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I should like also to extend my thanks to all those who helped in carrying out field work in Algeria. Most particularly, the workers in the four plants surveyed who accepted to be interviewed, and management for practical help. My students of the third and fourth years of B.A. Sociology (1985), who, as interviewers, helped in carrying out the survey.

Finally, I am grateful to my family; Louisa, Yasmine and Youghortha who endured the pressure for many years and generously supported me throughout this period.

This work presents a modest but new contribution to the study of the working class in modern Algeria. It goes without saying that any error of fact or interpretation is entirely my own.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used for convenience throughout the thesis.

AARDES: Association Algeienne de recherche Demographique, Economique et Sociale.
AGTA : Amicle Generale des Travailleurs Algeriens.
ALN : Armee de Liberation Nationale.
BCA : Banque Centrale d'Algerie.
CAD : Caisse Algerienne de Developpement.
CCAA : Conseil Communal d'Animation d'Autogestion.
CFTC : Confederation Francaise des Travailleurs Chretiens.
CGT : Confederation Generale du Travail.
CGTU : Confederation Generale du Travail Unifiee.
CNRA : Conseil National de la Revolution Algerienne.
DGS : Direction Generale des Statistiques.
DSF : Dependent Social Formations.
ENA : Etoile Nord Africaine.
FLN : Front National de Liberation.
FO : Force Ouvriere.
FMS : Federation Mondiale des Syndicats.
GDP : Gross Domestic Production.
GPRA : Gouvernment Provisoire de la Republique Algerienne.
ILO : International Labour Organization.
MNA : Mouvement National Algerien.
MPAT : Ministere de la Planification et de l'Amenagement du Territoire.
MTLD : Mouvement pour le Triomphe des libertes Democratiques.
OAS : Organisation de l'Armee Secrete.
ONS : Office National des Statistiques.
PCA : Parti Communiste Algerien.
PCF : Parti Communiste Francais.
PPA : Parti du Peuple Algerien.
RGPH : Recencement General de la Population et de l'Habitat.
SAP : Societe Agricole de Prevoyance.
SGT : Statut General du Travailleur.
SNS : Societe Nationale de Sederurgie.

UGSA : Union Generale des Syndicats Algeriens.

UGTA : Union Generale des Travailleurs Algeriens.

UGTT : Union Generale des Travailleurs Tunisiens.

UMT : Union Marocain du Travail.

UNFA : Union Nationale des Femmes Algeriennes.

UNJA : Union Nationale de la Jeunesse Algerienne.

UNPA : Union Nationale des Paysans Algeriens.

USTA : Union Syndicale des Travailleurs Algeriens.

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A note on the fieldwork

The fieldwork for this study was carried out in the autumn of 1985. It was based on a structured questionnaire prepared by me and administered to workers in the four plants surveyed entirely under my supervision.

The questionnaire was designed and tested by me during the summer of 1985. During this period I also negotiated access to the plants, submitted a copy of the questionnaire to management and discussed interview arrangements with them.

The survey covered four plants and needed a relatively large sample. Accordingly I recruited a group of students from the third and fourth years of a B.A. sociology degree at Annaba University to administer the questionnaire.

I arranged and supervised training sessions for the students in which the objectives of the survey were explained and the questionnaire discussed in detail. I also carried out close supervision of the students during the fieldwork; organizing briefing sessions before starting in each plant. My presence in the field was continuous and students were asked to report to me when faced with problems.

In addition, I organized at the end of each day a meeting to discuss any problems which might have arisen in terms of interpretation of particular questions, and in order to ensure that I was fully conversant with matters of detail necessary for me to interpret the data.

In addition to the questionnaire fieldwork also comprised informal group discussions with workers, meetings with union branch officials and with management representatives. These provided me with valuable background knowledge and helped in interpreting survey material.

INTRODUCTION

Interest in studying the Algerian working class has been very limited in the decades since independence. This neglect occurred even in the preceding period. Indeed, research on this subject constituted a negligible quantity of the huge sum of literature on Algeria. Much of it concentrated on nationalism, the liberation war, politics and economic development. This lack of interest, which was by no means innocent, constituted one of the main reasons behind my choice of the subject for research.

How is that lack of interest in the formation of an Algerian working class to be explained? Two explanations have been advanced. First, the limited degree of social and economic differentiation had been reflected in a low level of social class formation and, therefore, the negligible size of the working class. Second, the "settler" colonialism gave rise to major social cleavage separating two communities; Algerians and Europeans. This cleavage, it would be argued, muted other internal divisions and contradictions within each of these communities. However, there is the possibility that a third and no less important reason operated to reinforce such neglect that is, that the petite bourgeoisie, leading the nationalist movement, made a concerted effort to both contain and downgrade the relative weight and rôle of the emerging working class.

Nevertheless, such lack of interest continued to chracterize the bulk of research even when a number of these reasons were no longer valid. Indeed, since independence despite major development advances even fewer studies dealt with the subject of working class formation. Such neglect appears increasingly untenable, particularly in the light of the profound social and economic changes of the last two decades (1970s & 1980s) introducing quantitative and qualitative social and economic changes, including, I will argue, a process of working class formation.

In my view workers have constituted an increasingly important social group in Algeria following structural changes initiated by both

colonial and capitalist interventions. The importance of the working class both in size and function has gradually increased despite the many contengencies inhibiting and generally affecting the process. In the nineteen seventies and eighties the process of working class formation received great impetus for reasons that will be discussed and analysed in this work.

The thrust of the following argument will be to stress that the Algerian working class is rooted in the colonial period and that its post-colonial development has borne the imprint of that period. The process of its formation was accelerated by economic and social developments of the post-colonial period. including rapid industrialization, urbanization, an expasion of wage employment, as well as an expansion of education and training.

Other factors affecting its formation which will be considered include, the rôle of the state and those social forces contending for its control. This includes the delicate issue of the relationship between the working class and the unions as well as that between these tow and the various apparatuses of what was to become an hegemonic one-party state.

In this study a major problem focuses on the use of concepts and their adequacy. This includes central concepts such as "social class", "working class", "proletariat", "class consciousness" etc. In the thesis the concept "class" will be developed from an orthodox Marxian starting point. That is to say, class will initially be defined as both a social relation and an historical agency.[1] The first element of the usage expresses relation of domination and exploitation generating contradictions, conflicts and struggles. The second element points to both a collective capacity for organization as well as a potential for the generation of processes of social change. This inherent potential for active intervention may be associated with varying degrees of consciousness of class position and awareness of interest in specific historical situations.

Having briefly identified the broad concept of social class

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[1]Marx, K. "The Manifesto of the Communist Party." in Marx & Engels, Selected Work in One Volume. London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1968.

which will be developed in the thesis, it is also necessary to say something about such equally important concepts as "workers", "working class", and "proletariat". The immediate question that arises is do they refer to the same phenomenon or to different if associated social realities?

According to the Oxford Dictionary the term "worker" refers to "employees especially in manual and industrial work", while the term proletariat was used in ancient Rome to designate the urban poor; a propertyless mass whose only possessions were children.[2] Marx applied the latter term to workers in industry, who owning no property, in particular the means of production, were forced to sell their labour power to secure a livelihood. The proletariat as an historical agency emerged as a major class as a result of their exploited position in the relations of production in the context of the development of the capitalist system.[3]

The concepts, "proletariat" and "working class", do identify part of the social reality identified by the notion of "worker" (i.e. wage labour) but they encompass additional elements, such as: lack of ownership of the means of production, lack of control over the production process and the consequences of exploitation, alienation and the potentiality for emergent class consciousness and class action[4]. Nonetheless, the terms worker, working class and proletariat initially refer to those occupying a specific, identifiable position in a system of social production, itself generating a hierarchical structure of power and authority.[5]

A major problem for this thesis is that the adequacy of such concepts might be challenged on the grounds that while such terms have been useful in the analysis of developed capitalist formations they are not applicable to Algeria. Like so many other dependent social

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[2] The Concise Oxford Dictionary. edited by J.B. Sykes, London , Oxford University Press 1982.

[3] Marx, K . "The Manifesto of the Communist Party." in Marx & Engels. Selected Work in One Volume. London. Lawrence & Wishart, 1968.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Giddens, A. The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies. London. Hutchinson, 1973.

formations Algeria has lacked that high degree of social differentiation characteristic of the capitalist west. Cosequenty, it might be argued that the separation of producers from means of production is undeveloped or only partial, or that quite other modes of production have been emergent in Dependent Social Formations.

It will be argued however, that in Algeria the expropriation of direct producers has been a tangible and significant reality, even if this has not been on the same scale as that experienced in advanced capitalist formations. It is also argued that given the peculiar historical development of Algeria, class formation has assumed new and different forms. For example, bureaucratic state control of the means of production has been of great importance. However, this is not to accept the assertion that class formation in Algeria has been unique to the degree that the workers have participated formally in management. Rather, this has been overemphasized, operating as a political strategy of manipulation and control of the labour force in industry. Such policies were devised to cope with discontent and resistance and failed to seriously affect the dominant structure of power and authority.

Having said this, it must be stressed that the particular and complex historical development of Algeria has created a class structure radically different from that of Nineteenth Century Europe analysed by Marx. Its class structure, still in the process of formation, by no means fits the model of two principal, antagonistic classes. Volatile and ambiguous, the emergent class relations that reflect positions, interests, forms of organization and action, are largely in the making and as yet cannot be said to have crystallized.

This study of working class formation in Algeria has been organized along three fundamental dimesions. The first of these, the process of proletarianization, began during the colonial period and was consolidated in the post colonial period. The second dimension, the development of trade union and the labour movement, took place in the context of severe legal inhibitions, racial discrimination and, later, political manipulations and subordination. The third process is concerned with the gradual emergence of cohesive groups with collective identity. Class consciousness will be identified in the more recent period in its various forms of expression.

1- Process of proletarianization.

The first of the three core questions which constitute my problematic is: "What were the objective conditions associated with the historical emergence and subsequent development of the Algerian working class?" In order to answer this question it is necessary to go back to the colonial period. Colonialism represents the specific way in which Algeria was progressively integrated into an expanding capitalist system. More important, such integration contributed to the release of certain dynamic forces creating profound changes in the social, economic and political structures of the traditional society.

The emergence of the Algerian working class was historically rooted in the colonial process of expropriation and the transformation of labour power into a commodity. These elements introduced profound and dramatic changes in the structure of the feudal-like society.[6] Large populations were uprooted from rural areas where agriculture and domestic crafts were the principal activities, gradually becoming concentrated in and around newly emerging urban centres; near the mines, the estates, the workshops and manufactures. A large literature testifies to the inhumane conditions in which more and more men, women and children were forced to live and work. The expropriation of the peasantry and craftsmen represented the objective starting point for the emergence of a proletariat.[7]

While it is possible to identify, in the Algerian case, some of the general principles which have been associated with the emergence of the working class, it is also the case that such processes of change and social differentiation were the product of violent external forces. That is to say, the expropriation of peasants and craftsmen typically followed bloody confrontation between local communities and colonial forces. The processes of pauperization and proletarinization were then synonymous with widespread dislocation of traditional communities, forms of property and social organization.

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[6] See, for example, Gallissot, R. "Pre-Colonial Algeria." Economy & Society. Vol, 4. 1975. pp 418- 445

[7] See, Bennoune, M. "Origins of the Algerian Proletariat" Dialectical Anthropology. Vol 1, No 3, 1976. pp201-224.

The specific status of Algeria as a settler colony, its proximity to the metropolis (France) and its strategic position in economic and geopolitical terms led to its annexation. This was the source of a rather unique colonial relationship based on the negation of a whole people. The total subordination of Algeria and its people was the objective to be achieved, first through military force, then by a profound transformation of its social, economic and cultural structures and institutions.[8]

The process of colonization and capitalist penetration could not be realized without expropriating whole tribes and communities. Consequently, new groups representing a minority of the Algerian population became major representatives of the newly emerging social formation. Thousands of peasants, "freed" from previous ties including those to land, landlords and a quasi-religious aristocracy, as well as dispossessed craftsmen, constituted the potential for the later emergence of a proletariat.

The penetration of capital not only transformed traditional communities through the extension of monetary exchange and wage labour, the imposition of taxes and charges, etc. it also worked to preserve elements of the traditional order. This aim was achieved, for example, by legal arrangements such as the "Indigenous Code"[9] which contained specific laws applicable only to Algerians. Separate development was also encouraged by the use of economic measures, such as the creation of "indigenous associations for mutual aid" among the peasantry. Such policies also included the exclusion of Algerians from financial circuits including banking, credit and investment.

2- Unionization and the union movement.

The second important dimension of the study is the focus on the place and rôle of the trade union movement. The objective has been to answer the question: " How did an Algerian trade union movement

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[8] See, Ageron, charles-Robert: Histoire de L'Algerie Contemporaine. Vol.2, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1979.

[9] This was a sort of penal laws dealing with the Algerian population. It was applied between the years 1881 to 1896. See Ageron. op. cit.

emerge and what role did it play in the formation of the working class?"

We must note at the outset that the Algerian trade union movement, and through it the working class, was influenced by three important factors. First, there were close ties with associated metropolitan organizations. In most cases local unions were simply branches of major unions in France, their policies, orientations and activities being directly determined by their status as branches. Second, the strong anti-union bias of the settlers and the colonial regime was largely reflected in legal measures whose content was anti-unionist and racist. Such Euro-centrism under colonialism created severe problems of adaptation in the-post colonial situation. Third, the influence exercised by the nationalist political movement and the exigencies of a violent liberation war had important effects on union activity. For example, the political and ideological diversity of the nationalist movement (populist, liberal, Islamic and communist) was a source of ambiguity and confrontation. Consequently, the development of a strong unified, union movement was greatly inhibited.[10]

Conditions prevailing at the time of the liberation war led to the subordination of union organization to the political and military structures of the F.L.N; a situation which continued after independence. The political justification was that national development and reconstruction could not permit of divisions, cleavages and opposition between the Party-State and the unions.

Thus, the emergence and development of the union movement bore the imprints of both an authoritarian colonial system and a militant if fragmented nationalist movement. The emerging working class was, in the midst of all this, small, unorganized and divided across various lines. The lack of autonomy and of democracy, in the union movement itself operated to generate authoritarian structures and leadership. One direct outcome was the weak implantation of unions in the regions and their later abandonment. The question remains what did the unions contribute to the process of working class formation? Were they largely significant, securing working class acquiescence to state

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[10] See, for example, Weiss, F. Doctrine et Action Syndicale en Algérie. Paris, CUJAS, 1970. pp 17-20

control, in whatever form?

While it will be argued that the latter effect was observable to a degree it is also the case that these effects again should not be overemphasized, so leading to the total dismissal of the trade unions real contribution to the growth of collective identity. They organized and led workers through various and adverse conditions during both colonial and post colonial periods.

The undoubted relevance of trade unionism to the process of working class formation should not lead us to overlook the significance of the distinction between union organization as such and the wage labour which is necessary in explaining the conflict characterizing the relationship between them, including the phenomenon of the explosive wildcat strikes which affected many weakly unionized sectors in the nineteen seventies and early eighties.

The degree of subordination experienced by workers, particularly in manufacturing, led them to contest union power. It even encouraged the emergence, in the mid-seventies, of alternative structures such as workers' autonomous committees in certain sectors and plants.[11] Workers disaffection was also expressed by the assertion of the right to strike in the public sector. In broad terms, the union movement was characterized by a cleavage between the acquiescent and dissident groups. The former was generally situated in the central organs and among the national leadership. the latter was more characteristic of the regional and local branches and grass-roots officers. The bulk of members were indifferent but capable of being swept along by waves of dissidence at particular times.[12]

The diversity of relationships between unions and wage labour reflected the complex and contradictory condition of their development. However, the "official line" tended to suppress such diversity inside the movement. Relative supremacy was enjoyed by the

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[11] See, Corten, A. "La Formation de la Classe Ouvrière" in Université d'Oran: Acte du Séminaire sur les Méthodes et Outils d'Analyse du Fait Ouvrier en Algérie. Cahiers du CDSH, 1980.

[12] Ibid.

"reformist" and "conformist" tendencies. Such orientation, although advocated mainly by the central leadership, found significant echoes among important sections of the ordinary members except in periods of unrest. The rôle and significance of the union movement is explored and analysed in respect of a number of important moments in the process of working class formation.

3- Class Consciousness.

The third major question raised in the thesis is the issue of class consciousness. The question is: To what extent have Algerian workers developed forms of consciousness allowing them to perceive themselves as a class and act accordingly?

In the attempt to develop a framework within which such a question could be answered, we should again remain aware that the question of consciousness must be treated differently, that is to say, whether we are dealing with advanced or dependent social formations. While in the former, class consciousness was considered a complex product of working class formation, in the latter the process has been reversed, suggesting that it was "consciousness which creates social reality". To put it more clearly, consciousness has been considered a condition for the existence of working class rather than the culmination of its formation as an objective reality.[13]

In the case of Algeria we need to look at the extent to which workers were aware of their particular position and interests. What were the forms in which workers expressed such an awareness during The colonial period? To what extent were they able to organize themselves and what major forms of action did they engage in order to defend their interests? It is also important to consider in detail the changes which took place after independence and their effects on the issue of worker consciousness. Such changes included the process of building a modern nation-state, processes of social and economic transformation and cultural change. What kind of relationship did workers have with other major groups, especially those in power? How did they perceive their position in the new context? In what terms did they articulate their interests, particularly in the context of

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13 Ibid.

pressures associated with the emergence of a one-party state?

Some of these questions are to be answered through the analysis of the historical development of the working class, others will find their answer in the material provided by our survey. A good part of the latter data is used to answer questions such as: How do workers perceive themselves? On what basis do they identify their position and interests? How do they conceptualize social divisions and antagonisms in society? To what extent are they involved into various forms of resistance? What are their attitudes to strikes and how prepared they are to take such form of action despite its prohibition?

4- Structure of The Thesis.

In the attempt to answer such questions the thesis is divided into two parts; the first composed of five chapters dealing with the historical development of the Algerian working class since the colonial period. Chapter One, is a review of the literature on class analysis including an assessment of its adequacy when applied to Dependent Social Formations, and to the Algerian case in particular. Chapter Two considers the emergence of the working class during the colonial period; in particular, processes of expropriation and proletarianization of the peasantry, the development of the labour movement under colonial rule as well as the relationship between the nationalist movement and trade unionism. Chapter Three analyses the experience of self-management as a specific case in the process of working class formation in the early years of independence (1962-66). It presents a view of the emergent class structure and the position of the various social forces and institutions toward self-management (FLN, UGTA, the government). Chapter four deals with the relationship between the state, the unions and the stand they adopted toward workers and their struggle during the early years of independence. Chapter Five discusses the effects of industrialization on working class formation. It particularly deals with the rapid growth of wage labour in general and industrial workers in particular in the period 1966-1984.

The second part of the thesis analyses material provided by a survey carried in four industrial plants. Chapter Six considers the survey method, its limitations and the problems confronted in carrying

it out. It also provides an account of the plants surveyed and some characteristics of the sample arrived at. Chapter Seven analyses the survey data relating to perceptions of work, the effects of technology and the ways workers perceived authority relations in the workplace. Chapter Eight considers issues such as the response to wage conditions, career aspirations and mobility as experienced by workers, followed by a discussion of workers' attitudes to the education and future of their children. Chapter Nine focuses on reference groups, identities and forms of solidarity among workers; their attitudes to trade unions and participation in union activity. Chapter Ten concludes the discussion of the survey data through a consideration of the issue of class consciousness and action. It deals with forms of class identification, perceptions of societal division and antagonisms as well as forms of worker resistance, including strikes. Chapter Eleven attempts to draw together the various issues raised in the body of the thesis in order to arrive at a number of empirically grounded conclusions about the nature of the Algerian working class today as well as developing some speculative hypotheses about the potential direction of developments in class relations.

CHAPTER ONE

The Relevance of Class Analysis In Dependent Social Formations

Social scientists have maintained a major research interest in Dependent Social Formations (D.S.Fs)[1] since the Second World War, stimulated by the post-independence experience of social and economic change, political conflict and crises. A good deal of the accumulated literature on these societies has focused on issues relating to social differentiation. Much of this literature has been rooted in the classical sociological traditions of the analyses of the division of labour, social stratification and social class. Crudely, this field of interest has been dominated by two major perspectives which have competed for conceptual supremacy. The first of these is represented by a hybrid of Elite and Stratification theories, while the second, itself not entirely free from eclecticism, privileges the notion of class.

In general terms, the exponents of the elite/ stratification approach question the very relevance of the concept of social class and its adequacy for the analysis of the social structures of D.S.Fs. By contrast, those advocating a social class approach argue that such an analysis is not only relevant, but is necessary if the full meaning of events and processes in D.S.Fs. is to be grasped. However, it should be clear from the outset that any such

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[1] There is a wide range of terms in the literature to describe what has become known as "Third World Countries." Such terms include "Non-capitalist Social Formations," "Transitional Social Formations", "Peripheral Social Formations", etc. Each of these concepts has a specific theoretical frame of reference. In our case we choose to use the concept "Dependent Social Formations", as it points to one fundamental characteristic shared by the countries concerned, i.e, dependency. It is inspired by the Latin Amrican School of Depenency Theory in its more recent version. See, Petras, J. (ed), Critical Perspectives on Imperialism and Class in the Third World. London, Monthly Reviw Press, 1978.

schematic classification of the literature is not without its problems. For within each of these approaches there exist differences whose significance should not be neglected. Furthermore, on closer examination the general conclusions reached within both approaches reveal certain similarities, thereby rendering this distinction even more arbitrary. The most plausible justification that we can advance for utilizing the distinction here is that it serves as a useful analytical procedure in helping to identify the general limitations of the literature overall .

Our appraisal of the literature on the social structure of D.S.Fs. will focus on two major issues of particular importance to the present study. First, the relevance of the concept of social class and, therefore, class analysis. This issue will be considered by investigating the main arguments relating to the conditions under which class formation is either inhibited or accelerated. Secondly, the identification of the structural determinants of social classes and the factors affecting the process of class formation will be examined. The main objective behind this discussion is to suggest a more consistent and a rigorous definition of our conceptual apparatus. Consequently, we attempt to draw the lines of a general framework which might prove helpful in addressing the central problem of this thesis: is a working class in the process of formation in Algeria.

1.1 - The elite approach

While most of the literature on the social structures of D.S.Fs, involves a stratification model of some sort, the tendency, especially amongst students of Africa is to adopt a general elite-mass model. The basis on which such a formulation became possible has been to argue that various social strata existing in D.S.Fs, were internally differentiated into mass and elite with each elite combining with others to constitute a "ruling" bloc. Alternatively, the "ruling" elite has been conceived as a specific stratum owing its existence to its monopoly of existing resources. In either case we have a general model of elite-mass encompassing a more diffused stratification system.[2]

(Footnote continued)

There is a permanent source of tension in such formulations, however, stemming from the juxtaposition of two potentially contradictory conceptions. In the first example, the existence of the various social strata is explained by the diversity and heterogeneity of both social-economic structures, and cultural and political attributes and experiences.[3] In both examples, on the other hand, emphasis on elite-mass dimension relegates such diversity and heterogeneity to the background stressing, instead, the lack of differentiation amongst the majority which is thereby seen to constitute a mass. The concept of social class is rejected first, because the elite cannot be considered a class in the absence of other classes below it, secondly, that social strata are considered either small and heterogeneous in composition (example of a middle stratum composed of liberal professions, large and medium traders, middle level bureaucrats...), or they are based on non-economic "traditional" divisions such as ethnic and religious attributes.[4]

In his article on the literature of social structure in Africa, KITCHING[5] argues that the elite-mass model, as used by African students, has been distorted. Classical elite theorists conceived the relationship between elite and mass as one of domination and subordination implying conflict and struggle. In the African case, usage rarely depicts such relationships. Exploitation and suppression have not been considered at the core of the elite-mass relationships. Furthermore, he argues that classical elite theorists never denied the existence of classes, nor substituted elite for class. Many students of Africa did just that. The rejection of class analysis as inadequate for the study of the social structures of D.S.Fs, especially, in the

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[2](continued)
[2]See, Kitching, G.N. "The Concept of Class and the Study of Africa", The African Review: Journal of African Politics, Development and International Affairs, Vol., No.3, 1972, pp 330-334.

[3]Ibid. p. 332

[4]Balandier, G. "Problematique des Classes Sociales en Afrique Noire" in Cahiers internationaux de Sociologie, Vol.38, Jan.-June 1965; p.133.
[5]See, Kitching, op.cit p.333-334.

African case is justified in various ways by exponents of the elite-mass model. Neglecting for the moment, individual approaches we can identify some general propositions that capture the underlying consensus shared by most exponents of the perspective. In the following we attempt to outline these main arguments pointing to the general conditions inhibiting class formation and assess their validity, not only in general theoretical terms, but more importantly, in terms of their adequacy for the task we have set ourselves in this thesis.

1.1.1- Lack of economic development, absence of industrialisation and urbanisation

We have already mentioned that a variety of reasons have been put forward for rejecting class analysis, but in this discussion we shall only consider those on which there is a high degree of consensus amongst the exponents of the elite/stratification perspective. In general, the perspective claims that there are significant factors in D.S.Fs which constitute major inhibitions to the development of the specific social, economic and political structures necessary for the development of social class divisions. Balandier, studying Africa, has made this point quite clearly:

> "The nation, the state and modern economy are in the process of construction...In these conditions social differentiation expressing new relations of production have appeared only recently."[6]

The premises on which such an argument rely presuppose a direct link between a certain degree of the development of social and productive forces and the emergence of social classes. therefore it follows that social classes are seen as a specific property of advanced social formations. In the case of D.S.Fs, differentiation is either undeveloped or, where it exists, based on other factors such as ethnicity and religion thus generating traditional stratification systems.

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[6] Balandier, op. cit, p.133.

In purely theoretical terms this argument and the assumption on which it rests cannot be justified. Social classes are not specific properties of any particular social formation. As a general abstract category the concept of social class does not necessarily refer to a given degree in the development of productive forces. The crucial element for the existence of classes is not so much the degree of differentiation as expressed in the division of labour, for example, but the nature of the dominant relations of production.[7] Thus, while a low level of industrialisation, urbanisation, technology, etc. may generally inhibit the emergence of specific classes, it does not rule out the existence of class relations as such. Furthermore, this argument reveals another serious limitation from which the elite approach suffers. Namely the flight to generalization from dissimilar cases and limited observations. The societies characterized as D.S.Fs in fact represent a wide range of social types, historical experiences, as well as considerable variation in socio-economic development.[8]

In Algeria, the processes of industrialisation and urbanisation inaugurated under colonialism have been greatly accelerated during independence. In this section we will through examples, indicate the comparative level of transformation. A more detailed and documented discussion of some of the issues involved will be developed later in the thesis. If we consider urbanisation first, available data reveal a steady and rapid increase of urban population, especially since 1954. Compared to countries in a similar siuation the level of urbanization in Algeria is impressive (See Table 1.1).

The rapid process of Algerian urbanisation was largely unplanned leading to several serious social problems, Among such problems have been increased unemployment, and a decline in living conditions in the cities. It is worth noting that urbanisation "took off" initially as a result of the colonial policy of "regroupment" in

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[7] Marx, K. "The Manifesto of the Communist Party" in Marx & Engels: Selected Works. op. cit, pp. 35-46.

[8] Countries such as India, Brazil, Mexico, Egypt and Algeria cannot be compared in terms of their development, industrialisation and urbanisation with others such as Mali, Niger, Zambia, Yemen, Bangladesh, etc.

Table 1.1: Evolution of urban population (%)

Year	Algeria	Egypt	Morocco	Iran	Brazil
1954	25	-	-	-	-
1970	45.4	42.1	35.2	40.6	56.1
1974	52.0	43.2	38.2	45.1	58.2

SOURCE: United Nations, Demographic Year Book. 1979, pp. 184-191.

which some two million people from rural areas were displaced, particularly, during the war of liberation (1954-1962). The rate of urbanisation between 1954 and 1966 averaged 10%. Over the whole period of 1954-1977 the rate was 5%. This process was only halted in the early 1980's.

The industrialization process, though initiated in the colonial period, was very limited before independence. Since independence this process was accelerated through development planning heavily directed towards the establishment of an industrial base. The intensity and rapidity of this process can be surmised from the distribution of investments during the period 1967-1977; for the realisation of three development plans.

The effect of such investment can be measured by the contribution of industry to G.D.P, and the structure of the employed population.

The share of industry has grown steadily over the years expressing the priority given to this sector in the allocation of investments. The impact of industrialisation may be measured by the number of jobs created indicating movement of population from rural and agricultural localities to industrial and urban centres. Such movement also implies that a process of change and adaptation, however minimal, is taking place. Work in industry implies the emergence of new patterns of behaviour and conceptions of time and space.[9] It also

Table 1.2: Planned & actual investments 1967-1977 (in %)

Econ. sectors	1967-69 Plan.	1967-69 actual	1970-73 Plan.	1970-73 actual	1974-77 Plan.	1974-77 actual
Hydrocarbons	41.9	50.9	36.9	47.1	40.6	48.6
Capl&Interm Industries	47.0	40.6	48.9	46.2	47.6	44.5
Light Indust.	11.1	8.5	14.2	6.7	11.8	6.9
Tot.Indust.	48.7	55.3	44.7	57.0	43.6	62.0
Agriculture	16.9	16.4	14.9	13.0	13.2	4.7
Infrastruct.	34.4	28.3	40.4	30.0	43.2	33.3
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Benachenhou, A. Planification et de Developpement en Algérie, 1962-1980. SNED, Alger, 1980.p.49.

Table 1.3: Growth of G.D.P by sector (1967- 84) %

Sectors.	1967-73	1973-77	1977-78	1980-84
Hydrocarbons	6.9	1.5	9.3	4.6
Industry	9.7	7.5	20.8	13.5
Agriculture	1.2	2.3	9.8	4.0
Others	8.2	8.0	3.8	12.0
Total	7.5	6.6	8.2	8.2

Source: Benachenhou, op.cit, p. 266.

entails new forms of social relations which emerge and develop in the process of interaction with a new social environment. All such dimensions will be considered later when analysing the survey data (Chapters 7 to 10). For the moment we shall confine our attention to a few examples which indicate the general changes that took place in Algeria.

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9 See, Thompson, E.P. "Time, work and discipline, and industrial capitalism" Past and Present. No 38. 1967.

Table 1.4: Structure of male employment (%).

Sectors	1966	1977
Agriculture	58.23	31.12
Industry	8.24	17.16
Construction & public works	5.87	15.60
Services	23.85	32.60
Not declared	3.81	3.52
TOTAL	100.00	100.00

Source: M.P.A.T, O.N.S, Annuaire statistique de l'Algerie, 1982 edition, 1984; p. 65.

Agricultural employment not only fell by almost 50% during a period of 10 years from 1966 to 1977, but continued to fall in absolute as well as in relative terms.[10] Industrial employment both in the restrictive and in the wider sense (including construction and public works) has increased during the same period. This tendency has been consolidated in recent years as new industrial projects and enterprises have been launched and as previously established projects have realised their full potential output (Table 1.5).

Table 1.5: Non-agricultural employment 1980-82 (%)

Sectors	1980	1981	1982	% 1980-82
Industry	18.6	19.7	19.0	21.5
Construction & public works	20.7	21.8	22.4	29.3
Trade & Services	23.9	21.9	22.0	9.5
Transport	7.9	6.2	6.0	8.6
Administration & others	28.9	30.4	30.6	26.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: M.P.A.T, O.N.S, op.cit; p 73.

These examples clearly suggest that the simple dichotomy of elite-mass approach has questionable relevance for the analysis of the emergent Algerian social structure. Both urbanization and industrialization have occurred on a considerable scale and, we will

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[10] M.P.A.T, Projet de plan quinquenal 1980-84. Alger; 1980; p. 63.

argue, have affected the economic and social structure in fundamental ways. Rural dwellers no longer constitute the great majority of the Algerian population. Industry has emerged as a highly significant sector of activity whether in terms of employment, investment or contribution to the process of accumulation.

1.1.2- The persistence of traditional structures

Many elite-mass studies of D.S.Fs have stressed the continued importance of forms of social division based on ethnicity, religion, tribalism, etc. These, it has been argued,[11] were the dynamic factors structuring African societies and other dependent social formations. The persistence of such structures and their continuing influence, manifested through specific forms of solidarity and identification have, it is argued, left no possibility for the formation of social classes. This was made quite explicit by Balandier in the following statement:

> "Old social relationships still constitute the basis for solidarity whereby individual representatives of different classes are situated. Kinship, familial economies very often maintained ethnic association and urban community organisations which integrated in the same grouping individuals that unequal conditions should have opposed."[12]

Most significant, however, is not the persistence of those structures but their rôle and impact. Rather than necessarily inhibiting the emergence of classes, there is some evidence from different societies which suggests that such traditional forms might play the revers rôle. The example of the formation of the Algerian bourgeoisie through both family alliances and patron-client relationships was one that leads us to question this dominant conception.[13]

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[11] See for example; Lloyd, P.C. A Third World Proletariat? London George Allen & Unwin, 1982.

[12] Balandier, G. op. cit. p 137.

[13] See Liabes, D. Capital privé et patrons d'industrie en Algerie: 1962-1982. Propositions pour l'analyse de couches sociales en formation. C.R.E.A. Alger; 1984. pp. 247- 54.

The process of working class formation provides another significant example. Migrant workers have been known to form communities in slum areas around the industrial plants. Although such communities are based on kinship and regional affinities, they have not been entirely inhibitive of various forms of class action, such as strikes, or the workers' perceptions of their working class position (as our survey data will show, see chapter 10). On the basis of such partial evidence it is possible to argue that the rôle and function of such traditional structures, where they persist is not fixed for all time. On the contrary, they can be considered as adaptive structures in a transitional situation characterised by the lack or ineffectiveness of alternative structures. The latter might include trade unions and political parties which might have integrated and mobilized newly recruited workers whether of rural or urban origins.[14]

In Algeria, it will be argued, ethnic and religious factors have not been social stratifying elements. However, kinship and regional allegiances have played a rôle in creating networks of patron-client relationships in modern Algeria. Even here their influence was not widespread, nor experienced with the same intensity and regularity by members of various groups. Such assertions will be substantiated in the analysis of our survey data (Ch. 09 below). Other studies have already shown that traditional structures played an insignificant role among the dominant classes.[15]

A plausible hypothesis that may help to explain the persistent, yet changing rôle of traditional structures, are specific political conditions characterizing the process of class formation in D.S.Fs. It is clear that the dominant classes characteristically exerted their hegemony through the control of political parties and state apparatuses. Consequently, emergent working class organisations, whether professional or political, have either been absent or marginalised. These specific conditions may well privilege traditional structures as alternative means which can be mobilized to achieve

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[14]See A. Touraine. "Industrialisation et conscience ouvrière à Saô Paulo"; in Sociologie du Travail, vol.3, no.4, 1961; pp. 405-06.

[15]Gonzalez- Cazanova, P. " L'évolution du systeme des classes au Mexique" in Cahiers internationaux de sociologie, vol. 39, Jul.-Dec. 1965; p. 135.

various goals and purposes. In countries where such traditional structures have been identified as dominant, as in India, workers do succeed in organizing themselves across ethnic and religious lines of demarcation.[16]

Traditional structures can therefore co-exist with social class divisions; they may consolidate or blur such lines, depending on the specific historical conditions under which the process of class formation is taking place. But as a general trend their influence has been weakened through the concerted impact of a number of factors. These include industrialization, internal migration of the workforce, upward social mobility among new generations, the socialising effects of nationalist ideologies and above all by the daily experience of those involved in the industrial workplace or the urban environment.

1.1 3- Ambiguity of position and rôle.

Exponents of the elite-mass approach have also rejected the possility that class formation has taken place in D.S.Fs by pointing to what they called the ambiguous position and rôle of various groups. Such ambiguity arose from the lack of clear differentiation between traditional and modern relations, many groups being located in more than one position. Those who advance this argument usually refer to the examples of urban workers and the mass of under-employed and unemployed city-dwellers. Such ambiguity was considered characteristic of other groups as well, including those enjoying high revenues. With reference to Africa one of those adopting this line of argument stated:

> "...the ambiguity of situation and rôle would not permit to the African enjoying a high revenue- and who can be therefore perceived as a typical element of the new bourgeoisie- to behave effectively as a bourgeois could have done elsewhere and in different circumstances".[17]

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[16] Waterman, P. "Seeing the straws, riding the whirlwind: Reflections on unions and popular movements in India"; in Journal of Contemporary Asia, Vol.2, No.4, 1982; pp. 464-83.

[17] F.N. Agblemagnon, "Myth et realite de la classe sociale en Afrique noire: Le cas du Togo". in Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie, no.
(Footnote continued)

The reason for the existence of these ambiguities are not explicitly discussed, but implicitly assumed. It was the persistence of traditional ties, moral and material obligations which acted as redistributive mechanisms reducing disparities and delaying the development of new patterns of relationships and behaviour.[18] But, let us consider the case of the favored example of urban workers. The main idea rested on the assumption that, being uprooted from their traditional social and economic structures workers were not fully integrated in the new social environment; indeed they rejected such integration. This led some observers to introduce the notion of the ruralisation of the cities.[19]

Exponents of this approach argue that not only were many urban workers of recent rural origin, but that they continued to have strong links with the peasant economy. In many cases they were either owners or tenant farmers of small landholdings which they cultivated to boost their revenues. However, there have been major divisions of opinion about the nature and location of this group. Some have argued that urban workers, or at least a particular fraction, constituted a labour aristocracy closely related to the dominant elite.[20] Others, on the contrary, saw them as part of the impoverished mass hardly differentiated from groups such as small peasants, urban unemployed and under-employed .[21] In either case, the conclusion was the same; workers did not constitute a class. The reasons were: first, they were, numerically, only a small minority. Second, the persistence of

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[17] (continued)
38, Jan-Juin 1965, p. 168.

[18] See Pfefferman, G. Industrial labour in the republic of Senegal. New York, 1968; pp. 220-23.

[19] Many authors have made such reference. See for example, M.D. Guerid, "L'ouvrier majoritaire; elements d'approche de la nouvelle figure de l'ouvrier industriel Algerien". A seminar paper to the conference on "industrialisation et acculturation". Université d'Oran, 10-11 Dec. 1983, p. 6.

[20] Arrighi, G & Saul, J. " Nationalism and Revolution in Sub-Saharan Africa". in R. Miliband & J. Saville (eds.), The Socialist Register, 1969, p. 159.

[21] Worsley, P. The Third World, London, 1964, p. 150, and also P.C. Lloyd, Classes, Crises and Coups: Themes in the sociology of developing countries. London, Mac Gibbon & Kee. 1971.

traditional structures and values inhibited them from developing modern forms of class organisation and action. Third, wage employment was seen as leading to higher status by virtue of its association with urbanisation and regular income. For these reasons and depending on where the emphasis was laid, workers were either considered a privileged stratum, or part of the undifferentiated mass.[22]

The various arguments on this issue have limited significance in the Algerian case. This point has already been partially demonstrated. We shall, however, deal with these further objections to considering workers as a class, taking Algeria as our case study. The objection to workers constituting a class on the ground that they comprise only a small group in relation to the size of the population is unacceptable if only for the reason that such analyses usually took the size of various European working classes as their reference. The difference was obvious whether in terms of general socio-economic development or the extent of wage-labour employment. The size of the working class has to be considered within the dominant conditions in each country, given the degree of its social and economic development.

In Algeria the rate of wage employment was relatively high, considering both the rate of growth of the population and of the colonial heritage, which meant that the bulk of existing jobs had been created since independence, and notably in the 1970's. Table 1.6 compares the proportion of the employed with the effectively active population. In 1977 the urban employed equalled those employed in the rural areas. This testifies to the relative decline of agriculture since independence.

A consideration of the available data in detail reveals that wage employment constituted the dominant trend and that within this trend non-agricultural wage-labour was a prime feature. Industrial wage labour constituted approximately one-third of all non-agricultural wage labour. The industrial base was, therefore, relatively well developed as can be seen from the following data.

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[22]Kitching, G.N. op. cit. pp. 335-38, discusses in some detail these reasons and critically assessing their validity and value.

Table 1.6: Urban and rural employment (1977).

	Total	Urban	Rural
Active population	2,924,594	1,271,733	1,652,851
All employed	2,336,971	1,085,417	1,251,554
Unemployed	545,460	171,540	373,920

Source: R.G.P.H. cited by Benachenhou op. cit; p. 220.

Table 1.7: Wage labour (1977)

Categories	Size
Total wage labour	1,762,926
Workers & employees	1,533,949
Non-agricultural wage labour	1,311,347
" " Workers & employees	1,118,958
Industrial workers	364,800

Source: Computed from M.P.A.T.- O.N.S, Annuaire statistique de l'Algérie, 1982, Alger 1984; pp. 58-61.

However, the trend toward wage employment has been confirmed in the last decade. The size of the non-agricultural labour force increasing steadily over the years. Within this category, industrial wage employment had one of the highest rates of growth; third after construction and public works and administration. Employment in agriculture has stagnated at the level it achieved in the mid 1970's. From that period to 1982 the agricultural workforce did not exceed 960,000. (See table 1.8).

The second objection to the thesis of working class formation is much more important. This was based on the claim that workers remained tradition-oriented and have not freed themselves from the influence of traditional relationships and institutions. Algerian industrial workers, although influenced by traditional structures, appeared to deviate from that pattern of peasant-worker portrayed in

Table 1.8: Evolution of employment by sector (1980 - 82) (in thousands)

Sector	1980	1981	1982	Rate of growth 1980 - 82
Agriculture	960	963	960	-
Industry	385	457	468	21.5
Construction and Public Works	427	504	552	29.3
Commerce & Services	494	507	541	9.5
Transport	162	144	148	- 8.6
Administrative & Others	597	752	705	26.0

Source: Annuaire, op. cit., p.73.

the literature. Some of the objective characteristics of Algerian industrial workers underline this deviant tendency. First, land ownership among workers is low if not negligible. In a study in the region of Annaba, for example, only 7.6% in a sample of 2819 industrial workers still owned a plot of land.[23] A more limited study of industrial workers in a small town of the western region did find that 26.7% of a sample of 90 workers held landed property. However, more significantly only 4.4% of this group "occasionally" cultivated their inherited plots.[24] The possibility of a complete return to agriculture and the rural world for such people seemed very remote. Only 10.5% of a sample of 343 workers in our survey and 22.2% in the study of the western region showed such an interest even if conditions were conducive.

The relationship of workers and their attitudes to unions has been presented as another source of objection to the emergence of working class in D.S.Fs. This issues will be dealt with later in our study. But, we can point that our survey revealed that membership in local union branches of the four plants surveyed was relatively high at 48% (total 371). By contrast, interest and participation in union affairs was relatively low; only 34.4% attended union meetings more than twice in the previous year and only 8%

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[23] A.A.R.D.E.S., Pôle Industriel et Arrière Pays: le cas de Annaba. Alger, 1979.

[24] Moulay- Hadj, M. "Living in two cultures"; M. Phil. Dissertation, Sociology department, University of Leicester, 1988.

offered themselves as candidates for union office.

Reference group behaviour among Algerian workers was another important element casting doubt on the claims of the elite-mass approach. All workers when asked to state their reference group had chosen either occupation, 37%, or branch of industry, 29%, or both of these, 27.4%. The main reference group for these workers was workers in general, 38.4% (See Ch 09).

The third objection to working class formation is the view that suggests that workers are a privileged group in the midst of an impoverished mass. Evidence from Algeria indicates just the contrary. Workers are both objectively underprivileged and are subjectively aware of their underprivileged position. The evolution of wage-income and purchasing power are significant indicators of this position.

Table 1.9: Wage and purchasing power (1967- 77).

Sector	Wage index	purchase power
Agriculture	256	146
Non-agriculture	174	93.2
Administration	206	117.7

100 = 1967

Source: A. Benachenhou, op. cit. p. 226.

It is clear from these figures that non-agricultural wage labour experienced the lowest wage increase and its purchasing power had in 1977 dropped below that of a decade earlier, within this category it was workers in industry and construction and public works who suffered most from falling purchasing power.[25] Furthermore, when compared to the purchasing power of non-wage income categories workers seemed the less privileged. Despite the fact that the non-wage income category comprised heterogeneous groups with various sources of income, overall, their income and purchasing power progressed more than any group in the wage-income category.

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[25] See Benachenhou, A. op. cit. p. 227, the author makes reference to data which he did not provide in this work.

Table 1.10: Non-wage income and purchasing power (1967- 77)

Category	income index	purchasing power
Agricultural income	306	197.5
Non-agricultural income	231	132

100 = 1967

Source: A. Benachenhou, op. cit. p. 227.

1.1.4- Absence of Specific Value Systems

The elite-mass perspective also emphasises that such societies are characterized by mass ideologies of "national unity" or "social harmony", or sectarian ideologies stressing traditional ethnic and religious divisions.[26] Such ideological phenomena, it is argued, are closely related to the lack of industrialisation and urbanisation and the persistence of traditional economic and social relations. Thus classes not only lack the structural foundations for their emergence and formation, but also the conditions for class consciousness. As Balandier argued in the case of Black Africa:

> "...a situation resulting from class antagonisms that are clearly constituted would have no correlation with poor ideologies which are more repetitive than contradictory.[27]

Class consciousness is undoubtedly a crucial element in the process of class formation, for classes cannot exist as historical agencies at the political level in the absence of relatively coherent ideologies. In the case of dependent social formations there is a lack of consensus among observers on what could or could not constitute a class consciousness. Is, for example, the creation of trade unions an act of class consciousness? Are strikes a form of collective action expressive of class consciousness? Collective organisation and action have been subject to varying and sometimes contradictory interpretations. The dominant view in the literature is, however, that expressed by Peter Lloyd in the following statement:

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[26] Lloyd, P.C. Classes, Crisis, and Coups: op. cit, pp.121-22.

[27] Balandier, G. op. cit., p.140.

> "Although the empirical studies tend to portray trade union activity as highly economistic, workers have little consciousness of the workings of a capitalist mode of production and almost no vision of an alternative structure of society to which their activities and structures might lead."[28]

The reasons for this are identifiable in the structural conditions determining the objective position of workers and their organisations. In contrast, a high degree of consensus exists among observers concerning the development of a distinct class consciousness and ideology amongst the elite. This has led some to argue that: In general the elites are transforming into bourgeoisie faster than workers into a proletariat."[29] Many who hold this view consider that elites constitute a dominant class in societies where no other classes as yet exist.

Much confusion in the literature seems to have been generated by a lack of agreement about the meaning of the concept, class consciousness. Attitudes and actions that some would interpret as expressive of class consciousness, others would dismiss as mere conjunctural outbursts of mass discontent, or unintended consequences of short-term, sectarian actions. Data for such attitudes and actions are usually provided by studies of workers' perceptions of the divisions in society at large, and industrial conflict, including strikes. However, adequate systematic studies in both these areas are notoriously thin and most claims have the status of mere assertions, based on general observations of events. Lloyd acknowledges this fact quite explicitly:

> "Most studies of urban life have given us statistical categories of persons or descriptions of formal associations; there are almost no accounts of the perceptions of city dwellers of the pattern of social stratification."[30]

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[28] Lloyd, P.C. A Third World Proletariat? op. cit, p.100.

[29] Ibid. p. 101.

[30] Lloyd, P.C. Class, Crises and Coups. op. cit, p.122.

It is, therefore, of utmost importance to reconsider this concept "class consciousness" in a more consistent and rigorous manner. First, it must be seen as a process and not a static condition of all or nothing. Secondly, this process is constituted of various stages which can be conceived as general forms typical of particular phases in the process of class formation. Three such forms may be identified.[31] The first of these is based on the perception of social class position and interest. The second is the perception of antagonistic classes and their interests, and the third is organised action aimed at establishing particular class interests as general and hegemonic. These different forms or stages in the emergence and development of class consciousness are a cumulative process which could be accelerated or slowed down depending on the particular conditions in which class formation takes place. They may also constitute varying strategies applicable to different contexts and situations.

It will be seen that our study of Algerian workers identifies the existence of a certain form of class consciousness, while revealing the complexity of the issue. Workers may hold conceptions of societal divisions along a variety of dimensions. In our own study we found that two dimensions- wealth (78.7%), authority (34%) - were particularly important, as were exploitative relations (27.2%). Workers identified classes not only in terms as general as rich and poor, but also in terms of the relation to means of production and position in the system of production. Thus, 25.6% of respondents conceived of class divisions in terms of working class and bourgeoisie. Also important was the tendency of workers to perceive themselves as a distinctive class. Thus, 41% identified their class as the working class, while only 33% identified their class as the poor. This attitude was confirmed when the composition of this class was considered. A total of 75.2% of workers perceived the working class as unskilled and skilled manual wage-labour, those who have to work to earn their living. The only other group that workers considered to be part of the working class were small peasants and agricultural wage-labour (32.8%), (See Ch 10 below).

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[31]See for example: Giddens, A. The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies. London, Hutchinson, 1973. pp. 99-117.

As we will see among the other important elements referred to by Algerian workers was the existence of solidarity (62.3%), in its various forms and in various degrees. Three main social groups were perceived as having antagonistic interests - the rich (35.3%), large property owners (25.3%), and upper level managers and bureaucrats (24.7%). Collective struggle was highly rated as a form of action for achieving workers' interests (45.2%), while individualistic action was important for only 12.7%. Equally important was the combination of both collective and individual actions (42.1%). Strike action, although officially banned in the state-controlled sector in which strikers face severe charges and harsh treatment, was seen as both necessary (46.4%) and rejected (53.6%), (See Ch 10 below).

On the basis of such evidence it does seem possible and plausible to hypothesize that a sector of the Algerian workforce, at least, has developed a certain form of class consciousness. Firstly, this appears at the level of self-identification in terms of a class with distinctive interests; secondly, identification of opposed classes and their antagonistic interests; and thirdly, there is the perception of the necessity of collective organised action to further their own interests. The degree to which an alternative structure of society is perceived was not clear, but some specific elements pointing to its nature were present in workers' perception of societal division. Attitudes to workers organisation in its present form were on the whole negative, but this, as it will be argued in later parts of our study, may be taken as a sign of class maturity rather than of lack of class consciousness, particularly in a situation where the existing union organization may be said to have undermined autonomous working class action.

Conclusion

In this section we examined four major arguments on the basis of which class analysis is claimed to be inadequate and irrelevant to the social structure of D.S.Fs. On the basis of limited evidence, however, we have been able to question the validity of these claims. What has emerged is that, in the case of Algeria and possibly in other similar cases, objective and subjective conditions for class formation do exist.

1.2- The Class Approach

The adoption of a social class perspective in studying the social structure of dependent social formations, especially in Africa, is relatively new. Its emergence was not only the result of disillusionment with previous approaches, but was dictated by the changing social realities of these societies. However, this does not mean that the concept of class and its usage were totally new to Africans themselves. On the contrary, in the countries of North Africa, particularly Algeria, trade unions and political parties have long since popularised concepts of class and class struggle amongst specific sections of the population (See Ch 02).

Studying dependent social formations in terms of a class approach is not itself without its dispute. For example, variations in the concept of class have generated a number of intellectual trends in the West.[32]The application of this already diffuse concept to Dependent Social Formations, with their distinctly specific historical experiences, was bound to intensify and widen that classical debate. Thus, in the literature adopting a class approach we can distinguish, at least, two variants of class theory. The first conceives of class as a relationship of power and distributive capacities. The second sees class as an expression of the social relations of production.

There are two particularly important issues which interest us in the following discussion. First, what is the social content of class relationships and at what level can class be located. Secondly, what specific criteria can be used to identify class position, as historical agencies in a given concrete social formation. Different propositions and arguments from both of theoretical variants mentioned will be assessed in the light of the Algerian case and the

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[32]On Marxian concept of social class; See Marx & Engels: The German Ideology, edited by Arthur, C.J. London, Lawrence & Wishart 1974.
Marx, K. Capital, Vol.3, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1972.
Marx & Engels, Selected Work in One Volume, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1968.
As for the Weberian concept of class; See Weber, M. Economy and Society, edited by, Roth, G. & Wittich, C. Berkeley, University of California Press. 1978, (2 Vols). For a selection of contemporary views in both traditions, See Giddens, A. & Held, D. (eds): Classes, Power and Conflict: Classical and Contemporary debates. London, MacMillan Publishers Ltd. 1982.

evidence it provides.

1.2.1 - Class as a relationship of power

Class location:

Orthodox Marxist class theory points to the primacy of the productive sphere as the objective basis for class formation and location of the various class positions. At this level classes are determined through their relationship to the means of production and other criteria derived from this structural position. These were most clearly spelled out in Lenin's definition of social classes:

> "Classes are large groups of people which differ from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their rôle in the social organisation of labour and, consequently, by the dimensions and method of acquiring the share of social wealth of which they dispose. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy."
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To many scholars adopting a class perspective, such criteria seem inadequate to the specific conditions of dependent social formations. The principal argument for rejecting this view is the alleged absence of private property ownership on any large scale. Property ownership of the means of production, it is argued, is either in foreign hands or under state control. This has resulted in shifting the sphere of class formation and location from the economic to the political level, and from production to power relations. In this respect, Richard L. Sklar, studying the formation of dominant classes in Africa, has argued:

> "In all cases, dominant class formation is a consequence of the <u>exercise of power</u> by those who <u>control various and diverse social organisations</u>."[34]

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[33] Lenin, V.I. "A great Beginning" in <u>The Essentials of Lenin,</u> London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1974, p.492.

Class is, therefore, conceived as a more generalised relationship of power and consequently any attempt at locating classes must be directed to the more broadly political sphere rather than specifying that of production. Furthermore, it is not only the specific case of dominant class formation, but of all classes. Sklar was quite clear on this point: "... class relations, at bottom, are determined by relations of power not production."[35]

Another example of this argument can be found in Richard Cohen's reflection on Africa.[36] For Cohen exploitation remains the fundamental notion for studying the process of class formation, although the conditions of such a relationship differs from the Orthodox Marxist account.

> "exploitative relationships in Africa often, perhaps predominantly, rest on the control of the means of production, distribution and exchange rather than ownership."[37]

This shift from ownership to control is soon followed in Cohen by a shift away from the level of production to that of distribution. Given the structural dependence of the D.S.Fs, the weakness of their economic base and the effects of the "neo-imperialist nexus", social classes are no longer an expression of relations of production.

> "To discern the structure of exploitation, one may suggest that ... a much greater concentration is needed on the particular relationship held to the means of distribution and exchange rather than to means of production."[38]

What these statements reveal is a clear tension between

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[34] Sklar, R.L. "The Nature of Class Domination in Africa" Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol.17, No 4, 1979, p.536. (emphasis added).

[35] Ibid. p.537.

[36] Cohen, R. "Class in Africa: Analytical Problems and Perspectives" in Miliband, R. & Saville, J. (eds) The Socialist Register, London, Marlin Press, 1972.

[37] Ibid. p. 241. (emphasis added).

[38] Ibid. p. 241. (emphasis added).

two different and potentially conflicting notions of class relations. On the one hand, the tendency to conceptualize relations of exploitation in terms of control over the means of production and distribution firmly establishes classes at the level of production, as well as admitting the existence of an endogenous basis for their emergence. On the other hand, the downgrading not only of the importance of property relations, but also that of control over the means of production, introduces a fundamental change in the argument. It not only displaces the objective basis of class location from production to distribution and exchange- thus locating class as a market relationship- it also substitutes the endogenous structural basis for an exogenous one, that is, the world economy. The limitations of such a position will be explored in the second version of this approach.

In considering the relevance of these arguments for the Algerian case, two particularly significant points must be made. First, private property in the means of production not only exists, it plays a crucial rôle in the economy. Notwithstanding this state control remains the dominant form. Foreign capital played a minimal rôle until very recently. Let us first give some examples concerning the importance of private property and its rôle during both the colonial and post-colonial periods. Although the specific character of colonial domination in Algeria greatly limited the development of new social classes, colonialism could be said to have created the objective basis for some form of social class formation. The available data reveal that private ownership existed in land, industry and commerce. If we consider land property we find that almost one-third of Algeria's agricultural land was privately owned. To this must be added quite large parts of communal and habous lands [39] which was mainly controlled by rich families.

During the first decade of independence, up to 1971, the year that saw an agrarian reform launched[40] setting limits on land property, the tendency towards concentration of property was

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[39]Habous land: land owned by religious associations and run to cover their activities, such as financing Coranic Schools and religious celebrations.

Table 1.11: Major forms of land ownership (in hectares)

Forms of ownership	Before independence (1962)	1963
Colonial property (private)	2,800,000	-
Algerian privately owned (under French law)	2,600,000	-
Self-managed (state property)	-	2,800,000
Milk: privately owned (under Moslem law)	3,500,000	6,100,000
Communal and Habous	2,350,000	2,400,000
Public domain	9,500,000	9,500,000

Source: J. C. Martens, Le model Algérien de developpement; SNED, Alger; 1973, p.152.

accelerated. The minority of large land owners had grown even smaller (from 25000 in 1960 to 16000 in 1970) while their property increased considerably. The number of those owning small plots of less than 10 hectares had fallen sharply (from over 65000 in 1960 to 42000 in 1970) as more people migrated to the cities and settled there.[41]

Table 1.12: Distribution of private land in 1970

Size of holdings	Number of owners	%	% total land
over 50 hectares	16,530	3	25
10 - 50	147,045	25	50
5 - 10	114,275	19	15
less than 5	308,995	53	10
TOTAL	586,845	100	100

Source: J. C. Martens, op. cit., p.162

What these data show is that private property in agriculture has existed from the colonial period and thrived even

[40]The agrarian reform was launched by the regime of Boumedienne in the 7th November 1971. Its aim was to change inherited social and economic structures in the rural areas and achieve social justice. See, FLN: La Révolution Agraire. Alger, les Presses E.A.P, (n.d).

[41]Martens, J.C. Le Model Algérien de Développement. op. cit, pp. 144 & 166

after independence. This was the case even after the 1971 agrarian reform as many land owners circumvented the legislation restricting the size of property. Large proprietors owning over 50 hectares produced for the market, employing new techniques and wage-labour. The majority conducted their business as capitalist enterprises.[42] Those owning between 10 and 50 hectares constituted a rural middle class; they also produced for the market except for those at the lower end of the category. The majority, owning less than ten hectares, constituted the subsistence peasant economy based on family labour.

If we turn to non-agricultural activities we find that private property existed in industry as well as commerce and services. However, given the essentially agrarian character of colonial capitalism the development of industry in the wider sense was very restricted. The fact that Algeria was a settler colony also had the effect of restricting the development of an Algerian entrepreneur bourgeoisie, but did not rule it out altogether.

Table 1.13: Distribution of industrial enterprises (1955)

	Metropo. companies	Settler private enterprise	Algerian private enterprise
No. of enterprises	9,485	16,991	7,224
Wage labour employed	281,899	86,172	23,314

Source: Barbi, "Les classes sociales en Algerie"; Economie et Politique, part II, Oct. 1959; p.24.

Private enterprise in the industrial sector expanded in the years following independence (1962). This was, especially noticeable after 1966, the year marking the government's adoption of a Code of Investment awarding many concessions to private capital. This process was, however, slowed down in the early 1970's following a number of policy changes aimed at strengthening state control and even monopoly over a number of economic activities. The evolution of Algerian owned private enterprise is shown in table 1.14.

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[42]Barbé, R. "Les Classes Sociales en Algérie", Economie et Politique, Pt.I, Sept. 1959, pp.7-23.

Table 1.14: Algerian private enterprise by date of creation

	before 1900	1905 1954	1955 1962	1963 1965	1966 1967	1968	1969	1970 1971	TOT.
No. of enter-prises	9	281	141	258	262	245	181	119	1497
%	6	18.7	9.4	17.2	17.5	16.4	12.1	8.1	100

Source: A.A.R.D.E.S. Etude sur l'industrie privee, vol.2, 1975; p.76.

Furthermore, the share of private investment was considerable in the first decade of independence. This trend was again restrained in the 1970's but during the 1980's more emphasis was laid on the rôle and importance of private capital. A more detailed analysis of the relationship between private and public sectors will be provided later in our study. For the moment we offer some limited examples testifying to the importance of private capital.

Table 1.15: Share of private investments (millions A.D.)

	1968	1969	1970
Total investments	4,130	5,745	7,410
Public investments	2,840	3,530	6,450
Private investments	1,290	2,215	960

Source: Liabes, D. Capital prive et Patrons d'industrie en Algerie, 1962-1982; CREA, Alger 1984; p.274

The accelerated development of private enterprise and its important rôle can also be shown through its share of the workforce employed. The activities of private capital are not confined to specific sectors, but it has a tendency to operate in more profitable areas where returns are higher and more quickly realised. Although the employment capacities of diverse private enterprises differ greatly, the overall share of the private sector in terms of

total employment was nearly 40% in 1977.

Table 1.16: Private sector's share of total employment (1977)

	Agric.	Manuf. indus.	Constr. public	Transp.	Commerce	Other Serv's	Total
% Share	55	34.4	36.5	30.1	72.7	69.6	38.2

Source: Benachenhou, op. cit.; p.95.

The final example we can consider now in order to confirm beyond any doubt that private enterprise in Algeria is not merely family or craft business, but capitalist enterprise is wage employment. In this instance we look at the share of the private sector in the employment of industrial wage-labour (Table 1.17). This confirms the fact that private capital is not confined to services only but is quite active in all major branches of manufacturing industries. Thus, the arguments that there is no potentiality for a national bourgeoisie, or that it exists as a parasitic social category, lacking all the attributes of an entrepreneurial bourgeoisie, are in this fundamental sense, not applicable to the Algerian case. For all branches of manufacturing industries, even in those where the state attempted to establish a monopoly, private capital employs a significant share of total wage-labour.

Table 1.17: Private sector's share of industrial wage-labour (1977)

	Constr. public works	Textile indus.	Chems./ plastics	Wood/ paper	Steel mechan electr	Diverse indus.	Total share
% Share	52.6	45.2	45.3	33.5	18.9	91.2	23.3

Source: Compiled from Benachenhou, op. cit.; p.98.

It should be clear by now that private capital not only exists but plays an important rôle in the Algerian economy. There are therefore grounds for arguing that an objective base does exist

allowing for the formation of a national bourgeoisie as well as a proletariat.

What this limited evidence from the Algerian case reveals is that any dismissal of the importance of private property can be highly contentious and misleading. While it may be that private capital is significant it can, nonetheless, be argued that the dominant means of production are under state control or are subordinated to it, thus disqualifying the "relationship to the means of production" as the fundamental determinant of class formation in the Algerian case. The first question that must be asked here is whether state control over the means of production excludes the relation of exploitation (i.e. the appropriation of surplus labour) of those who work in the public sector? More generally, what makes the state sector different from the private sector in terms of the fundamental relationship between those who control it and those who labour in it? And, in what ways do such differences, if they exist, affect the process of class formation? To answer these questions by saying that the state-controlled sector is legally a public ownership, would be unsatisfying and even misleading.

In order to grasp the nature of the dominant relationship in this sector we need to introduce new concepts which are lacking in this literature. Marxist scholars such as Bettelheim and Poulantzas[43] have in their reflections on advanced capitalism distinguished between legal ownership, economic ownership and possession. We believe that this distinction is highly relevant for the study of the state sector in D.S.Fs. For we are here faced with a similar problem despite its different origins. It is possible to argue that the concentration and centralisation of capital under state control in D.S.Fs has given birth to a specific class of capitalists.

If legal ownership refers to forms of property rights sanctioned by law, the possession in the words of de Vroey refers to "the ability to put the means of production to work.[44] As such it has

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[43]For Bettelheim's view see, Wright, E.O. Class Structure and Income Determination, New York, Academic Press inc. 1979. pp. 3-18.

See also Poulantzas, N. Les Classes Sociales dans le Capitalisme Aujourd'hui. Paris, editions du Seuil, 1974.

two specific dimensions: control over labour power and control over instruments of production. Economic ownership as defined by Bettelheim means:

> "the power to assign the objects on which it bears (especially the means of production) to specific uses and to dispose of the products obtained through these means of production."[45]

Thus, the techno-bureaucracy and military who control the state and, consequently, the means of production may lack the formal legal ownership rights to these means, but they (or certain groupings of them) do have both the power and ability to put them to specific uses. In other words, they control the process of capital accumulation. Even more, it is they who dispose of the products and decide how they should be used. They also appropriate a significant part of the surplus value realised by the workers in this sector. However, in view of their legally sanctioned status as "caretakers" rather than owners, such appropriation takes the form of highly inflated salaries, fringe benefits and various other material and non-material privileges. In many cases they even become involved directly in private investment.[46] Let us now turn to a discussion of class identification suggested by the exponents of this variant of the class approach.

Criteria for class identification

The conception that class relations are essentially relations of power has led to a shifting of the location of classes from the economic to the political and from production to distribution. In this way relationship to means of production are substituted by control over the means of "consumption" and "compulsion" as structural determinants of class relations. In accordance with those criteria, class identification is sought not at the level of productive social relations, but at the political and distributive levels. This is quite clear in the two examples we

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[44]Cited in Wright, E.O. op. cit, p. 33

[45]Ibid. p. 34

[46]In the case of Algeria, see Liabes, op. cit. pp.92-114.

discussed above and which we pursue here.

In his attempt to identify the dominant classes in Africa, Sklar suggested the following criteria: high status occupation, high income, superior education, ownership or control of business and some specific measure of power such as ability to control means of "consumption" and "compulsion".[47] Cohen, on the other hand, with class structure as a whole in mind, identified what he called five major "internal variables" having crucial influence on the relationship between classes. These were:

1. possession of legitimised means of coercion and violence;
2. inherited legitimacy and political credit from external sources (imperialist powers);
3. possession of necessary skills for governing such as education and experience;
4. possession of illegitimate means of violence and the capacity to disrupt order; and
5. access to, or ties with, groups that have one or more of the previous capacities. This can be achieved through religious, ethnic and clientele groups.[48]

One might amend Cohen's list by adding the general categories of possession and attributes.

These suggested criteria of class identification are clearly grounded in two different but related conceptions of social class. First, the use of distributive categories such as income, occupation and education relate to what might be called a gradational or stratification theory of social class. On the basis of the distribution of such criteria a number of social groups could be identified as having more or less of such attributes. Such a conception provides the basis for an essentially descriptive distribution of people along such continua. However, it is incapable of identifying the dynamic forces which might explain and affect that distribution. In this respect, E. O. Wright argues that a "class structure defined in gradational terms remains fundamentally a static

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[47]Sklar, R. op. cit, p. 543.
[48]Cohen, R. op. cit, p. 247

taxonomy."[49] The other variant, more prominent in the literature, is that based on power and authority relations; that is social class may be defined in terms of relations of super- and subordination in a hierarchy of power or authority. This approach also reveals a number of specific limitations, best summarised by Wright as follows:

First, as a general model it tends to present power and authority as a "unidimensional relation of domination and subordination". In concrete situations this relationship is more complex as positions of domination and subordination are parts of a system of hierarchies. Secondly, this conception tends to emphasize form over content in class relations. Thus, the content of power and authority is rarely considered while much interest is focused on their actual forms. Thirdly, it follows that there is a failure to account, in a systematic way, for social conflicts and the various forms of organised collective action.[50] The all-important link between class relations, class interests and class action is missing. It also follows that power and authority are not sought for their own sake, but for what they express and represent, that is, objective structural position with a specific social content. Thus, while power and authority are necessary elements in a class analysis, they cannot explain substantive class relations nor different forms of class action.

It seems more plausible, therefore, to continue to conceive of class relations as expressing specific positions in a particular system of production: relations giving rise to exploitation and contradictory outcomes. Exploitation, meaning appropriation of surplus labour of the producers by the non-producers, becomes a core element, therefore, in determining class relations. Social relations of production not only provide the basis for class formation, but also identify them conceptually. We will now consider a further variant of class analysis which is also prominent in the literature.

1.2.2- Class as a relation in the world system

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[49] Wright, E.O. op. cit, p. 7.
[50] Ibid. pp. 8-9.

This variant of class analysis is best known in its neo-marxist form. In this perspective the fundamental process of class formation and structuration remains that of exploitation; classes are conceived as structural positions at the level of dominant economic relations. The specific emphasis of this approach, however, is that given the dominant character of capitalism as a "world economy", class relations are not determined within national units, but at the level of the world system in terms of global economic relations. Prominent exponents of this approach are Gunder Frank,[51] Samir Amin[52] and I. Wallerstein.[53] Despite differences of emphasis and in matters of detail, they all share this fundamental viewpoint. In the following discussion we will limit the arguments to the propositions put forward by Wallerstein.

At the core of this approach is the view that the historical emergence of the capitalist mode of production as the dominant system on a world scale has resulted in the creation of two distinct but related sets of social formations: Core and periphery.[54] Thus, both in terms of socio-economic development and class structure, the periphery is closely related to, and affected by, processes of transformation taking place at the centre. The fundamental relation between core and periphery is one of exploitation and domination. On this basis, an important claim is made: the principal contradiction, in the periphery is no longer between different classes located at the level of the national economy and the nation-state. rather, it is between the imperialist forces located in the centre and their allies, on the one hand, and the majority of people in the periphery, on the other. In Wallerstein's words:

"In peripheral areas of the world economy, however,

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[51] See Frank, A.G. Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution, N.Y, Monthly Review Press, 1969. Also Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America, N.Y, Monthly Review Press, 1967.

[52] Amin, S. Accumulation on a World Scale, N.Y, Monthly Review Press, 1975. Also, Unequal development, Brighton, Harvester Press, 1977.

[53] See, Wallerstein, I. The Modern World System, I & II, New York; Academic Press, 1974 & 1980.

[54] It represents the main thesis of this approach although expressed in different terms such as "Metropolis and satellite" by Frank, "Centre and Periphery" by Amin, and "Core and Periphery" by Wallerstein.

> the primary contradiction is not between two groups within a state each trying to gain control of that state structure, or to bend it. The primary contradiction is between the interests organized and located in the core countries and their local allies, on the one hand, and the majority of the population on the other."[55]

In this world system, Wallerstein argues, classes are located in two different spheres. Socially, their objective position and activity are "determined by their rôle in the world economy." Secondly, their political activity is located and mainly "directed at the state of which they are member citizens."[56] Classes, he insists, are not either of these but both. How the link is established between these two spheres remains unclear. One important consequence of this dual determination of classes is the suggestion that two distinctive forms of class consciousness arise. The first, prominent in the core countries, takes the form of struggles for the control and orientation of the state. The second, is to be found in the periphery and takes the form of anti-imperialism.[57]

When we attempt to discern the relevance of such arguments for analysing the process of class formation in Algeria (especially that of a working class) several questions arise. First, if classes are located at the level of the world economy, what is the status and significance of the economic within the nation-state? Secondly, in the particular case of Algeria, where the major means of production are either controlled by the state or in the hands of a national bourgeoisie, how can exploitation and therefore class formation of both the bourgeoisie, with its different groupings and the working class, be considered as objectively outside of the boundaries of the national economy? Thirdly, if the primary contradiction is not between these classes internally located, what should we make of the existing social conflicts and struggles in their

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[55]Wallerstein, "Class and Class Conflict in Africa" Monthly Review, Vol.26, No9, 1975, p. 41.

[56]Ibid. p. 37.

[57]Wallerstein did not identify this form explicitly but it can be deduced from his distinction of two spheres where social classes are located.

various forms, and what is their significance? Finally, if anti-imperialism represents the dominant form of class consciousness in the periphery, what is the status of struggles over state control manifest in the national polity and how can the state remain external to such struggles, while that is the privileged instrument of imperialist penetration and domination?

These are some of the questions which the adoption of such an approach raise and which must be answered by those who advocate it. While we cannot deny the significance of the imperialist division of labour on a world scale and the consequent exploitation of dependent social formations, any serious attempt at comprehending the social structures of the D.S.Fs. must focus, at least equally, on the internal dynamic forces. The specific mechanisms of imperialist penetration and exploitation, though important, cannot be substituted for an adequate account of those internal conditions which may consolidate or restrain external influences. Over-emphasizing the importance and rôle of the "world-economy" has the effect of denying the importance and specific effects of national economies and polities which provide the objective structural conditions for class formation.[58] The political corollary of this emphasis amounts to a denial that the peripheral state constitutes an arena for social conflict and class struggle.

Such arguments may be rejected not only because they imposed unnecessary theoretical limitations, but also because of their misleading political implications. The claim that all struggles in the periphery are anti-imperialist can provide the basis for the suppression of all forms of opposition to the dominant group and its ideology. The claim that class consciousness in the periphery takes the form of anti-imperialism is a source of confusion. "Ethno-national" consciousness which Wallerstein takes as a form of class consciousness in effect substitutes nations for classes. Such

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[58]For a detailed critical discussion of the views expressed by exponents of this perspective. See, Smith, S. "Class Analysis Versus World Systems: Critique of Samir Amin's Tautology of Underdevelopment" Journal of Contemporary Asia, Vol.12,No1, 1982, pp.7-18.

See also, Gulap, H. "Frank and Wallerstein Revisited: A Contribution to Brenner's Critique" Journal of Contemporary Asia, Vol.11, No2, 1981, pp.169-188.

notions may well have had some relevance during the period of formal colonialism and struggle for national liberation, but their value and validity in present conditions are highly questionable.

Conclusion

The literature on the social structure of D.S.Fs, is characterized by a controversy over the relevance of class analysis. Three major approaches have been identified. While each perspective identifies various social and economic inequalities and disparities, the terms of their interpretations divide them. According to the elite-mass approach, classes simply do not exist as yet. Rather, such societies are viewed as being characterized by the continuing influence of traditional structures that inhibit the emergence of social classes. In common with the stratification, elite-mass theory lays emphasis on quantitative forms and factors of differentiation such as, income, education, occupation, and other relatively undefined notions such as prestige and status. The nature and character of dominant social relations rarely investigated beyond the assertion that traditional structures and loyalties persist. There is in this type of analysis a striking underestimation of contemporary processes of social and economic transformation and their impact.[59] Consequently, such analyses have not been able to transcend general descriptions of a static character. Emergent social groupings in the underdeveloped world are not seen as stratified as the result of some generative dynamic, but merely as distributive effects. Consequently, we can detect in this approach an incapacity to account for social conflicts except on the limited grounds of ethnic and religious cleavages.

In the second approach, though class relations are seen as fundamental in determining the social structure of these societies, they are conceptualized as essentially power relations, or again as effects of distributive relations. This argument arises out of the claim that the single most important condition characterizing the economic structures of these societies was the absence of private

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[59]Such processes include industrialisation, urbanisation and changes in occupational structures as well as consequent social differentiation.

property and the predominance of state control of the means of production. As a consequence, economic relations and specifically the relationship to the means of production lose their importance as a factor for the formation of class relations. Conceptualizing class relations as essentially power relations means that classes are located at the political rather than the economic level. The alleged absence of private property has led to stress on distributive relations, that is control of the means of consumption and possession of certain market capacities such as skills, education and so on, as determinant factors in the process of class formation. The third approach[60] identified also stresses the absence of private property except as a category in the relations between a capitalist core and the periphery in a world system.

In examining these claims we found that the alleged absence of private property has been greatly exaggerated, as the Algerian case testified. Even in situations where private property is absent as a legal category, access to property and capacity to control means of production could constitute the fundamental element in the process of class formation. This is particularly the case, it is argued, in the state-controlled sector where a particular social grouping has no legal rights yet has the capacity to control means of production and the process of capital accumulation. Absence of private property in its legal forms does not exclude effective economic ownership and possession as defined above. The relationship to means of production should, we argue, remain central to the analysis of emergent class relations as well as a potential element of class identification.[61]

Exploitation as a category expressing the relationship between labour-power and capital does not disappear from the analysis as those who control the means of production and the production process including labour, may still appropriate part of the surplus product. The legally institutionalized forms of appropriation will be

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[60]Initially, we identified two approaches on the basis of the acceptance or rejection of class analysis. The third is a variant perspective of class analysis which differs, of course, significantly from the one conceptualizing class as a relation of power.

[61]See, Poulantzas, N. Les Classes Sociales dans le Capitalisme Aujourd'hui. op. cit.

different, but the process is similar. Thus, to conceptualize class relations merely in terms of power, authority or their distributive effects would be to stress the effects and forms rather than conditions of their existence.

Notwithstanding differences of terminology, the conclusions reached in respect of each of these approaches seem very similar. Social stratification is conceived in distributive and quantitative terms. Different groups are placed either in a hierarchical system of power or along a continuum according to their possession of some specific qualities and capacities. The important and fundamental aspect which is the relationship between these groups is either absent or perceived in quantitative terms. The position assigned to groups in such stratification systems are not determined in relation to each other, but in relation to external elements. Accordingly, the position of each group could well be determined independently of the existence of others. This was clearly emerging from the proposition about class location with a world system.

In the next chapter we will consider the process of social class formation in Algeria during the colonial period. The colonial period represented a crucial moment of highly significant social, economic and political transformation. The Algerian class structure today, although more complex, is in some way the product of those changes.

CHAPTER TWO

COLONIALISM AND CLASS FORMATION

2.1- Colonial Capitalism and Working class Formation

In this chapter we intend to consider some of the principal elements that constitute the historical background to the present-day Algerian social formation. It is not meant to be a history of the development of colonial Algeria, but an attempt to retrace significant processes and movements in the uneven development of the colonial society and economy. Our focal point will be the process of proletarianization which has so profoundly altered the social structure of the Algerian society from 1830 to 1982.

The present chapter will be divided into three sections. The first deals with the processes of socio-economic transformation associated with the sometime violent process of expropriation, resulting in the destruction of traditional forms of property and relations of production in both agricultural and non-agricultural activities. We will argue that these movements lead to coexistence of the old and emergent types of class relations. Special attention will be paid to the formation of these new forms of class relations, particularly the emergence of an incipient working class.

The second section will be devoted to the analysis of the historical conditions leading to the development of the labour movement. Of particular interest here was the rôle played by the metropolitan labour confederations, especially the "Confederation Générale du Travail" (C.G.T.). Of special historical interest was the division of society on an ethnic basis which gave rise to deep cleavages in the incipient working class and union organization

In the third section our attention will focus on the end product of the complex process of socio-economic transformation and political polarization; that is, the emergence of an independent national labour movement. The context in which this movement arose and its relationship to the nationalist movement as represented by the "Front de Liberation Nationale" (F.L.N.), is a key element in understanding the character of the labour movement and its later developments. While tracing the emergence of the "Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens (U.G.T.A.), we will also consider the problems associated with working class mobilization and organization in what was an extremely violent colonial context. These peculiar historical conditions have had lasting effects on the development of the working class and its organization, giving rise to the issue of the status and autonomy of the union organization in the process of working class formation and its future rôle in independent Algeria.

2.1.1 Colonial Agrarian Capitalism

The colonial subjugation and capitalist transformation of Algerian society and economy were carried through in two distinctive, but complementary periods; distinctive in time (1830-1880) and (1880-1962), their socio-economic contexts and aims, and consequently in the practices and policies on which they were based.

At the risk of some over-simplification, we can say the first period extended over the half century from 1830 to 1880; a period of military conquest and the consolidation of colonial rule. This period also saw a process of massive land expropriation, so establishing a base for the future settler economy and society. This process of land expropriation assumed different forms and was carried out in successive stages and by various means, depending on the politico-military conjuncture at the time. The Bylik [1]property held by the Regency of Algiers was the first to be expropriated immediately following the fall of Algiers in 1830. In 1833 there was the takeover of land not legally recognized as property by the French legal system.[2] From 1839 onwards land owned by rebellious tribes was

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[1]Land owned by the Bay (Turkish name for governors ruling provinces under the Ottoman Empire).

expropriated following their defeat in colonial wars. From 1843 there were successive expropriations of land owned by religious establishments and associations (Mosques and Religious associations), followed in 1851 by forest lands and in 1861 by all uncultivated land not used for pasture by the local communities all of which was declared the property of the French State. In the 1870's French colonial authorities took the decisive step of expropriating communal lands (Arch)[3] which made up a significant part of cultivable land and stood at the heart of traditional social structure. This was achieved through a series of laws aimed at privatizing land property.[4]

The second period in the process of colonial expansion and domination was marked by the establishment of a settler community and the beginning of capital accumulation. Thus, between 1880 and 1900, the colonial authorities distributed to French settlers 687,000 hectares of the best agricultural land and constructed some 700 villages. In parallel, a process of free colonization began with private settlers acquiring about one million hectares of land in the period between 1871 and 1900. This constituted a major break with the early years when settlers had held only 481,000 hectares.[5] By the turn of the century, therefore, a whole process of land expropriation on a large scale had been achieved, with the inevitable transformation of socio-economic structures. Various forms of property ownership and relations of production, partly communal, partly quasi-feudal such as the Khammest system[6] were either transformed into capitalist forms or

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[2]This included communal land, habous and tribal property all of which were not considered as private property since they were not registered as such under the French legal system.

[3]Communal lands were common property for all members of a tribe. Everyone had a right to cultivate it, but could not claim its ownership. It was inalienable; i.e. could not be sold or exchanged.

[4]See, K. Farsoun, "State Capitalism in Algeria". Middle East Research Information Project Reports (MERIP), Vol.35, 1975, p.3.

See also Bennoune, M. "Origins of the Algerian Proletariat". In Dialectical Anthropology. Vol.1, No3, 1976, pp.201-224.

[5]RAFFINOT, M. & JAQUEMOT, P., Le Capitalisme d'Etat en Algérie; Paris, Editions Maspero, 1977.

[6]A system in which landlords lease their property to peasants in order

(Footnote continued)

subjugated to its logic of operation.

Land expropriation and violent destruction of existing communities caused successive series of mass movements of the population to arid and mountainous areas. Population pressure on cultivable land, already apparent in the pre-colonial period, was accelerated to an unprecedented degree.[7]

The development of agrarian capitalism was essentially an uneven process resulting in the development of two distinctive yet related socio-economic structures. The traditional sector, largely dominated by the local peasantry, represented a subsistence economy, while the modern sector, dominated by the Europeans was a cash-crop export-oriented economy. However, this was by no means a simple dual economy. Their apparent separation, as measured by their different modes of organization and level of productive forces, concealed their fundamental interdependence. The two sectors were performing different but complementary rôles in an emergent system of capitalist division of labour and accumulation.[8]

The contrast between the two sectors and their characteristic communities was bound to be profoundly marked. The last decade of colonial domination (1952-1962) witnessed a high degree of land concentration in the cash-crop sector, more than 2,700,000 hectares of the best cultivable land was in the hands of some 22,000 Europeans. This represented a quarter of all agricultural land and 40% of effectively cultivated land.[9]Thus, the situation of the Algerian peasantry was dramatically transformed. By the 1930's the disparity

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[6](continued)
to cultivate it taking one-fifth of the crop as a remuneration for their efforts.

[7]The population pressure on land in pre-colonial Algeria was the result of both the steady growth of population and the development of forms of unequal access to land. See J.C. Martens, Le Model Algerien de Developpement; SNED, Alger, 1973, pp.137-39.

[8]The traditional sector and local communities provided means of subsistence and labour-power while the modern sector realized the valorization of capital. They were also articulated through the subtle mechanisms of market and commodity relations ensuring the transfer of both surplus labour and surplus value.

[9]RAFFINOT & JAQUEMOT, op. cit., p.29.

between Algerian land owners and settlers was marked. the settlers held an average of 120 hectares as against 11 hectares by Algerians.[10]

Table 2.1: Structure of land ownership in 1930

Categ. of hol in ha.	No. of E'pean owners	Ave. prop.	Total land	%	No. of Al'ian owners	Ave. prop	Total land	%
- 10	8,877	4.7	42,534	2	434,537	4	1,738,806	23
10-50	7,140	29.2	216,787	9	140,010	18.8	2,635,275	35
50-100	4,725	77.1	364,366	15	35,962	43.1	1,595,398	21
+ 100	5,411	318	1,721,979	74	7,035	198.3	1,593,398	21

Source: BENACHENHOU, A., Formation du Sous-developpement en Algerie; OPU, Alger, 1976, p.283.

As can be seen, the tendency toward land concentration was accelerated during the period 1900 to 1962. It is important to note that this phenomenon of concentration characterized both communities and sectors. However, concentration appeared in varying proportions whether in relation to the size of holdings, number of large landowners or total cultivable surfaces, and most significantly in the resulting ability to use modern techniques and means of production and organization.

It is also interesting to note that the percentage of the settler population living on agriculture was declining at this same period, from 221,293 in 1911 to around 100,000 in 1954. Of those, only a tiny minority was actively engaged in land cultivation (26,746) in 1954.[11]Equally important was the transformation of the settler community. In 1911, the percentage of the rural settler population living in the families of land proprietors represented 40%, that of tenant farmers and stewards 20%, and that of wage labour (workers and supervisors) another 40%. In 1954 the respective proportions were dramatically changed to 65%, 10% and 25%. This transformation was dependent on the systematic subjugation of the traditional sector including the dispossession and potential proletarianization of large parts of the Algerian peasantry. The transformation of the European

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[10]Ibid, p.29.

[11]Barbe, R., "Les Classes Sociales en Algerie"; Economie et Politique, Part 1, Sept.-Oct. 1959, pp.9-13.

rural population was paralleled by a similar process in the structure of activities among this population as table 2.2 shows.

Table 2.2: Evolution and structure of European active rural population (1948-54)

Category	1948	1954
Proprietors	19,384	17,129
Tenant farmers	2,094	1,162
Stewards	3,111	1,445
workers & Supervisors	5,349	2,006
Total	29,938	21,742

Source: Barbe, "Les Classes Sociales", op. cit., Pt I, p.15.

Consequently, in 1954 a small minority of large proprietors 6,385 (owning over 50 ha) owned 87% of the total colonial land (2,726,700 hectares). At the same time there was a rapid decline in the rural population as a whole. Non-agricultural activities, especially services were attracting the majority of the European population. The number of European agricultural workers stood at 7,020, in 1954 representing 25% of settlers employed in agriculture while the other categories such as tenant farmers and stewards fell by over 50% in the short period of six years (1948-1954).[12]

2.1.2- Pauperization and Proletarianization

The creation of large capitalist farms and plantations and their orientation to the export market had, in the context of a decline of both settler population living on agriculture and of that group employed in it, profound consequences for the Algerian socio-economic structures. The growth of these capitalist enterprises presuppose the existence not only of a relatively large mass of wage labour, but also of a relative surplus population.[13] In the specific

[12] Barbe, op. cit, p.16.

[13] Marx notes that the relative surplus population is directly linked to changes in the process of capital accumulation and in its (Footnote continued)

context of colonial rule this outcome was achieved mainly through two measures. First, land expropriation and concentration which led to the breaking of old communal property into a mass of small holdings increasingly unable to meet the subsistence needs of the peasantry.[14] It also led to greater differentiation and concentration of property within local communities as the traditional norms of indivisibility, collective cultivation and heritage were replaced by new legal norms transforming land into a commodity which could be privately purchased and owned. The natural corollary of this process was a relative increase in the numbers of the small peasants and landless labourers. Secondly, the generalization of commodity relations, of money and extension of market mechanisms through the systematic use of taxes on property and people, all precipitated significant changes in the socio-economic structures which can be seen from table 2.3.[15]

Table 2.3: Evolution and structure of the Algerian rural population (1911-54)

Year	Tot. pop.	Pop. living on agricul.	%	Rural Active pop.	Land owners all categs.	%
1911	4,252,474	3,423,722	80.4	-	-	-
1948	7,579,531	5,884,286	77.7	2,755,532	571,141	20.7
1954	8,455,000	5,825,000	68.9	2,573,504	503,728	15.6

Source: Compiled from Barbe, op. cit., Part I, pp.21-22.

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[13](continued)
composition. These changes are "always connected with violent fluctuations and the temporary production of a surplus population, whether this takes the more striking form of extrusion of workers already employed, or the less evident, but not less real, form of a greater difficulty in absorbing the additional working population through its customary outlets." - Capital, Vol.1, Penguin Books & N.L.R. (eds.), 1976, pp.782-3.

[14]This increased the number of peasants searching for additional income, hence the growing number of potential wage-labourers on the labour market.

[15]Barbe points out that at least 90,000 units must be added to the figure of active population in 1954. The 1954 census has used very restrictive criteria in defining this category, a fact acknowledged by colonial authorities and not without significance in view of the political context of that period in which the liberation war was launched.

Considering the period 1948-1954, three important remarks should be made. First, while total population increased by almost one million, the agricultural population declined by nearly 9%. The decline in the agricultural population was directly linked to the acceleration, over the same period of labour migration to urban centres, as well as emigration to France.[16] Secondly, the already noted concentration of land ownership was creating greater socio-economic inequalities within the Algerian community itself. Also by this time the major acts of land expropriation and land purchase by the settlers had been completed. Each of these processes was associated with or led to pauperization of particular sections of the peasantry. The rise in the number of the economically active population coupled with the steady decrease of landowners was expressed in the relative increase in the category of landless "peasants". These either joined the ranks of wage labourers or share-croppers (Khammes), further expanding the unemployed, or embarked on metropolitan migration.

Of particular interest to us is the possibility that we are observing here a process of proletarianization. This could be suggested from the simple numerical expansion of the category of landless labourers whether these were effectively transformed into a wage labour force (permanent or seasonal, in Algeria or in France), or took the form of a relative surplus population. It certainly is the case that due to the failure of capitalist agriculture to absorb this growing labour force (partly as a result of mechanization) a great majority of the active population in the rural areas was chronically unemployed, thus forming a lumpenproletariat drifting in and out of the urban areas seeking temporary forms of livelihood.

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[16] Though the emigration to France started before 1914, this movement assumed unprecedented proportions after the Second World War: 35,000 departures in 1946; 80,000 in 1948; 142,000 in 1951, and 165,000 in the first nine months of 1954. The Algerian community in France totalled 300,000 in 1954. The rural areas were the main reservoir for this movement. In some regions 40-50% of the male population was working in France. 90% of emigrants were wage labourers, and 80% of them came directly from the rural areas. 70% of all emigrant workers were unskilled manual labourers, 22% semi-skilled and generally employed in Construction and Public Works, and metallurgical and mechanical industries. Only 5% of them attained the category of skilled workers, 0.1% that of supervisors or foremen and 0.1% employed in office work. See, Charles-Robert Ageron: Histoire de l'Algerie Contemporaine, Vol.II, P.U.F., Paris, 1979, pp.529-30.

Table 2.4: Evolution and structure of active agricultural population (1914-54)

Categ. Year	Rural bourg. +50ha.	Medium peasants 10-50ha.	Poor & small peasants		Wage labour
			Fellah/-10	Khammes/-1	
1914	-	-	-	375,000	210,000
1930	-	140,000	434,537	206,100	462,000
1950	25,079	167,170	350/430,000	154,692	560,000
1954	20/25,000	-	-	60/100,000	570,000

Source: Compiled from Barbe, op. cit., pp.17, 19, 22, 23 and Ageron, op. cit., pp.508, 511, 514.

The important phenomenon expressed by the figures in table 2.4, however uncertain and only of an indicative value, was the steady decline in the category of poor and small peasants, especially the Khammes grouping While the number of those owning less than 10 hectares seemed to have changed little, their share of landed property in fact decreased from 23% in 1930 to 18.75% in 1950, shrinking even further in the following years. On the other hand, the share held by the rural bourgeoisie, especially the large landowners (+100 ha.), increased from 21% to 23% of all land owned by Algerians in the same period.[17] The most important transformation, however, was that signalled by the decline in the number of Khammes and the increase of wage labour over the years. The two were not unrelated, for both the pauperization of small peasants and concentration of land opened new possibilities for the small but powerful group of landowners to introduce modern farming techniques. This Algerian rural "bourgeoisie", was for obvious economic reasons in favour of using wage-labour.[18] This double process of decline in the Khammes and the extension of wage labour reflected, therefore, the extent to which capitalist relations of production were expanding.

However, the extension of wage-labour indicated by the

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[17] AGERON, C. R. op. cit., pp.509, 514.

[18] The Algerian landed bourgeoisie constituted a small fraction of 4% of all Algerian landowners and had a share of one-third of all agricultural production of the Algerian community including 31.5% of cereals, 22.8% dry vegetables, 30% vineyard products and 27.8% of industrial crops. See Barbe, op. cit, p.19.

figures in Table 2.4 is misleading. Behind the apparent steady increase in the wage labour force there is stagnation and even decline of permanent employment as the productive forces progressed in the period 1930-1954. The number of permanent agricultural workers declined from 180,000 to around 160,000, while seasonal labour expanded to top half a million. Seasonal unemployment was a major feature of colonial capitalist development. Unemployment and under-employment had been throughout the colonial period a distinctive mark of the rural areas. By 1954, according to observers, there was in existence up to one million unemployed in the rural areas, representing approximately 20% of the rural population.[19]

The mass of the rural population was living in poverty and there being little to distinguish the conditions experienced by the different social categories, such as agricultural workers, small peasants, Khammes, and the unemployed. A hand-to-mouth existence was a general pattern for the majority; dispossessed, economically exploited, socially and culturally disoriented.[20]The profound transformation of the rural areas can acquire their real significance when seen in perspective against a similar process taking place in the non-agricultural, urban areas. To these we shall turn now.

2.1.3- Limited and extroverted industrialization

French capitalism could be said to have followed the classical strategies of early imperialist expansion. Algeria was essentially a source of raw material, cheap labour and an outlet for the surplus production of metropolitan industries. Algeria's emergent industrial sector was consequently not only very weak, but heavily dependent on the forms and pace of development in the metropolitan economy, a fact well recognized and documented by the metropolitan authorities, despite attempts to remedy the situation. [21]Industry had

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[19]Seasonal labour is a form barely distinguishable from total unemployment. Labourers work on average 90 days a year for an annual income of 20,000 to 25,000 old Francs in 1954 which is under subsistence level as colonial administrators themselves acknowledged. See, AGERON, C.R., op. cit., pp.511, 512.

[20]AGERON, C. R., op. cit., pp.215- 21 & 510-517

(Footnote continued)

no possibility of autonomous development. The two occasions when such autonomous development became a practical possibility were the recession of 1929 and during the Second World War.[22] These windows of opportunity were short-lived, however, and little exploited by local capital. It is not surprising therefore that colonial Algeria had no industrial base worthy of the name. The non-agricultural economy was dominated by the services sector and commerce. Even the extractive industry and consumer goods production were very limited.

During the whole of the colonial period the only serious attempt to industrialize was made in the last decade before independence. In 1958, in the context of escalation of the national liberation war, the French government adopted the "Plan de Constantine". This five-year plan had two main objectives[23]: first, lifting the rural society and economy from their crisis and stagnation through a number of limited reforms such as land distribution to the poor section of the peasantry; the extension of irrigation systems and building of dams; the construction of one thousand rural villages; the activation of agricultural service cooperatives (Societes Agricoles de Prevoyance - S.A.P.) and the extension of health care. A second set of objectives involved the realization of a programme of

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[21](continued)
[21]The architects of the Plan de Constantine - a five year plan (1959-63)- destined to industrialize the colony - acknowledged that: "Algerian industry is composed of industrial enclaves technically and geographically isolated from each other, multiplication or acceleration effects which follow from industrial development are, in the actual situation, quasi-absent ... The greatest part of commercial networks find their point of departure in import or end in export, in many cases, the interests of importers or exporters constitute obstacles to industrial development."

Rapport General du Plan de Constantine, p.483, cited in T. Benhouria; L'Economie Algerienne. Paris, Maspero, 1980, p.224.

See also AGERON, op. cit., pp.500-504. He partly rejects the responsibilities attributed to metropolitan capital and authorities putting the blame on the absence of an entrepreneurial class as well as the geographical and socio-political constraints.

[22]In these two occasions the influence of metropolitan capital declined providing an opportunity for local investment to develop in the absence of metropolitan companies. However, the conversion of local capital from agriculture and commerce into industry failed for a number of reasons. See Ageron. op. cit.

[23]RAFFINOT & JAQUEMOT, op. cit., p.35.

industrialization based on the idea of "poles of growth" That is the concentration of investments in selected industries and locations situated in Northern Algeria. The branches were selected on the basis of valorization of local raw materials (iron ore, phosphate, and oil). The plan contained a steel complex in Annaba, an oil refinery in Arsew, an oil pipeline from the fields of Hassi-Messaoud to the port of Bejaia, and a gas pipeline from the field of Hassi R'Mel to the port of Arzew. Other less important projects were also planned in textiles, leather, construction materials, etc.

The underlying logic of the plan was to provide a socio-economic base which would undermine the Front de Liberation Nationale (F.L.N.) in its struggle for independence. In practical terms, however, the plan made little immediate impact and was abandoned.[24]

2.1.3.1 - Evolution and structure of industrial enterprises

Information regarding industrial and commercial development in the period before World War Two is both scarce and contradictory. Ageron, for example, claims that in 1918 industrial enterprises numbered 716 and employed some 23,000 workers. In 1939 the number of industrial workers totalled 40,000 only one-third of whom Algerians. The overall development of wage labour was very slow. Thus, in 1924, wage earners, including those working in construction and public works totalled 164,000. In 1954 this figure had reached 264,000, of which 117,800 were employed in construction and public works. [25] These figures are of limited value given the absence of reliable sources. Nevertheless, they indicate the slow pace in the expansion of wage labour among the Algerian population. they also

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[24]The plan failed for two main reasons. First, errors of judgement inherent in the logic of the plan counting on greater involvement of metropolitan private capital and a local class of entrepreneurial bourgeoisie. Both failed to react favourably - the first because of the unprofitability of the adventure and the risks it involved; the second, mainly because of its weakness and to some extent uncertainty of outcome. The second reason was the intensification of the war. See RAFFINOT & JAQUEMOT, op. cit., pp.37-38.

[25]AGERON, op. cit., pp.500, 502. Such figures did not include those given by Barbe. In fact, different sources provide contradictory figures, hence their limited value.

indicate the limited level of economic development in this period.

The number of enterprises (including commerce, transport, construction and services) developed in an uneven and contingent manner over the years after World War II. In 1947 it was estimated that there were 28,681 enterprises employing a total workforce of 267,916 and in 1956 they were estimated at 37,302 enterprises with a workforce of 431,682. [26]The labour force was split between their concentration in a small number of large enterprises, and the great majority who worked in very small craft enterprises. This characteristic reflected another important feature, that of capital concentration expressed in the increase in the number of large enterprises employing more than 100. From 1950 to 1955 this category expanded by 50%, those employing between 21-100 increased only by 25% while the smaller enterprises grew at an even slower pace.[27]

Table 2.5: Evolution of enterprises by size (1950-55)

Year Size	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
1-5	23,600	24,578	25,779	27,160	29,036	28,608
6-20	6,165	6,343	6,341	6,366	6,007	6,527
21-100	1,843	1,987	2,106	2,068	2,171	2,300
+ 100	449	557	615	605	626	671

Source: Barbe, op. cit., Pt. II, p.37.

The instability of the industrial base was associated with existence of small enterprises with a very limited capacity for wage employment. At the other end of the spectrum, however, were the large enterprises (671) employing 41% of all non-agricultural wage-labour. The top 50 of these enterprises each with 500+ wage employees had a total wage-labour force of 50,000 or one-seventh of total wage-labour.[28]This bipolar structure distinguished the various branches of industrial and commercial activity. Simple commodity

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[26]Barbe, op. cit., Part II, p.36.

[27]Ibid, p.37.

[28]Ibid. p.26.

production, retail commerce and services were the specific activities of the small enterprises. Activities such as the extractive and manufacturing industries, wholesale commerce and services were monopolized by large enterprises; essentially metropolitan companies and their local subsidiaries and to a lesser extent, settlers' private enterprises.

The division of society on ethnic grounds, noticeable in agriculture, was also a principal element in the social structure of urban society. The seemingly large number of enterprises owned by Algerians exaggerated their real economic and social importance. In 1948, of 70,000 such enterprises only 2% were not considered craft workshops. For the European sector the ratio was disproportionately many times higher; of 30,000 enterprises, 24% were not considered craft shops. In 1954, the same structure was sustained and developed further. Thus, of 100,000 Algerian owned enterprises less than 10% were employing wage labour with a total capacity of 30,000 employees. Of the 65,000 European enterprises, more than 30% employed wage labour with a total capacity of 320,000 employees.[29]

Another interesting characteristic of colonial industrial development, not unrelated to the structure outlined above was its geographic imbalance. Areas with greater density of settler population had the greatest number of enterprises. Some have argued that this expressed the underlying familial nature of these enterprises.[30] But it seems to us that there was more to it than that, as large enterprises hardly escaped this rule. The overlap between location of enterprises and settler population was most probably a function of the quest of capital for profitable markets and favourable conditions of operation. Thus areas of concentrated settler population represented two necessary conditions for operation of capital

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[29] Barbe, op. cit., pp.23-25. Algerian enterprises contributed 8% to GDP and European 90%, three-quarters of this share was provided by the largest 1,000 enterprises.

[30] See Taleb, A., "Essai de recension des enterprises dans l'Algerie coloniale"; in Enterprises et Entrepreneurs en Afrique aux XIX et XX Siecles, Tome 1. Eds. L'Harmathan, 1983, p.512. The author points to the reliance of colonial industries on the European population as their main market, but does not analyse this relationship in any depth.

reinforcing the overall discriminatory framework of colonial domination. First, there existed a market for its material production and services and secondly, it was able to draw upon a qualified and skilled labour force. These two factors could only be satisfied by the European community with high incomes and quasi-monopoly of education and training. As for the unskilled workforce, it was made up of Algerian workers who were attracted to the urban areas where they could find employment.

Table 2.6: Distribution of a sample of enterprises by region and activity

Branch Region	Food proc	Wood	Metall-urgy	Lea. text	Chems	Paper & pr' ting	Constr mater-ial	Bldg and pub. wks.	Tot.
Centr	173	45	137	105	102	43	57	111	773
West	137	28	61	20	24	5	11	2	288
East	61	54	18	4	30	4	39	1	211
TOTAL	371	127	216	129	156	52	107	114	1272

Source: Compiled from Taleb, op. cit., p.514.

As we have mentioned, the disparity between the three geographical regions in relation to the number of industrial enterprises was paralleled by the unequal distribution of population. The Central region of Algiers with the highest number of enterprises had a population of 402,614 Europeans and 2,656,285 Algerians. Oran and its Western region had a population of 385,149 Europeans and 1,767,277 Algerians. The Eastern region of Constantine with distinctively the lowest number of enterprises had the lowest European population of 183,304, and the greatest Algerian population of 3,220,075.[31]

2.1.3.2 - Wage labour and the industrial proletariat

The inability of Algerian emergent agrarian capitalism to absorb the growing mass of the labour force coupled with a weak

[31]Population figures taken from the census of 1954 provided by Barbe, op. cit.

industrial base had important consequences for the social structure and in particular for our problem of working class formation. One significant result was the acceleration of both internal and external migratory movements of the population. The first of these processes had the effect of increasing the mass of wage labour and the unemployed and under-employed in urban areas thus constituting a potential base for the future working class-in- formation . The second represented the creation of a "proletariat in exile." Writing of the former process in 1950 M. Larnaude noted:

> "part of the peasant families who also lost their lands refused to search for a subsistence in the countryside and migrated since a quarter of a century to the suburbs and cities; an urban proletariat, which was nonexistent in 1914, was thus constituted. The last war has only aggravated the situation ... The population of Algiers and its suburban municipalities increased by 42% between 1936 and 1948, that of Oran and its suburbs by 33%. This considerable increase resulted, most probably, from the influx of the Muslims."[32]

Given the destructive impact of settler colonialism on traditional socio-economic structures, value systems and organizations it was not surprising that these population movements were so massively evident. The modern malaise of masses of disoriented, and deprived people sinking into the deprived conditions of the shanty-towns around major cities and ports was an early experience in Algeria. It is notable that even without marked industrialisation Algeria's rural population fell from 80% to 68% of total population in less than 50 years (1911-1954).[33]The result was one million urban unemployed. In the period between 1936 and 1948 alone more than half a million people migrated to the urban areas. The regions exhibiting high rates of out flow were, not unexpectedly, those where agrarian capitalism was strongly established. Thus, from 1948 to 1954 the population of Tiaret dropped by 8.4%, that of Medea by 4.8%, Setif by 3.4%, Constantine by 6.9% and Tlemcen by 7.2%.[34]

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[32]M. Larnaude, "Algerie", p.102, cited in Barbe, Pt.1, p.21 (emphasis added).

[33]Barbe, op. cit., Pt.1, p.9. See also Table 2.3 above.

[34]Taking 1948 as index (100), Ageron notes that Algerian urban
(Footnote continued)

Table 2.7: Evolution of urban wage labour (1911-54)

Category	Europeans			Algerians		
	1911	1948	1954	1911	1948	1954
wage lab (includ. unempl.)	135,285	225,590	253,311[1]	109,546	312,154	463,187[2]
workers	84,524	91,260	84,951	64,163	212,723	241,649

Notes: 1 - the figure included 14,131 unemployed.
2 - including 84,000 partially unemployed and 133,110, totally unemployed.

Source: Compiled from Barbe, op. cit., Pt. II, pp.29, 32, 33, 35.

Despite these migratory movements leading to the rapid growth of the urban population, the evolution of wage labour[35] was slow. As will be seen in Table 2.7 settlers comprised a major part of wage labour in the period 1911 to 1954. In the case of the Algerian community access to wage employment was far more restricted during the same period. Access began to expand significantly only after the second war, a period characterized by the relative expansion of industrial activities. When we distinguish manual workers from wage labour generally it will be seen that while the number of European workers declined- in absolute and relative terms- representing only 32% of all European wage-labour in 1954, the number of Algerian workers steadily rose during this period representing more than 60% in 1954. Unemployment, was concentrated among Algerians 23% of the wage-labour force was totally unemployed in 1954. This rate was even higher when the partially unemployed were added. The figures being based only on those who had previously worked do not include the chronically unemployed.

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[34](continued)
population increased from 66% to 131 from 1936 to 1954 while the rural population increased in the same period from 87% to 115.
Ageron, op. cit., pp.473-74.

[35]Throughout, we have made a distinction between wage labour comprising all those who sold their labour power for wage returns and workers who, although part of this category, were distinct by their position in the hierarchical system of authority and their direct involvement in the production process.

Looking more closely at the structure of the wage-labour during the last decade of colonial rule, reveal further characteristics of the Algerian working class-in-formation. The structure of urban wage-labour (table 2.8) continued to faithfully reflect the low status of the Algerians. The table shows the composition of the working class in terms of ethnicity, skill and qualifications.

Table 2.8: Evolution and structure of wage labour by skill (1948/54)

Skill Category	Europeans		Algerians			
	1948	1954	1948	%	1954	%
Senior staff &technicians	45,676	56,289	10,395	18.5	9,725	14.7
Employees incl. junior staff	56,846	56,164	29,421	51.7	15,204	21.3
Skilled workers	38,755	50,629	24,551	39.8	39,443	43.8
Semi-skilled workers	32,859	28,102	50,404	60.5	60,811	68.4
Unskilled workers	11,714	7,217	128,783	91.7	141,395	95.1

Source: Barbe, op. cit., Pt.II, p.38.

Note: The category of employees was underestimated in 1954. It was probably due to different methods used in the two censuses.

The table indicates that European wage-labour was disproportionately concentrated in non-manual higher status occupations, as well as the skilled positions within the category of manual labour. European workers could be seen, therefore to represent a labour aristocracy.[36] Among Algerian workers the tendency was

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[36] The average annual earnings of skilled European workers were between 300,000 and 600,000F. Algerians of the same category earned between 300,000 and 400,000F; semi-skilled and unskilled Europeans, 250,000F. For the Algerians, the unskilled earned 80,000F. and between 180,000 and 250,000 for the semi-skilled. Three-fifths of Algerians workers were unskilled and an additional 133,000 were permanently unemployed,

(Footnote continued)

reversed very few achieved non-manual occupations, and only a tiny minority entered skilled manual occupations. The emergent Algerian working class exhibits a peculiar structure and composition; reflecting a combination of capitalist exploitation, alienation and colonial domination. Such characteristics, it is argued, would have serious and lasting effects on the development of the labour movement and the future rôle of the working class in the later period.

Table 2.9: Population and employment 1954

Category	Europeans	Algerians	Total
Total population	1,000,000	8,455,000	9,455,000
Active population	354,510	3,157,424	3,511,934
Salaried employees & wage workers	262,260	1,035,265	1,297,525
Workers (including unemployed	106,102	938,690	1,044,792

Source: Compiled from I.L.O., Yearbook of Labour Statistics, 1966 and tables 4 & 7 of this section.

Conclusion:

If we accept official statistics offered in table 2.9 we would conclude that the working class in the restrictive sense of manual labour, represented 80.5% of all wage labour, and 29.7% of total active population in 1954. However, these figures are deficient in a number of ways. First, the census of 1954 underestimated the active Algerian population.[37] Secondly, the figures for workers included the unemployed and under-employed in both agriculture and non-agricultural activities, around 400,000 and 200,000 respectively .

Despite these various deficiencies the discussion above would lead us to the following conclusions and hypotheses which will provide one of the starting points in posing the question, is there an

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[36](continued)
thus living under subsistence levels.
See Barbe, op. cit., Pt. II, pp.44-45.

[37]One of the ways is the exclusion of all women on the ground that they were not seeking employment.

Algerian working class?

1- The colonial period was important in shaping the peculiar structure and experience of the embryonic working class, consisting of agrarian wage labour and the urban workers and the unemployed.
2- The size of these groupings, particularly that of urban, industrial workforce was low during the colonial period. Nevertheless, their experience was socially significant.
3- Paradoxically, this slow growth was the product of low industrialisation but a high level of mechanization in agriculture.
4- The composition of these occupational groupings was distorted along lines of ethnic division and discrimination with the Europeans representing a landowning class and a labour aristocracy, subjectively conscious of its privileges and eager to sustain them.
5- The embryonic Algerian working class was subject to high levels of un-and under-employment and urban marginalization. In this sense the exploited experience of the urban and rural workers was similar. The question arises to what extent did the weight of colonial oppression and ethnic discrimination reinforce traditional structures and values despite the fact that in many cases their objective base was violently disrupted?

2.2 - The labour movement under colonial domination

The identification of a working class requires that we not only consider the objective factors- as above- but also the question of action and subjectivity. In the consideration of such questions in the context of colonialism it is also important to ask if such a study can be limited to trade unionism and its organization into, or alliance with, political parties? The answer must be negative in so far as workers' practices and struggles may assume many and diverse forms. Their grievances, claims and actions could be articulated in a variety of ways, from the most spontaneous popular manifestations to established forms of communal associations, clubs and cooperatives. This fact must be borne in mind in the context of what was a particularly oppressive form of colonial domination. That is to say Algerians were, for much of the colonial period, denied any right to formal organization and even spontaneous actions were severely suppressed.

Another important feature in the development of the Algerian labour movement has been its problematic relationship to political parties (communist and nationalist). Throughout the colonial period it could be said that a conflictive cooperation existed between the developing trade union movement and the political parties. The line of demarcation between the trade union movement, the communist party and the nationalist movement in the later years was, and is still, very difficult to draw.[38] The crucial historical moments of labour unrest were, for example, more often than not also moments of political agitation and nationalist resistance to colonial rule. these cross-cutting ties were a result of the fact that colonial capitalism was experienced in its dual effects of politico-cultural oppression and socio-economic exploitation and discrimination. Approaches that assumed an a priori essentialist incompatibility between the two movements, or privileged the nationalist political movement at the expense of the labour movement and dismissed this latter as a foreign and imported phenomenon are both simplistic and misleading.[39]

It is, therefore, important to grasp the full complexity of the context of the labour movement; the nature of the cleavages and alliances, tactical or strategic, between different groupings and political trends. The heterogeneous composition of the embryonic working class, reflecting the ethnic division of society, sustained and developed to its dramatic expression in the national liberation war. It is also important to note that both ethnic communities were internally divided along political, religious and regional lines. This hybrid composition has been a rock against which trade unions and political parties have continually stumbled. Both trade unions and

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[38] This was the case until the liberalization of political life in Algeria following the riots of October 5, 1988.

[39] These approaches were also ideologically motivated in the sense that they expressed the viewpoint of the national bourgeoisie and petite-bourgeoisie anxious to obliterate the internal division within the Algerian community. See - F. Soufi, "Sources et Problematiques de l'Histoire du Mouvement Ouvrier en Algérie". CRIDSH, Université d'Oran, Histoire de l'Algérie: etudes, sources et documents, No.9, 1983. p.2.

See also - A. Koulakssis & G. Meynier, "Sur le Mouvement Ouvrier et les Communists d'Algérie au lendemain de la première Guerre Mondiale"; in Le Mouvement Social, No.130, Jan.-March 1985, p.3.

political parties have grown out of, and to some extent, reproduced that division. Thus the communist party was largely European, while the nationalist parties were Algerians. Neither had the exclusive loyalty of a particular community however. Both rooted their legitimacy, in different ways, in their representation of the interests of the Algerian nation and the unified working class.

Given this complex historical context, the important questions are what were the objectives and forms of organization adopted by the labour movement and what was the nature of the struggles and constraints it faced? In answering, the focus will be on the trade unions. While we are aware that the labour movement was made up of more than the trade unions the near impossibility of documenting other forms of the labour struggle, practices and organization leaves us with no choice. Even in the area of trade unions there are great difficulties, such research has progressed very slowly and much is yet to be done.[40]

In the following discussion of trade unionism we will divide the period into three stages; the early years before the First World War which saw the emergence of the first trade unions; the period between the two wars; and finally, the post-war period, leading to independence. This division is significant in a number of ways. First, the quality of the data varies enormously, becoming reasonably rich only in the final period. Second, the trade union movement itself underwent significant transformation in each period either in terms of organization, structure, composition and politico-ideological orientation, or in its relationship with the metropolitan trade union movement and political parties.

2.2.1 - Early trade unionism

The emergence and development of trade unions in Algeria- given its character and status as a settler colony- was a

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[40] A mass of official government documents, party and union records, reports and publications are still unused and many are inaccessible to researchers, scattered as they are in different places in Algeria and in France. A great mass was destroyed during the war and the panic leading to independence.
See F. Soufi, op. cit.

slow and uneven process. Initially, it represented a simple extension of metropolitan organizations, not only in terms of their organizational and structural aspects, but also in their objectives and doctrine. Existing documents suggest 1880 as the year in which the first trade union branches were founded. The first workers to organize were the printing operatives in Constantine. Four years later the whole of this occupation was organized. By 1901, the bulk of the existing occupations were unionized even though their membership was very small and reserved for Europeans workers only.[41]

During the war years (1914-18) union activities (strikes, agitation, publications) were suspended. Nevertheless, workers continued to engage such activity, especially in the Western regions of Oran, Mostaghanem, Mascara and Bel-Abbes.[42]The racial character of unions in these years not only limited their size and success, but had a large impact on their future development. In the Oran region, for example, there were only two Algerian union members in 1892. This exclusiveness also encouraged the creation of rival unions, founded on a racial basis, as was the case of the Union of Algerian Indigenous Dockers at the turn of the century. Colonial legislation which prohibited the launching of specifically Algerian organizations and associations was relaxed in the early years of this century. However, Algerians continued to be legally banned from holding positions of responsibility within the unions.[43]

In the early years trade unionism was characterized by its uneven and disparate development. It was strongest in the central and the Western region of the country (the Algiers and Oran regions). The Eastern region, by contrast, was the least organized, a disparity that can be explained, as we have already noticed, by the concentration of both industrial enterprises and settler population in these regions. These were areas of intensive and systematic colonization. It is interesting to note that even the nationalist independent union of later years exhibited the same pattern. This fact

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[41]Weiss, F.; Doctrine et Action Syndicale en Algerie. Paris, Cujas, 1970, p.17.

[42]- Koulahssis & Meynier, op. cit., pp.2-3.

[43]F. Soufi, op. cit., pp.20-24

overruled any simple explanation of this tendency on the basis of an inherent contradiction and antagonism between the union movement and the nationalist movement. While the union movement was strongest in the West the nationalist movement gained its early strength in the East. The Central And Western regions had a larger permanent agricultural wage labour as they were regions of intensive agricultural production and had most of the capitalist plantations of vineyards, fruits and vegetables. The Eastern region was mainly one of cereal agriculture which required seasonal labour and rapidly developed into a capital-intensive activity.

The slow emergence of unionism in these early years was, however, largely related to the absence of any real industrial base, and the limited spread of wage labour in agriculture, regionally disparate and dominated by seasonal labour, which was specifically difficult to mobilize.

Union organization was also inhibited by the ethnic divisions as well as the legal prohibition of any popular forms of mobilization and organization among Algerians. This latter was achieved through enforcement of special laws under the name of "Le Code de l'Indigenat", lasting from 1881 to the turn of the century.[44]

2.2.2 - The trade union movement between the two wars

The First World War represented a turning point in the history of the union movement. A great number of Algerians served in this war[45] as well as in metropolitan economy. They consequently came into close contact with the metropolitan proletariat and its union organizations. Immigrant workers were generally affiliated to the

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[44]- The "Code de l'indigenat" was promulgated since 1881 for a period of seven years, renewed in 1888, and was suspended in principal in 1896. Its objective was total control over the Algerian society in the wake of the end of military rule and the introduction of civilian rule. In its terms, 33 specific items were considered punishable offences, ranging from verbal abuse of any form of colonial authority to unlicensed travel outside the municipality, familial and public gatherings without permission - all of which were punishable by imprisonment and fines.
See C. R. Ageron, op. cit., pp.24, 25, 49.

[45]There are no exact figures but the number of Algerians who served in the war was estimated between 120,000 and 150,000. See Ageron. op. cit.

"Confederation Generale du Travail Unifiee, C.G.T.U." which had a radical and communist orientation. In the aftermath of the war Algerian union membership rose sharply resuming the activities which were suspended in the war time. In the Algiers region union membership doubled while in Oran it tripled.[46]

The national, or the colonial question as it was called, constituted the main issue of debate in the trade union movement as well as the radical political parties, including the French Communist Party (P.C.F.) and its Algerian section. The strength of the unions in the early inte-war period (1919-23) was short-lived failing to overcome their main handicap, communal divisions. European workers largely continued to identify themselves in ethnic terms, as did the Algerians. European dock workers did not hesitate in 1919, to demand higher wages than those paid to Algerians.[47]Nevertheless, such sectional demands did not entirely inhibit the unions from strengthening solidarity across the communal divisions, in the case, for example, of the wave of strikes that swept the Oran region in (1919).

Other examples of such solidarity included the formation, in that same year, of "Committees against high living costs", and the refusal of dockers to handle the shipment of expensive consumer goods destined for the metropolitan market.[48]This was also the significance of the help given to women in the Bastos tobacco factories by the secretary of the bakeries union during their bargaining with employers in 1921. Union solidarity was shown in later years also. For example, in 1936-37 a wave of strikes by agricultural workers in the Oran region led to position of negotiating assistance from the local school teachers union.[49]Strikes were an important feature of the union action

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[46]See Koulakssis & Meynier, op. cit., p.4. Figures for union membership and composition in ethnic terms or occupations were not available for those early years. However, unions were still essentially European-based.

[47]See Soufi, F., op. cit., p.5.

[48]Koulakssis & Meynier, op. cit., p.5.

[49]Soufi, p.23. In this case a European teacher was dismissed by the authorities for his involvement with workers. This reflected the

(Footnote continued)

in the inter-war period as Table 2.10 indicates.

Table 2.10: Evolution of strikes (1919-1934)

Year	1919	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926
Strikes	53	28	07	16	13	15	09	18
Workers	7836	6250	371	1294	3100	114	458	2124
Year	**1927**	**1928**	**1929**	**1930**	**1931**	**1932**	**1933**	**1934**
Strikes	07	20	22	04	03	-	04	04
Workers	897	1817	2210	391	675	-	267	635

Source: Taleb, A. B. "Some Characteristics of the Algerian Union Movement during the Colonial Period." in Revolution & Labour. Special Issue, Nov. 1984, p.56, (Arabic edition).

The occasional acts of solidarity did not, however, resolve the deep malaise of communal division and its repercussions for the union movement. The divisions were exploited by the colonial authorities and the employers who had been gravely disturbed by the militancy of unions in the aftermath of the First World War. Workers were commonly used against each other to break strikes and weaken the union movement. In 1919-1920, for example, both unemployed Spaniards and Algerians were used to break the strikes of railway workers in the Western region (mostly Europeans). In 1921 a strike in the mines of Beni-Saf was broken after eleven days when European workers were persuaded to defect, leaving behind their Algerian and Moroccan comrades.[50]

The colonial employers and authorities had systematically pursued a policy of divide and rule. This was justified by the aim of keeping unions weak and without credibility. wage

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[49](continued)
influence the landed colonial bourgeoisie had over colonial authorities and their determination to break any form of solidarity.

[50]Koulakssis & Meynier, op. cit., p.27.

Differentiation between Algerian and European workers was justified in teleological terms; that is to preserve an essentially discriminatory reality, it was argued that the needs of each community varied greatly.[51] The suppression of the union movement was, however, carried out regardless of ethnicity. Political and ideological affinities overshadowed the ethnic divisions. Trade unionists and political leaders whether communists or nationalists, Europeans or Algerians were under close surveillance and their activities monitored in detail as comprehensive police reports testified.[52]

The inter-war period witnessed a number of significant events affecting the union movement. Three events were of particular importance: first the economic crisis of 1929-30; secondly, the launching in France of the Popular Front in 1934; and thirdly, the rise and establishment of modern Algerian nationalism. The crisis of 1929-30 further weakened the already fragile union movement, after a brief recovery in the aftermath of the first war. Widespread unemployment greatly undermined the spirit of solidarity that seemed to be developing. The rise of the Popular Front brought one new element to the scene; the unification of the two largest labour confederations in France, the C.G.T.U. and the C.G.T. with a membership of mostly Europeans and a reformist ideology. The overriding concerns of the Algerian union movement after this change was to contain the effects of the crisis, to preserve its membership and to play a leading rôle in the anti-fascist struggle. The radical and revolutionary tendencies of the old C.G.T.U. were compromised and with them interest in the national question and the independence of the colony.

The confederations; both the C.G.T. and the C.F.T.C. (a Christian Union) sought to expand and strengthen their influence throughout the colonies. The doctrine of "Colonial Socialism"

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[51] Soufi, op. cit., p.15.

[52] Ibid., pp.16-18 . Examples of widespread and systematic suppression were numerous. We mention two which reflected with their anecdotic character the type of atmosphere in which Unions operated. In 1919, a shopkeeper was imprisoned for shouting "Vive Le Bolshevisme", and a union militant for raising the red flag.

(Footnote continued)

[53]developed by some communists in the early twenties found a new impetus in the anti-fascist struggle on the eve of the Second War. The nationalist aspirations of Algerians which earlier roused the sympathy and recognition of sections of European workers suffered a setback. The hostility was particularly clear in the non-communist unions and political parties both in Algeria and in France. At this time the Communist Party and the C.G.T. had a confused and hesitant attitude resulting in a series of contradictory and ambiguous policies towards the national question and the rôle of the Union movement.[54]

Despite the setbacks this period witnessed not only a growing number of Algerian unionists who also played a more prominent rôle. Successful strikes were also carried out during this time, those by agricultural workers leading to the creation of their first union in 1936, which achieved a membership of 40,000 Algerian workers only one year later .[55]

The rise of modern Algerian nationalism was the third most important event of this period. It was particularly significant that this movement originated among emigrant Algerian workers and was closely associated with the communist movement in France. Despite continuing controversies about the origins of the nationalist movement, the creation of the "Etoile Nord-Africaine" (E.N.A.) in March 1926 was seen as the first nationalist political formation with a clear and coherent nationalist doctrine in the modern sense of the term. In its programme of 1933 a number of fundamental points were specified: a total and complete national independence, construction of a democratic state, nationalization of major assets and natural resources under state control, and socio-economic reforms such as free education, and agrarian reform.[56] The nationalist ideology of the

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[53](continued)
[53]The aim was to spread socialist ideas in the colonies and prepare them for the eventual socialist revolution in the capitalist centre.
[54]Ageron, op. cit., pp.379-389. The author gives examples of the ambiguities of the position of communists torn between support for a nationalist cause and the spirit of internationalism on a proletarian basis.

[55]Weiss, F., op. cit., p.20.
Union membership and its distribution was not available in all documents consulted. Only fragmented information existed.

(Footnote continued)

E.N.A. becoming later (1936) the "Parti du Peuple Algerian" (P.P.A) had considerable influence on the attitudes of Algerian workers, organized in the communist-oriented C.G.T. The conflict that developed between the nationalist and communist political parties was certainly responsible for the frustrations leading to the nationalist breakaway from the C.G.T. and the formation of the national independent Union.

2.2.3- Towards an independent union movement

The communist-oriented C.G.T. was always the strongest union organization in colonial Algeria despite the emergence of other organizations such as C.F.T.C. and "Force Ouvriere" (F.O.) after 1947. Most Algerian workers, whether in France or in Algeria, were affiliated to branches of the C.G.T. In 1945 the C.G.T. claimed a membership of 250,000. But union success in the specific context of colonialism was highly unstable. Thus, after the May events of 1945[57] the C.G.T. suffered a sharp drop in its membership mainly because of the withdrawal of Algerian workers and of the breakaway of the F.O. in 1947 leading to defection of great numbers of European workers. By late 1940, the C.G.T.'s membership was estimated at around 80,000 of which over 60% were Algerians.[58] In June 1954, the metropolitan C.G.T. had finally accepted the principle of an autonomous Algerian labour confederation, leading to the transformation of its local branch into the "Union Generale des Syndicats Algeriens" (U.G.S.A.). The membership of the new autonomous Union was estimated at 100,000, distributed between the three regions

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[56](continued)
[56]For a detailed account of the rise of Algerian nationalism and its different political expressions and organization and its relation to the communist movement, see Ageron, op. cit.

[57]On the 8th May, popular manifestations took to the streets of many Algerian cities and towns especially in the Eastern region (Setif Guelma, Skikda, Kharrata...). These manifestations were instigated by the nationalist party P.P.A.-M.T.L.D., claiming independence for Algeria on the eve of the Allied victory in the second war. Colonial authorities brutally suppressed these manifestations which left thousands dead and injured, among them a number of Algerian Union militants. The C.G.T. and the communist party blamed the nationalists and denounced them as 'provocateurs'.

[58]See R. Gallissot, "Syndicalisme et Nationalisme: Le foundation de l'Union Generale des Travailleurs Algeriens, ou du Syndicalisme C.G.T. ou Syndicalisme Algerien (1954-1956-1958)"; in Mouvement Social, Vol.66, Jan.-March 1969, p.9 & footnote 8.

as follows: Algiers, 40,000; Oran, 40,000; and Constantine, 20,000. However, labour historians such as Gallissot, think this was an over-estimation that should be reduced by 25% bringing the figure to around 70,000. At the same time F.O. unions claimed a membership of 125,000. The real figure, however, was around 60,000, most of them Europeans.[59]

The division of the union movement along ethnic lines concealed the important fact of its division on ideological grounds. The U.G.S.A. retained strong links with the metropolitan C.G.T. and the P.C.F. Its members were also members or sympathizers of the Algerian Communist Party (P.C.A) created in 1936,[60] or the nationalist party (P.P.A.-M.T.L.D.). Other unions, C.F.T.C. and F.O., were under the influence of the reformist and social-democrat ideologies of the Christian and Socialist parties. The most important elements dividing the union movement were the various position on the national question. While U.G.S.A. had always recognized, at least in principle, the right to national independence and considered colonialism to be a fundamental obstacle to the emancipation of the Algerian masses, other unions were openly hostile and resisted such a possibility. But the stand of the U.G.S.A. and the Communists, both in France and Algeria, however radical it may have seemed to non-communist Europeans, remained fundamentally conservative in the eyes of Algerian nationalists.

This can be seen from the status of local unions and their relationship to metropolitan confederations. Both the Algerian C.G.T., and later the U.G.S.A. and Communist Party were until very late in their histories simple sections or branches of the metropolitan organizations. The P.C.A received its independence formally in 1936, and the unions almost twenty years later (1954). Even then, this autonomy was formal rather than real. The metropolitan

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[59] Ibid. p.9.

[60] This followed a decision by the International Communist at its 7th Congress held in Moscow in 1936. It was resisted by trade unionists in the leadership of the P.C.F. and seen later by Algerian communists as essentially negative because the party was denied any real base as unions were still tied to the metropolitan C.G.T. and consequently to the P.C.F. See Weiss, op. cit., p.22, and Ouzegane, A., Le Mielleur Combat, Julliard, Paris, 1963.

unions always resisted attempts to create independent national unions. The classical case in the Maghreb being the rejection of the Union Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens (U.G.T.T), a nationalist breakaway from the C.G.T. in the mid-forties. The attitudes and reactions of metropolitan union leadership clearly betrayed deep-rooted colonial prejudices. As one of the C.G.T. leaders remarked in relation to Tunisia at the time:

> "Accepting the unions' autonomy means prejudging the future political situation, because it means clearly accepting the breakaway of Tunisia from the French Community."[61]

In the case of Algeria autonomy was resisted until 1954 and when it was granted as a tactical move rather than as the result of genuine concern. By that time formal autonomy was too late to forestall the irresistible process towards the split in the U.G.S.A. The formal character of the autonomy granted was betrayed by the Statutes of its creation. In the last article (No.20) it was stated that:

> "U.G.S.A. (C.G.T.) assumes the permanent link between the Confederation Generale du Travail (C.G.T.) and Algerian trade unions. C.G.T., in matters of directives, decisions, programmes of demands and orientation fixed by the supreme bodies of the C.G.T., and their application with adaptation to the Algerian situation and particularities. The Secretary of U.G.S.A. is its representative to C.G.T."[62]

As this formal autonomy was insufficient to heal the rift in the union and the growing disaffection of Algerian nationalists, the U.G.S.A. took the decisive step in the summer of 1956, proclaiming itself an independent national union, deleting from its statutes all reference to the C.G.T. and claiming direct affiliation to the World Federation of Trade Unions (Federation Mondiale des Syndicats - F.M.S.).[63] This was, however, its last act as it was banned five months later, in November 1956. The proclamation of

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[61] A statement by L. Jouhand, leader of the C.G.T. cited by F. Hached, founder of U.G.T.T., cited by Weiss, op. cit., p.21.

[62] Archives of C.G.T., Dossier: Organizations Algeriennes. C.G.T. Francaise, cited by Gallissot, op. cit., p.11.

independence also came after the formation of two Algerian nationalist unions in February 1956.[64] Until it was banned, the U.G.S.A. had branches in most occupations and sectors of economic activity, grouping the dock workers union, the miners union, municipal workers union, construction and public workers, railway men's and post office employees. Membership at that time, however, was only 15,000. After its ban, the P.C.A. recommended in November 1957 its members to join the nationalist union (U.G.T.A.).[65]

After the Second War and until its transformation into U.G.S.A. the C.G.T. maintained a relatively radical and militant stand compared to C.F.T.C. and F.O. and continued to do so until it was banned in 1957. While other unions were favoured by, and cooperated with, colonial authorities,[66] the U.G.S.A. was seen as an active ally of the nationalist movement led by the F.L.N.. Its programmes and demands stressed the urgency of radical social reforms including wages, agrarian reform, unemployment, and so on. Although the question of colonialism was seen as the main obstacle to real emancipation, this was always addressed in equivocal terms, coming last in the list of union demands. In the last two years of its existence the U.G.S.A. maintained its spirit of militancy despite repressive measures and organized a great number of strikes and other actions. Thus, in December 1954 popular protests against unemployment were organized in many cities and towns. In that same month 1,200 dock workers in Oran refused to unload armaments and were locked out by the authorities. This movement later spread to the port of Algiers.

In 1955 strike actions multiplied, spreading to such areas as gas, electricity and water supplies, the railways, manufacturing industries, mining and services. The dock workers were very frequently involved in strikes and lock-outs. Agricultural

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[63]See Gallissot, op. cit., p.24.

[64]The two unions were: Union des Syndicats de Travailleurs Algeriens (U.S.T.A.) and Union Generale des Travailleurs Algeriens (U.G.T.A.). Both will be discussed in the next chapter.

[65]Gallissot, op. cit., p.25, footnote 75.

[66]Weiss, op. cit. pp.20-21.

workers, especially in the Oran region, were also involved in popular actions and strikes during the summer of 1954. Against this background of labour unrest and nationalist armed struggle, the colonial authorities stepped up repressive measures. Union militants and leaders were harassed and imprisoned, union offices closed down and their publications suspended. This process culminated in the banning of the U.G.S.A., in November 1956.[67]

2.2.4 - The special character of the Algerian union movement

Given the socio-economic characteristics of this peculiar colonial context, and the radical transformation to which Algerian society and economy were to be subjected, it is not surprising that the labour movement and in particular the trade unions were rendered a somewhat marginal phenomenon. If we consider the year 1954 in which the liberation war was launched by the F.L.N., trade union membership did not exceed 150,000 (C.G.T. and F.O. combined). This represented a small fraction of the mass of wage-labour estimated at around 650,000. If we add the 400,000 seasonal agricultural workers, and the 1.5 millions in process of proletarianization as, the economically active population stood at more than 2.5 millions, the unionized fraction was, therefore, a tiny minority in a mass of disinterested, pauperized and oppressed people. It is also significant that the majority of the union membership was to be found in the services sector, and a minority in the large industrial enterprises.[68]

This limited success of the unions and the consequent weakness of the working class in process of its formation, were mutually reinforcing elements. A number of conditions represent real and objective constraints on such developments. The first set of conditions were those arising from the specific context of an oppressive colonial capitalist system. The second, were the nature and characteristics of the unions, as a product of this specific context.

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[67]For a detailed discussion of the position of authorities toward unions, See Gallissot. R., op. cit., pp.16-17 See also F. Weiss, op. cit.

[68]Gallissot, R. op. cit., p.18.

In considering the first set of conditions, we are forced to appreciate the colossal task faced by unions in a situation of high and chronic unemployment and under-employment. The relative surplus population produced and sustained by colonial capitalism was very high throughout this period (50% of the active population). The characteristically weak and extroverted economic base coupled with discriminatory policies had profound consequences for the formation of the working class. First, the mass of unemployed and under-employed Algerians were, by their very status, inaccessible to unionization. Secondly, the large part of the wage-labour force was dispersed among a great number of small enterprises, thus complicating further any attempt to mobilize and organize workers. Thirdly, Europeans, disproportionately, represented the urban wage-labourers. They were, concentrated in sectors of activity with relatively high material and moral security (administration, services, and transport). They were particularly accessible to union mobilization and organization. This particular fact had serious and lasting effects on the orientation of the union movement.

It was also noteworthy that agricultural workers were not organized until 1936, and even then they were the locus of suspicion simply because in their great majority, they were Algerians. It was one of the aspects on which Algerian membership in the C.G.T. and P.C.A. were very critical of union policy. They even saw in it a policy of deliberate neglect of those workers and clear expression of deep-rooted hostility and apprehension. For the mobilization of agricultural workers not only risks to disrupt the colonial enterprise par excellence, but also had a clear nationalist dimension. A question which the labour movement (unions and political parties) sought to avoid and towards which they adopted inconsistent and equivocal attitudes.[69]

This combination of conditions lent the union movement its specific character. First, it was essentially a European movement whether assessed in its composition or attitudes and policies. This tendency changed little even when Algerian workers joined in great numbers. Secondly, the unions were directly linked to, and strictly

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[69] Ouzegane, A., Le Meilleur Combat. op. cit., pp.90-91.

controlled from, the metropolis. Their structural and doctrinal dependence explained, in part at least, their failure to overcome the congenital weakness of their operation in Algeria. Thirdly, the colonial context, with its various discriminatory measures and structures, ensured that the unions were dominated by an aristocracy recruited from the most accessible sectors of the economy, and the more privileged sectors of wage-labour, i.e, European workers and some Algerian skilled and professional workers.

The fact that the union movement retained its European character for so long can then be explained by the historical socio-economic structures and politico-legal systems of colonial domination. In historical terms, the labour force represented a segment of the metropolitan proletariat which both the unions and political parties sought to mobilize and organize in accordance with the political struggles and class conflict in the metropolis. This was especially clear in times of economic recession and political upheavals, in 1930, 1934 and during and after the Second World War. Algerians were, for a long time, excluded from the unions for political reasons, including the policy not to contest which was anchored in the submission of Algerians. This exclusion realized two important aims. It confined Algerian workers in a position of second class subjects. Secondly, it assured colonial capitalism a stable market for cheap labour, thus limiting the strength and challenge of a potentially organized and united working class. This explains the fact that the settlers encouraged the promotion of special legislation throughout most of the colonial period. The ethnic division of society had its objective reasons in the logic of colonial domination and the union movement as a product of those same conditions could not but sustain this division and reproduce it.

The dependence of the union movement vis-a-vis the metropolitan labour organizations and political parties was, to a large extent, the corollary of the conditions discussed above. We have already mentioned the resistance of metropolitan union leadership to any acknowledgement of the autonomy of local union organizations. In fact, local union leadership reflected and reinforced this attitude. From the metropolitan view the dependence was justified by a number of reasons. First, Algerians, it was argued, still lacked skilled and trained militants to run their own unions. Second, autonomy would put

unions in a very weak position vis-a-vis colonial authorities. They would both lose their legal status and legitimate cover and protection against repression. From the viewpoint of local union leadership autonomy would certainly mean the loss of their active rôle in policy-making structures at the enterprise and government levels. Second, autonomy was associated with a tendency towards weakening the already fragile unity of the local working class whose divisions along ethnic lines would be enhanced by such a process.[70] There was also a strong sense of the need to preserve the relationship and solidarity of workers both in the colony and in the metropolis. Years of traditional ties and doctrinal influence produced and sustained the illusion that the liberation of colonized peoples could be achieved only through the liberation of the metropolitan proletariat.

The local unions were also elitist in character. This was by no means an inherent feature of the union movement as such, but the product of the specific objective conditions we have outlined. The social and occupational origin and background of union leadership reflected the structural conditions of unionization. They were mostly Europeans, but the Algerians shared in the general pattern of recruitment from such occupations as junior and medium level employees of public transport and other services, teachers and foremen.[71] These were the type of people who invariably assumed the leadership positions of different unions. The general composition of union membership and, in particular, their leadership, was related to their dependent status vis-a-vis the metropolitan unions. It might also explain the hesitant and equivocal attitude of the union movement towards the national question, being generally rooted in a cultural compatibility with the metropolitan leadership.

However, the point we made about the social origins of the union leadership had a significance that extended beyond the colonial situation. A similar pattern can be found in the post-independence period characterized by the continuing impact of general socio-economic imbalances. It was striking how similar the attitudes of rank and file workers to the union leadership continued

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[70] See Weiss, op. cit., p.22 and Gallissot, p.13.

[71] Gallissot, R., p.14.

to be. M. Launay recorded the following statement made by an agricultural worker at the close of the colonial period, and in some respects it was still relevant:

> "They would come once or twice a year, talk well and do nothing for us ... If we had a union card we would be thrown at the gates and starve to death, the union would do nothing. If you break a plough you will be thrown at the gates. You can go to the court, but you lose every time. And we still do not know who is the big boss of the union."[72]

One of the major difficulties faced by the unions in all Dependent Social Formations, whether in the colonial or post-colonial periods is that associated with the high instability of wage-labour. Workers were largely from a recent peasant background, in many cases, preserving strong ties with their rural communities, thus forming a mass of what was termed "target workers". Consequently, unions experienced great fluctuations in their membership. In the case of colonial Algeria this was true, to a limited extent, about union membership but not the character of wage-labour. Studies of the colonial period have revealed a striking degree of fixity in relation to wage-labour. Limited chances of employment offered by the colonial economy left no choice for workers to develop attitudes of "target workers" on a large scale as observed elsewhere in Africa.[73] Bourdieu, for example, made this point very clear in his study of work and workers' attitudes on the eve of political independence.

> "In urban society, the sharpest cleavage is that separating workers into two groups, those who are stable and they are extremely so, and those who are unstable (one in three) and they are also extremely so. The chosen instability constitutes a luxury[74]

At this stage, we might conclude that the labour movement had little impact on the process of social transformation.

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[72] M. Launay, Les Paysants Algériens. Eds. Seuil, 1963, p.140.

[73] See R. Cohen and R. Sandbrook (eds.); The Development of an African working class: studies in class formation and action; London, Longman, 1975.

[74] Bourdieu, P. et al. Travail et Travailleurs en Algerie. Paris et La Haye, Mouton, 1963. Cited in Gallissot, op. cit., p.34.

This argument has not been a denial of its importance or relevance, but a recognition of the specifically difficult and complex context in which it emerged, developed and carried out its struggles. The colonial barrier, the weight of the colonial bourgeoisie and the colonial state was too much to allow for full and real expressions of class divisions and conflicts. Instead, communal divisions on ethnic, religious and cultural grounds deeply rooted in highly unequal socio-economic conditions and political oppression and subordination gave rise to other forms of social solidarity. The future development of the union movement itself would bear clear imprints of this transformation, dislocation of social conflicts and antagonisms.

2.3- Nationalism and the labour movement

2.3.1 - The roots of the independent union movement

Attempts to create a labour confederation which was both nationalist and independent from the control and influence of metropolitan unions dated back to 1947. However, the general socio-economic and political conditions as well as the divisions within the nationalist movement delayed its effective realization. The idea was taken up again in 1953 during the second congress of the nationalist party (M.T.L.D.). This time a commission of labour affairs headed by a union militant - Aissat Idir - was established.[75]
Some historians have suggested that union committees at the wilaya level (provincial) as well as committees for the unemployed were created, and a national conference of the unemployed was held in the period 1953-54.[76]

These early attempts and their failure reflected the instability of both the labour and nationalist movements. For the former, they clearly signalled the deep-rooted dissatisfaction with, and antagonisms within, the existing union organizations. For the latter, they reflected its inability to develop viable structures and forms of organization to mobilize specific sections of the Algerian

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[75]See Weiss, op. cit., p.30.

[76]Ageron, op. cit., pp.592-93.

population. This may well be a particular feature of a nationalist movement with strong populist overtones.

The launching of the national liberation war in November 1954 represented a turning point, not only in the history of the nationalist movement with its various political formations, but also the labour movement and its organization, the trade unions. This event has exacerbated the contradictions inside both movements, especially accelerating the process of division inside the union movement. This was mainly due to the fact that the FLN had, for the first time, posed the national question, not in terms of a probable event, but in concrete and practical terms. The unions and the political formations were forced to take practical stands and choose sides, rather than merely express preferences or reflect on a theoretically possible event. The union movement failed to develop a consistent attitude and a coherent programme in relation to the national liberation, dashing the last illusions of the nationalist militants. This confirmed them in their conviction that not even the U.G.S.A., let alone the other unions, the C.F.T.C. and F.O., was fundamentally interested in the question of national independence, continuing to pursue its economic demands only.

2.3.2 - The creation of the U.S.T.A.

The Union Syndicale des Travailleurs Algeriens (U.S.T.A.) was the first independent nationalist union. It was launched by Messali's Movement National Algerien (M.N.A.) on the 20th February 1956.[77] Its creation was viewed favourably by colonial authorities because it reinforced rivalry and bloody opposition that had developed between the F.L.N. and M.N.A. However, U.S.T.A. had very little success in Algeria. Its membership amounted to a few thousands (5,000 by its own claims, this was considered an over-estimation of its strength). Its membership was limited to few employment sectors as the composition of its first secretariat suggested. Of the ten members

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[77] Messali Hadj, a major political figure in the history of the nationalist movement, leader of E.N.A., P.P.A.-M.T.L.D., and when the party split in 1953 over the question of Messali's leadership into loyalists and opponents, Messali created the M.N.A. in opposition to the F.L.N. as the liberation war was launched, and armed confrontation opposed militants of both parties during the war.

of this secretariat, six were from urban transport in the Algiers region, three from electricity and gas services, and one was a hospital employee. By contrast, its branch in France was relatively successful, perhaps due to the legacy and influence of Messali's previous political organizations (E.N.A., P.P.A., M.T.L.D.). Its strongholds were in the Eastern and Northern regions of France. In the aftermath of its first congress in France in 1957, it claimed a membership of 75,000. But independent sources suggested a figure of 15,000 members for its metropolitan section.[78] There is little record of its doctrine or programmes of action. However, a strong anti-communist feeling was said to have been its dominant orientation.

Both the creation and rôle of the U.S.T.A. and M.N.A. are still very problematic. It is known that in 1956, U.S.T.A. played an active rôle in breaking strikes called by U.G.S.A. Most seriously, Gallissot has pointed to police and other government archives suggesting that this union was at certain moments used by and/or cooperated with colonial and metropolitan authorities.[79] Whatever may have been the reasons behind its creation, this union had little impact among Algerian workers, especially in Algeria.

2.3.3 - U.G.T.A. from its creation to its exile

The Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens, (U.G.T.A.), was created just four days after the U.S.T.A. on February 24, 1956. In its structure it reflected the strong influence of the French union models, especially the C.G.T., and U.G.S.A. from which its leaders came. It was presented as an independent nationalist labour confederation of various occupation-based unions. It had a hierarchically centralized structure composed of an executive committee of 21 members, which elected an executive bureau of 12 members, and this in turn chose a secretariat of five members. Horizontally, it was organized in three regional unions (Algiers, Oran and Blida) and two local unions in Algiers itself. In addition to these, U.G.T.A. had a special commission of control with five members.

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[78] See Weiss, op. cit., p.29, footnote No.6 and Gallissot, op. cit., p.20.

[79] Gallissot, op. cit., p.20, footnote 53.

All the decisions were to be taken by the congress held every two years. The first occupational unions to join the U.G.T.A. were the railways union, post office employees, dock workers, agricultural workers, and later the teachers union. According to union claims its membership rose very rapidly achieving 110,000, one year after its creation, distributed among 72 sections (the basic union structure). Its implantation in the Eastern region, however, was very weak, if not absent due mainly to the intensification of the war in this part of the country. In February 1957 the U.G.T.A. extended its activities to Algerian emigrant workers through the creation of the "Amicale Générale des Travaileurs Algériens" (A.G.T.A.). This was conceived as an association of emigrants and a mouth-piece of the union and the F.L.N. Algerian workers were encouraged to join French unions, especially C.G.T., while the A.G.T.A. played a more prominent role in civic and political matters, representing emigrants' interests at the highest levels and mobilizing support for the national question.[80]

In terms of objectives, U.G.T.A. defined its aims in a classical trade unionist manner. These were made explicit in the declaration of its first national secretariat:[81]

- to give workers' struggles a new and revolutionary orientation, congruent with their profound aspirations.
- to help workers acquire a class consciousness enabling them to fight all exploiters without distinction.
- to eradicate all forms of discrimination in the defence of the working class.
- to establish real and effective democracy within the unions.
- to realize the unity of the Algerian working class by joining one International Trade Union Confederation.

The U.G.T.A. was conceived as universal, that is, open to all workers without distinction of race, religion or political

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[80]Weiss, F. op. cit. pp.30-32.

[81]The declaration of the National Secretariat appeared in l'Ouvrier Algérien No.1, of 6.4. 1956, reproduced in Weiss, op. cit. p.321.

convictions. But the repeated calls to European workers suggests that these were not attracted to join despite the recommendation made by the P.C.A. to its members and sympathizers after the banning of the U.G.S.A. The U.G.T.A.'s leadership stressed that their strategic aim was:

> "the construction of a democratic Algeria against the imperialists and feudalists ... Only the U.G.T.A. can represent the class consciousness of all the Algerian proletariat"[82]

The attempt to cross ethnic lines was also expressed in the call made in an open letter to European workers:

> "We are democrats. We would not accept to live under a feudal, monarchial or theocratic regime."[83]

In its first and only year of legal existence U.G.T.A. was actively involved in a number of economic and political strikes. Its members and leaders were subjected to all sorts of harassment and repression.[84] One of its first shows of strength was its participation in the election of enterprises' committees of the 30th April, 1956. U.G.T.A. delegates took 72% (12 of 18) of the seats contested. But the Governor General declared these results unacceptable and offered the seats to other unions, mainly the F.O. Examples of repression which U.G.T.A. militants had to endure are too many to enumerate and we have given just two of them here. In May 1956, U.G.T.A. offices were stormed by police who seized documents and arrested 150 members including all its leaders. In June 1956, union offices were again searched after a bomb explosion, documents were seized and 700 members arrested. It was only too significant that U.G.T.A. in the first months of 1957 had already had its seventh National Secretariat.[85]

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[82]Aissat Idir in "Conscience Maghrebine", cited by Weiss, p.34.

[83]U.G.T.A., "Appel aux travailleurs Algériens d'origine Europeenne"; Jan 1957. See Weiss, op. cit. p.322.

[84]weiss, F. op. cit. p.33.

[85]See Weiss, op. cit., pp.33-34. Successive members of the National Secretariat were either jailed or went into exile in Tunisia and Morocco. Aissat Idir the founder and first secretary of the U.G.T.A. died in prison in 1958 after being tutored for months.

The wave of strikes, whether economic or political, started in 1956 by a political general strike successfully followed in both Algeria and France. This led to new arrests in the union ranks and in reaction to the repression a new strike was called in August 1956. In November 1956 a general strike was called, this time in collaboration with the Moroccan U.M.T. and the Tunisian U.G.T.T., in commemoration of the second anniversary of the liberation war. In January 1957 a strike by railway workers developed into a strike of dock workers, and 74 union officers were arrested. The longest and most successful strike was the general strike of 26th January, 1957. This was called to show support for the F.L.N., as the United Nations General Assembly was debating the Algerian question for the first time. The strike was observed by all Algerians and lasted more than a week. The repression following this event was even greater than before with 183 union officers imprisoned while a number were either killed or disappeared. By mid-1957 U.G.T.A. could no longer withstand the systematic repression, and went underground with its leadership posted to Tunisia where the F.L.N. had its headquarters.[86] This event represented a major turning point in the development of U.G.T.A. Its activities in Algeria dropped dramatically, and its political involvement in the first year, coupled with the growing need to coordinate its clandestine activity, led to its subordination to the F.L.N.

As a result most of its efforts became concentrated outside the country. The unions new rôle involved two specific missions.[87] First, there was a diplomatic task aimed at gaining the recognition of the International Congress of Free Trade Unionism. This also involved intensive activity to gather support for the F.L.N. Second, the U.G.T.A. became more concerned with training and educating trade union officers and planning for the future rôle it would play when political independence was eventually achieved. In this period also the U.G.T.A. intensified its activities in France through A.G.T.A. until the latter was banned by French metropolitan authorities in August, 1958 as a result of its political activity.

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[86] Weiss, F. op. cit. p.36.

[87] Weiss, op. cit., p.37.

2.3.4- Nationalism and trade unionism: U.G.T.A. and F.L.N.

An interesting question that historians of the Algerian labour movement have not explicitly formulated was why the final split of the U.G.S.A. and the creation of an independent nationalist union only occurred one and a half years after the liberation war had been launched? We believe the answer to this question is to be found in both the weakness and divisions within the nationalist movement, on the one hand, and the relatively strong influence of U.G.S.A. among Algerian workers, on the other. The first point can be seen from the reaction of all Algerian political formations: the M.T.L.D., the P.C.A., the Association of Ulema and the M.N.A. These were without exception, suspicious, if not openly hostile to the armed struggle and its leaders. With respect to the second point, the existing union organization (U.G.S.A.) despite its internal divisions, seemed at least temporarily, more comforting in the context of the confusion affecting the political scene.

The lapse of time between the outbreak of war in November 1954 and the creation of the U.G.T.A. in 1956, had a double function. It confirmed the F.L.N. as an authentic nationalist and popular force leading a liberation war, and not a momentary uprising. Second, it also confirmed the equivocal and hesitant attitude of the U.G.S.A. towards the question of national independence, including the impossibility of taking an independent stand from the metropolitan confederation. These two significant events certainly convinced Algerian militants in U.G.S.A. of the necessity to create their own independent union organization.

We have to raise this question because it is also associated with an important claim: that the U.G.T.A. was a creation of the F.L.N.[88] This could be seen to have within it an explanation of the delay in the split of U.G.S.A. and the creation of U.G.T.A. However, there is no historical evidence to support such a claim. Quite the contrary. Documents from the period, whether issued by F.L.N. or U.G.T.A., suggest that no links of direct organizational

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[88] See Gallissot, op. cit., p.38, where he points to some historical evidence on the question of U.G.T.A.'s independence relying on the testimony of some early militants.

subordination existed. Their relationship prior to 1958 appears to have been through individual militants who were affiliated to both organizations. The institutionalization of closer links came as a result of a number of elements, not least the increasing repression to which both were subjected. The most important element was certainly their specifically nationalist ideology. Their nationalism in distinction to that propagated by the P.C.A. and practised by the U.G.S.A., "the nation in the making", was firmly nostalgic. For them, the nation had already been in existence with all its spiritual, cultural and socio-political elements. What it needed was a resurrection, reaffirmation of all that was suppressed, distorted and violated.

It was, however, of utmost importance to note the existence of some ideological and political differences between F.L.N. and U.G.T.A. The former never considered the working class an important social force in the revolutionary liberation and transformation of Algerian society. Rather, it saw the working class as a potentially conservative force. Such an attitude may be explained by the social origins of the F.L.N leadership (petite bourgeoisie) and its claimed base in the peasantry. In its first elaborate ideologico-political programme, the Soummam declaration of 1956, the F.L.N. leadership exalted the peasantry and was, to some extent, critical of the workers. Nevertheless, it recognized their distinctive rôle and weight in strengthening the liberation movement:

> "The working class can and must bring a more dynamic contribution, giving impetus to the rapid evolution of the revolution, its power and final success."[89]

As Gallissot has rightly argued, the complexity and, indeed, confusion characterizing the relationship between the F.L.N. and the union movement was the product of the specific conditions of the liberation struggle. These necessitated close links and coordination of actions leading to the subordination of socio-economic concerns and objectives of the union to the political aims of the F.L.N. and its strategy of national liberation. This subordination was

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[89] F.L.N., Plate-forme de la Soummam, cited by Gallissot, op. cit., p.39.

reflected, in the period after 1958, by the organic domination of F.L.N. apparatuses over the U.G.T.A. It is also important to note that this institutional and ideological hegemony had a specific class content. The F.L.N., despite its heterogeneous social composition was in its early phase dominated by a radical grouping of the petite-bourgeoisie. Later on, the predominance of this fraction was weakened, through a process of the accommodation of other political tendencies representing different groups of the rural and urban bourgeoisie.[90] The hegemony of the F.L.N. over the U.G.T.A. was not, therefore, a simple contingency plan dictated by conjunctural conditions, but reflected a latent process of class hegemony in the making. The working class and its independent organization would certainly represent the main threat to the alliance that emerged between the bourgeoisie and the petite-bourgeoisie, and its subordination and control represented one of the main tasks of this alliance.

Colonial suppression and exploitation was a general phenomenon, though different classes or groupings of classes did not experience it in the same way and were affected in varying degrees. In effect, however, the principal contradiction, that between the colonial order and the indigenous society, to some extent overlaid, its internal divisions and antagonisms. The aim of national independence was the overriding goal on which all social forces could agree, but nothing beyond that. Algerian workers and their unions were no exception as this statement clearly suggested:

> "We ought to be clearly understood, in the present stage, the principal enemies of the Algerian people, and the workers in particular, is French colonialism. That is why each worker must understand that the U.G.T.A. is closer to any

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[90] This change in the balance of power was the result of other political formations joining the F.L.N. in 1955-56, though as individuals. The composition of the Conseil National de la Revolution Algerienne, the supreme instance in F.L.N. apparatus reflected this: 17 of the members were from the early leaders, a radical splinter group of the M.T.L.D., five were from the "Centralist" tendency of the M.T.L.D., two from the liberal "assimilationists", and two from the Association of the Ulema. Some of the "Centralists", the liberalists and the Ulema were all representative of different fractions of the bourgeoisie (large landowners, traders, entrepreneurs and liberal professions). See Gallissot, op. cit.

> Algerian industrialist imprisoned for his patriotism than to Mr. Zittel, the former C.G.T. Secretary of Algiers Municipal Workers, who defends the slavish policy applied by the former unionist Lacoste."[91]

Even the "revolutionary" character claimed by the union movement was not foreign to the F.L.N.'s populist ideology. Indeed, here we could find another convergence. The revolution was couched in general terms and associated with political independence. However, U.G.T.A. saw this latter as a necessary, but not sufficient condition for the emancipation of the popular masses. The socio-political project of a future society was something which the F.L.N. ideology did not, most probably intentionally, specify. For the union movement there was a socio-political project, however vague and lacking a clear social content. This was specified in general terms as nationalization of foreign assets, state property of all material wealth, and construction of a planned and independent economy on the basis of industrialization.

> "It is not a secret for anyone: tomorrow's Algeria must be, will be- because this is the will of its people- a socialist Algeria... What we want is to be totally free, and there is no total freedom without economic and social liberation. This is the essential: disappearance of all exploitation... We are not fighting to exchange masters, but in order not to have any, it means to become masters of ourselves. The condition of this freedom is socialism. It implies the distribution of wealth, suppression of all forms of monopoly and all the privileges, a planned economy."[92]

Another key element in this socio-political project was agrarian reform. Here as elsewhere, however, the lack of a specific social content and definite plans for the future forms of socio-economic organization was clear.

> "With respect to the agrarian reform, it must be complete...: limitation of property, distribution

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[91] l'Ouvrier Algérien, No.1, 6th April 1956. Cited in Gallissot, p.40, original emphases.
See also M. Mashino, "Entretien avec un syndicalist Algérien", in Les Temps Modernes, Oct.-Nov. 1960, p.527.

[92] See M. Mashino, op. cit., p.525, original emphasis.

of land to those who work it, collective cultivation."[93]

It was, therefore, not totally justifiable to claim, as some scholars did, that the U.G.T.A. saw political independence as its strategic and final aim and had no perspective beyond that point, no plans for the future, however vague and general.[94] It was a more serious charge to dismiss the revolutionary project of the U.G.T.A. as an independent nationalist union movement in the way Gallissot did:

> "There is no need for a revolutionary programme for the aftermath of political liberation, since the suppression of the colonial status is sufficient. Does not this revolutionary national trade unionism hide, behind the term of national revolution, a reformism of simple social promotion.[95]

It was undoubtedly true that the union movement was dominated by a particular stratum of the emergent working class; mainly, non-manual employees and manual skilled workers. But this was a product of the specific historical conditions in which the labour movement developed previously and within which U.G.T.A. was created. The liberation war, the violent suppression during the years of its existence and the exile of its leadership had all inflicted damaging consequences on the union movement which must not be underestimated. The U.G.T.A. problem, in our view, did not lie in the absence of a revolutionary programme for the future, but rather in the absence of an objective base.

Since 1957 when it went underground and its leadership was exiled, the possibilities of a serious mobilization of workers was greatly compromised. Even before that the context of the war had imposed on the union a specific orientation for its actions, mainly

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[93] Ibid, p.525.

[94] See Gallissot, p.41. Basing his argument on a selective reading of U.G.T.A. documents, he concluded his analysis by denying the union any authentic representation of working class interests and considered it the creation of a frustrated stratum of Algerian workers and employees who were denied chances for social promotion within the context of colonial order.

[95] Ibid, p.42.

political strikes and anti-colonial propaganda at the expense of class-oriented actions of mobilization and education of workers. The contrasting example presented by emigrant workers in the metropolis was significant in this sense. Only this group had, to some extent, the chance and, indeed, the privilege of developing its class consciousness and ideology in the context of the socializing action of the metropolitan labour movement and the intensive action of the A.G.T.A. But this group was as much in exile as were the U.G.T.A. and its leadership. The rôle played by emigrant workers in the formulation of U.G.T.A. ideology and programmes is difficult to overestimate, but more important is the fact that this group represented inside the U.G.T.A., the potential core, as against the non-manual service employees dominating the union in Algeria. It is not our intention to claim that U.G.T.A. had an unproblematic and revolutionary class ideology or programme, but to draw attention to the specific nature of the movement and the conditions within which it was developing, and consequently the potentially conflicting orientations resulting from its status and rôle. The U.G.T.A. had and still has, both class and national aims and objectives. This becomes clearer in the following chapters as we analyse the status and rôle of U.G.T.A. in the context of national development and anti-imperialist struggle.

CHAPTER THREE

THE GENERAL CONDITIONS OF CLASS FORMATION (1962 - 1966)

In the last chapter we considered the development of colonial capitalism and the associated transformation of Algerian economic and social structures in general including the process of working class formation. This chapter will concentrate on economic and social structural changes during the early years of independence (1962-66). In the first section we shall present a general outline of the colonial heritage, focusing on the state of the economy. The second section is devoted to an analysis of the emergent Algerian class structure. The third and final section will consider the specific processes of working class formation, focusing on the particular experience of self-management.

3.1- The economy after independence

The stagnation of the colonial economy reached crisis proportions after independence. Many new factors began to affect the already profoundly weak and unstable infrastructure. The most important of these were the disruptive effects of the liberation war, extending over seven years and encompassing the whole country. Particularly damaging was the violent campaign of economic sabotage and terror carried out by the "Organisation de l'Armee Secrete" (OAS), on the eve of independence, and the massive exodus of Europeans following such communal violence. At least one third of the one million settlers departed, including the trained and skilled elements of the workforce which had sustained both the economy and the administration. Their departure brought many activities to a halt and led to the closure of various enterprises with the consequence of widespread redundancy, particularly in the urban areas. Independence was then marked by three phenomena: a fall in production, a rise in unemployment and underemployment, and the flight of capital.

3.1.1. - Fall in production

Production was seriously disrupted in this period. Some estimated the fall in overall production between 1960 and 1963 at 35%.[1] According to Amin, non-agricultural activities were the worst hit dropping by an estimated 55% in 1963, compared to 1962 levels. The degree to which various sectors were affected differed. Thus, production in extractive industries fell by 20% in 1963, while metallurgy dropped by 50%. Electricity production and consumption fell by 22% in the same year.[2] Observers have also pointed to the sharp fall in the use of the productive capacity of many industries in the period immediately following the Evian Accords of 1962.[3]

Table 3.1: Utilization of productive capacity (1962)

Industry	Capacity in %
Textiles	50
Olive oil	71
Fish canning	14
Fruit canning	40
Sugar refining	0
Chemicals	40
Metallurgy	25

Source: Clegg, I., Workers' Self-Management in Algeria, p.79.

3.1.2. - Employment

We saw in the previous chapter that the colonial economy

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[1]S. Amin, L'economie du Maghreb, Paris, eds. Minuint, 1965. Vol.1, p.120.
See also Raffinot and Jacquemot, Le Capitalisme d'Etat Algerien; Paris, Maspero, 1977, p.49.

[2]Clegg, Workers' Self-Management in Algeria. London: Penguin Press, 1971, p.77. Also Raffinot & Jacquemot, op. cit, p.56.

[3]Clegg, op. cit, p.79, and Raffinot and Jacquemot, op. cit., p.50.

had failed to absorb the growing labour force and that under- and unemployment were major characteristics of the colonial period. In the aftermath of independence the situation deteriorated further. The figures available, though varying considerably from one source to another, point to a fall in the level of employment in almost all sectors, other than "modern" agriculture where Algerians took control of abandoned farms so continuing their operation and averting a major crisis in food production. In 1962 the employment in urban areas was estimated at 600,000, while the level of unemployment exceeded 33% among one million of active male population. [4] Unemployment in the rural areas with an active male population of some two millions was even higher, with some estimating it at over one million.[5] In the aftermath of independence while levels of unemployment fell, industry, construction and public works remained affected losing some 50,000 to 60,000 jobs in the period 1963 to 1964.[6] In 1964, official sources estimated urban unemployment at 500,000, while under-employment was estimated at 900,000.[7] This continuing situation encouraged a flow of emigrant workers to France, the number rising in 1963 to 222,631; and increasing in subsequent years.
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3.1.3- Flight of capital

The low rate of investment which characterized the whole period of colonial rule, sank further during the last decade of colonialism despite attempts by the metropolitan authorities to reverse the trend by launching the Constantine Plan in 1958. The main Factors conditioning this trend were discussed in Chapter Two.

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[4]S. Amin, The Maghreb in the Modern World: Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco; London, Penguin Press, 1970, p.136.
See also Raffinot and Jacquemot, op. cit., pp.51-56, and Benhouria, op. cit., p.237.
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Amin, The Maghreb in the Modern World, op. cit., p.136.

[6]Ibid. Other sources put the number of jobs lost in this branch of industry at a higher figure (103,000 jobs between 1961-63) according to Revue Algerienne du Travail 1964, cited by Boutefnouchet, Les Travailleurs en Algerie, ENAL, Alger, 1984, p.33.

[7]See Benhouria, op. cit., p.237 and Boutefnouchet, op. cit., p.33.

[8]Raffinot & Jacquemot, op. cit., p.49. See also Benhouria, op. cit., p.241.

The movement of capital out of colonies, even those independent economies integrated into the neo-colonial system, is a common feature of the relationship. However, the flight of capital from Algeria was peculiar in the sense that it was occurring not under relatively stable conditions and represented by the repatriation of profits and interests, but as a process of the withdrawal of capital assets accumulated over a long period. This process occurred over the period, 1959 to 1964,[9] assuming alarming proportions immediately after the Evian Accords, concluded in March 1962. The failure of European settlers to halt political independence, and the extreme tension and violence which followed the cease-fire, fuelled the process of capital repatriation. Thus, in 1962 the amount of repatriated capital reached 500 million AF a month. From 1963 to 1965 a total of 4.5 billion was repatriated, representing 43% of total savings (including households, administration and enterprises).[10]

Furthermore, it was not only capital that was repatriated but also industrial and commercial equipment. The lack of capital was not, however, the only or even the most important problem affecting the economy. Some observers argued that the economic crisis was fuelled by the under-utilization of existing investment provided by private and public financing. This was linked to a dramatic fall in global demand (40%) as the settlers and the French army (500,000) left the country; the acute shortage of skilled and qualified labour force; dilapidated equipment resulting from the lack of investment and breakdown of trading links.[11] The effects of the crisis were unevenly experienced by enterprises, depending on their size, and the nature and destination of their products. Hence, large export-oriented firms were less affected than smaller enterprises supplying the local market. This outcome undoubtedly accentuated Algeria's economic

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[9]Riva et Roved, "Le commerce exterieur de l'Algerie"; Doctoral Thesis, Universite de Strasbourg. Cited by Benhouria, op. cit., p.241.

[10]Ibid. p.241.

[11]Ibid, p. 242. The author revealed that "existent capital provided by state subsidies and foreign, mainly French, aid amounted in the three years from 1963 to 1965 to 640,735 and 735 million Algerian Dinar respectively. Private investment, excluding oil, reached 440,285 and 360 million AD respectively, in the same period."
See also Raffinot and Jacquemot, op. cit., p.49.

dependence and highlighted its future vulnerability. Some have argued that it was this experience which also gave rise to "the first signs of the political weakness of the working class" by undermining union power in economically more important enterprises.[12] The truth in this claim can only be assessed in the wider context of the period. For example, the government was determined to keep the unions out of these enterprises, so providing the relative peace[13] and stability required by foreign capital to keep it in the country. The government's main objectives were to avoid aggravating unemployment, already at unacceptable levels, while curtailing workers' power and influence in sensitive areas.

To conclude this section we must point out that despite the economic crisis the economic structures were characterized by diversity and complexity. In all economic spheres various forms of legal ownership coexisted. In agriculture there was a "socialist" sector which included self-managed farms covering almost 2.5 million hectares of the best arable land, abandoned by settlers or nationalized. This sector also included war veterans' co-operatives and state farms operated by the army. Self-managed farms employed some 150,000 full-time workers and at least an equal number of seasonal labourers. Much of the privately owned land, although larger in size (11.2 million ha), was in arid and less fertile areas. It was also characterized by its division into small holdings and involved a great diversity of land tenure arrangements and methods of operation; including family subsistence plots, crop-sharing and capitalist market oriented farms. This heterogeneity is indicated by the distribution of private land holdings shown in Table 3.2.

The forms of property ownership and organization in the non-agricultural sector were also diverse and heterogeneous as Table 3.3 reveals.

Industrial enterprises were also heterogeneous in their

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[12]Benhouria, op. cit., p.243. A detailed discussion of the political context and conflictive relations between the state, workers and the UGTA will follow in the coming sections of this chapter.

[13]By this is meant the absence of industrial conflict and disputes which would threaten foreign companies operating in the country.

Table 3.2: Distribution of private land holdings

No. of holdings	Surface in ha.
over 100,000	- 1 ha
over 300,000	1 - 10 ha
160,000 - 180,000	10 - 50 ha
16,000 - 17,000	50 - 100 ha
8,000 - 9,000	100 + ha

Source: Algerie Press Service, Bulletin Economic, Nos. 73-74. August 1966, in Clegg, op. cit., p.84.

Table 3.3: Ownership of industrial enterprises

Type of ownership	No. of enterprises	Employees
Self-managed	218	14,934
State controlled	411	44,113
Private (mainly foreign)	599	40,570
Joint (state & private)	22	1,758

Source: Sous-Direction des Statistiques, Enquete Semestrielle sur la situation de l'emploi au printemps 1966, Alger, 1966, in Clegg, op. cit. p.88.

size, economic importance, modes of management and types of activity. Self-managed enterprises were largely (45%) of a semi-artisanal character being concentrated in specific branches such as construction and public works (30%), food processing (35%), while only 6% existed in basic industries such as steel with the remainder in services (restaurants, hotels, cafes, etc.).[14] By 1965 most enterprises operating in the basic industry sector were under direct state control. In the immediate post-independence period private enterprise was dominated by large foreign (mainly French) companies concentrated in manufacturing industries such as chemicals, textiles, metallurgy and hydrocarbons. Enterprises owned by local private capital were in their majority, small family concerns, mainly in construction, textiles and services. Those under state control comprised the newly nationalized enterprises, some of them were under self-management. The newly created state enterprises were organized in the form of national companies operating in activities such as wholesale trade, banking and

[14]Clegg, op. cit., p.88.

insurance, hydrocarbons, etc. Joint-venture forms of enterprise owned and managed by both the state and private capital, especially foreign, were in the extractive and manufacturing industries such as hydrocarbons and metallurgy.

This diversity of structure represents a major problem in assessing the process of working class formation, not least because the degree of heterogeneity in work conditions and management policies makes it unlikely that workers will develop coherent strategies, forms of organization and solidarities. Many of these issues will be discussed in the following sections when we deal with self-management.

3.2 - The Social Structure after Independence

In this section we will tentatively outline the process of class formation in these early years of independence. We have already noted above that the existence of social classes and particularly that of the working class has been the subject of controversy in the literature on Africa in general. This is equally true of the literature on Algeria as we shall discover. Our attempt to identify the nature, characteristics and strategies of the various classes and social strata will be carried out at two closely interconnected levels: the political, representing state building, and the economic, represented by policies of economic development. In Algeria, as in all dependent social formations, the relationship between these two levels is of greatest importance and requires close attention. The importance of the state cannot be over-emphasized, as state building figured very prominently among the list of priorities for the Algerian nationalist movement from its emergence in the 1920's.[15] This does not only reflect the universally recognized need for a strong state in a modern world, but also because the Nation-State symbolizes for ex-colonial peoples the recovery of a

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[15] Some have argued that it was in fact the only objective on which various groups in the nationalist movement could agree. The failure of political parties which existed before the FLN was explained by many observers as an outcome of such disagreement. The FLN succeeded precisely because it set aside all other objectives.

See Harbi, FLN mirages et realite, Jeunes Afrique, Paris, 1985 (2nd edition).

cultural and social identity which has been suppressed and even denied. Such nationalist aspirations constituted strong bonds that united all social groupings in the history of Algeria and continues to do so despite variations in its expression. State building was, therefore, the issue that both divided and united the various classes and groups during and after colonial rule.

The importance of the state in the process of class formation in dependent social formations resides in part in its role as a mediator of the process of integration of these formations in the world system. The state, as both a concrete apparatus and a relationship of power and authority, becomes an arena of class struggle in a period in which social classes were not yet crystallized, and objective relations of production determining their positions and weight were in the process of formation.

State building is an important aspect of the analysis of class formation in D.S.F.s, not only because the state is itself an arena of class struggle and that its policies have a direct bearing on the process, but also because it mediates the social formation in its relationship with the "world system". This reality is reflected in Algeria by the overriding importance accorded by different classes to the processes of state building. This political obsession helps to explain the otherwise unintelligible political crises and conflicts which occurred during the first years of independence, often interpreted as arising from personality clashes between leaders with different political backgrounds, or the product of tribal and clanic antagonisms, having their roots in segmentary society ill-adapted to the modern forms of government and authority.[16]

From our perspective state building and class formation are bound together in a complex dialectical relationship. What makes the task of analysing this relationship more difficult is the fact that both are in the making, undergoing profound processes of rapid

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[16]Such interpretations were widely held by North American social scientists interested in the analysis of North African societies. See I W. Zartman et al, Political elites in Arab North Africa; New York, Longman, 1981.
Also W. Quandt, Revolution and leadership: Algeria 1954-1962; Cambridge Mass., MIT Press, 1969.

transformation. Thus, what can be discerned, whether in relation to the state or that of social classes, are tendencies which might be either confirmed and consolidated or reversed and surpassed. The outcome is the product of the ongoing class struggle in its various forms and expressions: economic, political and ideological.

The Algerian anti-colonial struggle drew the attention of numerous observers stimulating the production of a massive literature and a series of ongoing controversies. This enthusiastic interest is to be explained by the fact that a successful liberation war, fought against one of the major colonial powers of the time was in many ways unique both in the Arab world and Africa. Secondly, the political adoption and then institutionalization of "workers self-management" as an official ideology and a mode of socio-economic organization by the newly independent state was a social experiment of major dimensions which caught the imagination of many and drew the hostility of others. It was perhaps inevitable that the emergent class structure in this early period of independence should become a major focus of attention. The liberation war, for all its violence, did not represent a social revolution. Neither was the leadership of the movement assumed by the oppressed and exploited, that is the workers and proletarianized peasantry. Rather, it was the petite bourgeoisie, its urban and rural sections, that played the leading role. Nevertheless, independence led to some unexpected developments, including the workers' self-management policy and the radicalization of the regime following what at first seemed a conventional neo-colonialist succession.

The conditions arising out of the liberation war and independence gave rise to a number of ideological struggles, including that relating to class formation. The view shared by most observers was that social classes were undeveloped, if not totally absent in independent Algeria. The arguments advanced to justify this conclusion included the underdeveloped and dependent nature of the colonial economy, the general repression which characterized colonial rule so constraining the process of socio-economic differentiation, and the predominance of ethnic cleavage separating groups into two antagonistic communities- European settlers and the local Algerian population. All these factors were seen as inhibiting the formation and crystallization of class relations at both the objective and

subjective levels.[17] Indeed, this characterization of the social structure was prominent in the literature produced by F.L.N. on the eve of independence and has been maintained as the official line ever since. In the Algerian case, then, we seem to have a degree of agreement between the analyses produced by social scientists and F.L.N. activists. We shall proceed to a critical evaluation of these arguments.

3.2.1 - The bourgeoisie

The F.L.N. position since independence has been to view the bourgeoisie as either absent or very weak and, therefore, of minor economic and political significance.[18] The arguments supporting this view have been first, that in the aftermath of independence the bourgeoisie constituted a small minority of the population (i.e., 50,000 representing 0.6% of the population). This minority was, it was argued, composed of large land owners, wholesale traders and a small group of professionals, reflecting the absence of a solid entrepreneurial base. Secondly to the extent that it did exist the bourgeoisie owed its existence to colonial penetration and domination. Its character was then largely determined by the metropolitan bourgeoisie rather than the Algerian social formation. Consequently, it played an insignificant role in the struggle for independence and state building. Thirdly, the economic and political dependence of this bourgeois group explains the fact that it is concentrated in unproductive, parasitic activities and exhibits an orientation to consumption. The main political conclusion drawn from the F.L.N. analysis has been that this class does not pose any real threat to the socialist transformation of the Algerian society.

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[17] Many of those studying post-colonial Algeria adopted this position. See, for example:

A. Michel, "Les classes sociales en Algerie"; Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie, Vol.38, 1965, pp.207-220.

M. Harbi, "L'experience de 1962 a 1965: sa porte ses limites"; Les Temps Modernes, Nos.431-432, July-Sept., 1982, pp.34-55.

R. Gallissot, Les Classes Sociales en Algerie"; Homme et Societe, 14, Oct.-Dec., 1969, pp.207-225.

[18] For the FLN's official position, see FLN, La Charte d'Alger, Alger. Imprimerie Centrale du parti.

Social scientists analysing the Algerian class structure have tended to adopt a similar thesis, although with some variations. Some agree that the bourgeoisie is small in size, economically and politically weak, has been incapable of playing any significant role in the development of the country.[19] Others, however, have taken a different view, arguing that this class has constituted is an important social force which influenced events immediately after independence and continues to do so.[20]

Such disagreement seems to stem from different view about the composition of this class. Whereas those who minimize its importance include only a small group of entrepreneurs in industry and commerce representing 1.5% of the total population,[21] others also include the strata of higher professionals and large land owners (whose property exceed 50 hectares)[22] while others widen the social base of this class still further to include what they call the "new" petite-bourgeoisie, referring largely to the newly formed strata of bureaucrats.[23] Such differences about the composition of the bourgeoisie has also been associated with competing views regarding its strategy. Hence, there are those who see a narrowly conceived bourgeoisie as maintaining and consolidating its position in a "neo-colonial" system through an alliance with the settler bourgeoisie

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[19]Such a position was represented by many studies. See, for example: Clegg, op. cit., pp.110-111; Raffinot & Jacquemot, op. cit., p.40, Harbi (1982), op. cit., p.39; and Michel, op. cit., pp.212-213.

[20]This opinion was held by many. See, for example:

Laks, M., Autogestion Ouvriere et Pouvoir Politique en Algerie (1962-65), Paris, Etudes et Documentation Internationales, N.D., pp.144-147.

Dominelli, L., Love and Wages: the impact of imperialism, state intervention and women's domestic labour on workers' control in Algeria 1962-1972; Norwich, Novata Press, 1986, pp.42-43.

[21] See Raffinot and Jacquemot, op. cit., p.40, and Harbi (1982), op. cit., p.39.

[22]See Clegg, op. cit., pp.110-111. See also Benhassine, M. L., "Le processus Historique de Formation du Secteur d'Etat en Algerie". Revue Algerienne des Sciences Juridiques, Economiques et Politique, No. Special, Juillet, 1982, pp.219-248.

[23]See Dominelli, op. cit., pp.42-43.

and close links with the metropolitan bourgeoisie. Thus, while it is dependent its strategy is neo-colonial in origin.[24] Those with a more extensive conception have argued that the emergent bourgeois strategy was to establish an hegemony through the control of the state and economy. Its objective position and interest in the long run, contradicted those of the settler and metropolitan bourgeoisies who represented external threats to its hegemony. In this view, the fundamental contradiction emergent in the system was that dividing the bourgeoisie and the workers and poor peasantry.[25] Such structural cleavage was regarded, however, as incipient rather than systemic and coherent. The organized bourgeoisie, according to this interpretation, was rather hesitant, lacked a clear and coherent programme and produced policies representing discordant reactions to an unstable and rapidly changing situation.[26]

Such variations in conceptualizing the "bourgeoisie" express in part, the genuine problems of inadequacy of concepts and categories, which have been forced into use to account for the development of D.S.F.s in the context of capitalism on a world scale. Short of inventing a more appropriate terminology, the concept "bourgeoisie" remains valid on the condition that it is restricted to those groups whose relationship to the means of production and distribution allows them some form of control over labour, and other resources of production whether private or public in form. The extension of the concept to include the strata of professionals and bureaucrats is acceptable if it is possible to show that they exercise

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[24]The attempt was made where representatives of the bourgeoisie assumed a leading role in the "provisional Executive" in 1962 following the "Evian Accords" as a caretaker government. One of the main objectives of the Algerian bourgeoisie, according to Laks was to secure the position of the settler bourgeoisie as a future ally. In addition to this its hostility toward the working class and distrust of the petite bourgeoisie led this class to take measures concerning the protection of vacated properties and offered guarantees to settlers who fled the country. This position was contained in the Ordinance of 24th August, 1962 issued by the Provisional Executive. See Laks, op. cit., pp.144-145.

[25]Dominelli, op. cit., pp.40-43.

[26]Both the reactions of the bourgeoisie and the unstable character of the situation will be discussed when dealing with the case of self-management.

control in such a way that it is fundamental to a process surplus appropriation. At this stage, while we might argue that Algerian bureaucrats exhibited certain similarities with a bourgeoisie in terms of life style, high income and position of authority, its relationship to the means of production was in the early years of independence still ambiguous.

The inadequacy of an 'extensive' conception of the bourgeoisie is particularly clear in relation to its strategy. The lack of a coherent political programme would lead us to question the validity of such a conception. The categories observed seem more appropriate to those groups whose development was closely tied to the colonial economic structure which they attempted to preserve and consolidate. The F.L.N.'s analysis was, then, relevant in so far as the bourgeoisie was faced not only by the hostility of workers and the peasantry, but also that of the petite bourgeoisie which was to play a leading rôle in the liberation struggle, and was determined to consolidate its leadership through the seizure of state power and control of strategic branches of the economy. However, the arguments advance by the F.L.N. and other observers seriously underestimate the potential of the bourgeoisie, as we shall find out later.

3.2.2 - The petite bourgeoisie

This class was considered by F.L.N. radicals as the most active group capable of threatening any real prospect of socialist development in Algeria. However, a considerable degree of disagreement existed between the F.L.N. analysis and that of the independent observers. It is symptomatic that even the term used to designate this class was the object of controversy. The F.L.N. considered it to be a stratum of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie, composed of civil servants in the state apparatus, executive managers and directors of state enterprises and farms as well as lower management in the self-managed sector.[27] Social science observers called it the "bureaucratic" or "managerial" class, composed of two fractions: an "old guard" which emerged under colonialism and a new fraction developed since independence to meet new administrative and economic requirements.

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[27]Michel, op. cit., pp.196-197.

According to these observers, its objective base was and still is the state apparatus and the state-controlled sector of the economy.[28] Still other observers use the terms "petite" and "medium" bourgeoisie, a hybrid class which includes not only the bureaucracy but also a stratum of professionals (10,000), artisans (35,000), traders (83,000) and a well to do group of land owners (80,000 owning 10-50 ha.[29] For there is a distinction to be made between the managerial class and the petite bourgeoisie, the latter being characterized by its urban and rural fractions. The two have developed different alliances; the bureaucracy with the bourgeoisie, and the petite bourgeoisie with workers and the peasantry.[30] To support this view, those such as Harbi who adopt it, point to the conflict between the bureaucracy and the petite bourgeoisie over control of the state and the orientation of its policies. Harbi in particular, seems to restrict the term "bureaucracy" to refer to what others such as Clegg, Chaliand and Laks consider only as its colonial fraction, while he uses the term "urban petite bourgeoisie" to refer to the newly promoted post-colonial state functionaries. Both strata are seen as in favour of a strong centralized state, but while the latter was nationalist and anti-imperialist, the former was in favour of maintaining a neo-colonialist relationship as the best way of protecting its own position and interests.[31] However, Harbi overestimates the contradiction between what is essentially two fractions of the same emergent class, that is the petite bourgeoisie. Such alliances were short-lived and determined more by the contingencies of the liberation war than long-term objective interests.

The general theme running through these various conceptions is that a new fraction of the petite bourgeoisie that emerged in the early years of independence transformed the class as a whole to one which was predominantly based in the state apparatus and the state-controlled economic sector. How did this transformation

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[28]Clegg, op. cit., pp.112-113 and Laks, op. cit., p.142.

[29]Raffinot and Jacquemot, op. cit., p.42. The figures are for 1962.

[30]Harbi (1982), op. cit., p.37.

[31]Ibid, p.39.

occur? To understand such a process the historical position of this class must be taken into account. As Raffinot and Jaquemot have noted, the petite bourgeoisie has been marked by two conflicting tendencies since the colonial period: first, as a propertied class of small capital it came under the pressure of the dominant structures of the colonial dependent formation. Consequently, its objectives were essentially reformist aspiring to resolve its problems through integration into the colonial system. Once this proved unattainable it became actively nationalist; playing a leading role in the liberation war. Secondly, the failure to realize its aspirations under colonialism generated pressure to transform its "financial, technical and intellectual capacities into effective instruments of exploitation".[32] The contradiction between these two tendencies only became apparent when the defence of its interests temporarily brought it closer to the workers and peasants.

The process whereby certain fractions of the petite bourgeoisie were transformed into a "state bourgeoisie" was carried through several stages and operated at various levels. First, the early stage, was the bureaucratization of the various apparatuses of the liberation war: the party F.L.N., the National Army of Liberation (A.L.N.), the Provisional Government (G.P.R.A.), the National Council for the Revolution (C.N.R.A.), etc. Secondly, another fraction had already established a foothold in the state colonial apparatus (22,000 civil servants and functionaries); the process of transformation was further enhanced, therefore, by the preservation of an inherited colonial administration. Certain conflicts between these two fractions were clearly visible, not least because of their different trajectories, war time socialization and alliances as well as their competition for the greater share in authority.

In the second stage, these two fractions sought alliances with different groups. While that emerging from the war apparatus allied itself with workers and peasants, the second was closer to local and metropolitan bourgeoisies. What distinguished

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[32]Raffinot and Jacquemot, op. cit., p.43. It was, however, important to identify various groups or fractions composing this hybrid class. They were united through their distinctive economic position and their ideology stressing ascension and upward mobility.

these two fractions of the petite bourgeoisie was not so much their social origin or aspiration to replace the settler bourgeoisie both economically and politically as the dominant class, but their political experience of colonialism and their ideological perception of the future society. Whereas the former was populist and resolutely anti-imperialist, perceiving its role in independent Algeria as a ruling class in its own right, the latter seemed more content with a subordinate role in a neo-colonialist system. The existing heterogeneity of the petite bourgeoisie was further accentuated by divisions arising from the struggle for political power in the immediate aftermath of independence.

However, a common interest that brought them together at a later stage was the primacy both accorded to the building of a strong, centralized state which, in turn, became the dynamic force in their own transformation.[33] The interesting question here concerns the strategy adopted by the petite bourgeoisie. Why did it stress policies leading to the extension and consolidation of state ownership rather than those favouring private ownership of the means of production? It is difficult to find a satisfactory answer to this question, but there are certain elements which could help us formulate a tentative one. First, there was the strong aspiration on the part of this class toward economic ascendancy frustrated by the specific nature of the colonial system, as represented by the presence of a settler bourgeoisie. Secondly, after independence, the requirement of capital accumulation was largely expressed through a strong tendency to adopt a "luxurious consumption model".[34] Thirdly, the pressure from the demands of workers, peasants, and the unemployed for a share in the promised benefits of independence entailed a hostility to any form of private appropriation of what was considered the national heritage. Finally, the existing high concentration of economic resources favoured a form of public ownership under state control if a "rational and effective" operation of the heritage was to be achieved.[35]

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[33]See Harbi (1982), op. cit., p.39.

[34]This refers to the extreme degree of poverty of the majority of the population, leading to the absence of a mass consumption market. Only the small bourgeois stratum has a purchasing power underlying the demand for luxury goods. See Laks, op. cit., p.206. See also the Tripoli Charter in Michel, op. cit., p.216.

These elements help to explain the option for state ownership, but only once it is stressed that this emergent class could only ensure its control over the state once public ownership was introduced. The option of private ownership was, therefore, economically and politically perhaps the least favourable for the transformation of the petite bourgeoisie into a dominant class. It is also true that anti-imperialism was often confused with anti-capitalism (private ownership) in the populist ideology of the F.L.N., and this led to the prominence of the idea that state ownership and control are the best possible way to achieve development and avoid imperialist domination.

The strategy of the ascending petite bourgeoisie was composed of two integral elements: first, a concerted effort to achieve control of the inherited state apparatus through its seizure of political power, and secondly, the consolidation of an economic base through an extension of state ownership and control of the most important sectors in the economy. These two elements in its strategy provided a common base for the otherwise fractured petite bourgeoisie; elements that strengthened and crystallized its common awareness of its strategic common interests, beyond the immediate conflicts and which divided it during the early period.

However, it would be greatly misleading to think that such a strategy was systematic and coherent. Rather, it was characterized by a series of tactical alliances and compromises between the various fractions of this class in the party, the administration, and the army, on the one hand, and between these and other emergent class groupings such as the bourgeoisie, workers and peasants. The bourgeoisie, for example, was denied the opportunity to extend its economic base, even though its previously acquired property and business activities were not challenged. Foreign interests were also subjected to certain measures of control including nationalization. The most important tactical actions, however, were those directed at the workers and peasants. At the political level the new rulers sought to control the trade union movement, assigning it

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[35]This line of argument was expressed by Raffinot and Jacquemot, op. cit., p.58.

the role of mediation between workers and the state. At the economic level, the government carried out limited nationalization, and put some restrictions on private capital which, had the effect of securing for it workers support. [36]

The political ascendancy of the petite bourgeoisie, now gradually transformed into a state bourgeoisie, lay not so much in its own strength, cohesion and systematic action (which it lacked), but in the weakness of other emergent class groupings competing for political power. Its success was in great part due to the tactical alliance it forged with workers and poor peasants once it adopted "self-management" as its official line in March 1963.

3.2.3 - The working class

The emergent Algerian working class, as already noted, was small in size at the end of colonial rule. Also, they only partially exhibited those objective and subjective characteristics associated with the formation of a social class. The potentiality for such a crystallization of class relations was greatly undermined by the characteristics of the Algerian social and economic structures. For example, low levels of permanent wage employment in all sectors of economic activity, an expansion of relative surplus labour, low levels of skills and qualifications, political hostility toward any serious attempts at union organization, racial discrimination, etc. Following independence, some of these conditions changed, but others persisted and may even have worsened. Even the size of this embryonic class fluctuated over time, increasing or shrinking as a result of the economic and political instability which characterized the first years

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[36] Such tactical actions were inherently contradictory for they were not inscribed in a systematic and coherent programme, but were reactions to specific events such as labour unrest, political opposition and challenge for authority or even reluctance of certain employers (especially foreign) to accept the sovereignty of the new state. The government sought to play a mediating role between capital and labour, but on many occasions it failed given the intransigence of one side or the other. This led to active interventionism exacerbating the situation further. Clear examples were provided by the role of the state in self-management and the extension of its "protection" to private capital in companies threatened by unrest and conflict. See Laks, op. cit., p.208 and Decree of May 1963 in, Weiss, F., Doctrine et Action Syndicale en Algerie. CUJAS, Paris, 1970, p.130.

of independence.

Also, in this period it is extremely difficult to develop reliable estimates of the size of this emergent class grouping. However, we might take as a first approximation the number of workers at the eve of independence, around 250,000 in the urban areas, and 150,000 in rural Algeria. To these must be added some 90,000 jobs vacated by European workers later to be filled by Algerians. However, in view of economic disruption, many such activities ceased, causing the level of employment to drop. This was especially so in the urban areas, in industries such as construction and public works where an estimated 50,000 to 60,000 jobs were lost by the end of 1962.[37]

A number of other important changes occurred in this period affecting the process of working class formation. Firstly, there was the replacement of European workers who had previously monopolized the heights of the occupational structure, leading to the upward mobility, or "creaming off" of qualified and political conscious workers so removing them from direct contact with workers and depriving union sections of experienced officers at a critical moment in the reconstruction of the union movement. As a result of the widespread shortage of qualified personnel this process occurred on a wider scale in most of the economic and administrative sectors. Secondly, as a consequence of these processes of upward social and occupational mobility the composition of the working class in formation was characterized by a relative increase in the unskilled workers from recent rural background. The process of working class formation was also affected by the increased exodus of migrant workers to France the numbers of which rose steadily from 1963.[38] Hence the embryonic working class was not only in its size, but also by qualitative changes limiting its possibilities for organization, the development of common identity, class consciousness, and solidarity.

Given the conditions operating during this period Algerian workers can be characterized as comprising a large mass of

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[37]See Amin, The Maghreb in the Modern World, op.cit. p.136

[38]Raffinot and Jacquemot, op. cit., pp.44-45. See also Boutefnouchet, op. cit., p.33.

both an urban and rural subproletariat. These conditions were, however, simultaneously, reinforcing the traditional value system, emphasizing kinship loyalties and , regional and client relationships. Nevertheless, workers experienced a severe disorientation arising out of the war and independence including the destruction of old structures associated with the absence of viable alternatives providing a new sense of identity and giving meaning to their existence. Indeed, many Algerian workers were severely alienated, no longer members of the old "traditional" order which continued to exist only in their memories; as a refuge from the experience of the irrationality of an emergent chaotic urban social life which failed to provide the conditions for integration.[39]

However, there was a group of workers (employed in industry and construction, and services) distinguishable in one important aspect, from the mass of drifting urban and rural subproletariat. That is those who had a clear and definite relationship to the means of production as full-time wage labour. This was crucial in the process of the formation of a distinct social class. A process further enhanced by the spontaneous attempt of these workers to control the means of production as it was abandoned by the settlers.[40] This process led such workers to realize their specific class position and common identity as well as the existence of antagonistic groups with opposed interests and strategies. But, as Clegg rightly argues, the situation of economic deprivation and social alienation which were the potential conditions of revolutionary class consciousness, were also the conditions that hindered its development. Realistically, it could hardly be expected to be otherwise under the prevailing conditions of these years.[41]

In terms of organization, although the U.G.T.A. rapidly re-established itself as the only trade union organization, making considerable efforts to revive existing union sections or create new

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[39]Bourdieu, P., "La hantise du chomage chez l'ouvrier Algerien"; Sociologie du Travail, Oct.-Dec. 1962.

[40]This concerned all the farms vacated by the settlers and many small businesses in industry and services.

[41]Clegg, op. cit., p.109.

ones, both the general social and economic conditions and the U.G.T.A. exile during the war years proved major obstacles to the effective organization of workers in the post-war situation. The U.G.T.A. and its cadres, as already noted, were forced into exile from 1957, after barely one year of legal existence in which its national leadership changed not less than seven times.[42] This had two important consequences for the Algerian working class and its trade union movement. First, it was never able to develop stable and viable organizational structures and where it did they were restricted to major urban areas and selected industries. Secondly, colonial repression and consequent exile had the effect of subordinating union activity to F.L.N. cells. Indeed, this was generally the fate of the U.G.T.A. and its cadres outside the country as well.

The primacy accorded to the struggle for independence, the repression and then the exile led therefore to the union organization becoming another political arm of the F.L.N. The breakdown of normal contact and communication between the leadership and members also had the consequence of stimulating a process of bureaucratization as no democratic functioning of the organs was possible. Given these difficult conditions, how did the U.G.T.A. develop immediately after independence? If we take into account the difficulties just mentioned and the confusion in the aftermath of independence it could be argued that the union successfully managed to deal with certain immediate tasks such as reviving old union sections, creating new ones and extending its membership, estimated by the end of 1962 at between 250,000 and 300,000. More important, however, was the active role it played in setting up workers self-management as we shall see in the next section. However, this does not mean that the union movement overcame all its difficulties and weaknesses, whether arising from the present chaos of the post-independence situation or relating to developments since the liberation war.

3.3- Self-management: the problematic of class consciousness

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[42]The move to Tunisia was a desperate last attempt to save the union movement and its leadership form savage colonial repression. But that action had many lasting and far reaching consequences for the future of the union movement and its autonomy in independent Algeria.

The emergence of workers' self-management in Algeria in 1962 was the spontaneous result of workers' action in the rural and urban areas. This movement, observers of the Algerian case agree, brought the emergent working class to the threshold of class consciousness.[43] In this section our concern is to show how this experience represented an important part of the process of working class formation as well as that of the emerging dominant class, the state bourgeoisie. Indeed, the whole experience from its inception to its demise can be seen as the object of class struggle with fundamental implications not only for the class formation, but also for the future development of the social formation as a whole. Workers' self-management developed through various stages, each of which was characterized by a definite balance of power between the various social forces contending for power.

Three notable phases may be distinguished in which the working class first imposed its interest through self-management only to be subordinated to a direct and rigorous state control and the newly forming state bourgeoisie. The demise of self-management and the failure of the working class to assert its autonomy had various causes, some of which related to the distinctive weakness of the working class-in-formation, while others were located in the process of state formation and the emergence of a dominant class. In respect of the former, the working class, at this stage, was characterized by its small size as we have already noted, lack of organization and the absence of a coherent ideology and strong leadership. It must be stressed that both the colonial heritage and the post-independence situation were not favourable to the development of a strong organized working class.

Another important element contributing to the final demise of self-management was the bureaucratization of the working class vanguard. This phenomenon is of great interest in the light it sheds on both the conditions of working class formation and the mechanisms which facilitated its control. In order to grasp the full importance of these conditions and mechanisms we must first outline

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[43]This position was adopted by almost all those who studied the experiment of Self-management in Algeria, particularly Clegg and Laks.

the structures of self-management as they were designed and then consider their operation in the concrete conditions.

3.3.1 - Self-management structures

Self-management structures and their prerogative were first defined by the March Decrees of 1963, institutionalizing workers' self-management.[44] These structures were:

1. - Workers' General Assemblies: These were to be constituted of all permanent workers in an enterprise or farm excluding seasonal workers. Theoretically it was to have power of approval and sanction over a wide range of matters including economic plans, purchasing and equipment, production and marketing, work organization and capital expenditure.

2. - Workers' Councils: These were to be elected by the general assemblies with two-thirds of the members drawn directly from production. Their areas of responsibility included purchase of equipment, credits, internal organization and management of accounts.

3. - Management Committees: These were to be elected either by the workers' councils or in their absence the general assemblies with two-thirds of their membership (which ranges from 3 to 11 depending on the size of the workforce) also drawn from productive workers. These committees were to have a managerial role; drawing up plans of production, equipping, marketing, and implementing decisions including the purchase of equipment, materials, raising loans, organizing production and drawing up accounts. They were to elect a president whose role was to "convene", "preside" and "direct" meetings and counter-sign all documents.

4. - Directors: The post was to be a state appointment; representative of the self-managed enterprise or farm. The status of the Director as an agent of the state was, however, the subject of much pressure from the worker and was changed in 1965 when directors

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[44]See the Decree of 22nd March, 1963 in Clegg, op. cit. where a detailed
discussion of Self-management structures could be found. Also, see Laks. op.cit., and Domenilli. op.cit.

had to be permanent workers with all attendant rights and obligations. Although the appointment of directors was still in the hands of the state, the consent of the Communal Council for the Promotion of Self-management (C.C.A.A.) was necessary. This Council included representatives of local management committees, U.G.T.A., the F.L.N. and local administration.

The task of the directors was to monitor the legality of all transactions and financial operations carried out by enterprises or farms; oversee the application of decisions, sign documents, hold funds, keep accounts and serve as secretary to all organs of self-management. As it can be seen, the directors, although theoretically under the authority of the presidents, had very wide effective powers making them the real managers of the enterprises or farms. Their authority was further enhanced by the fact that in most cases, especially in rural areas, there were likely to be very few literate members of the community, so giving them large room for manoeuvre and manipulation.

The self-management structures envisaged in the legislation embodied three important limitations on the implementation of effective workers' control. First, the general assembly was not representative of all workers, as the seasonal workforce was excluded. This latter was important in agriculture, but also in certain industries such as textiles, food processing, leather and wood. This legal division created a great deal of animosity among workers inhibiting the development of a sense of solidarity and community of interests. Secondly, the general assembly, while theoretically endowed with wide-ranging powers over all self-management structures, was practically left with no means of enforcing its collective will or controlling its implementation. The fact that in practice worker representation tended to coincide with the hierarchical division of labour made it even less likely that the general assembly would play an effective role.

Also, those elected to workers' councils and committees tended to be experienced, skilled, and literate workers who generally held positions of authority as foremen and supervisors. In effect, their status was further enhanced by their election to self-management positions. Thirdly, the directors, although again theoretically under

the authority of the elected bodies turned out to be the effective managers of the enterprises and farms.

Such limitations had significant implications for the functioning of the new self-management structures. Effectively, they lead to the consolidation of state bureaucratic control. Workers were split between permanent and seasonal and this contributed to the process of internal bureaucratization producing a sort of labour "aristocracy" separating the base from its vanguard. This was a process in which self-management structures reinforced existing authority and skill differentials led to increasing complaints about the "authoritarian" behaviour of committee members. Following their "election" in 1962-63, management committees were not renewed, despite the fact that legally their mandate was limited to three years, with one third renewable each year.[45]

The new directors as state agents with effective power to control self-management, and as members of the ascending petite-bourgeoisie with a definite value system and aspiration for power, played an important role in the deformation of self-management, being instrumental in its subordination to state control. Although important, this was not the only mechanism by which the emergent state bourgeoisie sought and achieved control over self-management. Before considering these mechanisms, however, it is important to ask the question: how was it possible for the state to so transform a situation that seemed to be so advantageous to the workers? The answer lies, at least partly, in the process of bureaucratization associated with a profound disillusionment of workers in self-management as a goal.

Those who have studied this process tend to agree on two points; first, that workers' attitudes and consciousness were major factors leading to the incorporation of self-management. Second, that the specific historical, economic, political and cultural conditions of Algerian society as well as working class institutions were conducive to a process of bureaucratization.[46]

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[45]See Weiss, op. cit., pp.126-127.

(Footnote continued)

We have already pointed out that the self-management structures had within them the seeds of bureaucratization. For example, in many cases the management committees were set up by external agencies, the F.L.N., the army, local administration and the U.G.T.A. Typical patron-client relations were prominent in the process, although it would be true to say the U.G.T.A. had a genuine interest in promoting real self-management. Consequently, the authority and prestige of the committees and their presidents were rarely an expression of the workers' will and interests, but rather a reflection of that of various patrons. The decree of 22nd March, 1963 institutionalizing self-management either gave de facto recognition to existing structures or reproduced them under unchanged conditions, but reinforcing the authority of the committees while undermining that of the general assemblies.

A further point relates to the significance of worker motivation and values. Minces argues that the worker "vanguard" was very much influenced by the ideology of the emergent dominant class, and that committee members viewed themselves and acted as proprietors.[47] Such an explanation is acceptable to Clegg and he suggests that the "vanguard" re-acted in this way both for reasons of economic interests and, more importantly, in order to fulfil the leadership role left vacant as a result of the colonial destruction of the traditional socio-political system and the failure of the independent state to develop viable alternatives.[48]

However, Clegg's argument would appear to be adequate only in relation to the new urban areas. In the rural areas the absence of alternative forms of organization and solidarity has ensured the retention of the traditional social relations which continued to exert great influence. The situation, on large estates, associated with industrial and commercial enterprises in the urban

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[46](continued)
[46]All those studying self-management pointed to this phenomenon. See, for example, Clegg, op. cit., and Laks, op. cit. Also Minces, J., "Autogestion et luttes de classes en Algerie"; Les Temps Modernes, No.29, June 1965, pp.2205-2231.

[47]Minces, op. cit., p.2210. See also Weiss, op. cit., p.134, footnote No.1.

[48]See Clegg, op. cit., pp.167-168.

areas has been quite different. Here, the old forms of solidarity and ties hardly survived the colonial period. Furthermore, a degree of class consciousness and organization existed among certain sections of the workers, particularly the more skilled and experienced, that is, who constituted management committees. Clegg's interpretation of the emergence of bureaucratic tendencies does not apply to these, as he himself recognizes.[49]

In a rather more persuasive argument, Laks considers the bureaucratization of the management committees to be to a large extent, the product of an historical rift that already divided the majority of workers from a militant "vanguard". In coping with the low level of consciousness and lack of commitment exhibited by the workers while, at the same time, having to defend self-management against the state bureaucracy, the "vanguard" resorted to undemocratic forms of decision making, thus further alienating ordinary workers.

Ironically, what was conceived as a defence of self-management, from both instrumental worker attitudes and central bureaucratic control, actually contributed to the isolation of the potential working class leadership transforming it into a form of "factory bureaucracy". Laks also points to the historical causes associated with the previous socialization of union leadership under colonialism and the specific conditions which had to be faced in these early years of independence.[50] Thus, one of the major factors determining the failure of self-management, observers argue, was the attitude of the workers. Given the importance of this issue we shall discuss it in some detail.

3.2.2 - Workers' attitudes to self-management

Workers' attitudes are certainly crucial to an

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[49]Ibid, p.169.

[50]We have seen that most militants were socialized in the trade union movement during the colonial period, especially in the CGT characterized by centralized and "elitist" conceptions of organisation and struggle. The dominant view among the leadership was to face bureaucratic threats first, mobilizing and educating workers later. See Laks, op. cit., pp.76-77.

understanding of both the rise and fall of self-management. Such attitudes arose out of the specific conditions characteristic of the post-independence period and workers' position in it. Clegg argues that two elements were fundamental in shaping these attitudes. First, there were immediate economic interests integral to "the struggle for employment and material survival", and second there were the effects of a cultural heritage marked by the "workers' inability to grasp the economic system as a social totality", one which could be acted upon rather than passively endured.[51] In this respect, workers' management was less a conscious political act of control than an unconscious response to "material deprivation". Thus, while Clegg dismisses as simplistic the view emphasizing the "workerist" tendencies among workers, his interpretation nevertheless puts considerable emphasis over workers' instrumental attitudes.

> "Autogestion as a mode of organization capable of solving the political and economic problems of a revolutionary society was not only a concept foreign to their experience but was felt as marginal to their immediate needs".[52]

Although we do not underestimate the importance of material benefits expected from self-management, i.e., jobs and wages, the workers' attitudes can be described as instrumental only when alternative conceptions were available to them but failed to be taken up.[53] This, however, was not the case. Workers were immersed in a struggle for survival and never had the chance of grasping the wider implications of their action. Furthermore, no one, other than the U.G.T.A. and some F.L.N. militants, made serious and concerted efforts in this direction. More important, was the fact that workers' concrete experiences strengthened their conviction that the new situation differed little from the previous one, except, that is, in the first phase when wages were increased and jobs made them secure. However,

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[51] Clegg, op. cit., p.171.

[52] Ibid, p.173.

[53] We use the term "instrumental" to point to a specific attitude in which workers were attached to their material interests rather than any abstract notion of collective identity or general aims. See, Goldthorp, J. Lockwood, D. et al. The Afluent Worker: Inustrial Attitudes and Behaviour. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1968.

workers in self-managed enterprises, particularly in agriculture, saw their wages stagnating, as the promised share in profits failed to materialize and even faced the possibility of losing jobs as enterprises faced mounting difficulties concerning credits, equipment and marketing.

Disillusionment and resentment became so deep and widespread among workers that most of them came to favour a complete state take over in order to secure their own futures. Such attitudes should not be mistaken for a lack of interest in self-management or even seen as hostile to it. Rather, they were an expression of the workers' sharp awareness of the inherent contradiction in the relationship between the claims for self-management and the rôle of the state. For while these workers were portrayed as independent producers, they were effectively denied necessary conditions and attributes to which such status entitled them.

The crucial point that seems to have escaped the attention of most observers was that Algerian workers rightly conceived of themselves, and acted as, contractual wage labour, not as managers of their own enterprises. Such an attitude has been considered by some as a clear sign of a profound misconception on the part of workers, and is explained as resulting from the predominance of workerist tendencies,[54] the absence of a "vanguard" socialist ideology,[55] or simply, the extreme deprivation inhibiting the development of a coherent and compatible consciousness.[56] The problem as we see it is not that workers' "attitude remains the attitude of

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[54]Henri, J., "Retrospective sur l'Economie Algerienne en 1963"; Confluent, No.39, March 1964, p.271.
It was also the official view expressed by Boumaza then Minister of National Economy: "The great difficulty in Autogestion, an essentially evolutionary formula, is to find the right mean between the anarchic, workerist tendency at the base and the centralizing bureaucratic statist current at the top". Speech delivered in May 1963, quoted in Clegg, op. cit., p.172.

[55]Chaliand, G.; L'Algerie est-elle socialiste? Paris, eds. Maspero. 1964.

[56]Clegg, op. cit., pp.173-174. His position seemed more subtle as he recognized that: "this involvement with material self-interest is not in itself evidence of hostility to self-management or even an incapacity to take responsibilities within it." op. cit., p.175.

paid employees...,"[57] as Lazarev puts it, but in the fact that workers were, legally and effectively, considered and treated as such. The decree of 28th March 1963 stated explicitly that "remuneration is fixed by the authority of tutelage according to the post occupied and on the basis of minimal productivity norms."[58] Strict administrative, economic and financial control, firmly exercised by various state agencies and representatives both within and outside enterprises, effectively excluded self-management structures from the process of decision-making affecting the operation of enterprises.

Measured by the rate of participation, only a minority of workers were involved and, therefore, had an understanding of self-management. Usually the most skilled and senior workers, while most workers were marginal and ignored the role of the organs of self-management, believing that they were not concerned.[59] This outcome was not restricted to the early years, which might have been explained by the confusion surrounding the establishment of workers' committees, the lack of human and material resources and experience necessary for the mobilization of workers.

According to more recent studies of agricultural self-management, the situation continued to be much the same, if not actually worsening.[60] Such studies confirmed that general assemblies rarely meet and when they do they generally endorse decisions taken elsewhere. As for workers' councils when they are not simply confused with management committees, they lack effective authority. Management committees are the only organs that seem to function relatively regularly, but their rôle has been reduced to taking decisions concerning matters of daily routine such as control and execution of particular tasks, on site work organization, disciplinary action,

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[57] Lazarev, G., "Remarques sur l'autogestion agricole en Algerie"; Institutions et Developpement Agricole du Maghreb. Paris, 1965. Quoted in Clegg, op. cit., p.174.

[58] Decree No.63-98. Cited by Badrani, S., L'Agriculture Algerienne depuis 1966: etatisation ou privatisation. Alger. Office des Publications Universitaires, 1981. p.246.

[59] Chaulet, C., La Mitidja Autogeree, Alger, SNED, 1971, p.215.

[60] Chaulet noted that "No where did the general assembly play the role of a sovereign organ nor was it considered as such." Ibid, p.149.

etc.[61] This picture was summed up by Chaulet who remarked:

> "The weak importance accorded to fundamental problems relating to the orientation of production in the short and long terms... Some committees have never discussed them, other accorded them one meeting in the whole year, and even here, it was a pure formality demanded by the crediting agency or technical organs before any consideration is given to credit applications.[62]

In industry the same phenomenon was studied by Laks who stressed the process of the "internal bureaucratization" of self-management structures as different from that associated with state control through various mechanisms; administrative, economic and financial. These bureaucratic tendencies were reflected in the attitudes and actions of the "vanguard". Although this group was, on the whole, committed to self-management and highly critical of the state bureaucracy,[63] their attitudes to workers and the manner in which they carried out the struggle against the state bureaucracy betrayed their elitist conceptions. These were marked by a striking neglect of collective forms of action which might have developed worker consciousness, and solidarity. They also expressed a lack of confidence in workers' ability and even a feeling of contempt towards the majority who were seen as ignorant and self-interested. The struggle carried out by the "vanguard" against the state bureaucracy excluded, therefore, the mass of ordinary workers and this may well explain their apathy and lack of militancy. The "vanguard" tended to overestimate its own ability, and thus substituted itself for the

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[61]In order to highlight this point we quote at length from an official report: "For every agricultural season Directors at the wilaya level (county) and central authority formulate detailed work plans (management indicative plans and financial indicative plans) for the farms. These latter can make some minor modifications through management committees and workers councils. In practice it can be said that the role left to the farm directors and management committees is insignificant." Ministry of Agriculture: Etude sur la rationalisation de l'emploi des cadres de l'agriculture. Alger, Oct. 1971. Cited by Badrani, op. cit., pp.250-251, footnote No.5.

[62]Chaulet, op. cit., p.155. See also a recent study by Dominelli, op. cit., chapter 4.

[63]For a detailed discussion of this issue; See Laks, op. cit. pp.76-77. As for a description of the debates, delegates' attitudes and their critique of the government; See Minces, op. cit.

working class as a whole. In many cases, their strong position in the enterprise led them to indulge in highly authoritarian forms of behaviour relegating the democratic functioning of the organs to the background.

This phenomenon was more pronounced in cases where both the "vanguard" and the "base" lacked strong commitment to self-management and even more so where the leadership was not elected but self-imposed on workers in one way or another.[64] Widespread illiteracy was one of the problems hindering workers' participation, and enhancing bureaucratic tendencies among the "vanguard", and the manipulation of the state bureaucracy by the directors. The situation was such that even when workers were given a choice, they often chose not those they trusted, but those who had qualification, experience and a certain tact in dealing with state agencies.[65]

3.2.3 - The bourgeoisie and self-management

The post-war seizure of vacated property and constitution of workers' committees did not overly concern the bourgeoisie when it first occurred on abandoned agricultural estates. However, the extension of such action to industry, commerce and the services raised many fears and questions about the future development of Algerian society. The Evian Agreements (signed on 19th March 1962) had brought representatives of the bourgeoisie to power through their control of the Provisional Executive (a caretaker government). The latent objective of these agreements, for the colonial power, was to lay down the basis for a future neo-colonial order. But the complexity of the situation and the rapidity of events, immediately before and after independence, undermined the project. First, the massive exodus of the settler bourgeoisie undermined any planned alliance between it and its Algerian counterpart; the condition for ensuring a neo-colonial outcome for Algeria. Secondly, the Evian Agreements were widely contested by a tacit alliance between workers and the radical

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[64]We have already pointed out the patron-cient relationships of the Committees and the FLN, the Army, the state bureaucracy which were all competing to dominate Self-management in these early years of independence. See, Laks, op. cit. pp.77-80.

[65]Ibid, p.81.

petite bourgeoisie in control of the F.L.N. and the army.[66] Thirdly, the local bourgeoisie was weak and insufficiently prepared for a leading rôle.

Given the fact that both European exodus and workers movement to control vacated enterprises were linked, the Provisional Executive introduced a measure designed to deal with both phenomena. The promulgation of the Ordinance of 24th August 1962, attempted to halt the settler exodus and put an end to the workers' control movement.[67] This Ordinance expressed the intention of the Executive to preserve abandoned property for absentee owners while encouraging their return. It also declared the occupation of such property as illegal giving unlimited power to local administrations to expel occupants and assume responsibility for managing vacated properties. By conceding the right of occupants to claim possession while maintaining silence on the widespread speculation in vacated properties the executive provided sections of the bourgeoisie and petite bourgeoisie with possibilities for self-enrichment.[68]

The significance of this measure resides in the fact that it not only sought to forestall the workers' movement, but also to contain it by bringing it under the control of an inherited colonial administration. Laks argues that this measure reflected the bourgeoisie's fear of an eventual ascendancy of the petite bourgeoisie and the ultimate development of a centralized authoritarian state under its control. But the latter was rapidly reinforcing its hold

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[66] This was clearly expressed in "the Tripoli Charter", an official document outlining the future development of independent Algeria. It was adopted in Tripoli by the National Council for the Revolution in 1962, just before independence.

[67] Ordinance No.62-020, in Journal Officiel de l'Etat Algerien, No.12, 7th Sept. 1962, pp.138-40. Cited by Laks, op. cit. p.144.

[68] This clause reflected the confusion characterising the position of the bourgeoisie torn between immediate aspirations to enrich itself taking advantage of the favourable situation and long term strategic objective of consolidating its domination within a neo-colonial framework. As Laks argued, this clause clearly favoured the bourgeoisie and petite-bourgeois elements who engage in a widespread operation of speculation and transactions, while it could not benefit workers for the equipment they controlled had no use outside factories and farms. See Laks, op. cit., footnote, p.145.

over the state and while accepting the role of executioner of the Ordinance, it was not prepared to relinquish its share of vacated properties. Instead, through its position in the inherited administration, it enhanced its objective base, power and authority.

The workers had, at this stage, to face the hostility of two classes linked by a multitude of ties and interests despite their own antagonisms, inherent in their objective positions and aspirations. Workers were, on the other hand, atomized, divided, disorganized and disoriented in the absence of a well-organized party or strong trade union movement. The U.G.T.A. leadership has long since lost contact with its base, lacked cadres, resources and a coherent programme for the future, rendering its task of mobilizing workers in that prevalent chaotic situation a near impossibility. As we have argued above, the petite bourgeoisie seemed a favoured candidate for political power; one of its fractions being already entrenched in the inherited administration. It eventually gained control of coercive power (the army and police) and used its experience and prestige gained during its leadership of the liberation war to legitimize a nationalist ideology after independence. As this class acceded to political power in the autumn of 1962, the urgent task of developing "self-management" fell to it. How did the petite bourgeoisie relate to the workers' movement?

3.2.4 - The petite bourgeoisie and self-management

The immediate task facing the populist section of the petite bourgeoisie upon its accession to power, was to find solutions to the economic situation. A number of alternative possibilities were available, but given its interests, its hostility to the neo-colonial arrangements, its determination to block the local bourgeoisie and withstand the pressure of the workers and the peasants, the least damaging option was seen to be an alliance with the workers. Consequently, one of its first acts was to confirm the workers' movement of self-management. In October and November, 1962 two significant decisions were taken: the first confirmed workers' right to manage vacated enterprises,[69] while the second prohibited

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(Footnote continued)

transactions in all vacated properties by particular individuals. These measures won the new government strong support from workers and peasants. However, the confirmation of self-management was not without its ambiguities and reticences which expressed both the apprehension of the government towards workers' control and a lack of confidence in its own capacity to deal with the reaction of the settler, and beyond it, the metropolitan bourgeoisie.

These decisions should be interpreted within the context of the balance of power between various social forces, inside and outside the country. First, the decrees made it necessary for workers to obtain a prior agreement from local administration in order to set up management committees. Secondly, the decrees included the declared intention to protect the property rights of the previous owners if, upon return to Algeria, they agreed to share management with the workers' committees. These decisions represented a significant compromise. While confirming the workers' rights to self-management, they subjected such rights to the tight control of the state bureaucracy. State control was not limited to administrative measures (prior agreement of local administration) but was extended to economic and financial mechanisms.

These latter were very important and effective including control of all liquid capital deposited by the enterprises in banks (all private at the time). Withdrawal of such deposits was subject to the prior agreement of an accountant, acting on behalf of the state. Industrial enterprises were considered as more important and were required to accept the state nomination of financial and technical inspectors to the management committees. Their agreement was essential in all decisions affecting the enterprises.[70]

According to Laks, such external controls ensured that

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[69](continued)
[69]Decree No.62-2 of 22nd October 1962 confirming workers' committees in agriculture. Journal Officiel de la Republique Algerienne, No.1, Oct. 11962, p.14.
Decree No.62-38 of 23rd November 1962, confirming committees in industrial and craft enterprises in Journal Official, No.5, Nov. 1962, p.56. Both quoted by Laks, op. cit., p.149.

[70]See Laks, op. cit., p.150.

from the beginning the state was involved as a major actor in the self-managed enterprises. The decrees confirmed a type of co-management representing the forerunner of a later model of joint ventures between the state and private capital, foreign and national. They indicated too, an interest in protecting foreign capital against the encroachment of the local bourgeoisie through the prohibition of all transactions in vacated properties; even repealing many which were concluded. Essentially, the petite bourgeoisie was consolidating its own position by extending the economic rôle of the state both as a proprietor and manager.[71]

Conclusion

The process of class formation in general and working class formation in particular was profoundly affected by two issues: state building and economic development. These represented two different yet related arenas of class struggle and conflict. The issues around which such struggle evolved included the nature and rôle of the state, the social and political character of the new society, the content and orientation which should be given to economic development. In this context, the experiment of workers' self-management represented a focal point attracting much open and latent conflict among various classes and groups in formation. Self-management was, in part, the product of and a condition for the raising of consciousness among the working class. It was a process which presaged the growth of "revolutionary" consciousness.[72] However, the prevailing context of nationalist politics, and the social and political alienation of many sectors of the working class hindered such a crystallization.

Among the various causes leading to the failure of self-management, the weakness of the working class-in-formation was of

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[71]Ibid, p.151. The same view was held by all those who characterized the Algerian development experience as one of state capitalism or state socialism. See, for example: Raffinot and Jacquemot, op. cit.; Clegg, op. cit.; and Chaliand, op. cit.

[72]This concept is used in Giddens' way. See, Giddens, A., The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies. London, Hutchinson, 1973.

great significance. Others reflected the fact that various factors in the environment were inimical to such a development. Such causes included: the process of internal bureaucratization of the unions leading to a weakening of the ties between the leadership and the mass of ordinary workers; the disillusionment of workers and the prevalence of instrumental attitudes toward self-management; the fact that workers conceived themselves as contractual wage labour and were effectively seen and treated as such by the state and its agencies.

The general conditions of social, economic and political organisation at that particular time were conducive to forms of bureaucratization emanating from the strong, concerted intervention of central authority. In short, the demise of self-management betrayed the weakness of the working class in formation. It revealed the limitation of holding local economic power when political power, i.e., the state and its apparatuses were increasingly under the control of a class who opposed self-management. It also showed the crucial weakness entailed in the absence of an independent working class organisation.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE WORKING CLASS AND THE STATE

In this chapter the actions of the relationship of the state and the emergent working class outside the confines of Self-management. First, we will consider government actions and workers' struggle in the private sector. In the second section we will discuss how the government and the UGTA faced worker resistance, including the wave of strikes. Finally, we analyse working class formation as it manifested in the relationship between the state and the union movement.

4.1.1- The state and private capital

The analysis of the relationship between the state and private capital, national and foreign, will throw more light on the class nature of policies pursued in the self-managed sector. Although state policies dealing with private capital lacked coherence and were characterized by conjunctural reactions rather than long-term planning, their main features was repeated calls for cooperation coupled with limited attempts to exert some control on private capital. However, the main preoccupation of the government was the extension and consolidation of the newly created state-controlled sector, a task which, to some extent, determined its orientations to both self-management and private capital.

Nationalization was not a favoured method despite the fact that both employers and workers, for different reasons, were pushing the government in this direction. The government was more interested in entering joint ventures through the control of major shareholdings in private companies operating in Algeria. Such was the thrust of government policy in this direction that by 1964, the state acquired up to 40% in a number of French companies and their subsidiaries including Algerian Airlines, Berliet (a truck company),

Renault (automobile industry) and 33% of other major companies in extractive industries, 40.5% in the French company S.N. Repal in the oil industry and 51% in the electricity, gas and railways company SNCFA.[73]

This policy of acquiring shares which would appear, at least on the surface, to threaten foreign interests was complemented by others designed to reassure foreign capital. One major step in this direction was the formulation of a Code of Investments in 1963. The main objective of this code was not to impose restrictions on the activities of private capital, but rather to the contrary spell out guarantees and privileges provided for it in a country whose government did not cease to proclaim the construction of socialism. The important concessions made to private capital included the reduction of the effects of nationalization for which compensation was always guaranteed. Liberalising legislation on capital transfer, guaranteed the transfer of 50% of total profits and in cases of nationalization or liquidation of businesses the transfer of total capital assets was guaranteed; fiscal advantages; custom and tariff protection; credit facilities and access to state market.[74] Such advantages were generally granted without imposing any specific restrictions or conditions for their withdrawal in cases of misconduct by private capital. Furthermore, no legislation concerning work conditions, union activity, workers' participation in management was introduced parallel to those guarantees in order to control the activities of private capital.[75] Such complete openness to private capital, especially foreign, was expressed very eloquently by the then Minister of Labour in the following statement:

> "The Algiers Charter has not completely eliminated the existence of free enterprise in Algeria... It is evident that my role, at the ministry, is to create the best conditions for representatives of free enterprise in our

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[73]For a detailed discussion of this point, see Laks, op. cit., p.197, and Akkache, Capitaux etrangers et Liberation Economique l'Experience Algerienne, Paris, Maspero, 1971.

[74]On the Code of Investment, See Akkahe, op. cit.

[75]Laks op. cit. p.198.

> country, so that they can do their job in normal conditions... There are perspectives for the development of free enterprise... I don't think that in Algeria we have to declare war on it... We try to assist free enterprises because they provide salaries and contribute to create favourable social conditions..."[76]

It was, however, notable that the local private capital despite all assurances, guarantees and stimuli remained hesitant and confined its operations to branches traditionally characterized by low risk and rapid capital turnover such as commerce and services with very few investments in manufacturing. Repeated attempts by the government to draw private capital into joint ventures failed to overcome this reticence.[77] Reluctance from local private capital reflected a deep distrust and concern among the local bourgeoisie towards the drive to extend and consolidate state control over the economy.

The bourgeoisie was confirmed in its suspicion and distrust by the very fact of its exclusion from political power as the petite bourgeoisie strengthened its hold over the state; transforming itself into a state bourgeoisie composed of two active fractions, the bureaucracy and technocracy. This process of the class formation of a state bourgeoisie was clearly evident in the extension of state ownership and control in various branches of the economy. Besides the joint ventures in which the state acquired control in many sensitive areas traditionally dominated by foreign capital, a clear tendency towards the creation of state-owned and managed companies was accelerated. These companies covered all economic activities, consumer goods (textiles and leather), basic manufacturing industries (steel, chemicals and hydrocarbons) and transport, communication and commerce. Such companies had various forms of management but all shared one distinctive feature, the exclusion of workers from any form of participation in decision making. Laks even argues that a clear correlation existed between the economic importance of these companies

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[76]Boudissa, the then Minister of Labour quoted in Le Bulletin d'Autogestion, July 1965, No.5, p.2, cited by Laks, op. cit., pp. 198-199.

[77]Laks offers many examples of such attempts. See Laks, op. cit., p.201; and Clegg, op. cit.; also Benhouria, op. cit.

and exclusion of workers from decision making.[78]

It is interesting to ask the question; what were the characteristics of working class formation outside the limited, but important arena of self-management? In answering this question we shall distinguish two aspects: first, the content and form of the workers' struggles during this period and, second, the relationship between the union movement and the state.

4.1.2 - Forms of Workers' struggle

It is common to consider that social classes, like the individual members composing them, have both immediate and long-term interests as well as objectives, these are expressed by representative groups and organizations. These may be, complementary or contradictory and may be articulated by different groups within the same class. The struggles of Algerian workers in the early period of independence offers an example which may be conceptualized and explained in terms of such a broad approach, taking into consideration the general structural context, the aspirations of, and constraints experienced by, different groups within the class, as they interact between themselves and with other classes.

In the case of Algerian workers, for example, we can distinguish the mass of workers and their local unions, and the "vanguard" represented by the national leadership including the U.G.T.A., and radical elements in the F.L.N. Despite any long-term convergence of interests, it is clear that the immediate interests and objectives were different. While local unions and their members were preoccupied with immediate issues such as wages, working conditions, and relations with management, the latter were more concerned with issues having a long-term bearing on the position of workers. The objectives of the "vanguard" not only reflected the weight they gave to the necessity of social transformation as a condition for the emancipation of workers, but was also dictated by its analysis of the existing conditions inherent in the post-independence situation. Such

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[78]See Laks, op. cit., p.203; and also Weiss, Doctrine et Action Syndicale... op. cit.

an orientation on the part of the "vanguard" led to a strategic alliance with the radical nationalist element of the petite bourgeoisie and, more importantly, with that impoverished mass constituting the sub-proletariat. Here we seem to have two different orientations, both influencing working class struggles; one adopted by local unions and their members and the other by the "vanguard". However, how did these orientations express themselves in action? And what was their significance for the process of working class formation?

Workers' action in this period was dominated by strike action. This is somewhat surprising given that economic conditions were, from a conventional approach, extremely unfavourable to strikes. The increase in the number of strikes in these early years compared to their level just before independence was an important phenomenon which calls for explanation.

Table 4.1: Evolution of strikes (1958-64)

	1958	1959	1960	1963	1964 *
Strikes	2	9	17	100	114
Workers involved	51	530	1828	-	566

Source: ILO, Yearbook of Labour Statistics, 1964, p.552 & 1966, p.708.
(*) figures are for the first semestre only

There are certainly doubts as to the reliability of these figures both before and after independence, making comparison rather difficult, but there is little doubt that the years 1963-64, were marked by an escalation of strike action. The plausible explanation of this paradox resides, in our view, in two fundamental changes brought about by the achievement of political independence. First, there was a rapid increase in unionization in the various economic sectors, especially industry and services, after a long absence of legal trade union activity. Secondly, there were major changes in the rôle of the trades unions, whose traditional task of defending workers' interests had been subordinated to political

considerations and activity. This change was perceived not only by the U.G.T.A. leadership, but also by the mass of workers and local union militants whose activities had been suspended in previous years. It seems as though workers and local militants- once independence was achieved, an objective to which all others were subordinated- sought an amelioration in their own conditions and were increasingly determined to press for their demands by strike action. But, why strikes and not negotiation and agreements? The simple answer is that such negotiation did occur but not to the satisfaction of the workers involved.

A number of reasons contributed to this outcome. First, the normal intransigence of employers who believed that the prevailing conditions of widespread unemployment and recession were unfavourable toward radical action. Secondly, many workers faced a desperate situation and their local representatives were determined to assert themselves. The general situation created by nationalist triumph over a major colonial power provided added impetus to workers' determination to improve their conditions by maximizing their demands, especially as the employers continued to be mostly foreign.

Despite the diversity of the causes and content of the strikes in this period, arising out of the particular conditions prevailing in different industries and regions of the country, three common features can be discerned. First, the active part played by local union sections and their militants whose eagerness to reaffirm the importance of their organization might have on occasion unrealistically pushed desperate workers to take strike action. Secondly, by far the greatest number of these strikes (90%), were in the Algiers region, the country's capital and the most developed region. This certainly reflected economic concentration (60% of all wage employees in 1965).[79] It might also have been the case that the rôle of union sections here was greater than elsewhere. Although precise information on the degree of unionization in different regions is lacking, both the degree of economic concentration and traditional significance of the U.G.T.A. in this region may well explain the high level of strikes. Thirdly, despite variations in worker demands, one

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[79]See Weiss, op.cit., pp.120-121.

common cause of strikes and labour unrest was the deep distrust and reciprocal threats characterizing relations between workers and employers generally.

The intransigence of employers and the determination of workers were mutually reinforcing, leading to widespread labour unrest. The strikes were also largely concentrated in foreign-owned enterprises, which dominated the economy. Nevertheless, Algerian private capital was not spared such event. Indeed, one major characteristic of workers' struggle after independence was that the principal contradiction- indigenous/foreign- was replaced by that of capital/labour. Consequently, many strikes took place in enterprises owned by the local bourgeoisie, as well as the multi-nationals.[80]

4.2.1 - The Government and Strikes

The government's strategy in relation to workers' strikes was to play a mediating rôle, placing itself above the conflict between workers and employers. This "neutral" mediating rôle was crucial if the state was to exert its influence, while at the same time, emphasizing its autonomy, strength and credibility. It was through playing this rôle that the Ministry of National Economy was able to take a leading part in 1963-64 in the attempt to bring together the antagonistic parties and negotiate a number of agreements, ending strikes or preventing them whenever possible.[81] The "neutral" stance and the mediatory rôle were clearly expressed by government officials who claimed that both workers and employers were acting in an irresponsible manner.

Weiss argues that the government's attitude towards strikes arose from three sources. First, there was the genuine fear of soaring inflation resulting from a further drop in production and relatively high wage settlements. Secondly, the government feared the widening of already large disparities between the relatively better

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[80]Hostility toward the local bourgeoisie was not only reflected in strike action disrupting private enterprises, but also in mass demonstration led by the UGTA in April 1964 against traders and their union organisation. See Weiss, op. cit., pp.122-23.

[81]Weiss, op. cit., p.125.

off workers, and the mass of unemployed and poor peasants. Thirdly, there was the risk of alienating private foreign capital. Many employers experiencing difficulties actually preferred nationalization as a solution to threatening bankruptcy or the option of leaving the country. Official policy was to avoid such outcomes by maintaining and even consolidating private enterprise, as the state lacked the financial resources and the qualified personnel to manage large areas of the economy.[82]

The government's attitude to strikes was, however, ambiguous and contradictory, expressing as they did these practical problems and the ideology of the emergent petite bourgeoisie; its weakness and its inability to exert its hegemony. These sources of ambiguity might explain repeated attempts by the government to take a "neutral" position and to be seen doing so. However, it was a position that offered limited possibilities for manoeuvre while generating many policy inconsistencies resulting from the government's need to strengthen its position in relation to the mounting opposition on all sides. The objective of consolidating its control over the state required the government to enter into many short-lived and tactical alliances which, to some extent, undermined the "neutral" posture. Inherently contradictory was the fact that neither workers nor private capital would accept or support the strategic aim of the petite bourgeoisie to establish strong centralized state control over the economy with its bureaucratic and technocratic tendencies. In order to achieve this aim the petite bourgeoisie was forced into short-term alliances, first with the local bourgeoisie and foreign capital, then with workers and peasants. This cycle of tactical alliances was distinctive of the whole process of petite bourgeois class ascendancy and the strategy remains central even today after its transformation into a state bourgeoisie composed of various spheres of influence (the bureaucracy, the army, the technocracy and the political elite).

4.2.2 - U.G.T.A. and workers' strikes

We have already argued that it is important to distinguish within the union movement between the local union sections

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[82] Ibid, pp.126-27.

and full-time union officers and cadres in the regional and national structures of union organization. The latter constituted a leadership characterized by four important features which set it apart from the base. First, in terms of social origin, most of the leadership emerged from intermediate groups; junior functionaries and service employees. Secondly, most, if not all, trade union leaders were socialized in the nationalist political movement even before the creation of the F.L.N. in 1954. Thirdly, they tended to have a long experience within various metropolitan unions during the colonial period. Finally, and most important was the influence of the communist-oriented C.G.T., from which the majority of the U.G.T.A. had come.

These characteristics had a significant bearing on the ideas and views of the U.G.T.A. leadership concerning the future development of Algerian society and the rôle workers should play in it. In these features there were sources of tension and complementarity and they have all influenced the U.G.T.A.'s position and relations with the state, the party and workers. The most obvious consequences included the fact that the union organization incorporated within it a tendency toward centralized control; the seed of bureaucratization of the union movement. There was also a strong nationalist sentiment, providing basis for identification and compromise with the nationalist and populist ideology of the government and finally, a clear, if not systematically formulated, identification with socialism and proletarian ideals. This general background is very important for an understanding and appreciation of the attitudes of the U.G.T.A. leadership not only in this early period, but even today.

Long before independence, the U.G.T.A. leaders entertained the idea that their organization would assume a new major and novel rôle in the building of post-independence Algeria. This was made clear immediately after independence, when the union stressed workers' association, rather than free bargaining; a position which was considered more appropriate to a situation in which workers were seen to be assisted by a state that expressed the general aspirations of national reconstruction and the building of an egalitarian society. Even elements in the F.L.N. considered that the union movement would share political power, in view of its rôle during the liberation war.[83]

Whatever the motives of the union leadership were, its political position was undoubtedly to shift the balance of power in favour of workers. This was to culminate in the establishment of an egalitarian society benefiting the mass of workers, poor peasants and sub-proletariat who constituted the backbone of the liberation war. In the short term, however, the union leaders saw the association with the state as involving a sacrifice, the suspension of immediate interests. Investment, higher productivity, work discipline and improved management, rather than consumption and distribution had to be given priority.

This position was, as it emerged, very close to the government's proclaimed intentions. While for a short period in 1962, the U.G.T.A. leaders expressed dissatisfaction with certain government policies, in 1963, with a change in leadership,[84] the union fully backed the government and became forceful in their condemnation of workers' demands, which were labelled "workerist". The leadership became openly critical of "militants" encouraging strikes, describing them as "the rearguard of reformists who misconceive the epoch". This critique was even more pronounced as one editorial in "Revolution et Travail", the official U.G.T.A. magazine shows:

> Have you advanced one step the cause of socialism? Are you sure of interpreting correctly the desires of the base for action by giving it a free bargaining rather than a participatory and socialist form?... The U.G.T.A. will not tolerate that a short-sighted demagogy is given free course under its banner and name... The only leaders worthy of being part of our organization are those who know how to organize the socialist aspirations of their comrades and guide them towards their final goal without losing them in demagogic impasses.[85]

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[83] In fact this orientation was favoured and even encouraged by government and political authorities. It was a general case of newly independent countries that under slogans of participation, one-party states sought to control and subordinate trade unions. In the UGTA's case, see Weiss, op. cit.; Laks, op. cit.; and Gallissot, R., "Syndicalisme et Nationalisme: La fondation de l'UGTA ou du Syndicalisme CGT au Syndicalisme Algerien, 1954-1956-1958", Mouvement Social, No.66, Jan.-Mar. 1969, pp.7-50.

[84] For a detailed discussion of the changes which occurred in the UGTA leadership during the first congress in 1963 and the role played by the government in this congress, See Weiss, op. cit. pp.79-92 and pp.267-80. Also, Faver, J. "Le syndicat, les Travailleurs et le Pouvoir en Algerie" Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord, Vol4, 1965 pp.45-63. See also, Laks, op. cit., p.168-69.

However, such condemnation did not weaken the propensity of workers and their local leaders to make demands the form and content of which began to change early in 1964. As Weiss argues, the new demands were concerned, besides wages and working conditions, with other issues such as participation. [86]

Table 4.2: Content of 33 strikes in 1964.

Demands	No. of occurrences
Wages, allowances.. etc.	17/33
Working conditions	12/33
Participation & Algerianization	10/33

Source: Revolution et travail No.13, Jan. 1965.

In the winter of 1964 some 3,500 workers in 11 enterprises were involved in such strikes.[87] Many of these strikes achieved their goals such as Algerianization and workers' participation through enterprise committees, as well as other demands relating to both wages and working conditions. [88] Such strikes exacerbated relations between the union and the local militants and the followers, so demonstrating the inability of a leadership, loyal to the government, to control their own organization. Thus, despite the U.G.T.A.'s theoretical commitment to workers' control, it failed to support the workers demands and this movement largely escaped union control, especially in cases involving the state sector. In effect, the leadership faced the dilemma of having to satisfy both the government to which it owed its position, and the workers' demands, simultaneously. This ambivalent position did not deter the leadership from opposing workers' strikes generally and those in the state sector

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[85] UGTA, Revolution et Travail, 29 June 1963, cited by Weiss, op. cit., p.134.

[86] UGTA, Revolution et Travail, No.13, Jan. 1965.

[87] For a detailed statement of the UGTA's programme see Weiss, op. cit., p.138. For the escalation of strikes in this period see Laks, op. cit, footnote No.56, p.253.

[88] See a detailed discussion of one of these strikes in Weiss, op. cit., pp.141-44.

particularly. Its arguments were expressed in the following manner:

> One fact should not be left out of sight that the government is a socialist government, issued from the people... strikes in the public sector are inadmissible. Workers in the private sector, before resorting to strikes, have to think and do not accept pay rises, which lead to perpetual increases in wages and prices.[89]

Strikes were even described as a "betrayal" of the cause of socialism:

> To strike is to renounce the struggle, to put down instruments is to abandon the weapons which build socialism.[90]

The workers were relatively successful in their demand for Algerianization and vocational training but less so when it came to workers' control. Both the government and the U.G.T.A. were hostile to the latter demands. Algerianization progressed quite rapidly depending on the size of the relevant industrial branches and enterprises. Thus, in most enterprises with less than 100 employees the level of Algerianization achieved in 1965-66 was very satisfactory (See Table 4.3). Unsurprisingly, it was highest in those industries that required relatively less technical expertise such as metallurgy and chemicals, but lower in those with complex production processes such as, mechanical, electrical industries, and hydrocarbons.

For the U.G.T.A., the problem was not so much the lack of trained Algerian workers as resistance by foreign capital, especially in strategic manufacturing industries. The level of Algerianization also varied in accordance with legal ownership. It was highest in the self-managed and state controlled sectors and low in the private, mainly foreign, sector as Table 4.3 shows.

Achievements in the area of vocational training, considered a necessary precondition for the progress of Algerianization, were not impressive. Worker pressure supported by the

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[89] UGTA, Editorial in Revolution et Travail, 20 Jan. 1965. Quoted in Laks, op. cit., footnote No.60, p.255.

[90] UGTA, Rapport d'orientation de la commission de preparation du Congres. Quoted by Laks, op. cit., p.255.

Table 4.3: Algerianization in enterprises of 20+ employees,1966
(Private sector: male only)

	Management		Sen. Admin staff		Sen. techn. staff		Superv. sub staff		Emp'ees.	
Algerians	188		132		35		2.707		3,137	
Europeans	386		324		276		1,767		241	
Public sector	St -	Sm	St -	Sm	St -	Sm	St -	Sm	St -	Sm
Algerians	154	260	265	53	38	3	4,382	286	4,881	1,017
Europeans	37	6	145	8	153	13	782	24	75	6

Source: Weiss, p. 180. St = state sector, Sm = self-managed sector.

U.G.T.A. led to the decree of the third of August, 1964 which instituted training structures in all enterprises employing over 100, under the control of workers enterprise committees. However, as enterprises with fewer than 100 employees constituted the great bulk, vocational training structures depended on the creation of inter-enterprise committees; something that never materialized. Also, even in larger enterprises, where such committees existed or were set up by the unions, their general activity and control of training structures was irregular and weak.

The most important issue, workers participation, existed in Algeria, as in France after the Second World War, in the form of enterprise committees. These committees played an active rôle in large enterprises (over 100 employees), but given the small number of such enterprises in Algeria their importance was limited. Workers and their local unions pressed for their extension to small and medium-sized enterprises and the reactivation of those which already existed in larger enterprises. But they had a very limited success as shown by a study commissioned by the Ministry of Labour.[91] It was found that only 5% of enterprises with over 50 employees had such committees and even here they functioned irregularly, their rôle being restricted to management of workers' welfare services. In larger enterprises, these committees functioned on a relatively regular basis, but their results were not satisfactory despite the effective contribution of workers'

[91] See Weiss, op. cit., p.140.

representatives to decision-making in areas such as recruitment, training, promotion and wages. Overall, the committees were less effective than workers and their unions had hoped. The reasons included the shortage of experienced union officers, the resistance of employers and the confusion in the minds of workers' representatives between bargaining and participation.[92]

However, the important question which must be addressed here is why, despite all these limitations, were enterprises' committees the favoured form of participation for the working class vanguard during 1964-65? Why did workers and the vanguard not focus their demands on self-management? Very few observers have addressed this question and those who have come to two different conclusions. The first, expressed by Weiss, argues that, in the light of the reluctance of the government to extend self-management and its failure to introduce the legislation compatible with its proclaimed goal of a socialist transformation of society, these enterprise committees represented the best available option for the articulation of workers' interests.[93] The second view, advanced by Laks suggests that the demand for enterprise committees was a conscious choice made by workers and their vanguard. It was clearly a major change in the working class' view of the state. Workers were not only disillusioned with the actual form of self-management on offer, but a large proportion of them became aware that the existing form of self-management was not a viable model under the prevailing conditions. In fact, it came to be seen as a form of ideological mystification disguising bureaucratic control and exploitation.[94] These interpretations might seem, at first glance, similar if not identical. In fact, they express very different views resting on totally opposed assumptions. Whereas, Weiss considers government hostility to self-management as a major condition influencing workers' orientations, such hostility was not seen by him in terms of existing class relations and struggles. Laks, on the other hand, considers that the workers' ability to grasp the class nature of state policies was fundamental to radical change in workers' orientation.

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[92]See Weiss, op. cit. p.141.

[93]Ibid, pp.141-42.

[94]Laks, op. cit., pp.251-58.

Government opposition to self-management was a manifestation of the dominant social and economic structures expressing antagonistic class relations. This crucial element is missing from Weiss' interpretation where little attention was devoted to the analysis of class relations, interests and conflicts surrounding self-management. Laks' interpretation is not only theoretically superior but more compatible with expressed workers' attitudes concerning self-management as shown by the following statements made by workers during the first congress of the "Industrial Socialist Sector" in 1964. Concerning the investment policy of the state which favoured private capital, a delegate remarked:

> "The creation of joint venture enterprises is an example. It happens that credits are given to wholesale traders to transform them into industrialists while we are lacking liquid capital to pay our workers."

On the question of distribution of realized benefits to workers which was one of the most debated issues, the workers' position opposing its re-investment was made clear in the following statement:

> "If the power was in the hands of workers and peasants, I would be in favour of putting all the benefits in a common fund, but at this moment, can we trust 'them'?"

Another delegate takes this matter further and touches on the important issue of the class nature of the state:

> "The legal and administrative structures of the present state do not correspond to our socialist orientation. Ask how many workers and peasants are in the National Assembly, in our ministries and all leading organs of the state? It is because of this that the present state apparatus, as a whole, did not assist and even sabotaged self-management."[95]

4.3 - UGTA facing Party and State hegemony:

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[95]These workers' statements were reported by Laks, op. cit., pp.228-29. See also, Minces, op. cit., for a detailed account of workers' views in this Congress.

Immediately following independence in 1962 the UGTA's central structures were revived under the initiative of the existing leaders. One of the declared objectives of this leadership was to assert the independence of the union movement vis-a-vis the party and the state. This goal was behind the neutral position adopted by the UGTA leadership during the political turmoil of 1962, and its opposition to the FLN Political Bureau. In a declaration published in July 1962 this position was made explicit:

> "The UGTA is a national organization. Its autonomy in politics is indispensable. It is important that the trade union movement develops freely..."[96]

The UGTA leaders refused to take sides politically but urged the adoption of policies designed to solve acute problems inherited from colonial domination and exacerbated by the liberation war. Later, when Ben Bella assumed political leadership, he considered that the neutral position assumed by the UGTA was a sign of hostility towards him and support for his opponents in the Provisional Government. He explicitly accused the UGTA of having played "one of the most negative rôles since independence."[97]

The difficulties facing the UGTA were numerous the most important being the extreme disruption of the economy caused by the massive exodus of European settlers. To this must be added limited implantation of the UGTA in large urban centres and the weakness of its structures after a long period of exile. But neither its historical experience nor the current conditions were conducive to the development of a strong and independent union movement. Despite these serious limitations, UGTA leadership were intent on obtaining for their organization a more significant rôle than that of collective bargaining and defending economic interests:

> "For us workers, the UGTA is not an instrument of social improvement, but an instrument of social transformation. The UGTA is not essentially for the defence of corporative interests, but for the development of the country, freeing the Algerian people from famine, misery

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[96] Quoted by Weiss, op. cit., p.70.

[97] Interview published by Le Monde, 14th Sept. 1962. Quoted in Weiss, op. cit., p.71.

and ignorance."[98]

One of the most important tasks carried out by the UGTA in the period was its participation in the setting up of workers' committees and the movement for self-management. This rôle, as Weiss pointed out, was not an isolated act, but a co-ordinated and planned activity covering the whole country, where union sections and militants existed.[99] Such a commitment and rôle was one of the main causes of the hostility and conflict characterizing the relationship of the UGTA, and the FLN and the government. By the end of 1962 two particular tendencies dominated activities and opinions within the union movement. First, there were the radical positions, such as commitment to self-management, and the commitment to strike action, especially in the private sector supporting demands ranging from wages to workers' control. Second, relations with the FLN and the government became more conflictive as union leaders insisted on their autonomy. Political leadership within the FLN became increasingly impatient with, and hostile to, this tendency.

What lay behind the hostility characterising relations between UGTA, the party and government? Was it the revenge of a bitter political leadership which the union failed to support in its bid for power in the summer of 1962? Or was it the expression of rivalry between various apparatuses competing for authority and legitimacy among an important, if small section of the population, but which otherwise exhibited no fundamental differences? On the other hand, could it be interpreted as reflecting deep and latent antagonisms between emergent class groupings, i.e., a form of class struggle. These are the important hypotheses which might offer practical assistance to explain such relations. The first could be considered inadequate not only because of its superficial character, but also because the conflict between the union leadership and government has survived many changes in personalities on both sides. In fact, this contradicted Weiss's argument that dissensions between different groups in Algeria tended to be quickly forgotten.[100]

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[98]UGTA, L'Ouvrier Algerien, August 1962.

[99]See Weiss, op. cit., p. 74.

(Footnote continued)

The second hypothetical explanation, favoured by Weiss, considered such conflict as a matter of "innocent" competition for power between two organisations with similar objectives and social bases. The subordination of the union movement to government was more of a necessity imposed by the need for unity and consent in view of the nature of tasks which were to be carried out: building a wrecked nation, an independent state, social and economic development, etc. But such an "innocent" justification was claimed by governments in all countries whatever their objective character and intentions might be. Furthermore, national unity and interests were not synonymous with subordination and hegemony. In fact, the UGTA did not totally reject the political and ideological domination of the FLN party. [101] What was resented was outright and direct intervention in, and manipulation of the union organisation and its use as an extra arm of the state.

One important point recognized by all observers as well as FLN radicals was the fact that the party machine was very weak. In such circumstances the UGTA, despite its own weakness, represented a formidable adversary.[102] But, rivalry between the UGTA and the FLN was not a simple and "innocent" competition between two organisations possessing the same ideology and representing similar interests. Far

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[100] (continued)
[100] Weiss, op. cit., p.78. In fact all events since independence showed that was not the case at all. Differences between representatives of the bourgeois liberal tendency and the populist radical petite-bourgeois elements survived for many years (for example; repeated clashes between Boumedienne and Farhat Abbes, Ben Khedda and Company.)

[101] The agreement concluded between the UGTA leadership and the Political Bureau of the FLN in Dec. 1962, explicitly referred to the primacy of the party line in matters of ideological and political orientation. On the other hand, it recognized the need for an autonomous and democratic functioning of union structures.

[102] The weakness of the FLN's structures and their inefficiency was not a secret for anyone. See Weiss, op. cit., p.79; and Clegg, op. cit. For an insider's view, see Lacheraf, M., L'Algerie, Nation et Societe. 2nd edition, Alger, SNED 1978.

The hegemonic tendencies of the FLN were denounced by radical leaders such as Ait Ahmed who declared in the National Assembly in November 1962, "It is not because the party has not yet established its structures that it should question the legitimacy of the structures of other national organisations which exist already." Journal officiel de la Republique Algerienne, No.25, Feb. 1963, p.152.

from it. Although structurally weak, the party had appeal and legitimacy as the bearer of national consciousness and pride. Dominated by the petite bourgeoisie ever since the liberation war, the FLN was further brought under firm control after independence as an instrument of class hegemony and a power base.

The radical ideological rhetoric of the FLN such as that expressed in the Tripoli Charter, or the Algiers Charter was first of all the product of a small group of radical intellectuals. The rhetoric was accepted by the petite bourgeoisie leadership as its own programme as far as conditions of its implementation remained largely under its control. Thus, the primacy of the party line which the political leaders wanted to impose on the union was not that expressed in the FLN's doctrinal documents mentioned above and to which the UGTA subscribed. The petite bourgeoisie accepted that political and ideological line as far as it excluded the bourgeoisie and discredited its neo-colonial orientation. Going beyond that risked prejudicing its own existence and domination. The UGTA's position in defending the line defined in those historical documents (the Tripoli Charter and the Algiers Charter) expressed the interests of the popular classes: workers, peasants and the sub-proletariat. The conflict, therefore, extended beyond mere rivalries of personalities and competition between different apparatuses for domination. It was rather an episode in a struggle between two major classes in the process of formation. However, such struggle was not always explicit and clearly defined as class relations and the interests they expressed were not yet crystallized.

Governmental hostility to the union movement was demonstrated on yet another occasion by its opposition to UGTA representation on the specialised commissions of the national assembly. It was clear in this instance that the UGTA's aspiration for a rôle in the country's political life was not going to distract it from preserving its autonomy leading it into providing unconditional support for the government.

> "The UGTA provides its support for the government when the government envisages revolutionary solutions, but it will oppose any policy favouring the proprietors against those who have one form of capital only: their labour power.. It will also oppose any governmental conception which would maintain labour dependent on capitalists...

> It will be vigilant concerning the application of production plans and directs this in enterprises with a socialist basis."[103]

Such a position was clearly unacceptable to the government and, by the end of 1962, relations between the UGTA and the government had reached breaking point. However, in December 1962 an agreement was reached stressing organizational and functional autonomy of the Union and the political and ideological preeminence of the party. This fragile compromise was wrecked by the events of the first UGTA Congress in January 1963. The government literally "hijacked" the congress replacing the radical leadership with another, loyal to its line.[104]

This first congress brought the union/government conflict into the open; revealing the real intentions of the political leaders to use the Union as an extra arm of the one-party state. It also clearly revealed the weakness of the working class-in-formation and its organisation the UGTA, in the face of aggressive state intervention. The deposed leadership was, nevertheless, eager to avoid a showdown with government, preferring to preserve worker unity in a single union movement, despite "temporary" control by the state. The union movement and its relations with the emergent working class might have developed differently had those leaders reacted otherwise to the "hijacking" of the congress.

The FLN leadership justified direct intervention in the congress by alleging that the UGTA was not representative given the absence of peasants from its ranks. Second, it accused the UGTA of "workerist" tendencies reflected in the union's strong orientation toward bargaining rather than participation or corporative strategies. In short, the UGTA was seen to be engaged in articulating a minority, sectional interest at the expense of those of the masses. This critique revealed the populist orientation on the part of the political leadership, with a claim to represent the interests of the

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[103]UGTA, L'Ouvrier Algerien, No.3, November 1963. The issue carrying this editorial was immediately seized by the authorities. See Weiss, op. cit., p.81.

[104]We have already pointed to this important event in the previous section.

popular masses, especially peasants and the unemployed. The FLN also betrayed its petite bourgeois roots by its attempts to mobilize the peasantry in opposition to unionized workers. This position was similar to, and may have been inspired by, that propagated by Fanon, whose ideas were influential among a section of the FLN leadership.[105]

The prime expressed concern of the FLN leadership was to preserve national unity. Such claims and rhetoric were very common in the newly independent nations, as political elites attempted to establish their control and consolidate their power bases. By contrast, the UGTA leadership continued to espouse a more coherent class position as could be detected in a statement by one of the deposed leaders at the end of the congress:

> "... We have to defend an orientation based on the independence of the union movement from the party. We shall continue our struggle for this principle to the end... We are accused of promoting Workerism. This is false. However, we assert that without a strong organisation of urban workers there can be no defence for rural workers. It is up to the workers organised in the union to assist peasants."[106]

Many observers have seemed ready to accept that union organisations in dependent social formations should be subordinated to the political and ideological tutelage of the nationalist elites. In some ways, this reflected an unqualified acceptance of the rhetoric of the political leaders who emerged in the nationalist struggles.[107] It has often been alleged that the unions played a negative rôle, hampering efforts to overcome underdevelopment and establish social equality. In this respect, Weiss seemed to have failed to grasp the class aspirations and objective interests of the Algerian political

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[105]See Fanon, F., Les damnes de la terre, Paris, ed. Maspero, 1961. Basing his analysis on the experience of Algerian peasants in the liberation war he developed the idea that the Third World peasants were the revolutionary class, while workers represented a privileged group whose interests were linked to the colonial powers.

[106]Bourouiba, one of the deposed leaders of the UGTA in the first congress, 1963. Cited by Weiss, op. cit., p.87.

[107]Such view could be found in the mass of literature sympathetic to political regimes in the newly independent nations with leftist orientation: e.g., Nkrumah's in Ghana, Sekou Toure's in Guinea, Ben Bella's in Algeria, and Nasser's in Egypt.

leaders. For example, he accepted the claim that the UGTA's bid to participate in formulating policies while defending its autonomy was indefensible.[108]

For the UGTA leadership such a position reflected an awareness of the need for an independent working class organisation in view of the FLN's increasing subordination to a bureaucratic stratum in the dominant bloc. The political development of Algeria since the early years of independence had been significant, including the institutionalisation of the one-party system, with the prohibition of all political opposition (notably through outlawing the Algerian Communist party in 1962) and the subordination of the union organisation in 1963. Such measures signalled the aspirations of the petite bourgeoisie to political domination. The realisation of such aspirations included other groupings such as the workers and peasants, being denied effective and adequate political representation. These were the real and objective roots of the emerging statist regime.

Another controversial aspect of the relations between the UGTA and the government was their divergence over the rôle of the union organisation in self-management and in the expanding state sector. We have already pointed to the commitment of the UGTA to self-management. Despite its weakness and problems it threw all its weight, prestige and resources into the promotion of self-management. This latter was seen as the prime contribution of the working class to building socialism in Algeria. However, despite the official adoption of self-management and its institutionalisation there was no government reference to the UGTA or its potential rôle. The government was intent on limiting the union's involvement in this "important institution". Although recognising the right of union branches to exist in self-managed enterprises, a far more important place was given to party cells, leaving union branches as channels of communication between workers and the authorities. However, the weakness of the party organization cast doubt on the effectiveness of the leading rôle accorded to it.

In their efforts to consolidate and extend

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[108]Weiss, op.cit., p.91.

self-management, the union leadership confronted two issues. First, given the bureaucratic tendencies of self-management, union branches were given the task of ensuring a rigorous application of the legislation in order to preserve democratic functioning of the various structures. Secondly, the success of self-management was seen as dependent on the raising of workers' consciousness and their commitment to collective forms of organisation.[109] Contrary to the position adopted by the government, the union leadership considered that union sections should function within the self-managed sector. Their tasks were to defend seasonal workers who were not represented in self-management structures, to serve as a link between workers in self-management and those in other sectors, so overcoming the isolation of the self-managed sector and its workforce.[110]

Another area of tension between the union movement and the state (Party and Government) was the rôle of the union in the state-controlled sector. The state-sector of the economy was rapidly expanding and included in 1965 the most important enterprises as measured by equipment, capital, labour concentration and profitability. These enterprises were of various legal characters and status. They included directly state-owned enterprises, privately-owned firms under state "protection", which included direct management. This was achieved by the creation of Management Boards on which workers were either not, or under-represented. A common feature of these types of enterprise was an intolerance of union organisation. Also dominant management style in this sector, as revealed by UGTA reports, Government commissioned studies and independent observers, was highly authoritarian, and involved widespread financial mismanagement and mistreatment of workers.[111] In many instances, UGTA militants were involved in struggles with local Management Boards and Directors.

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[109] Ibid, p.224.

[110] UGTA, Revolution et Travail, issue of 8th April 1965.

[111] Weiss reported examples of cases in which the Minister of the Economy in person slapped striking workers, ordered the intervention of the riot police and workers were imprisoned. See Weiss, op. cit., pp.224-25.

In state enterprises workers suffered great setbacks being denied the right to organise let alone to actively participate in management. Those union branches which were tolerated, were starved of economic and financial information and were denied the right to strike; a right recognised for those working in the private sector. Both local union militants and the national leadership were alarmed by the prospects of further development in this sector which, by all indications, was set on a massive and rapid expansion. As the sector developed, both bureaucrats and technocrats were able to consolidate their positions in both the enterprise and state apparatus. Although UGTA militants and leaders resented the prospects of being excluded from decision making in the most important and sensitive sectors of the economy, they had little choice given the balance of power at that particular conjuncture in which the bureaucracy was emerging as a dominant force.

Conclusion:

Discounting the issue of self-management, it is clear that worker militancy represented an important feature of political and economic life during those early years of independence, and manifested in successive waves of strikes. However, the anatomy of those strikes confirms the peculiar character and limitations of the working class in formation. It reveals important imbalances between workers by region, by branch, and by industry. It also reveals a superficial implantation of union organisation in many sections, as well as the weak influence it had among large fractions of the working class, in both urban and rural areas.

The situation was further complicated by the union rift between leaders and full-time officers in the central organizations, and rank and file members and local branches officials. The former were more committed to institutional forms of worker participation, advocating austere policies, respect for work discipline, improvement of management and productivity. This orientation, in many respects, echoed the main concerns of the government. The membership and branch officials were, however, more interested in improving their immediate conditions including, for some, extending their control over the more prosperous companies. In a sense, while the national leadership could

be said to have been accepting the need to abide by the rules of the game, laid down by the government, the local membership and officials were more radical, pushing events toward open confrontation, and running the risk of being crushed.

In any case circumstances were unfavourable for workers to assert themselves as a class possessing an alternative social and political project to that proposed and implemented by the populist leadership of the petite-bourgeoisie in the process of being transformed into a state bourgeoisie. Thus, the working class-in-formation was denied the chance of developing an autonomous organisation capable of articulating workers' interests. Among other things, it faced systematic state intervention, the expression of an hegemonic class-in-formation.

CHAPTER FIVE

INDUSTRIALIZATION AND WORKING CLASS FORMATION

Some notions of a future Algerian social order were present in doctrinal documents of the F.L.N., elaborated during the period of the armed struggle, one such document, the "Charter of Tripoli" was adopted, at the eve of independence in 1962, by the National Council of Algerian Revolution (CNRA). These ideas were further clarified by the first congress of the F.L.N. in 1964 in what became known as "the Algiers Charter." However, in this period political instability, weakness of the national state and conflicts over power by political representatives of various classes-in-formation prevented any serious attempt of implementing the proclaimed programme. In fact, no social, economic or even political project for the future was acceptable to all social forces struggling for supremacy and control of political power. Consequently, major decisions taken at that period (1962-65) reflected precarious political compromises which functioned to satisfy contending forces while giving space and allowing time for the ascension of the petite bourgeoisie.

This moving stalemate situation was overtaken by the "Coup d'etat" by the army in 1965. Shortly after that a new project was proposed to take Algeria on the path of socialist development, but this proved later to be little more than a variant of earlier policies. The exponents of this project came largely from top ranks of the petite bourgeoisie in the F.L.N., the state bureaucracies, and the army. This class grouping already managed to occupy sensitive places in the state apparatus inherited from colonial rule, in the leading structures of the F.L.N. and in the army. But its success was by no means final and complete. It had to face serious resistance from various quarters including workers and their unions, the national bourgeoisie, especially the French bourgeoisie with interests in Algeria, and multi-national business. It was in this context of hostility, both internally and externally, that the rising petite bourgeoisie set on the course of transforming Algerian society and

through the same process, transformed itself into a dominant class. But given the specific conditions presiding over its ascent, both locally and internationally, it failed to achieve hegemony. This led to constant and renewed alliances between groups and fractions representing various classes-in-formation. Consequently, the development policy adopted by the petite bourgeois leadership had always to take account of various opposed interests in order to ensure allegiance and inhibit the mobilization of opposition forces. Under such circumstances only a populist ideology and development policy was capable to holding together the cobbled alliances made up of various groups with conflicting interests. After this brief remainder of the context within which the development policy based on industrialization was adopted, we can turn our attention to the foundations and objectives of such policy as well as its effects on social structure. Finally, we will discuss some general characteristics of a working class which, to some extent, was a product of this policy commitment.

5.1- Foundations and objectives of a development policy

The theoretical model underlying Algeria's development policy since 1967 found its clearest expression in the work of G. D. de Bernis, a French radical economist. The basic idea in this model was that any attempt to escape under-development and a neo-colonial status must adopt an overall strategy of social and economic development. This strategy would provide the necessary conditions for realizing a sustained high rate of internally generated economic growth, both in terms of productivity and employment. A fundamental condition necessary to achieve this end was the ability of the country to embark on a planned long-term programme of industrialization and socio-economic transformation. "Industrializing industries", that is, those producing equipment, machinery and intermediate goods must be the basis for such a strategy.[1]

In practical terms this strategy called for the establishment of "poles" of industrial growth, stimulating industrial

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[1]See G. D. Bernis, "Les industries industrialisantes et l'integration economique regionale"; in Archives de I.S.E.A., No.1, Vol.21, 1968. Also for the same author, "Les industries industrialisantes et les options Algerienne"; in Revue Tiers Monde, No.47, July-Sept. 1971.

growth in the hinterland constituting their social and economic environment. These centres of a sustained economic growth would draw in other regions and branches of activity. The result would be the establishment of a network of linkages between these various nodal points of the economy which would also have the effect of triggering a process of change in other related spheres, such as education and manpower training to meet the requirements of a modern expanding economy. The strategy, as a whole, aimed at a thorough restructuring of the economy and society leading to high levels of productivity and employment.

We must indicate two decisive factors on which the success of the strategy would depend. First, there was the preeminent rôle to be played by the state, since it was conceived as a planned restructuring of economy and society. Only the state could provide the much needed resources and coordinate their use. The second factor was the necessity of agrarian reform transforming existing forms of land tenure and ownership. The aim was then to expand the internal market, providing an outlet for industrial products as well as increasing productivity in agriculture necessary to feed the urban population.[2] Despite the appearance that such a development policy was socially and politically neutral, the assumptions on which it stood pointed to the necessity of by-passing the bourgeoisie, giving priority to state planning and ensuring the active participation of workers and the peasantry. For without a real participation of those forces such a policy would neither have its necessary conditions nor could it achieve its proclaimed objectives.[3]

The objectives of this development policy were first laid down in a government publication entitled, "Planning Perspectives and Development Strategy."[4] It represented a general policy outline for the period 1967-1980. Its main declared objective was to build "an economy in full development and perfectly integrated to meet all the

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[2]For a detailed discussion of these points, see Benachenhou, A., Planification et Developpement en Algerie (1962-1980). Alger, SNED 1980, pp.25-26.

[3]Ibid, pp.27-29.

[4]Direction General du plan et des etudes economiques, Algiers 1967.

needs of a population of 18 millions."[5]

Two important objectives were to be realized: first, eradicating unemployment and under-employment, each of which represented a serious problem; second, improving the living standards of the poor and deprived strata constituting the overwhelming majority of the population. Fundamental, however, was the goal of increasing labour productivity. In fact, building a strong industrial sector was seen as a key not only to achieving these objectives, but also to realizing and sustaining an independent and self-sufficient economy.

Another official document which spelled out Algeria's development policy in more detail was the "National Charter", adopted in 1976.[6] In this major doctrinal source we can find a similar line of argument, stressing the leading rôle of heavy, base industries. Its over-riding concern was the improvement of labour productivity, without undermining employment in a situation which was characterized by high rates of unemployment and under-employment coupled with a very high rate of population growth.[7] Other stated objectives included a more adequate orientation of investments, to meet the needs of popular strata, as well as an expanding internal market for industrial production. It also stressed the necessity of creating a better balance between different regions of the country, and between rural and urban areas, so avoiding the potential consequences of anarchic industrialization. The implementation of this general policy was realized through various development plans, beginning with the first plan 1967-69, followed by the First Four-Year Plan (1970-73) and the Second Four-Year Plan (1974-77). These have been followed, since 1980, by the First and Second Five Year Plans. But the real basis for economic development and the process of industrialization was laid down by the two Four Year Plans (1970-77).

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[5] Benachenhou, op. cit., p.30.

[6] F.L.N., La Charte Nationale. Alger, Editions Populaire de l'Arme, 1976.

[7] In the early seventies (1970's) unemployment was officially put at 18.6% of the active population. Independent sources put it as high as 28.4% and even 33% depending on different ways of calculation and statistical categories used. See Benachenhou, op. cit., pp.220-221. The rate of population growth was among the highest at 3% annually.

5.2 - Changes in the social structure

Two particularly important elements in these plans had significant consequences for change in the social and economic structures of Algerian society. The first was the decisive and dominant role played by the state as initiator and sustainer of development policy. This led to the emergence of a strong state sector in the economy covering various strategic branches and activities. Second, the development policy, and the socio-political projects at its heart, were a product of constant compromises and changing alliances between major social forces on the scene (the local bourgeoisie, the petite bourgeoisie and popular masses including workers, peasants and the unemployed).

Consequently, one important aspect of political strategy was the establishment of a certain "division of labour" which lead to the emergence of spheres of influence under the control of different forces. Hence, the bourgeoisie, although politically marginalized, received significant economic incentives, as the Code of Investments of 1967 revealed. Petite-bourgeois fractions in the army and the state bureaucracy were able to consolidate their positions and strengthen their grip over the state. Workers and peasants were at various times co-opted; drawn into frequently constituted but fragile alliances by such means as populist ideology, material reward, or political manipulation, bureaucratic control, or even the open use of force.

One outstanding result of this strategy, and alliances on which it was built, was the gradual transformation of certain fractions of the petite bourgeoisie; first, through the control of political power and later through the increasing control of large and strategic segments of the economy.[8] The composition of this emerging state bourgeoisie was becoming more complex incorporating various fractions, differentiated not only by their social origin and mobility

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[8] State control over the economy was ensured by five large companies in heavy base industries, with 107 productive plants, 40 distributive agencies, 9 engineering units and six mixed companies with a total workforce of 105,836 employees. In light industries such control was ensured by 11 large companies with over 430 productive plants employing more than 120,000 workers. Cited by Benachenhou, op. cit., pp.139-145.

trajectories, but also by their power bases and ideological attitudes. Another important consequence was the consolidation of the economic position of the local bourgeoisie, despite its political marginalization. Numerically very small (0.5% of the employed population in 1977 and 1% in 1982.[9] it was economically strong enough to exert pressure and win concessions from the state. Despite repeated rhetoric the existing position of the "private bourgeoisie", as it became known in Algeria, was never under serious threat from the expansion of public ownership. On the contrary, it continued to enjoy many privileges, was spared risks of long-term investment, and the costs of labour-power reproduction and above all, enjoyed a protected local market. Even the state monopoly over foreign trade and control of strategic industries, for a long time, worked to its advantage, given the state subsidies operating on many intermediate capital and consumer goods, imported with hard currency. The expansion and consolidation of this class could be revealed by many indicators including the increase in the number of private companies (See table 5.1 below).

Table 5.1: Number of private companies (1966-80)

Size	1966	1969	1974	1977	1980
Up to 4 employees	-	2,201	3,201	3,339	5,000
More than 5 employees	-	1,845	1,618	2,731	4,387
TOTAL	3,358	4,046	5,819	6,070	9,387

SOURCE: D. Liabes, Capital prive et Patrons d'industrie en Algerie. CREA, Alger, 1984, p.419.

The continued importance of private enterprise can also be measured through its share of industrial wage employment; around 30% in 1972 and 25% in 1979, at the peak of the expansion of the state sector. Thus, despite the ideological rhetoric condemning the bourgeoisie its growth continued.[10] The performance of private

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[9] See ONS, Enquete Main d'Oeuvre et Demographie, Alger, 1982, p.7.

[10] Liabes, D., Capital Prive et Patrons d'industrie en Algerie. Proposition pour l'analyse de couches sociales en formation. CREA, Alger. 1984, p.398.

enterprise was also impressive when measured by its share of gross domestic production (GDP), representing 51% in 1969, 40% in 1974 and 30% in 1978.[11] Thus despite the relative decrease, it was still represented nearly one-third of national production at the height of state interventionism and public sector dominance. Yet another indication of the strength of private enterprise was capital turnover, which was estimated at 28.4% in the mid 1970's, a superior rate to that experienced in the state sector despite favourable conditions, such as advanced technology in the latter. All these indicators point to the fact that the local bourgeoisie, despite its small size, remained economically influential.

Another phenomenon directly related to development policy was the rapid expansion of wage employment leading to a massive increase in the size of wage labour and particularly industrial workers. Although planned employment targets were not always achieved the rate of job creation was impressive.

Table 5.2: Employment (1967-85) (in millions)

	1967	1973	1978	1982	1985
Active population	2.5	2.8	3.5	4.3	4.5
Employed	1.72	2.18	2.83	3.4	3.9
Rate of employment	75	76.5	81	80	86.3

SOURCE: Benachenhou, op. cit., p.220 and ONS; Statistique, No.5, 1986. p.34.

It is important to note that much of this progress was realized outside agricultural activities, in industry and services. Employment in agriculture has remained stagnant since 1966 registering a decrease since 1977. Its share of total employment was more than 49.4% in 1966, falling to 29.6% in 1977, 31% in 1980, and 28% in 1982. Since 1977 three major branches of the economy have grown faster than others, i.e., manufacturing industry, construction and public works and administration. In 1966 their respective shares were 10% for manufacturing, 5.4% for construction and 14.5% for administration. In

[11] Ibid, p.429.

1977 their respective shares had increased to 17.2%, 14.8% and 17%. In 1982, administration emerged for the first time as the most important, employing 21.8% of total workforce, with construction and public works at 16.1% and manufacturing industry shrinking to around 14%.[12]

Table 5.3: Wage labour (1966-82)

	1966	1977	1982	% increase 1966-82
Total employment	1,724,900	2,336,972	3,473,904	101.4
Wage employment	650,000[1]	1,441,546	2,309,209	255.3
Industrial workers	190,000[1]	659,162	979,000	415.3

Source: MPAT_DGS: Annuaire Statistique de l'Algerie 1982, Alger, 1984.

1- These figures were estimates from the population census of 1966. Different estimates were advanced by various observers.

Despite the fact that these figures have only an indicative value, they nonetheless reveal a clear tendency which was consolidated in the following years. Wage labour became the dominant social grouping in the active population. Within this group, industrial workers were becoming the most important social category, representing the expanding core of an emergent class. The rapid growth in wage employment (See table 5.3) led to an expansion in the emergent working class particularly in the period 1970-79. This was the period of the implementation of the two Four-Year Plans; industry providing 28% of total jobs created, (an annual rate of 45,000 jobs) and construction and public works 35,000 .[13]In the First five-Year Plan (1980-84) the rate of job creation in these two major sectors shifted in favour of the latter, with 50,000 jobs being created annually, representing 25.7% of the total. Industries share dropped to 15.7%, an annual rate of 37,000 jobs.

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[12]These percentages were computed from statistics provided by MPAT-D.G.S.: Annuaire Statistique de l'Algerie, 1982, Algiers, 1984.

[13]Benachenhou, op. cit., p.264.

In order to interpret the effects of this general increase in the size of the emergent working class we have to first identify the particular branches of industry in which this expansion took place, and second, single out from the mass of wage labour those groups contributing directly to the production process from a subordinate position within the hierarchical organization of work.

However, the number of workers in all branches of the economy is difficult to estimate since available data and documents do not provide a useful breakdown. For this reason we shall concentrate on two major sectors: industry, and construction and public works in order to provide some indicators concerning the composition of wage labour in other branches.

Table 5.4: Wage employment in industry (1966- 82)

	1966	1977	1982	% 1966-82
Industry	99,276	359,319	502,909	406.6
Construction & public works	61,800	320,128	567,252	818
TOTAL	161,076	679,437	1,070,161	564.4
Workers	135,000	659,162	979,000	-

SOURCE: MPAT-DGS, Annuaire Statistique de l'Algerie 1982, Alger 1984.
ONS: Enquete emploi et salaires 1982. Alger, 1985.

The figures provided in Table 5.4 indicate that a very high proportion of industrial wage labour consisted of workers, while other employees represented only a minority including those in managerial functions, technicians, engineers, supervisory staff and administrative employees. The category "workers" in this table included those who were directly and indirectly involved in production as well as unqualified employees. The other main criteria of identification was their position in the hierarchical system of authority. They all shared the same position as subordinates with no formal control over their own or others' activities. It was important to note that the proportion of workers to total industrial wage labour was the same (88%) at the end of the two Four-Year Plans (1970-73 and 1974-77). This meant that the growing size of the working class was directly related to the expansion of industrial (including

construction) wage labour. However, some changes were already apparent in terms of the relative importance of certain branches where the working class was located. Thus, in the period 1980-84, construction and public works, and transport were expanding faster than industry. Their respective rates of job creation was 11.8% and 12.2% while that of industry was 6.8%. Should this tendency be maintained in future years, the working class would develop at much faster rate outside manufacturing industries, than within it with a significant impact on the process of working class formation.

5.3- General characteristics of working class formation

The process of social and economic transformation reviewed above had greatly influenced the formation of the working class. In this respect, our attention was focused on a number of elements that were highly significant not only to understand the actual process of working class formation, but also its relative importance and weight as a social force. The characteristics would provide us with valuable insights to explain the strength and weakness of this class, difficulties and constraints facing its organization as a social force, its various internal divisions and different conditions experienced by its sub-groupings.

5.3.1 - Recency and diversity of origin

Despite the fact that the embryo of a working class can be traced back to the colonial era, we have seen that it had acquired neither the size nor the organizational strength of a significant social force. We have also seen that decolonization process and the liberation war were processes which undermined its stability, and political and ideological autonomy.

The recent and peculiar historical origins of this class-in-formation has had profound repercussions on its development therefore. for example, the total number of those in wage employment in 1963-64, did not exceed 600,000 of which less than 50% were workers in a population of more than nine million.[14] That is to say, the size

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(Footnote continued)

of the working class was about the same, if not less, than that prevailing during colonial rule. Its composition had, however, undergone certain changes, as 500,00 or more workers in construction and public works lost their jobs through closure of settler-owned enterprises. In manufacturing industries some 90,000 new jobs were made available by the departure of European settlers. These jobs were largely filled by skilled and experienced workers already employed in those industries. This mobility set in a process of recruitment of about the same number of workers with little or no previous experience of industrial work. In consequence the emergent industrial working class, already small and disorganized, was renewed by almost one-third in a very short period. The replacement of European settlers also played a decisive rôle in this period, a sizeable proportion of the most qualified and experienced workers being "creamed off" by a sudden process of upward mobility. The implications of this phenomenon for the mobilization and organization of an autonomous class are only too clear, for such a process of mobility deprived the embryonic industrial working class of many of its most able and qualified members.

We have already seen that no industrial base worthy of the name was developed during the colonial period. Consequently, industrial activity was limited to extractive industries, while manufacturing was almost nonexistent outside food processing, textiles and, to a lesser extent, chemicals. Even in these branches, existing enterprises were limited both in their number and employment capacity.[15] Thus, the industrial base possessed by Algeria today is of a recent origin. In fact, almost all large, state-controlled companies operating in various branches of industry and construction were created after 1966. Only four of those companies which now dominate Algeria's industry were either created or nationalized before that year.[16] The emergence and further development of a working class,

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[14](continued)
[14]These and the following figures were taken from: S. Amin, The Maghreb in the Modern World, London, Penguin, 1970, p.136.

[15]For detailed information on this point, see Taleb, A. "Essai de Recension..." op. cit., p.514

[16]See, Benhouria. L'Economie de l'Algerie. op. cit.

especially in industry, was, therefore, closely linked to the rapid expansion of a state-controlled economy.

Table 5.5: Evolution of industrial workers (1966-85)

	1966	1977	1985	% Increase
Industry	80,000	291,372	470,211	487.7
Construction & public works	55,000	312,165	539,613	881.1
TOTAL	135,000	603,537	1,009,824	648

Source: D.G.S.: Enquete Emploi et Salaire, 1966 & 1977.
O.N.S.: Revue Statistiques, No 5, 1986, p.38.

An important characteristic of this newly forming class was necessarily the diversity of social origins of its members. There is lack of systematic data on this issue, but in a survey carried out by the French sociologist Bourdieu and his associates[17] on the eve of independence, this diversity of social origin was made clear. Nevertheless, it was also revealed that certain socio-occupational categories dominated the composition and recruitment to working class positions. (See table 5.6)

Table 5.6: Socio-occupation background of workers (%)

Fathers Being	% Sons being workers
Farmers	3.0
Agricultural workers	2.0
Employers, artisans	14.6
Traders	8.5
L. profession, ex-manager	23.5
Middle, l. manager	24.2
Workers	28.0
Service employee	31.7
Unemployed	12.4

Source: Bourdieu et al, Travail et Travailleurs en Algerie. op. cit.p 139.

The process of internal recruitment appeared relatively important. Almost one-third of those who were workers or service

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[17] P. Bourdieu et al, Travail et Travailleurs en Algerie. Paris & la Haye, Mouton, 1963.

employees had sons entering similar jobs. Surprisingly, other groups, including small employers, the liberal professions and managers had also made a significant contribution, clearly attesting to the variety of social origins of workers and underlining a parallel process of proletarianization of various sections of the middle class. Such a process was directly related to Algeria's colonial status which imposed both economic and political limits on the changes in the social structure.

In the more recent survey we carried out on industrial workers in Eastern Algeria the diversity of social and occupational origins was not highly significant. [18] Indeed, data from our survey, although not immediately comparable to those provided by Bourdieu, indicated the predominance of internal recruitment.

Table 5.7: Socio-occupational background of workers

Fathers	No. of workers	%
Farmers, agricultural workers	176	53.2
Industrial workers	76	23.0
Construction workers	34	10.3
Service employees	5	1.5
Self-employed	21	6.3
Casual labour	9	2.7
Unemployed	10	3.0
TOTAL	**331**	**100.0**

This diversity in socio-occupational background can be established through the combination of two dimensions. The first is the status in occupation, that is, whether wage employed or not, and the second, the branch of activity such as agriculture, industry, services, etc. Our data revealed that industrial workers were mainly recruited from among two large social groups. The first was constituted of what might be called a traditional petite bourgeoisie (small employers, artisans and farmers). The second and more important was clearly of working class origin (workers in agriculture, construction, transport and industry).

[18] Our survey was carried out in four major industrial plants in Autumn 1985, the sample totalled 375 workers to whom a schedule interview was administered. See chapter 6, for details on the method used and the plants surveyed.

Comparison of data from these two surveys, although obviously very limited would suggest a growing tendency to internal recruitment in recent years. The contribution of social groups from a distinctively middle class position was clearly reduced. Of more significance was the greatly increased proletarianization of the rural population. This was clearly evidenced in the process of labour migration to the urban industrialized areas.

When using the same criterion of socio-occupational background to consider workers' previous employment experience it was revealed in our survey that a majority of workers had an industrial background (44.4%). A second important group was recruited from construction and public works (23.8%). Those coming from agricultural activity, whether they were small peasants or wage labour constituted only a minority group (15.5%).

Similar tendencies were revealed by another survey covering the industrial region of Annaba. The study was carried out in the late 1970's by the Algerian Association for Demographic, Economic and Social Research (A.A.R.D.E.S.). Findings in this study showed that the diversity of social and occupational origins was affected by skill differences. Among skilled workers, industry provided 20%, construction 16%, and agriculture 11.7%. But where unskilled workers were concerned, agriculture supplied 23.6%, industry 19.4% and construction 18.6%.[19]

This diversity in the background composition of the working class could have important implications for our study. The nature of work and work organization, the conditions for social interaction and value systems, for example, may well differ from one situation to another. As a result, it is possible that the process of working class formation has been subjected to a wide variety of diversifying influences, given its heterogeneous composition, different experiences and conflicting interests and attitudes.

5.3.2 - Mobility of the workforce

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[19] AARDES: Pole industriel et Arriere Pays: le cas de Annaba, El-hadjar. VOL.2, Alger, 1979, p.60.

Another significant characteristic of the working class-in-formation during this period of relatively rapid industrialization was the high degree of mobility experienced. In considering this we concentrated on both spatial mobility (location of residence and location of job), and occupational mobility (changes in branch of activity). These dimensions were selected given the availability of material, while other aspects were more difficult to document. Even for the aspects considered data were available only for selected periods. Furthermore, they did not deal specifically with workers, but with the workforce in general. Only the survey carried out by AARDES dealt specifically with workers.

Let us first look at the general trend. In 1982, the mobile workforce represented 32.49% of the total employed population then standing at 3,473,904. The structure of this mobile workforce revealed a profound transformation in terms of social and occupational position. The single most important point was the expansion of wage labour. This social category has attracted in 1982, 45.14% of employers, 64.45% of self-employed (small producers and craftsmen), 58.89% of cooperative workers in agriculture, 62.49% of seasonal labourers, 69.10% of apprentices and 39.79% of family labour.[20]

- Change of branch:

When considering mobility in terms of major branches of activity it was found to be generally high as Table 5.8 shows.

Table 5.8: Labour mobility by sector (1982)

Branch	Rate of mobility
Agriculture	55.1
Industry	59.7
Construction & public works	54.7
Transport & communications	50.9
Commerce	68.8
Services	61.9
Administration	42.8

Source: ONS; Enquete Main d'Oeuvre et Demographic, 1982, p.13.

[20] ONS, Enquete Main d'Oeuvre et Demographie, Alger, 1982, p.12.

In 1982, industry had the third highest rate of workforce mobility, after commerce and services. it also came third after construction, public works and administration in attracting mobile workers from other branches. Particularly significant was the fact that it attracted only 6.95% of the workforce previously employed in agriculture. By contrast, construction and administration attracted 22.6% and 11.2% respectively of such mobile workforce. These data contradicted a widely held belief that most of the mobile workforce from agriculture was drawn by industry. A plausible explanation for this alternative phenomenon might be found in the fact that industry required a workforce with a level of skill or experience which, on the whole, rural workers lacked. On balance the flow of the workforce between agriculture and industry seems to have been in favour of the former, with 10.8% of those leaving industry going to agriculture against 6.9% moving in the opposite direction.[21]

Now let us consider mobility among industrial workers (including those in construction and public works). These will be looked at in terms of changes in branch of activity, job location and place of residence. In 1982, the number of workers mobile from industry and construction was estimated at 471,509 representing 41.7% of total mobile workforce. Of all those mobile industrial workers some 35.1% had changed their branch of activity. They moved to various branches including services (26.7%), agriculture and fishing (35.9%), administration (15.3%) and trade (14.3%). Some significant differences appeared in the pattern of mobility when job location was taken into account. Urban workers had tended to move to services, administration and trade. Rural workers moved mainly to agriculture and related activities.

The proportion of workers attracted by industry was slightly higher than that leaving it for other branches, the number being estimated at 169,127 workers, representing 41.6% of the total. This high rate of mobility meant that industrial workers, the potential core group of the working class, was being continuously renewed; over one-third annually. It is also important to note that the branches which attracted industrial workers, also provided their

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[21]ONS; Enquete Main d'Oeuvre et Demographie, p.13.

replacements, i.e. agriculture 6.9%, services 9.9%, trade 5.9% and administration 7.5%.[22]

- Change of job location and residence:

Material dealing with workers' spatial mobility was very scarce. However, it is possible to illustrate the point by reference to the industrial region of Annaba, on the basis of data provided by the survey carried out by A.A.R.D.E.S.[23]

Table 5.9: Location of previous job

	Commune Annaba	Wilaya Annaba	Eastern wilayas	Other wil'as	Abroad	Unemp.	Total
Skilled workers	503	802	144	91	68	189	1594
Unskilled workers	293	548	123	27	62	258	1018
TOTAL	796	1350	267	118	130	447	2612

Source: AARDES: Pole Industriel. op. cit. p.67

This survey revealed that a large proportion of the sample had previously worked outside the commune of Annaba. In fact, only 30.5% of the sample worked in this commune before 1977. Overall, these findings point to a high rate of spatial mobility in terms of job location. When skill differences were taken into account it was found that only 31.5% of skilled workers had previously been employed in the commune of Annaba. It meant that the great majority of skilled workers had moved in to Annaba from other regions. As for the unskilled only 28.5% had held their previous jobs in this commune.

The implication of such rates of mobility was instability and constant changes in the composition of workers in the various plants, a condition which was bound to delay the formation of homogeneous, cohesive groups, with a shared value system. Other

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[22]Ibid, see Annex II, pp.1-2

[23]AARDES: Pole Industriel. op. cit. p.62

consequences would be a lack of integration and organization; or absence of group solidarity and a weak sense of collective identity.

A similar trend may be observed in relation to mobility of residence. The AARDES data revealed that a large majority (78.9%) of workers in this sample had changed their place of residence from 1970 to 1977, representing a high rate of spatial mobility. This mobility, was to some extent, affected by skill differences. For example, unskilled workers were more prone to change residence (85.9%) compared with (74.5%) of the skilled workers..

Table 5.10: Previous place of residence

	Commune Annaba	Wilaya Annaba	Eastern wilayas	Other wilayas	Abroad	Tot.
Skilled wkrs.	407	832	562	120	80	1594
Unskilled wkrs.	143	451	465	32	70	1018
TOTAL	550	1283	1027	152	150	2612

Source: AARDES. op. cit., p.68.

Again, the significant point underlined by such results is that they point to the differences in occupational experiences, value systems and attitudes which were likely to characterize such workforce testifying to the recency of working class formation not only in this region but elsewhere in Algeria.

5.3.3 - Rural - urban division:

The Algerian working class-in-formation was from the beginning, divided into two large sections: rural and urban workers. The rural proletariat was concentrated mainly in farming, construction and public works. It was further divided into core groups of permanent workers on large plantations and farms, construction projects and to a limited degree, craft industries. In 1977 permanent agricultural workers were estimated at 248,935, while seasonal labourers were estimated at 114,521, mainly in agriculture. [24]

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[24] MPAT-DGS: Annuaire Statistique de l'Algerie, 1982, ed. 1984. p.61. We included cooperative workers with the permanent group. It must be said that official estimates under-rated seasonal workers.

Instability and lack of organization of the rural workers were directly related to both their dispersion in small scattered groups and irregular employment. They were also differentiated on the basis of various forms of ownership and systems of land tenure: private property, cooperatives, state farms, etc. All these factors further contributed to make rural workers a marginalized group. Up to the first years of independence the rural section of the working class-in-formation was larger than the urban, but starting from the end of the 1960's the size of the two sections began to change in favour of urban workers. That change was a direct result of policy choices giving priority to industrialization.

In 1966, the number of non-agricultural workers was put at 378,925[25] employed mainly in industry, crafts, construction and services. In industry and construction alone the number of workers did not exceed 120,000 - well below that of permanent agricultural workers.[26] In a relatively short period of time (1966-82) the composition of the working class-in-formation underwent dramatic changes. Thus, by the 1980's there was an Algerian working class whose core fraction was no longer located in agriculture and crafts based in the rural areas, but concentrated in modern industry, construction and services based mainly in the urban areas. Agricultural workers were by now a minority, constantly shrinking as younger generations were attracted to urban areas.

The growth in the number of urban workers had a great impact on policy making. Many government plans and projects were implicitly or explicitly directed either to contain or control the activities of this grouping or to meet some of its demands. Such policies included among others: the experiment with "Socialist Management of Enterprises", a kind of formal and controlled participation of workers.[27] Other plans concentrated on expanding

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[25] This figure included 103,882 unemployed at the time of the census.

[26] These estimates and figures were calculated from data provided by the population census of 1966. See Annuaire Statistique de l'Algerie. 1966. pp.452 & 612.

[27] See F.L.N. La Gestion Socialist des Entreprises: Charte et Textes d'application. Alger, 1975. See also for a critical discussion of the

(Footnote continued)

education and establishing a free National Health Service. There were also more specific policies dealing with work legislation, and reforming social security. Perhaps the most important of all was the adoption of the General Statute of Workers (S.G.T.). It included a definition and classification of jobs, a wages policy, and many other forms of workplace regulations.[28]

Judging by the number of recorded strikes urban workers were, in fact far more militant and organized than their rural counterparts; although this does not deny that the latter had their specific ways of resistance and expression of dissatisfaction. Nevertheless, they tended to privilege individual forms of action in the absence of organization and solidarity.

It is tempting to explain such differences in terms of a classical paradigm: industry brought about concentration of workers leading to the development of a sense of collective identity stemming from shared experience. This resulted in increased solidarity and organized collective action. In the rural areas, dispersion, lack of interaction, predominance of traditional values and orientations and social ties based on kinship, tribal, clanic relationships, led to individualistic action and disintegration.

5.3.4 - Location in different branches of activity

One important element in the process of working class formation was that of locating the emergence and development of "collective" workers. This process differed according to the branches of work activity, which exhibited varying characteristics. These variations were related to the nature of the production process, the degree of concentration of capital and labour, level of mechanization and forms of ownership and size of organization.[29] Depending on these,

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[27](continued)
Socialist Management Experience, Ghezali, M. La Participation des Travailleurs a la Gestion Socialiste des Entreprises. Alger, OPU. 1977.

[28]See, Boutefnouchet, M. Les travailleurs en Algerie. Alger, ENAL, 1984. for the full text of the SGT.

[29]There is a wide range of literature on these issues. See for example; Ingham, G. Size of Industrial Organization and industrial behaviour. Cambridge University Press, 1970.
(Footnote continued)

various forms of labour control and management might be adopted. The character of a branch of activity and its relative importance in the general economic policy might also be highly significant for the process of working class formation.

For example, manufacturing industries occupied a privileged position in development policy. Consequently, industrial workers emerged as the group most exposed to state policies whether aimed at worker control and subordination or formed as a response to their pressure. We could expect, therefore, that these workers would be relatively favoured by government policies, as well as exhibiting greater militancy. Their strategic position in relation to development policy was used as a means of asserting and articulating their demands; or winning more concessions than others. This strategic position was also related to job security and the relative stability of the workforce. This was more important in manufacturing than in other branches such as construction, transport and services.

Security and stability were crucial prerequisites in the emergence of a relatively homogeneous and cohesive collective workforce in industry, especially in manufacturing. These were necessary conditions in any attempt to organize workers and enhance their interest and enthusiasm for the various forms of collective action.

The question, of course, was what did the distribution of workers among various branches look like, and what tendencies could that distribution generate? Let us first consider the distribution of workers among various branches of economic activity during the period 1977-82, a period in which industrialization was at its peak and bearing its fruits in terms of employment.

The most important point made by table 5.11 is that the proportion of industrial workers in the total was declining over the period; constituting around 28.7% in 1977, and 22.7% in 1982. Industry was losing ground as the branch where the largest numbers of workers

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[29] (continued)
Edwards, R. Contested Terrain: The transformation of the Workplace in the Twentieth Century. London, Heinemann, 1979.

Table 5.11: Workers in major branches (1977-82)

Branch	1977	1982	% Rate of increase
Agric. & related activities	363,456[1]	550,000[3]	51.3
Industry	301,951	423,029	40.1
Construction & public works	191,416	548,283	186.4
Transport & communications	57,551	116,650	102.7
Services	78,900[2]	118,910	50.7
Trade	60,000	108,485	80.8
TOTAL	1,053,274	1,865,357	77.1

Source.: MPAT, DGS: Annuaire Statistique de l'Algerie 1977/78 & 1982.
ONS: Enquete emploi et salaire, 1981, 1982.

Notes: 1 - The figure included some 114,521 seasonal labourers.
2 - A calculated estimate as no exact figure for this period was available.
3 - The figure referred to 1981 and included at least 20% of seasonal workers.

were concentrated. Such a trend can be traced back to the choice of technologies used in Algerian industry which made it highly capital intensive. Industrial expansion was, then, slowed down by the relatively high cost of job creation in this branch; industrial plants in operation offering limited levels of employment given the advanced character of technologies used.[30]

Another significant trend revealed by this distribution related to the important role assumed by construction, public works and services. They emerged as major branches with high labour concentration. The rate of expansion in construction was spectacular, leaping from 18.2% of the total in 1977 to 29.4% in 1982. A similar trend is observable in services, transport and communications, and in trade. Such changes in the distribution of workers among branches of activity undoubtedly had significant implications for the process of

[30]It must be said that despite the capital intensive character of existing industrial plants they all experienced high levels of overmanning. It was a result of political decision concerned with reducing levels of unemployment.

working class formation.

First, in two areas of high labour concentration agriculture and construction workers experienced a high level of job insecurity. Second, in contrast to industry, these two branches were dominated by small farms and enterprises, many of which were in the hands of private capital. Third, partly as a result of the first two factors, these two branches offered the least favourable working conditions, wages and potential for worker organization. Such conditions led to high levels of labour turnover which inhibited the emergence and development of "collective" workers. The dispersion of workers in a multitude of small enterprises and farms represented serious difficulties for their organization. It was these characteristics which explained the failure of the trade union movement in those branches.

The maintenance of the this trend in the distribution of workers in the various branches would lead to a situation in which industrial workers would, in the following two decades, no longer constitute the solid core of a working class grouping. The increasing importance of workers in other branches, especially construction and services threatens to exacerbate already existing cleavages, reinforcing heterogeneity. More importantly, it would mean that large numbers of workers would be concentrated in branches whose very nature put serious limits on the development of class identity, consciousness and action.

5.3.5 - Location in sectors with different forms of ownership:

It has already been made clear that the Algerian economy was divided into a large public sector under state control, developed particularly after 1966, and a private sector, dominated almost entirely by local private capital. At the level of legal property relations the state-controlled sector was publicly owned and managed by state agencies on behalf of the community as a whole. Private ownership manifested itself in various legal forms- individual, family, shareholding, etc. The sectors were also distinguished by their levels of development of productive forces. The state sector was made up of what is considered as the strategic branches, such as basic heavy industries (steel, engineering, mechanical, etc.) and the oil

industry. These were relatively highly mechanized. Private capital flourished in light manufacturing, specializing mainly in consumer goods (food processing, textiles, chemicals). The private sector was also less mechanized, more labour intensive and used less sophisticated production techniques.

A third feature distinguished the two sectors related to the size of plants and units. The public sector was dominated by big companies and large units and plants. The private sector, on the other hand, was characterized by a proliferation of medium and small companies and plants. Such differences in the structure and size of enterprises led to differences in management policies and organization. The state sector was more centralized and this and other factors, both economic and political, until recently, made it possible for management to adopt relatively benign, less coercive and aggressive practices. Economically, secure oil revenues allowed the adoption of such management practices. Politically, the regime needed to secure legitimacy and ensure support from workers on whose efforts the success of the development policy depended.

The private sector was free from such constraints and was more or less compelled to apply strict management rules. However, this did not mean that the need to achieve higher levels of productivity in the private sector were always directed by modern economic rationality. Management practices in this sector represented an interesting blend of modern and traditional practices and techniques. Thus, paternalistic attitudes and practices can be found to operate alongside some elements of modern management methods based on Taylorite and Fordian principles. These included technical division of labour, systems of authority and control and various material incentives.[31]

Even in the state sector, fundamental changes were introduced from the beginning of the 1980's, including a thorough restructuring. Large-scale companies and plants were decentralized, the parts given greater autonomy. This meant that companies and plants in the public sector were no longer dependent on, and run by the

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[31]See, Liabes, D. op. cit.

highest echelons, of the centralized bureaucracy. It also meant that companies were becoming financially more independent from the treasury.

Now, let us consider the distribution of workers within these sectors over a period of time and discern what possible implications it might have had for the process of working class formation.

Table 5.12: Distribution of workers by juridical sectors (1969-82)

	1969		1982	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
Industry	89,592	45,509	332,209	90,820
Construction & public works	39,067	30,989	387,208	161,075
Transport & communications	22,893	7,612	86,698	29,952
Services	6,978	751	45,713	73,297
TOTAL	158,530	84,861	851,828	355,144

Source: - Secretariat d'Etat au Plan: Annuaire Statistique de l'Algerie. 1970, pp.39-40.
- MPAT, DGS: Enquete emploi et salaire 1982, ed. 1984.

Note: In 1969, services included only financial institutions for which data were available. In 1982, the figure included all activities classified in this branch.

On the basis of available data it appeared that in 1969 the number of workers employed in the public sector represented 65.1% of all workers in various non-agricultural activities estimated at 243,391.[32] By 1982 the public sector saw its share of workers increased to 70.6% while that of the private sector dropped slightly to 29.4%. Thus, despite ideological rhetoric and the consolidation of state monopoly over many strategic industries (oil and gas, steel, chemicals, mechanical and engineering, etc.), or perhaps because of that, the private sector began to develop and expand its activities.

[32] This figure leaves out in addition to agricultural workers those in services, administration and trade for lack of precise data.

Recent changes in economic policy, following the reforms adopted from 1982, point towards a strengthening of the private sector and a relaxing of state monopolies over a wide range of economic activities. Such a trend would suggest an increase in the number of workers in private and smaller enterprises, so reinforcing the trends noted above. However, given the political uncertainty characterizing this process of opening up the economy to the private capital; the contradictory attitudes of the bourgeoisie, and its unwillingness to take risks, both the size and pattern of investment may see little change.

Attractive branches for private capital have been construction, services and consumer goods, and the size of such enterprises was, and is likely to continue to be, predominantly small. In 1980, for example, the number of enterprises employing up to 20 was 4,056. Those employing between 20 and 100 were estimated at 467. Most of these were in textiles, food processing and furniture. The number of large enterprises employing over 100 did not exceed 61 of which only one employed more than 500.[33]

In 1982, textiles and food processing industries accounted for 45.1% of all workers in private industry, employing 21.9% and 23.2% respectively. Private industry in general revealed two further important characteristics: first, the relative importance of the female workforce representing 10.9% of the total workforce in this sector. Second, the private sector employed a large proportion of seasonal labour. In 1982, it was estimated at 24.3% of all wage labour in this sector. When the structure of the workforce in some private industries such as textiles and food processing was considered those characteristics emerged even more clearly. Textiles had traditionally relied on female workers and continued to do so. The proportion of employed women was 40% in 1968, dropping to 37.4% in 1970 and 33.6% in 1982. The food processing industries were dominated by the use of seasonal labour. In 1968, such labour estimated at 69.8%, and in 1970, 76.6%.

The private sector was also charcterized by the

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[33]Liabes, D., op. cit., p.418. According to this author the number of small enterprises was largely underestimated as those employing less than five workers accounted for 4,000 to 5,000 units.

prevalence of unskilled labour. For example, in 1970 only 16.7% of all industrial workers in this sector were skilled. The unskilled and semi-skilled represented an overwhelming majority, 83.3%. Although important changes have occurred since then, unskilled workers are still a large majority. In 1982 the proportion of unskilled in private industry was 57% compared to 42.8% in the public sector.[34]

Such characteristics had important implications for the process of working class formation. Of these, we have cited high rates of labour turnover, female and seasonal labour. Such labour traits presented major difficulties for worker mobilization and organization. The prevalence of paternalistic methods or authoritarian forms of management also lead to workers' reluctance to organize in unions. This can be seen from the number of union branches operating in the private sector. In 1971-72, for example, their number did not exceed 370, representing only 25% of all existing union branches. Also their distribution according to size of enterprise confirms our argument regarding the way the size of enterprise inhibited organization. For example, enterprises with 5 to 19 workers- the majority in the private sector- had only 92 union branches covering 9.8% of the total within this size category. There were 153 union branches in enterprises employing 20 to 40 workers; that is 40.6% in this size category. Large enterprises, employing more than 50 workers, had 125 union branches covering 75% in this size category.[35] In many small enterprises workers went unreported as employers tried to evade taxes and social security payments; this was particularly true with female and seasonal labour. Workers from these groups tended to accept such practices in order to avoid paying their own social security contributions.

In contrast to the private sector, industries under state control were dominated by large enterprises and plants. Labour legislation, norms and regulations were far better observed in this sector. Workers' participation under the scheme of "Socialist Management of Enterprises" after 1973, contributed, especially in the early years, to the mobilization and organization of workers in union branches. This put pressure on management and state agencies to both

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[34] AARDES: Etude sur l'Industrie Privee. Alger, 1979, Vol.5, p.60.

[35] AARDES: op. cit., Vol.3, p.132.

comply with existing norms and to promote a new legislation.

Although union branches and workers' committees existed in most enterprises under state control, a number of them were not included in the scheme of worker participation. In some cases the enterprises had no unions, especially in the case of local authority (communes and wilayas) administration and units under their control.[36]

In industries under state control the workers are better able to organize. The concentration of workers in large plants was in itself a factor in enhancing a sense of collective identity. In addition, management compliance with existing legislation and worker participation in management, despite all its limitations, gave an impetus to union organization. Workers in this sector also enjoyed more stability and security in their employment. Each such factor contributed to make public sector workers appear a "privileged" section of the working class. They may also explain why these workers were relatively less militant than those in the private sector, as the strike rate attests.[37]

5.3.6 - Cleavages based on skill

Skill differentiation was a further variable dividing workers and affecting working conditions, job security and bargaining power, etc. Such an element might also be related to labour mobility and labour turnover. As such its implications for the process of working class formation cannot be underestimated. In order to reveal its importance we may consider the skill composition of industrial workers and changes in their structure over the period of 1969-82.

First, it must be noted that it is extremely difficult to establish the structure of skill differences in all its complexity.

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[36]This has changed recently as new legislation was adopted, including the right to unionization now recognized to all workers and employees since the vote for a new constitution on the 23rd Feb., 1989.

[37]The number of strikes during the period 1969-85, for each sector was: 3,456 in the public sector, and 4,125 in the private sector, making the annual rate 216 and 258 respectively. See, Chikhi, S. "Gréve et Société en Algérie: 1969-1985" Cahiers du CREAD No6, 1986, pp. 98-106.

Labour surveys distinguished only four categories or levels. At the bottom of the hierarchy was the category of unskilled workers, followed by semi-skilled, skilled and highly skilled. In fact, the line of demarcation between the first two categories was difficult to establish in real terms. Both included workers with no formal training or qualification. These were manual labourers whose work tasks were simple, repetitive and generally not mechanized, if they were employed in industry. However, relatively clear difference existed between these categories and the third, skilled workers. However, even in this case the difference was more formal than real. In general, skilled workers were specialized in particular tasks and often in direct contact with machinery. In fact, most of those in industry were machine operators. But for many, such classification was the result of experience on the job rather than formal training. The fourth category was clearly distinguishable from the rest; being constituted of qualified workers whose training was carried out, and recognized by specialized centres for vocational training.

The data on the distribution of skill presented in Table 5.13 below reveals one significant fact; the pyramidal shape of the working class-in-formation. It had a large majority of unskilled workers at the base and a minority of highly skilled at the top. Over the period 1969 to 1982 this fundamental characteristic remained unchanged, although the proportion of unskilled workers decreased slightly in relation to the intermediate category of skilled workers.

This pyramidal feature was characteristic of each of the major branches of the economy, although over the years some of these branches- industry, transport and communications- developed a more balanced structure. Other branches, such as construction and public works, maintained their clear pyramidal skill shape over the years. The skill structure of the workforce observed in each major branch was also apparent within sub-branches. It is important to note that in 1982 highly skilled workers constituted a small minority (13.5%) in industry as a whole.

During the period of rapid, intensive industrialization, (1969-82) however, there was a tendency for unskilled labour to be concentrated in fewer industries. Thus, the number of industries with 50% or more unskilled workers fell from seven (7) in 1969 to six (6)

in 1977 and to four (4) in 1982. For other industries the predominance of unskilled labour seemed to be a permanent feature. These included the extractive industries, construction materials and food processing. Skilled workers became more concentrated in heavy basic industries including steel, engineering, mechanical, hydrocarbons and other manufacturing industries such as textiles and chemicals.

It appears that the skill structure of workers depended on whether the industry was labour or capital intensive. While unskilled labour tended to be concentrated in the former, skilled workers were predominant in the latter. Two factors could help to explain such difference between various industries. First, the production process in the first group was less mechanized and less differentiated in terms of technical division of labour and task specialization. The latter group of industries was relatively highly mechanized, the production process was more complex involving a relatively high technical division of labour and task specialization. The second factor concerns the segmented character of labour markets in which a group of industries operated. for example, Labour intensive industries drew their workforce mainly from migrant workers and the surrounding rural areas, while capital intensive industries drew more stable workers from urban areas. The latter included relatively high proportions of educated and trained workers, many of whom had previously worked in industry.[38]

Overall, the composition and structure of industrial workers was dominated by unskilled labour. Although their proportion had decreased over the years, they continued to form a majority in many industries. Such industries were particularly characterized by their harsh working conditions, a high degree of job insecurity, low wages and, in many, violation of existing labour legislation, including the right to organize in union branches. Moreover, labour intensive industries dominated by unskilled labour (69.9% in 1969 and 57.4% in 1982) were largely made up of small plants, especially those in the private sector.

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[38]See Prenant, A. & Semmoud, B. "Incidences geographiques de l'industrialization en Algerie". in Palloix, Algerie 1980, Tiers Monde, No special, 1980, pp.533-34.

Table 5.13: Distribution of workers by skill and branch of activity (1969-1982)

	1969		1977			1982		
	Unskilled & semi-skilled	Skilled & highly sk'd	Unskilled & semi-skilled	Skilled	Highly skilled	Unskilled & semi-sk'ed	Skilled	Highly skilled
Industry	80,857	54,286	158.721	107,228	36,002	193,837	171,966	57,226
Construction & public works	45,813	24,241	111,356	57,914	22,146	310,608	187,530	50,145
Transport & communics.	11,915	18,588	29,211	18,920	9,670	45,520	52,186	18,944
Services [1]	1,517	6,210	6,168	7,437	5,165	76,620	31,458	12,663
TOTAL [2]	140,102	103,325	305,456	191,499	72,983	626,585	443,140	138,978
%	**57.6**	**42.4**	**53.6**	**33.6**	**12.8**	**51.8**	**36.7**	**11.5**

Source: Calculated from Enquete emploi et salaires 1969, 1977, in MPPT: Annuaire Statistique de l'Algerie 1970, p.40, 1977/78, p.95.
MPAT; ONS: Enquete emploi et salaires 1982. Alger, 1985.

Notes: 1 - The figures for services were restricted in 1969 to financial institutions. In 1977 a branch of services provided for enterprises was added. For 1982, services include these two as well as domestic services and catering which account for a large increase in this branch especially of unskilled and semi-skilled workers.
2 - The total numbers of unskilled and semi-skilled workers are greatly under-estimated in this table for 1969 and 1977 as a result of data not covering many service activities. In 1977, for example, unskilled and semi-skilled totalled 576,359. R.G.H.P., 1977.

Conclusion:

The rapid and intensive process of industrialization contributed to transforming Algeria's social structure. The rising petite bourgeoisie was, consequently, able to transform itself into a dominant force, taking the form of a state bourgeoisie. The same process, notwithstanding the ideological rhetoric, gave impetus to the development of a local bourgeoisie, rooted mainly in services, trade and light consumer industries. This class was economically powerfully but politically marginalized until the end of the 1970's. Since then things began to change and it was increasingly recognized as a politically influential force.

As for the working class, industrialization had many and varied implications for its process of formation. First, since industrialization began effectively in 1969 the emergent working class expanded in size many times over and developing as an important social force.

Among the effects of industrialization leading to the formation of a working class was the concentration of labour and capital in large enterprises and plants. This led to the formation of the "collective worker" and serving as a melting pot for various differences characterizing those workers newly recruited to industry. This, in turn, enhanced the chances for the emergence of a sense of collective identity based on shared work experiences, values and struggles. Such experiences, of course, provided the objective and subjective support necessary for the emergence and crystallization of class identity.

But industrialization, as it took place in Algeria, also had its negative effects on working class formation which include the dramatic ruptures which have characterized the process, especially between the colonial and post-colonial periods. Given the rapid and intensive process of industrialization, recruitment to the working class has drawn on a variety of social backgrounds and origins. Such variety and diversity was an inhibition to the formation of integrated, "collective worker". It also hindered the emergence of shared and cohesive value systems capable of replacing older and

traditional ones.

In general, the process of industrialization has generated a working class-in-formation characterized by many internal cleavages and divisions including location within different sectors and branches, varying forms of ownership, degrees of development, varying enforcement of legislation, differences in security of employment, chances of mobility, etc. The most important differences, may be, were tendencies pointing to concentration of workers in non-manufacturing branches such as construction, services and trade. Added to that, the increasing importance of the private sector, notoriously known for its unfavourable conditions for the development of the working class. Those expanding branches of activity and the private sector were associated with the least favourable terms for workers: less skilled jobs, irregular employment, hard working conditions, violation of legislation, low wages, lack of career prospects.

Newly introduced reforms leading to the break-up of large industrial enterprises and the adoption of free market principles in managing them, are already beginning to reveal their contradictory effects. On one side, workers were threatened in their jobs and wages, as management attempted to make these enterprises more viable and profitable under conditions of autonomy. On the other, workers were provided with a chance to negotiate in a free bargaining situation and exert some pressure on management without direct state intervention. The new conditions have initially exacerbated cleavages and divisions of various kinds (along skill lines, sectors, regions.. etc.) threatening workers' unity, already very fragile and precarious. Second, there is the lack of a strong, autonomous, and grass-roots union movement and organization capable of facing the challenge of management and behind it, the state. Finally, after a long period of subordination, effectively since the liberation war (1954-62), it was only at the end of the 1980's, that workers discovered the consequences of their lost independence. They are now attempting to organize freely in an environment characterized by fierce competition among political parties, fighting to establish their influence in the working class.

CHAPTER SIX

ON SURVEY AND METHOD

The survey providing data for our present study was carried out in Autumn 1985. It was devised with one principal objective in mind: to produce a wide range of information on industrial workers in four specific branches of industry. The data generated by this survey might be divided into two different categories. First, factual information relating to social and occupational characteristics of the sample including age, level of education, marital status, number of children, background, skill, length of employment, etc. The second type of information concerned attitudes, opinions and perceptions held by workers on a variety of issues. In this respect it might be said that our survey offered a variety of information which contributed towards answering some of the fundamental questions posed by the thesis.

The first important area on which the survey was beneficial concerned social and occupational characteristics of workers in four industrial plants. Using an interview schedule we were able to collect a comprehensive sum of information on such social and occupational characteristics as age, education, background, skill, length of employment, etc.

The survey also offered information dealing with reference groups and the various bases for their identification by workers. Other important questions on which the survey provided valuable information were workers' perception and orientation to work, working conditions, technology and mechanization, authority relations, etc.

The survey was also a source of information on such issues as perception of the role of unions, the degree of solidarity

among workers, the extent to which a sense of identity was developed and the perception of existing societal divisions and antagonisms. This data was also extended to the workers' attitudes toward collective action, including the extent to which certain forms of resistance were practised, attitudes on strikes and workers' readiness to be involved in such forms of class action.

However rich and varied was the information provided by the survey it was far from offering answers to all questions, or covering all issues raised by the study. Many aspects were not, and perhaps could not be illuminated by this survey and the data it provided. The issues on which the survey remains silent included: The extent of interaction and degree of cohesiveness of various groups of workers whether in the same plant or in the four different plants surveyed. It also fails to identify the types of relationship existing between workers and other groups including supervisory staff, technicians and engineers and the mass of office employees, whether in the workplace or outside it.

We have also been unable to document the various forms of social interaction among workers and the intensity of such processes; forms of solidarity and sources of cleavages as reflected especially outside the workplace in social and symbolic practices of popular culture developing in residential areas, clubs and informal groups of different sorts. The survey is also silent on the actual involvement of workers in open forms of resistance and collective action such as strikes.

Many of these issues could not be adequately investigated using the survey based on a standardized interview schedule. The limitations of the survey were, however, to some extent, a consequence of a conscious decision. To secure workers' co-operation and trust as well as maintaining official approval from management, we chose to suppress direct and explicit reference to workers' active involvement in various forms of resistance and collective action such as strikes. Also, the survey based on a schedule interview had to cover a wide range of issues, a fact which imposed some sort of selection of issues to be treated. Some of the excluded issues lent themselves with difficulty to such a technique of data gathering. In fact, we are here considering the general limitations of surveys based

on standardized interview schedules as a method of social investigation. We will consider first the general limitations of survey method and then limitations relating to our particular survey.

6.1- Limitations of survey method

What we can consider as the limitations of the survey method depends on a number of elements, including the subject to be investigated, conditions under which it is investigated and abilities and skills of researchers themselves. For these reasons judgements might differ on what could be considered as shortcomings or not, of a specific method of investigation. In the following we present what might be considered as the most obvious and common limitations of the survey method.

Most obviously, the survey method reflects an interest in generalization and classification, leading to a clear tendency to underplay the specificity and uniqueness of events and those involved in them. It is also inherently static failing to grasp the dynamic, situational, and changing character of phenomena, and people's perception and appreciation of them.[1] Surveys are generally used in large-scale investigations, covering a wide range of issues. As such they tend to produce a considerable sum of information, but information which lacks, depth as less effort and time are given to eliciting responses on specific issues. Consequently, important and valuable data might be missed.[2]

The risk of error involved in the use of surveys is also important. A clear example of such risk the use of the questionnaire as principal instrument of data collection. The preformed question is based on extremely fragile assumptions. The quantification of responses to one specific question supposes that respondents grasp it in the same manner giving it the same or, at least, closely similar meaning. But, we know such a process of meaning attribution is

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[1]Denzin, N. K., The Research Act. London, Printice-Hall, 1989. 3rd edition. p.103

[2] Manheim, H. L. Sociological Research: Philosophy and Methods. Illinois, The Dorsey Press, 1977,p.212.

dependent on many factors such as cultural characteristics, class, status, etc.[3]

Surveys based on the use of schedule interviews also raise the important issue of validity which means in this case absence of error and conformity to reality. Interviewing is based on three assumptions. First, it is seen as giving respondents a chance to express their truth. Some would consider this a naive view. Others see in it the fundamental rule of social life, that is to find out what people think or know about a specific issue, it is sufficient to ask them about it. May be most questionable assumption in all this is that all opinions are equal and equally expressed. Surveys not only lead to the cumulative addition of different responses to the same question, but put together responses which may not have the same subjectivity intensity or objective value. Consequently, The positive or negative responses of an "indifferent" or a "passionate" subject are considered of the same value. Thus the decisive critique of the survey method, based on a structured questionnaire, is its tendency to treat collective consciousness, for example, as a simple sum of individual opinions and attitudes added together. Obviously, there are serious doubts as to the validity of surveys in measuring opinions and attitudes, especially when groups and not individuals are concerned. They may well compute them but do not grasp or measure them.[4]

Because surveys may classify as equal opinions which are unequal, they also affect the empirical validity of results, that is, the possibility of prediction. The possibility of prediction is related to both the stability of opinions as well as the link existing between them and action, and both these are related to the intensity with which opinions and attitudes are held and continue to be held; conditions for which the survey failed to account.[5]

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[3]On problems of language and meaning related to the use of schedule interview, See. Denzin, N. K. op. cit. pp.104-105.

[4]See, a critique and an alternative view to the use of the structured questionnaire in Douglas, J.D. Creative Interviewing. Beverly Hills, Sage, 1985.

[5]See, Manheim, H.L. op. cit. pp.217-218.

Furthermore, if a survey is able to reflect the structure of opinion at a given point in time and even predict results in the near future, it cannot, as many social scientists have pointed out,[6] reveal potential states and possible crises, arising perhaps not of externally generated changes. This is so, in part, because the survey does not grasp opinions in the real situation in which they are formed and structured. The survey cannot grasp opinion before it is formed and, in some sense, it destroys the given character of opinion in the process of atomizing it, ignoring the various influences through which it was formed. [7]

The schedule standardized interview has another important limitation reflected in the nature of information it provides. Such information is generally constituted of response given, without reflection, to fragmented and precise questions. Psychologists have noted[8] that respondents caught by surprise in the interview have no time to organize their thought even if they know something on the subject on which they are questioned. Consequently, they provide easy accessible information which is in many cases the most superficial. The survey questionnaire many be a good instrument insofar as factual information is concerned, but when the desired information relates to latent causes, attitudes and motives, it becomes doubtful whether it is the best way to elicit information to which respondents themselves may not have immediate access.

Another general limitation of survey method concerns the degree of co-operation of respondents. Anyone with some experience of social research is well aware of various defense mechanisms put at work by respondents. Most common among them are: -

(i) Evasion which can be represented by direct refusal to respond, a polite but firm excuse, or even conscious lies.

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[6] See, Hyman, H. Interviewing in Social Research. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1954.

[7] See, Gafinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology, Englewood Cliffs, N.J. Prentice-Hall, 1967 p.44

[8] See Mtild, W. Riley, Sociological Research: A case Approach. Harcourt, Brace & World inc. 1963, pp. 187-189

(ii) Rationalization, meaning that respondents tend to justify their attitudes by giving explanations which they may believe to be true, but which could be shown not to be.

(iii) The issue of social desirability of responses and demand characteristics, or expectations and projections, all these represent types of relationships and influences exercised by interviewers on respondents and vice versa, leading to biased information.[9]

As a technique of data collection the questionnaire used in the survey has one important limitation. For it must satisfy two contradictory conditions: eliciting true responses from respondents while obtaining responses which are significant in relation to the issue under investigation. Whereas, eliciting true responses may be achieved by asking simple questions, this means that they are superficial and have less explanatory value. Complex questions may achieve significant responses but pose the problem of whether all respondents will be able to understand and answer them.[10]

To conclude on the general limitations of survey method especially when based on the use of the structured questionnaire, we point to two sets of questions such as: How informed are respondents about the issue(s) under investigation? Are they conscious of their feelings, likes and dislikes? Do they know what makes them act in one way or another? The second set of questions concerns the technique itself and its adequacy. Is asking questions sufficient to get information on people's opinions, attitudes and probable behaviour? Obviously, there are no simple and definitive answers to these questions.

6.2- Limitations of present survey

The limitations of our survey will be evoked in relation

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[9]See, Denzin, N.K. op. cit. pp.107-108 and Garfinkel, op. cit. p.44

[10]See, Denzin, N.K. op. cit. pp. 108-110

to three important aspects. First, difficulties associated with the performance of interviewers; second, limitations related to the structured questionnaire used, and third, problems of communication and language.

Performance of interviewers: This particular survey was based on a structured questionnaire for which groups of students from the third and fourth years of a B.A. Sociology degree were used as interviewers. The students were taken through an intensive training session before the survey was launched. However, not all students were able to attend these sessions regularly, as they were organized during term time. To cover for such shortcomings we organized comprehensive briefings just before fieldwork was started in each plant. We also attempted to provide regular and close supervision during the time when fieldwork was underway. However, lack of experience among students and differences in predisposition and attitudes to fieldwork (some showed great enthusiasm while others were more cautious) undoubtedly affected their performance and with it the results of the survey.

The questionnaire: Our survey was based on the use of a structured questionnaire designed in the absence of the necessary and beneficial help of colleagues and workers to whom it was to be administered. Several reasons were behind this shortcoming. First, the organization of arrangements with the plants to be included in the survey took the best of our effort and time leaving us with very little time to be invested in consulting various parties. Second, very few among my immediate colleagues had any experience of fieldwork. Workers were not piloted mainly because of the shortage of time, and also because it would have been a difficult exercise to develop the necessary managerial support in advance of the survey proper. However, the questionnaire was administered to a small group of workers leading to some modification both in substance and form.

In the construction of the questionnaire priority was given to covering a wide rage of issues, rather than the depth questioning. In a sense this was imposed by the main objective of the survey, which was an initial exploration of the various dimensions relating to the complex process of class formation among industrial workers. Given the explorative nature of the survey and the variety of issues investigated we had little choice but to ask as many questions

as it was necessary to cover all issues involved. The questionnaire included some 75 questions, and although most of them were pre-coded questions each interview session required an average one hour to complete. Some respondents undoubtedly found it boring leading them to provide quick answers in order to end the interview session. This tended to be especially true of two extreme cases: workers with no previous experience of surveys at all and those who were most frequently surveyed.

Problems of communication: By this we mean the problems involved in using language as a means of communication in surveys generally and the imposition of specific terminology when a structured questionnaire is used. The problem resides in the fact that questions undergo transformation at various points during the survey. They are first conceived and worded in a specialized language and then asked in the interview situation in a simpler less sophisticated form. In our case the problem was complicated further by the use of different languages. The questionnaire was conceived and worded in literary Arabic, administered during interview sessions in the Algerian dialect and then the whole work, that is, questions and responses were translated into English, the language in which the thesis is written. The process of translating back and forth has certainly affected not only the questions but also the content of responses when translated from Algerian dialect to Arabic to English.

6.3- General characteristics of the workforce:

In this section we shall present and discuss some of the characteristics of the workforce comprising our survey sample. Comparison with Algerian working population in general as well as with other developing countries will be attempted whenever there is a possibility to do so. The aim of such comparison is two-fold: first, to underline distinctive characteristics of the sample and second, to reveal the degree of its representativeness insofar as the Algerian workforce is concerned. Selected variables on the basis of which analysis of survey results was carried out include some social characteristics such as age group and level of education and a second set of industrial and occupational characteristics such as sector of employment, level of skill, seniority in the job, union membership, etc. The choice of these variables was motivated by the fact that the

literature on D.S.Fs, stresses their importance when dealing with the issue of working class formation. In the following we shall deal with some of them in turn.

6.3.1- Social characteristics:

Of various social features and attributes of the workforce provided by the survey we chose to discuss two: age group and level of education. Our selection of these two elements was based on the hypothesis that categories of workers based on them might be important in explaining differences in attitudes, varying levels of consciousness and predispositions insofar as forms of resistance and action were concerned. Let us first consider results relating to the distribution of workers according to age group.

Table 6.1: Distribution of the sample by age group

Age	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=100	Steel N=139	TOTAL N=374
22-30	20.3	31.1	19.0	37.4	28.1
31-40	29.7	47.5	42.0	33.8	37.4
41-50	23.0	14.8	21.0	22.3	20.9
51-62	27.0	6.6	18.0	6.5	13.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

Two important points can be made on the basis of these results. First, a clear majority of the sample (65.5%) were under the age of 40 years (the median for the sample was 35 years). This testified to the youthfulness of the workforce in four plants. Second, the youthful character of the workforce was not evenly distributed among these plants. It was clearly apparent in chemical and steel industries (70% and over). Older workers constituted a more important group in the mining industry and to a lesser degree in engineering.

Comparison with the Algerian employed population was made difficult for the simple reason that age group categories used in our survey differed from those used by the population census which offered some information on this issue.

Table 6.2: Employed population by age group (1982)

Age group	Number	%
6 - 14	25,119	0.7
15 - 17	88,501	2.6
18 - 59	3,110,767	89.5
60 +	249,517	7.2
TOTAL	3,473,904	100.0

Source: ONS, Enquete main d'oeuvre et demographie 1982, No.2, p.1.

However, we can observe the workforce was composed in its clear majority and in both cases from those in age group 18-59. Our sample closely resembled this since all its members were inside the category 22-62 years. Accordingly, it might be said that on this particular variable our sample was highly representative of the main core of the employed population in general.

What were the tendencies revealed by the survey in relation to the second social characteristic, level of education, and, to what extent was the sample representative, on this particular point, of the general employed population?

Table 6.3: Distribution of the sample by education

Education	Mining	Chemicals	Engineering	Steel	TOTAL
Illiterate	47.3	37.7	45.0	35.0	40.5
Primary	24.3	16.4	35.0	37.1	30.7
Secondary	23.0	41.0	20.0	22.9	25.1
College	5.4	4.9	-	5.0	3.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

The survey results pointed to the fact that illiterate workers represented the single highest percentage in the sample (40.5%), followed by those whose education was confined to primary school (30.7%). Together, these groups- the least educated- represented the large majority (71.2%) of the sample. Could this be an indication of the extent to which workers generally were denied access

to education? To answer such a question we must consider data relating to the level of education among the employed population in general. Fortunately, comparison on this variable was made possible by the similarity of categories used to classify the level of education attained by workers as reflected by data from the population census.

Table 6.4: Employed population by education (1982)

Level of education	Number	%
Illiterate	1,818,242	52.34
Primary	935,869	26.94
Secondary	410,269	11.89
College	258,458	7.44
High education	46,898	1.35
Others	4,168	0.12
TOTAL	3,473,904	100.00

Source: ONS, op. cit., p.10.

Comparison of the results of our survey with those of a nationwide survey on employment revealed close similarities. The illiterate represented just over one half of the employed population and a little less in the case of our sample (40%). Those with primary education made up similar proportions in both cases: 30.7% among our sample and 26.9% among the employed population. Together these two groups made up over 70% of the workforce in both cases. Workers whose educational achievement took them beyond primary school represented minority groups in both the sample and the employed population.

On this point equally, then, our results could be considered highly representative of the major trends characterizing the Algerian workforce in general. Consequently, this offered the possibility of making, within certain limits, some generalization concerning workers' attitudes and perceptions in relation to the issues investigated.

6.3.2- Industrial characteristics:

Having considered data relating to two of the most important social characteristics, we turn now to some selected industrial characteristics of the workforce. Following the same

procedures, we shall make comparisons, whenever possible, between our sample, the Algerian employed population and that of other developing countries. In this case three selected characteristics will be dealt with: distribution of the workforce by industry, by levels of skill and the extent of unionization. For some of these selected characteristics we have comparative information, but for others such information was unavailable. Before dealing with these characteristics let us present a general picture of population and employment in Algeria and some developing nations which are at a similar level of development. (See table 6.5).

Considering the information provided by Table 6.5 a number of points should be made. First, compared to other countries in generally similar conditions and occupying a similar place in the world system, Algeria had the lowest proportion of economically active population[11] amounting to only 18% of its population. Brazil had the highest proportion (36.8%), followed by Egypt (31.4%), Morocco (29.3%) and Tunisia (28.4). The low proportion could be, at least partly, a specific definition of statistical categories. Thus, in Algeria the majority of women were excluded from the economically active population on the grounds that they were predominantly housewives who did not seek wage employment.

The second important point revealed by Table 6.5 relates to the distribution of the employed population by major sectors. In this respect it was interesting to note that Algeria was among the countries which had a balanced distribution of its workforce. However, the importance of manufacturing industries in Algeria was quite limited (12% of the workforce). In this Algeria was similar to the other countries except that is, Tunisia, in which manufacturing had a higher share of the workforce (22.3%).

Before we extend our comparison, it must be pointed out that the industry samples in our survey were not calculated according

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[11] This terms means: "All persons of either sex who furnish the supply of labour for the production of economic goods and services as defined by the UN system of national accounts and balances during a specified time-reference period." The term labour force is also used as an equivalent. See ILO, Yearbook of Labour Statistics 1986, p.3.

to the relative importance of the industry to the economy in general, but according to the number of "workers"[12] employed in each plant, representing a branch of industry.

Table 6.6: The sample by branch of industry

Industry	No.	%
Mining	75	19.7
Chemical	61	16.3
Engineering	100	26.7
Steel	140	37.3
TOTAL	375	100

In our sample as a whole the steel industry provided the highest share of workers, followed by engineering, with mining and chemicals occupying the lower rankings. The question is how far was this distribution (although accidental, as we mentioned above) representative of the distribution of the workforce in general. The information we have on the industrial workforce and its distribution among various branches of industry dates back to 1982. In this respect it has only an indicative value insofar as representativeness and trends of distribution were concerned.

Table 6.7: The workforce by branch of industry (1982)

Branch of industry	Numbers	%
Oil industry	49,036	10.3
Mining industry	13,482	2.8
Steel, mechanical & engineering	124,846	26.1
Construction materials	39,486	8.3
Chemicals & wood industries	87,038	18.2
Food processing & tobacco	64,298	13.4
Textiles & leather industries	92,186	19.3
Other industries	7,904	1.6
TOTAL	478,276	100

Source: ONS. Enquete Main d'oeuvre et demographie, op. cit., pp.7-11.

[12] The sampling procedure excluded all non-manual, nonproductive workers such as technicians, supervisors, office employees, etc.

Table 6.5: Labour force in some developing countries

	ALGERIA 1983	TUNISIA 1980	MOROCCO 1982	EGYPT 1983	BRAZIL 1980
Total population	20,192,000	6,369,000	20,449,551	44,038,000	119,070,865
Labour force	3,632,594	1,809,970	5,999,260	13,842,200	43,796,763
Employed	3,473,904[1]	1,703,500[1]	4,775,000[2]	10,114,600	47,926,000
% in primary sector	26.4	31.6	47.7	39.1	29.5
% in secondary sector	30.6	33.8	19.4	21.1	23.4
% in tertiary sector	43.0	34.6	32.9	39.8	47.1
% in manufacturing	12	22.3	11	13.9	15

Notes:
1- This figure and the breakdown into sectors is for 1982.
2- The figure is for 1980 and so is the breakdown by sectors.
3- The figure and breakdown by sectors is for 1982.

Sources:
- ILO. Yearbook of Labour Statistics, Geneva eds., 1983, '85 & '86
- Lloyds Bank Group, Economic Report, Morocco, 1983. p.6.
- Office National de Statistiques (ONS): Enquete Main d'oeuvre et demographie, Vol.2, Alger, 1984.

Although data provided by the national survey of labour force and demography of 1982 was not immediately comparable to that provided by our survey, they revealed some important trends. First, great disparity among various branches of industry considering the number of people employed were evident. Second, the concentration of the workforce in some branches of manufacturing was considered as strategic in respect of economic policy. These included steel and engineering (26.1%), chemicals (18.2%). Our sample has to a large extent reflected the supremacy of these branches. But the mining industry appeared to be over-represented in the case of our survey.

The second industrial characteristic to be dealt with here relates to differentiation based on levels of skill. First we must raise a point concerning the problematic nature of the existing classification of workers into specific skill categories. There were no general criteria adhered to by different branches of industry or even plants within the same branch. Hence, classification may well differ and does so frequently from one branch to another. But despite such variation there was an overall agreement on the use of three general categories: skilled (including a sub-category of highly skilled), semi-skilled and unskilled. These categories referred only to workers directly involved in the production process (including maintenance and auxiliary workers).

Where the classification of the labour force in general was concerned further categories were used to account for those at the top of the hierarchy including executives, senior staff, technicians and supervisory staff. Since in our survey we were concerned only with productive workers, classification of workers in terms of skill was limited to the first three categories.

As it appeared from our survey data skilled workers represented the larger percentage followed by semi-skilled and the unskilled workers. However, it must be said that only a narrow difference separated these last two categories both of which were comprised of unqualified labour. The only clear difference was that whereas semi-skilled were on the whole task specialized those classified as unskilled represented auxiliary labour used for various general purposes. Workers in both categories shared a low level of education, or none at all, and had no formal training for the jobs

Table 6.8: The sample distributed by skill

	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=100	Steel N=140	TOTAL N=375
Unskilled	41.9	45.9	9	10.7	22.1
Semi-skilled	35.1	42.6	38	36.4	37.6
Skilled	23.0	11.5	53	52.9	40.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

they did. The third skilled group was distinctive since most of those workers were educated and had benefited from formal training specifically designed to provide them with certain abilities relating to their jobs. On these grounds, it is clear that the less skilled workers represented a larger percentage in our sample (59.7%). Considering this characteristic within specific branches it appeared that the less skilled workers were concentrated in mining and chemicals. These branches were relatively less mechanized, a fact which helps to explain the predominance of less skilled workers. While we have some data relating to the skill level of the industrial workforce in general there are no data showing differences among various branches of industry.

Table 6.9: Industrial workers by skill (1982)

Category	Number	%
Unskilled & semi-skilled	193,837	45.8
Skilled	171,966	40.7
Highly skilled	57,226	13.5
TOTAL	423,029	100

Source: ONS. Enquete emploi et salaire 1982. Alger, 1985.

The distribution of industrial workers according to levels of skill revealed that unqualified labour although constituting an important proportion did not represent a majority (See table 6.9). Contrary to our sample, qualified labour made up the largest proportion of industrial workers in general. In this sense it seemed that skilled workers were relatively under-represented in our sample.

But it must be remembered that the survey sample was calculated not on the grounds of its representativeness of industrial workers in general, but according to the number of workers and their distribution into skill categories in each plant.

In order to further clarify this aspect and to put into perspective the proportion of workers comprising various skill categories, we shall look at the distribution of the employed population in general.

Table 6.10: Employed population by skill (1982)

Levels of skill	Number	%
Executives & senior staff	92,500	2.7
Technicians & supervisory staff	107,981	3.1
High qualified labour	262,021	7.5
Qualified labour	1,168,396	33.6
Unskilled labour	1,823,534	52.5
Not declared	19,473	0.6
TOTAL	3,473,904	100

Source: ONS, Enquete Main d'Oeuvre. op. cit., p.21.

The important point revealed by Table 6.10 was the existence of similar distributions of the employed population in general and that of our sample. Classification of workers according to their skill produced a pyramid whose base was constituted of a majority of unqualified workers. Thus, in both cases skilled labour represented only a minority group. It must be noted that available information pointed to contradictory trends in the composition of the workforce insofar as skill was concerned. When industrial workers were considered separately it appeared that qualified workers constituted a majority group. But when all the employed population was concerned unskilled labour was found to constitute a dominant group. This meant that the core group of the working class (industrial workers) was composed in its majority of qualified labour. In itself this might be positively related to the emergence of a sense of collective identify and enhance the potential for the mobilization and organization of workers as a distinct social group with specific interests. On the other hand, when the working class in general (including

non-industrial labour making up the majority) was considered such positive potentialities faded away leaving place for lack of cohesion, weak prospects for organization and relatively important cleavages related to various elements including security of employment, differences of income, working conditions, degree of organization, etc.

The last characteristic to be considered in this section relates to unionization. In this respect we shall present and compare data provided by our survey with those concerning the Algerian workforce in general and the degree of unionization in some developing countries. First, it must be noted that the level of unionization in our sample was relatively high (48%). But some clarification is in order here. This is the figure drawn from a random sample of workers from all four plants, the real figure may be either higher or lower.

Table 6.11: Unionization in the survey sample (%)

	Mining N=70	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=100	Steel N=140	TOTAL N=371
Unionized	42.9	68.9	37.0	49.3	48

Nonetheless, our figure reveals real trends in the level of unionization in the four plants. We know, for example, our figures indicating that union membership was higher in chemicals and steel than in mining and engineering reflecting the real situation. Despite the fact that union officials in the local branches were hesitant when asked about the level of unionization we were able to obtain reasonable estimates. According to our sources, the degree of unionization in the four plants was: 45% in the mining industry, 60% in chemicals, 35% in engineering, and 50% in steel.

Data relating to the degree of unionization at national level are scarce. Only in 1986 did the UGTA release comprehensive statistics revealing the number of union branches and union membership in various sectors of the economy as shown in Table 6.12.

According to these data the overall level of unionization was under 30%. This represents a generous estimate since we used as a reference point the number of employed in 1982 which

Table 6.12: Unionization at the national level (1985)

Sectors	Branch	%	Membership	%
Construction & wood	3,020	25	323,542	31.3
Metal, leather & textiles	916	7.6	148,491	14.4
Energy, chemicals, & mining	1,318	10.9	111,229	10.8
Finance & planning	1,866	15.4	127,571	12.4
Health & social security	687	5.7	66,962	6.5
Transport & communication	822	6.8	73,800	7.1
Food & commerce	1,100	9.1	85,266	8.3
Education & culture	2,355	19.5	95,358	9.2
TOTAL	12,084	100	1,032,219	100

Source: UGTA, Revolution et Travail. NO.467. 1986. pp.79-81.

stood at 3,473,904. This was supported by available data putting union membership at 24.8% of the employed in 1983, increasing the following year to 25.8% to achieve in 1985 the proportion of 29.7%.[13]

The other important point which could be made with reference to these data relates to variations in the number of union branches and membership in different sectors of employment. The construction and wood industries emerged as a focus for union activity with a quarter of all union branches and almost one-third of all membership. Health and social security were the least unionized sector with 5.7% of union branches and 6.5% of total membership. The unions seemed to have targeted some sectors at the expense of others. With some simplification it might be said that while productive sectors were a favourite unions targets, those based in services were not. Such orientation might be explained by the concentration of workers in productive sectors, a relatively longer experience of union activity in them and the relative stability of the workforce. All these elements were to some extent lacking in nonproductive sectors leading to difficulty in establishing union branches and increasing membership.

While considering the level of unionization it is worth making some comparison between Algeria and other developing countries

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[13]UGTA: Revolution et Travail, No.467. 1986, p.77. For all these percentage points we used the number of employed in 1982.

which are generally considered to be comparable.

Table 6.13: Union membership in some developing countries
(%) of active population early 80's

40-50%	30-40%	20-30%	10-20%	Below 10%
Algeria	Argentina	Colombia	Botswana	Bangladesh
Tanzania	Barbados	Egypt	Brazil	Dominican Rep.
(incl.	Chile	Gabon	Costa Rica	Haiti
peasants)	Ethiopia	Jamaica	Ecuador	India
	Venezuela	Mexico	Kenya	Indonesia
	Sri-lanka	Trinidad &	Malaysia	Pakistan
		Tobago	Nigeria	Senegal
			etc.	

Source: ILO. World Labour Report, Vol.2, Geneva, 1985. p.11.

We can certainly agree that the existing figures for unionization in Algeria are clearly over-estimated, largely because of confusion in 1985 between the UGTA's membership, which referred to non-agricultural workers, and the UNPA (National Union for peasants) which included in its membership various categories of the peasantry (cooperative workers, agricultural wage labour, small peasants, etc.). If we accept data released by UGTA, its membership was estimated in 1982 at 862,860 non-agricultural employees representing 24.8% of all the employed population estimated at 3,473,904 in 1982. Consequently, union membership in Algeria was probably closer to that found in countries such as Colombia, Egypt, Mexico, etc. where membership represented 20-30% of active population. Given the degree of unionization in other developing countries, many of which had a longer and richer experience of industrial development (Egypt, Mexico, Brazil, India) the achievement of the Algerian trade unions appeared reasonably significant. Especially so in the light of various constraints and limits put on the freedom of organization and action of the unions in Algeria which led to their subordination to the state and party bureaucracies until very recently.

6.4- The Plants Surveyed

The survey, on which a significant part of the present study is based, was carried out in four industrial plants, all of them

branches of larger companies operating in the public sector. Our choice of these particular industrial units was motivated by one principal concern; achieving as adequate a representation of industrial workers as possible, given the constraints of time and other resources. Of course, it would have been more adequate had we been able to widen the range of our sample to other branches of industry and commerce. Also, these particular plants were chosen because were relatively speaking, large-scale, they represented those industrial branches (manufacturing and mining) which were likely to be most conducive to working class formation.

Also, they were among the most important employers in the region. They were the first to be established in their respective area of location. Consequently, they attracted their workforc from a wide spectrum of backgrounds; not specifically urban or industrial. They represented a "melting pot" for the various groups composing the workforce, providing favourable conditions for the emergence of an embryonic working class grouping. This was accelerated by the homogenizing effects of the process of concentration, mechanization and standardization of working conditions introduced by these plants. Finally, the choices were determined by the possibility of gaining access. In the following we attempt to provide a comprehensive picture of each of the plants surveyed.

6.4.1- The mine

The open cast mine produced iron ore destined mainly for the steel plant in Annaba. work started in this mine at the beginning of the century. It became the property of the Algerian State following the wave of nationalization in 1966. Now it is part of a large company specializing in the production of iron ore and phosphate. The mine is located in a small town (Ouenza) situated in a rural area 150 Km. southeast of Annaba. It is the only major industrial activity in a region dominated by agriculture and live-stock raising. The extraction zone was constituted of scattered hills and valleys across mountainous and arid land stretching over hundreds of acres. Iron ore was brought down in large quantities by bulldozers after the use of dynamite to demolish hill-sides. Further down in the foothills near the town there was an ore-crusher, stocking area and loading facilities. Nearby, there was a railway station which provided for transportation of iron

ore to Annaba. Close by the station there was a bloc of offices on a small hill housing the technical and administrative structures. The maintenance department, and its various specialized workshops, was located separately, accommodated in a number of large metal sheds each one serving as a particular workshop.

The level of mechanization at the mine was generally low and unevenly spread between various sections of the production process. Technology differed in accordance with types of activity. In the production department most activities required direct manual intervention, although large bulldozers were used in the extraction of iron ore. Large transmission belts were needed to move raw material from extraction zone to the ore-crusher. The crushed ore was stocked near the station ready for transport to steel plant. Loading iron ore onto the wagons was carried out either by large bulldozers or transmission belts on which small groups of miners worked. Given the character of the production process and its low level of mechanization few workers in the production department were rated as skilled or semi-skilled labour.

The degree of mechanization in the maintenance department was more important, particularly in the engineering workshop. Other workshops were relatively less mechanized. Most of the maintenance workers were concentrated in the engineering workshop supplying other workshops with spare parts, repairing vehicles, the ore-crusher, transmission belts, etc. The technology used in the maintenance department included large, semi-automated drilling-machines, milling-machines and polishing-machines. Most workers here were classified as skilled.

The organization of the labour process differed between the production and maintenance departments. The production department was characterized by a flexible division of labour, a low degree of task specialization and direct supervision. In the maintenance department the technical division of labour was more pronounced and was accompanied by a relatively high degree of job specialization and technical control rather than direct supervision.

The mine depended in its operations on a limited range of local services. Most important were the high-voltage power station

providing electricity for the ore-crusher, the industrial machines and the railway line connecting the mine to the steel plant.

Organizationally, the mine was divided into three large departments. First, the production department itself sub-divided into a number of sections; extraction, ore-crusher, stocking and loading. Second, the maintenance department sub-divided into a number of workshops; mechanical, electrical and design workshops. Third was the administration, sub-divided into a number of sections including finance and accountancy, personnel, marketing and public relations.

The production and maintenance departments employed 345 and 105 workers respectively. In the former, the majority were composed of unskilled miners working in extraction and on the ore-crusher. Most maintenance workers were skilled labour working as electricians, mechanics and designers. The administration department employed some 100 persons including executive staff, secretaries and auxiliary labour.

Management structures in the mine were not complex. At the top was a management board presided over by the Managing Director. The latter was assisted by Heads of Departments and two elected worker delegates. Heads of Departments constituted the middle management structures, while Heads of Sections and Principal Foremen were considered the lowest level of management. Relationships and communication between various management levels were characterized by informal arrangements rather than formal rules. In fact, much the same could be said of relationships between management and the workforce generally as formal procedures were often substituted by kinship and client relationships, with the middle management playing a particularly important rôle in this process. Those in the middle and low levels of management enjoyed a certain measure of discretion in decision making relating to matters of work organization. Strategic decisions were, however, taken by the highest levels of management. Organs of worker' participation had a largely formal existence and were often manipulated by management in order to meet their objectives in specific situations.

Part of the workforce, including management and the supervisory corps, were resident in the local town, but many of them

living in company houses situated very close to the mine. Others of the workforce lived in private houses in the local community. A management residential area was separate situated on a hillside south of the mine, although the recently recruited lived in private houses in the town and surrounding villages. This did not adversely affect the process of interaction outside the workplace. Public places such as Cafes and the market place played an important rôle in maintaining intensive contact between various groups of the workforce.

6.4.2- The Chemical Plant

The chemical plant surveyed was part of a larger state company specializing in the production of agricultural fertilizers, pesticides and industrial chemicals. Built in the second half of the 1960's, it began production early in the 1970's.

The plant was composed of two factories one producing fertilizers, the other pesticides. The fertilizers factory, in which the survey was carried out, was built on some 70 acres of land stretching between the sea-shore and the motorway linking Annaba to El-Kala east. At the entrance stood blocs of offices housing the management and the administrative departments. Behind the offices were the large metal sheds used for stocking raw materials. Beyond these were buildings accommodating the maintenance department. In parallel line, closer to the sea-shore, were located the installations for sulphur treatment and preparation. beyond it, were large buildings housing the ore-crusher, mixing and manufacturing sections. The last in the row was the packing workshop and warehouses, close to a railway line used for transport of products.

The plant as whole was charcterized by a relatively high level of mechanization but with some variation between the various installations. Least mechanized at the two ends, were the plants for preparation of raw materials and warehousing. The production process was highly mechanized, particularly in the case of sulphur preparation, ore-crusher and manufacturing. The organization of the labour process differed according to the degree of mechanization in different departments, such as the production and maintenance departments. In the highly mechanized sections there was extreme task specialization and high levels of technical labour control methods.

The workforce in such sections enjoyed a relative degree of job discretion. In the less mechanized sections job fragmentation was less pronounced, direct control methods were applied and workers enjoyed less job discretion.

The chemical plant depended on a number of local services including maritime installations in the harbour of Annaba. It also had a power station and was linked to the main rail track for transport of its raw materials and products. It was also dependent on sea water for various needs including cooling sulphur installations. The plant had two main divisions; technical and administrative. The first included two departments; production and maintenance. The production department in its turn sub-divided into a number of sections: raw materials, sulphur treatment and preparation section, ore-crusher and manufacturing, packing and stocking area. The maintenance department was sub-divided into two main workshops; one for mechanical the other for electrical repairs. The administrative division was composed of various departments such as finance and accountancy, personnel (recruitment and training), marketing and general utilities (canteen, transport, health care).

The plant had a workforce of some 1500 employees, 750 of whom were in the fertilizer factory where the survey was carried out. Of these some 566 were into production activities including 398 workers in the production department and 168 workers in maintenance. Workers in these two departments were technicians, skilled machine operatives and unskilled labour. Most of the skilled workers were concentrated in maintenance, sulphur treatment sections, or worked on the ore-crusher and mixing machines. Unskilled labour worked in the warehouses or as packers and loaders. The administrative division employed some 184 persons including executive, middle and junior staff, and a large group of office and white-collar employees.

Management structures in the plant were similar to those in the other industrial plants. At the top of the management hierarchy was a Managing Board headed by a Managing Director and composed of executive staff and two representatives of the workforce. Middle and low levels of management were to be found within separate departments and sections respectively. In each case they were composed of Heads of Departments or Sections assisted by specialized staff

members.

The workforce of this plant lived in residential areas scattered in and around the city of Annaba. Some middle and junior staff lived in detached prefabricated houses on site. Executive staff lived in company houses in Annaba. The workers were divided into three groups; the first group, along with a majority of administrative employees, lived in private houses and company flats in Annaba. A second group lived in small villages nearby the plant. The third lived in a camp of prefabricated houses some 25 Km away from the plant. Such residential dispersion was among the major obstacles inhibiting interaction and contact between various groups of workers and employees outside the workplace.

6.4.3- The Engineering Plant

This plant was part of a large state company specializing in engineering, particularly for the road transport industry. The company has various plants around the country producing lorries, buses, tractors etc. The plant in which the survey was carried out produced bicycles, motor-cycles and small engines. It was built during the second half of the 1970's and began production in 1980.

The plant was located in the Eastern suburb of the city of Guelma (100,000 population), situated 60 Km South of Annaba. It was built on some 50 acres. At the entrance of the plant there was a large bloc of offices housing various management and administrative structures. Next to it there was a small health clinic and the plant's canteen and other offices. Facing this line of buildings were the numerous sheds housing the production workshops. Behind these was a large open-air stock area for the stocking of raw materials and scrap metal.

The plant was relatively highly mechanized but with important variations between workshops. The highly mechanized sections of the production process were those relating to metal preparation and manufacturing. The latter section especially was characterized by high performance milling, drilling and polishing machines. Less mechanized were the assembly workshops and maintenance section.

Overall, the organization of the labour process was based on a combination of Taylorite and Fordist principles. Its main features were job fragmentation, work rhythms were determined by either technology or by line supervisors and stop watch. Management targets determined the spread and flow of production. In addition various labour control methods were applied. The engineering plant used a limited range of local services including an electric power station, natural gas supply for its furnace and canteen, a health clinic and a small training centre.

The plant was organized on the basis of two main divisions; technical and administrative. The technical division was composed of two major departments; production and maintenance. The production department was composed of three sections: The first of these was the metal preparation section made up of two workshops in which a number of processes were carried out, such as heat treatment of metal, casting metal, forging, cutting up, shaping and welding. The second section, manufacturing was composed of three workshops carrying out milling, drilling and surface treatment. The third section was assembly composed of two workshops, one of which specialized in the assembly of engines, bicycles and motor-cycles, the second being a machine-tool workshop. The maintenance section had two workshops one specializing in electrical and electronic repairs, the other in mechanical repairs.

The workforce employed in this plant stood at 1268, including 48 top management and middle level staff, 315 junior staff and supervisors and 905 low grade employees and production workers. Of the latter group 800 were workers. The plant began production in 1980 with an annual output of 30,241 motor-cycles, 20,400 bicycles and 6,041 engines. By 1986 production had increased to 53,000 bicycles, 48,340 motor-cycles and 10,000 engines.

Management structures in the plant were organized along functional lines. At the top there was a Management Board headed by a General Manager, assisted by various Heads of Departments. At the departmental level (production, maintenance, finance and accountancy, personnel, supply and marketing, health and social services etc.) there were intermediary management structures with Heads of Departments assisted by middle level staff. The low level management

was to be found running sections or workshops.

The engineering plant functioned according the rule book. A clear distance separated workers in the shop-floor from managerial staff. Communications between the two groups was formal, mediated by the corps of supervisors and junior staff. However, even this group distanced itself from shop-floor workers, treating them strictly according to the bureaucratic rules.

The workforce in this plant was recruited mainly from the city of Guelma and the surrounding villages. The majority of the managerial staff and administrative employees lived in the city either in private houses or company flats. The workers were divided between those who lived in surrounding villages while others had company accommodation in the city. However, there was no particular residential area in which the workforce was concentrated.

6.4.4- The Steel Plant

The steel plant was part of the colonial project Plan de Constantine (see ch 5). Effective construction of the plant began in 1960 only to be interrupted on the eve of independence in 1962. The plant attracted interest again in 1964 with the founding of a state company, "Société Nationale de Sédérurgie" whose aim was the building and running of the steel plant. However, this plan was delayed until 1966, when construction was resumed with the help of Soviet experts. The project took more than fifteen years to complete using the services of no less than eight countries (Algeria, France, USSR, Italy, West Germany, Belgium, Japan and Britain).

At its completion in 1982 the plant's workforce stood at around 18,000 employees. In the decade 1967-77 the training programmes associated with the development of the plant produced some 10,000 newly trained workers and foremen.

The level of mechanization in the steel plant was relatively high and evenly spread although different types of technologies were used in different workshops ranging from mechanically driven to electronic and automated machines. There was also a high degree of variation in the type of technology given the

number of countries contributing to the development of various workshops.

The plant depended on a wide range of local services including an electric power station, an electrified railway line linking it with the iron ore mine and the port facilities at Annaba. Water and gas supplies were important as was a fleet of buses for transport, five canteens, a medical centre, a sports centre, a shopping co-operative and three vocational training centres.

Organizationally, the plant was divided into various zones of different activity and technology in the production process. Consequently, the labour process was subject to various forms of organization. The first division cuts the plant horizontally into a zone of metal preparation; (the cock section, preparation and binding 1 & 2, blast furnaces 1 & 2), and a zone of metal manufacturing; (The hot rolling mill, cold rolling mill, and weldless tubes). The second division cuts the plant vertically, according to the nature of products, into four zones; Cast iron, flat products, long products and weldless tubes.

The survey was carried out in two departments located in different divisions of the plant. the first sample was drawn from the hot rolling mill department in the flat products division. It employed some 780 persons of whom 600 were in production and 180 in maintenance. It produced coils and strong plates with an annual output of one million tonnes. The second department sampled was the billet steel mill in the long products division. It employed around 600 persons with 500 in production and 100 in maintenance, with an annual output of 600,000 tonnes of billets.

Administrative employees, supervisors and managerial staff were not included in these figures. However, their number was low given the prevalence of central management structures at division and plant levels. Management structures in this plant were doubly complex. First, because of the complexity of the production process in terms of its technical characteristics and organization. Second, because of the size and diversity in the composition of its workforce. Hence, management of human resources was noticeably more complex.

Up to the end of the 1970's different divisions were organized according to different plans drawn by the original construction companies. However, from 1978 the plant was organized in accordance with a general plan elaborated by the Ministry of industry in association with a French consultancy group and inspired by classical models based on Scientific Management and Fordist principles. The pyramidal structure was divided into three levels occupied by three major groups. At the top, the managerial staff constituted by 252 positions ranging from the General Director to Heads of Divisions, Departments, and sections. The second corps was composed of an army of supervisors and foremen. this group was stratified into heads of workshops, principal supervisors, area supervisors and foremen of first and second category. The third group was that of the "obscure world" of direct producers and auxiliary labour composed of thousands of workers grouped in terms of divisions, departments, workshops, skill and tasks. This pyramid was characterized by its segmentation and fragility. The top, or a "thinking head" was effectively cut off from the body, especially shop-floor workers. Channels of communication were too often deficient or nonexistent not only between management and workers, but even between various levels of management.

Management structures in the steel plant were dominated by central administrative bodies, especially the Board of Directors. This left lower levels of management with the task of running the daily affairs. Given the size of the plant and its complexity such a form of centralized organization generated numerous problems on a daily basis.

The steel plant had, from the beginning, adopted a social policy (housing, transport, canteen health care, leisure activities, etc.) as an integrated aspect of the management of the labour force. Earlier contingents of steel workers were recruited locally. As the plant expanded recruitment extended to a wider range increasing the influx of migrant workers considerably. Most of these lived in appalling conditions; many in Turkish baths transformed by their owners into workers hotels. Others built shanty-town houses around the plant or close to the city. Under the mounting pressure of an expanding workforce the company launched a vast project of housing, building estates nearby the plant and others on the outskirts of

Annaba.

The company's housing policy was geared to attracting and stabilizing managerial and supervisory staff. Workers were left to manage on their own, the company offering only transport within a radius of 60 Km from the plant. Later the company launched a vast programme of purpose built residential areas nearby the plant. In the last few years most of the workers living in the slum have been given the resources to build new houses, in specially prepared settlement areas.

6.5- Sampling Procedures.

The samples, to whom the schedule interview (See annex) was administered were randomly chosen from maintenance and production workers only. For a variety of reasons it proved very difficult to apply strict methodological procedures in this sampling. The major difficulties were; the lack of updated lists of workers, the unwillingness of management to cooperate in generating such a list, difficulties encountered in getting supervisors to release the randomly chosen workers.

These lessons learned directly from a pilot project led us to develop a more flexible procedure consisting of selecting workers on site at the time of interviewing and given that certain conditions were satisfied. The first of these conditions was willingness of the selected workers to participate. Second, they had to be free at that particular time or, replaced, so avoiding major interruptions in the scheduling of the interviewing process. Third, it was necessary to obtain the consent of the area supervisor or foreman. In some cases supervisors suggested workers for interview. Such offers were accepted, but instruction were given to interviewers to treat such cases with caution and to drop them if they showed clear apprehension at being interviewed.

Interviews were individual and carried out in private whether in shop-floor offices or deserted corners of the workshop. These decisions depended on the degree of cooperation and suitability of the places, i.e., the absence of intruders, be they officials or team-mates. In cases where serious breaches of these conditions were

experienced the relevant interview schedules were discounted.

Table 6.14- Distribution of The Sample by industry

Plant	No of workers	Sample	%
Mining.			
Production dept.	345	52	15.1
Maintenance dept.	105	22	20.9
Total	**450**	**74**	**16.4**
Chemical			
Production dept.	398	41	10.3
Maintenance dept.	168	20	11.9
Total	**566**	**61**	**10.8**
Engineering			
Metal preparation	400	60	15.0
Manufacturing	300	30	10.0
Assembly	100	10	10.0
Total	**800**	**100**	**12.5**
Steel			
Hot rolling mill	780	80	10.3
Billet steel mill	600	60	10.0
Total	**1380**	**140**	**10.1**
TOTAL	**3196**	**375**	**11.6**

CHAPTER SEVEN

PERCEPTION OF WORK, TECHNOLOGY AND AUTHORITY

Studies of work can generally be divided into two types based on two different methodological approaches.[1] In the first, the main focus of interest is the description and analysis of certain objective aspects of the labour process such as work organization, systems of control, authority structures, etc. In the second, although the objective remains much the same the method is different. In this case interest is focused on discovering how workers perceived such objective characteristics of the labour process and how they react to them. As in other areas both approaches have advantages and disadvantages. While it was not in the scope of this study to develop a critique of these different yet complimentary approaches, we do stress that it is likely that a combination of the two will be the more fruitful and adequate approach. However, given the problematic of our thesis, which was the process of working class formation, more emphasis will be laid on what is called, in the absence of a better term, the subjective experience of work. However, in view of the inherent limits of the survey method and the schedule interview as a data collection technique, we shall attempt wherever possible to supplement workers' responses with a description of the objective aspects of the labour process as we observed it in the plants covered by the survey. Hopefully, such a combination of the two approaches will generate more fruitful insights when it comes to the interpretation of workers' perceptions of the various aspects of the work situation, as well as the structure of society in general.

In this chapter, then, we shall consider our data as they related to the perceptions of work, technology and authority relations. In the first section related to work we focused our attention on a number of the most salient features of the job such as the degree of improvement in skills. In the second section we shall be

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[1]The first approach is represented by the Labour Process Theory while the second by classical Industrial Sociology. See Thompson, P. The Nature of Work: an introduction to debates on the labour process. London, Macmillan, 1983. Chs, 1 & 2.

concerned with perceptions of mechanization, technical advance and the way in which these were seen to affect working conditions, orientation to work, wages and skill levels. The third and last section will be devoted to a discussion of perceptions concerning existing authority relations.

7.1- The nature of work

Perceptions of work, we believe, were important not only in informing workers' attitudes and actions in work, but also affected attitudes and conceptions of society and its structure.[2] In presenting the results we attempted, firstly, to give an overview of all workers' responses, providing tables where a significant relationship was found between workers' perceptions and the list of selected variables which the literature had shown to be of specific interest.

The first question dealing with perceptions of work was (Q: 09): "If asked to comment on your job, how would you characterize it?" It was a pre-coded question with four alternative statements. The first indicated job satisfaction; the second stressed the fact that it was tiring and risky, the third pointed to its alienating character as meaningless and boring operations; and the fourth indicated the danger it involved. The objective of this question was to elicit, in simple and general terms, perceptions held by workers of their jobs.

Table 7.1: Job perception by industry

	Mining	Chemicals	Engineering	Steel	Total
Satisfying	19.2	8.3	4.0	19.3	13.4
Tiring	42.5	36.7	50.0	36.4	41.3
Meaningless	11.0	8.4	33.0	10.8	16.3
Dangerous	27.3	46.6	13.0	33.5	29.0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.00

The results in Table 7.1 indicate that a large

[2]See, Blumer, M. (ed). Working Class Images of Society. London, R.K.P. 1975.

proportion of workers considered their jobs as mainly tiring. There are some interesting variations across plants reflecting the specific nature of the production process in each industry, such as the tendency to see jobs as dangerous in chemicals and steel or boring and meaningless as in engineering. These results revealed no significant relationship between job perception and age group. However, older workers perceived their jobs as tiring while the young had a tendency to consider them dangerous.

Table 7.2: Job perception by age

	22-30 N=105	31-40 N=138	41-50 N=78	51-62 N=51	TOTAL N=372
Satisfying	14.3	13.0	12.8	11.8	13.2
Tiring	28.6	42.0	50.0	52.9	41.4
Meaningless, boring	19.0	15.9	15.4	13.7	16.4
Dangerous	38.1	29.1	21.8	21.6	29.0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R - 0.12 P 0.01

Table 7.3: Job perception by education

	Illiterate N=151	Primary N=115	Sdry. N=93	College N=14	TOTAL N=373
Satisfying	10.6	14.8	12.9	35.7	13.4
Tiring	52.3	42.6	24.7	21.4	41.3
Meaningless, boring	14.6	14.8	19.3	28.6	16.3
Dangerous	22.5	27.8	43.1	14.3	29.0
	100	100	100	100	100

R - 0.11 P 0.01

The Results in Table 7.3 indicate that perception of job was related to the level of education although no significant correlation was found. Both perception of job as satisfying and boring increased with the level of education while its perception as tiring and dangerous was decreasing.

The second question was (Q 10): "Do you enjoy any freedom in organizing and carrying out your job?" It was a pre-coded question to which four alternative statements were suggested as

possible answers. The first indicated that workers had never had any freedom to organize and carry out their jobs. A second pointed to existence of rare occasions in which some freedom was exercised by workers. The third suggested that job discretion was experienced now and then. The fourth suggested that freedom was a frequent phenomenon pointing, therefore, to a high degree of job discretion.

The objective of this question was to find out how workers rated their own experiences of job discretion. The assumption was that the degree of freedom enjoyed by workers in carrying out their jobs would have an important impact in shaping their attitudes to work, and beyond that, their orientation and sense of identity as members of the work group, or alternatively their alienation and loss of identity as creative agents.

Table 7.4: Degree of freedom by industry

	Mining	Chemicals	Engineering	Steel	Total
Never	47.9	59.0	43.0	32.9	42.7
Rarely	23.9	32.8	36.0	20.7	27.4
Sometimes	14.1	3.3	10.0	25.7	15.6
Frequently	14.1	4.9	11.0	20.7	14.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

Ro.18 P0.00

These results revealed that a high proportion of the sample experienced little or no control over the way their tasks were carried out. Such absence of freedom was especially true in the mine, chemical and engineering plants. In steel the case was interestingly different with a high proportion enjoying at least partial freedom at work.

The results in Table 7.5 pointed to a lack of pattern of relationship between degree of freedom and age. However, there was a tendency among younger workers to experience a greater level of freedom at work. The results indicated a pattern of relationship between degree of freedom and seniority. Whereas a larger percentage of senior workers reported lack of freedom, less senior workers had enjoyed relatively more freedom at work.

Table 7.5: Degree of freedom by age

	22-30 N=105	31-40 N=139	41-50 N=78	51-62 N=49	TOTAL N=371
Never	32.4	46.0	47.4	46.9	42.6
Rarely	26.7	28.1	28.2	26.5	27.5
Sometimes	18.1	14.4	15.4	14.3	15.6
Frequently	22.8	11.5	9.0	12.3	14.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R - 0.11 P 0.09

Table 7.6: Degree of freedom by seniority

	- 5 N=130	6-10 N=141	11-15 N=69	16-20 N=10	21+ N=22	TOTAL N=372
Never	40.8	36.2	56.5	30.0	59.1	42.7
Rarely	17.7	37.6	26.1	40.0	18.2	27.4
Sometimes	18.5	18.4	7.2	10.0	9.1	15.6
Frequently	23.0	7.8	10.2	20.0	13.6	14.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.14 P0.00

The third question was (Q 11): "How have your abilities and skill developed since you took up this job?" It was a pre-coded question for which three alternative statements were suggested as possible answers. The first indicated that workers experienced loss of skill, thus pointing to a process of deskilling. The second indicated that workers had merely succeeded in applying abilities and skills they had brought with them upon joining the present jobs. The third pointed to a more positive outcome in which workers were able to improve their abilities and skills, be that in terms of improving their dexterity or in gaining new skills.

The objective behind this question was to find out how workers judged their work experience in terms of the fit between their abilities and skills on one hand, and the job requirements on the other. This was important insofar as work experience leads either to self-realization and fulfilment or negation of creativity and denying workers the chance of developing various existing or potential

abilities. Both outcomes have an important bearing on attitudes to work and related activities which contribute to developing a sense of identity.

Table 7.7: Skill evaluation by industry

	Mining N=70	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=100	Steel N=139	TOTAL N=370
Lost	30.0	14.8	23.0	20.1	21.9
Realized	30.0	45.9	16.0	40.3	32.7
Improved	40.0	39.3	61.0	39.6	45.4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R - 0.03

The results in Table 7.7 indicate a lack of correlation between workers' evaluation of their skills and the branch of industry. But overall there was a clear tendency to express an improvement of skill and ability among workers.

Table 7.8: Skill evaluation by skill category

	Unskilled N=79	Semi-skilled N=140	Skilled N=151	TOTAL N=370
Lost	27.8	20.0	20.5	21.9
Realized	38.0	37.9	25.2	32.7
Improved	34.2	42.1	54.3	45.4
	100	100	100	100

R 0.13 P 0.00

It appeared from the results in Table 7.8 that workers' evaluation of their skills and abilities was correlated with skill categories. Hence, less skilled workers seemed to have had less chance to improve, while skilled workers expressed in greater proportion an improvement in their skills and abilities.

The results pointed to a certain pattern of relationship between skill evaluation and union membership. Thus, while union members appeared to have experienced degradation or stagnation of

Table 7.9- Skill evaluation by union membership

	Members N=177	Non-members N=189	TOTAL N=366
Lost	24.9	18.5	21.6
Realized	36.1	29.6	32.8
Improved	39.0	51.9	45.6
TOTAL	100	100	100

R 0.12 P 0.01

their skills, non-members tended to express an improvement.

The fourth question was (Q 12): "Does your job involve varied activities or tasks?" It was a pre-coded question for which three alternative statements were suggested. The first indicated a total lack of variation with workers having to perform routine and repetitive tasks. The second pointed to the experience of limited variation in jobs performed. The third indicated that work involved a variety of regular rather than contingent activities.

The aim of this question was to unveil the extent to which workers were subjected to labour process characterized by excessive division of labour and task fragmentation. This aspect in the nature of work was closely linked to the preceding one dealing with the evaluation of skills. However, the results may point to some inconclusiveness in the relationship between these two aspects of work. The value of this question lay in the attempt to reveal that work organization obeyed the classical principles of scientific management developed by Taylor and improved by Ford.

Table 7.10: Task variation by industry

	Mining N=69	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=100	Steel N=140	TOTAL N=370
No variation	58.0	31.1	49.0	46.4	46.8
Some variation	21.7	47.5	40.0	50.0	41.6
Varied	20.3	21.4	11.0	3.6	11.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R - 0.08

The results in Table 7.10 indicate that the majority of our sample experienced little or no variation at all in their tasks. This tendency was especially pronounced in the engineering and steel industries.

Table 7.11: Task variation by skill

	Unskilled N=79	Semi-skilled N=140	Skilled N=151	TOTAL N=370
No variation	41.8	42.9	53.0	46.8
Some variation	39.2	42.1	42.4	41.6
Varied	19.0	15.0	4.6	11.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

R - 0.15 P 0.00

These results revealed that task variation was experienced more by less skilled workers while skilled workers appeared to have been more specialized and thus had less variation or none at all in their tasks.

Table 7.12: Correlation for general sample

	Indus.	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union Memb.
Job percep.	0.00	-0.12*	0.11*	0.01	-0.04	0.00	0.04
Deg./f'dom	0.18**	-0.11	0.05	0.02	-0.14**	0.07	0.07
Skill eval.	-0.03	-0.04	-0.05	0.02	-0.03	0.13**	0.12*
Task varia.	-0.08	0.08	0.02	-0.07	0.08	-0.15**	0.08

* - P 0.01
** - P 0.00

7.2 - The nature of work: discussion

Having presented the most significant results in the first part of this section we shall now attempt to analyse and interpret them, first in relation to the general sample and then at the level of particular industries. In both cases we shall focus on revealing the relationship between workers responses and those

Table 7.13: Correlations for sub-samples

1- Mining

	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Seniority	Skill
1- Job percep.	-0.06	-0.04	-0.41	0.10	0.18
2- Deg./f'dom	-0.10	0.02	0.22	-0.14	-0.25
3- Skill eval.	-0.12	0.06	-0.37	-0.08	0.02
4- Task varia.	-0.05	0.18	-	-0.08	-0.24

2- Chemicals

1-	-0.02	0.34	0.33	-0.21	0.27
2-	-0.09	0.09	0.09	0.20	0.19
3-	-0.12	0.12	0.25	-0.16	0.21
4-	0.07	-0.05	-0.12	0.02	0.03

3- Engineering

1-	0.03	0.08	-0.06	0.18	-0.10
2-	0.04	0.12	0.08	0.03	-0.09
3-	0.14	0.00	-0.05	0.00	0.22*
4-	0.18*	-0.04	-0.03	0.07	-0.18*

4- Steel

1-	-0.22*	0.04	-0.12	-0.14	-0.06
2-	-0.25*	0.18*	0.09	-0.24*	-0.15*
3-	-0.13	0.06	0.03	0.05	0.06
4-	0.16*	-0.02	-0.14	0.40*	-0.01

* P 0.01
** P 0.00

selected variables which represented major characteristics of the workforce.

The first aspect we dealt with in this section related to workers' perceptions of their jobs. In this respect, although workers' responses were not significantly affected by branch of industry, there were certain interesting differences which require explanation. First, mine and steel workers were more likely to express a certain degree of satisfaction about their jobs, while such attitudes were particularly infrequent in the engineering and chemical plants, most probably reflecting the distinctive character of assembly line work in the engineering factory and the prominence of routine, unskilled work in chemicals. The character of work organization in

engineering might also explain the high proportion of workers who saw their jobs as boring and meaningless. The most salient feature of work for workers generally (except chemical) was fatigue, reflecting the amount of effort and work rhythms dictated by the industrial labour process. Again, the perception of danger as a major feature of work in both chemical and steel plants was associated with the realities of working conditions in those factories including lack of safety procedures. In fact, these differences in response indicated both variations in labour processes and organizational contexts. Thus, while fatigue in mining was due to the type of work requiring considerable effort under a system of direct control, in engineering the rhythm of work was determined more by machinery through a combined system of technical and direct controls. In steel and some sections of the chemical plant we observed that workers were able to exert relatively greater control over their jobs despite the high degree of mechanization in the first plant as well as direct supervision. This might be explained by the relatively high level of skill, especially in steel. In mining and engineering the case was reversed and the chances of escaping intensified work rhythms were limited as a result of more rigorous and direct control systems. Such results were generally in line with findings and arguments developed by comparable studies.[3]

Job perception was also affected by age, although the degree of correlation between these two variables was not significantly high. However, a clear tendency emerged indicating that satisfaction decreased with age. The same was true in relation to the perception of jobs as dangerous. The fact that young workers tended to perceive their jobs in contradictory terms such as satisfactory, boring and dangerous might reflect the conflicting early experiences of work, its new environment, rules and rhythms. As workers gained more experience and learned to adapt to various rules and codes, they also adjusted their aspirations to the harsh realities of industrial work leading them to adopt less contradictory attitudes. Generally, the perception of danger could be linked to lack of experience and unfamiliarity with the industrial environment. However, it could also be associated with the deceptive image of industry presented to

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[3]See for example, Edwards, R. C. Contested Terrain: the Transformation of the Worplace in the Twentieth Century. Heinmann, London, 1979.

workers when they were first recruited. Such a deceptive image was propagated by both the state and management in their desire to attract the workforce to industry. Another line of explanation may be that as workers got older and gained experience, danger became an accepted part of the job which hardly attracted their attention. The second tendency concerned the clear increase in the experience of fatigue with age. Widespread reference to fatigue among older workers can be explained with the effects of long years of hard work involving considerable physical effort, anxiety and stress. The effects of age in this case might well have been mediated by those of education and skill, as older workers were less educated and less skilled and they tended to have access, generally, to jobs demanding more physical effort.

These tendencies were, to some extent, confirmed by the effects of education. First, the expression of both satisfaction and boredom was more frequent among the better educated workers. Second, fatigue was stressed by less educated workers and the same could be said of danger as a major feature of work. Thus education appeared to be a major factor, not only in determining the nature of the job occupied but also in contributing to the generation of specific attitudes and perceptions of work. For example, it was the better educated who tended to express more than others certain forms of dissatisfaction which might have been as a consequence of excessive specialization and task fragmentation. But lack of education generally associated with less skilled jobs meant hard toil and higher levels of danger.

The importance of education can also be detected in workers reflections on their positions in the labour market in general. The overwhelming majority of the less educated workers were extremely dissatisfied with their jobs, but resigned to what they saw as their inescapable fate. "What can we do, we are not educated to get better jobs" was the statement repeated in various forms by those workers expressing dismay and resignation. The significance of education was also clear in the determination of workers to educate their children. As one skilled steel worker put it:

> "I do not want my children to suffer like me as a result of lack of education. One has to do his best to educate his children so they can get a better

job."

In Algeria, as in other similar countries, education was regarded as the most important asset not only in relation to work as it opened skilled and less tiring and dangerous jobs, but also in determining one's position in society at large as a decisive factor for upward mobility. The significant rôle of education will be discussed in much more detail in the next chapter when we deal with workers' perceptions of their children's careers and futures.

Considering the sub-samples individually it became clear that workers' perceptions of their jobs were not significantly affected by any of the selected variables, except one. It was among steel workers that age was significantly correlated to job perception. The dominant tendency was similar to that found in the general sample, with young workers relatively more satisfied but concerned about the dangerous character of their jobs while older workers stressed the element of fatigue. Overall, these results pointed to an important degree of homogeneity in attitudes relating to work whether in the general sample or in particular sub-samples representing different industries.

The second issue investigated in this section related to the degree of freedom experienced by workers in carrying out their tasks. Our results revealed that an overwhelming majority in the sample declared that they had no control over the way their tasks were carried out (70.1%). However, experience of freedom or its absence was significantly affected by three variables: branch of industry, age and seniority. Concerning the first, it appeared that steel workers were more likely than others to enjoy a certain degree of freedom, followed by miners and engineering workers while chemical workers were least represented among those having such an experience. Such variations might be explained not only by such factors as skill, age, the size of the plant but also the extent of workers' resistance to work discipline. In this respect, the steel factory was distinguished by a number of features. First, it had one of the highest proportions of skilled workers; second, workers in the age group 22-30 years made up 37.4% of its sample which was the highest among the four plants. The size of this plant was also important and the workshops covered in the

survey had over 2,500 workers divided between the melting house and the hot rolling mill. Skilled workers might be considered, at least theoretically, more privileged in exercising some freedom given their qualifications. But this was problematic and needed to be investigated further. Age was important for various reasons, including the fact that younger workers were generally more assertive, independent minded and less worried about possible sanctions. The large size of the workforce was an objective factor that posed real problems for labour control and enforcement of discipline. But it was also important to note that the extent of worker resistance, as our observation and records of such phenomena as absenteeism and labour turnover revealed, was more common and widespread in the steel industry.[4] It was interesting in this respect to recall that steel workers had, more than others, voiced complaints about the extensive chain of command in the factory, yet they seemed to enjoy more freedom in their tasks. Such complaints might be an indication of the degree to which management practices and existing discipline were contested.

Experience of freedom was also related to age, with younger workers having a tendency to report a certain degree of job discretion. We have already pointed out the importance of age which affected workers attitudes toward the enforcement of work discipline. Thus, besides certain characteristics generally related to age such as degree of assertiveness and low conformity, different attitudes related to age might also be explained by external factors such as the fact that most young workers were single and had less social obligations, making them, therefore, less vulnerable in the labour market, while older ones were in the reverse situation. The objective status and resources of these two groups differentiated them and helped to shape the perceptions of their positions.

In fact, the importance of age in the experience of freedom at work was confirmed by the relevance of seniority in the job. Our results revealed that less senior workers included a greater proportion of workers experiencing some degree of freedom. There were two possible explanations for this tendency. First, it might be the

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[4]See El-Kenz, A. et al. Industrie et Société: Le Cas de la SNS, Alger, 1982.

case that workers in their early careers, still young and assertive, showed more resistance to existing rules and norms. Such tendency could be strengthened by their lack of adaptation. Through the years resistance tended to diminish as various forms of adjustment were achieved representing a compromise between frustrated aspirations and prior images of work, on one hand, and the realities of the shop floor, on the other.[5] This would result in some measure of self-restraint and relative acceptance of enforced rules and procedures. The second possible explanation is that workers in their early careers tended to lack a coherent view of the labour process and the weight of existing constraints in the form of various mechanisms of control. Consequently, they tended to overestimate their discretion, but as they gained in experience and came to realize the impact of the existing division of labour, mechanization and control systems they were less prone to overestimate their degree of freedom. These two tendencies may well combine to produce such a pattern of attitudes and perceptions. However, this should not distract us from the fact that a large majority of workers in our sample (70.1%), including a good proportion of less senior workers, felt they were denied any discretion in the way their tasks were executed.

In this respect our findings were interesting as they highlighted workers' awareness of the tendency towards the centralization and concentration of decision making even in its simplest forms, such as deciding how to execute management commands. As one skilled steel worker in the melting house put it:

> "We work hard under appalling conditions, but we have no say in how things were done, we are being treated like the machines we work on."

The third aspect treated in this section related to workers' evaluation of their skills and abilities throughout the period during which they were employed in the plants surveyed. Our findings revealed that a good proportion of workers had experienced an improvement in their skills (45.4%) while another significant percentage of the sample (32.7%) had maintained the skills and

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[5]See, Beynon, H. Working for Ford. London, Allen Lane, 1973.

abilities they possessed upon recruitment to these plants. A smaller group (21.9%) experienced a loss of skill and ability. In this respect it might be argued that an overwhelming majority of the sample expressed a positive judgement concerning the way their skills and abilities were affected. Comparison of the findings across plants pointed to interesting variations, although no significant degree of correlation was found between skill evaluation and branch of industry.

Workers experiencing a loss of skill constituted a relatively higher percentage in the mining industry (30%) and a low percentage in chemicals (14.8%). The fact that loss of skill was prominent among the miners might be related to the low level of mechanization and the nature of the production process based on labour intensive methods. The extraction of iron ore on in an open cast mine did not require specific skills, but considerable physical effort.

The case in the chemical plant was, in some sections of the productive process, similar to that in the mine insofar as mechanization was concerned. The fact that a minority reported a loss of skill might be explained by the fact that a majority of the workforce was unskilled and therefore did not consider themselves as losers in any case. Workers reporting the realization of their skills and abilities constituted an important proportion in chemicals, steel, and to a lesser extent, in mining, but was particularly low in engineering. In all four plants relatively large proportions of the workers expressed the view that their skills had improved since they joined their present jobs; this tendency was especially pronounced among engineering workers. These results, based as they were on workers' self-evaluations seem to contradict the deskilling thesis much stressed since Marx and more recently, by labour process theorists.[6]

What our findings suggested was the fact that deskilling was an uneven process affected by a multitude of factors including the specific character of the industry, the conditions under which technological innovations were introduced and general characteristics

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[6]See among others, Braverman, H., Labour and Monopoly Capital: the Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century; London, Monthly Review Press, 1974.

of the workforce.[7] In Algeria, the process of industrialization was largely based on relatively new technologies while the workforce was generally characterized by lack of qualifications and low levels of skill. Colonial domination for over a century led to the destruction of social and economic structures without seriously developing a viable alternative (see previous chapters). This resulted in widespread unemployment which represented a distinct feature of a settler dominated society. Following political independence, industrial development had to be started from a very low base. Given these conditions employment in industry, even in its most degrading forms, would be perceived as an improvement.

Furthermore, skill improvement did not necessarily mean acquiring new knowledge and abilities. Thus, workers' responses might have concealed the fact that what they did experience was improvement in dexterity. Another source of confusion which might have contributed to overestimating skill improvement was a tendency to link concrete abilities to formal skill classification which were not necessarily the same thing. Thus, although some workers might have experienced genuine improvement in their skills there was certainly a tendency to overestimate such experiences.

Among the selected variables only skill category was significantly relevant to the way workers evaluated their abilities and whether their skills improved or were degraded. The general pattern which emerged in this case pointed to a clear tendency for workers in lower skill categories to experience a loss of skill while those in higher skill categories experienced an improvement. Such findings, if truly reflecting the reality might have serious consequences for the process of working class formation. They point to an underlying process of the reproduction of existing cleavages, countering the homogenizing effects of division of labour and work organization. The significance of these divisions within the working class was all too obvious, being associated with narrow, sectional interests, and reducing the possibilities of collective action and for the emergence of solidarity among workers.[8]

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[7] See Thompson, P., The Nature of Work: op. cit.

[8] Marshall, G. "Some Remarks on the Study of Working Class Consciousness", Politics & Society, Vol.12, No3, 1983, pp.263-301

If we turned to individual sub-samples we would find that workers' evaluation of the state of their skills during their present employment was not significantly affected by the selected variables. The only exception to this was found among engineering workers and the pattern of variation in this sub-sample was the same as that observed in relation to the general sample. Skill improvement was experienced by workers in higher skill categories while those in lower categories experienced loss of skills and abilities.

The fourth aspect of work perception treated in this section related to the extent of variation in the work tasks performed. According to our results the majority of workers were either performing repetitive and monotonous tasks (46.8%) or experienced only a limited degree of variation in their tasks (41.6%), with a small minority (11.6%) reporting a significant degree of variation in their tasks. Thus, the general tendency was one of task fragmentation and excessive specialization.

On looking at the results across industry we found that task specialization tended to be prominent in highly mechanized industries such as engineering and steel, but also in less mechanized ones such as mining. Nevertheless, an important degree of variation in the tasks performed was reported in mining and chemicals, both with important departments using labour intensive methods drawing up on unskilled workforce (41.9% and 45.9% respectively); in engineering and steel this category represented only 9% and 10.8% respectively.

Generally, in all four plants, workers reported the existence of excessive task specialization. This might have far reaching consequences for workers including the limits put on the development and utilization of their skills and abilities, loss of meaning and boredom which would characterize their orientation to work, all leading to increased level of alienation among workers whose only link with their jobs would be the cash-nexus.[9]

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[9]There is an important sum of literature on what became known as job redesign in studies of industrial sociology and labour process. All were critical of excessive division of labour and specialization based on Scientific Management and Fordism. See for example, Knights, D. et al. (eds): Job Redesign: Critical Perspectives on the Labour Process. Aldershot, Gower, 1985.

Our findings also revealed that the extent of task variation was negatively correlated with skill. Thus, fewer workers in the higher skill categories reported a high level of task variation. Such results seemed to lend support to the proposition that there was a tendency towards task specialization in industry, especially among skilled workers. The latter were positioned in the most sensitive and highly mechanized sections of the production process. These characteristics of their position led not only to greater degree of task fragmentation and specialization but also to increased rigorous control of the labour process. Paradoxically, skilled workers were more threatened than others by the deskilling process. While unskilled labour did not escape this general tendency the extent to which less skilled workers were subjected to excessive technical division of labour was less pronounced. Their very lack of specific skills and qualification tended to keep them relatively marginal in relation to processes of mechanization, division of labour and task fragmentation. But deskilling was not a linear and even process without counter tendencies. Thus, the homogenization of the workforce was a complex process which was at times enhanced and at other times limited by the technical and social organization of work. The case of skilled workers illustrated such contradictory effects well. On the one hand, they were the group which experienced skill improvement during the period of its actual employment; on the other hand, the degree of specialization threatened them more than any other group.

This contradictory process of differentiation/ homogenization may have serious implications for the emergence of class consciousness and worker' resistance as we shall attempt to show in later parts of this study.

If we considered the relationship between task variation and selected variables at the level of individual sub-samples we could observe that while in chemicals none of the variables proved relevant, in mining and engineering differentiation based on skill category was important and had the same effect as that in the general sample. In the steel factory two variables were relevant to the experience of task variation. The first was age and the second, seniority. While task specialization was more prominent among young and less senior workers a certain degree of variation was experienced by old and senior workers. Finally, underlining our findings was the fact that a

majority of workers in the four plants clearly experienced lack of task variation. This was an interesting result in the light of important differences which distinguished these plants such as their size, level of mechanization, location, and the nature of the production process and its organization.

This supported the thesis that Algerian industry was characterized by a trend toward the adoption of forms of work organization based on Taylorite and Fordist principles stressing task fragmentation and standardization and leading to a process of deskilling (see the qualifications to this argument above).[10] This could have two important consequences for workers. First, There will be a potentiality toward a depreciation of wages and a reduction in worker' resistance. For as skill requirements for production became low the flexibility of labour markets, both internal and external increased giving management more possibility to assert its authority. Secondly, such process also acted as a control mechanism since workers became aware of the fact that their skills were no longer indispensable and could easily be replaced without too much disruption or increased costs for the plant. Hence the objective limits set on the development of militant collective action of a class character.[11]

Conclusion

Our results indicated a few interesting trends: First, fatigue was a prominent feature experienced by all workers in different industries, regardless of the general characteristics of the workforce. This reflected the great amount of effort and work rhythms dictated by the industrial labour process generally. Job perception depended to a large extent on the character of industry, its degree of mechanization, the nature of the products and forms of organization. Second, a large majority of workers experienced a lack of freedom in carrying out their jobs. However, a certain limited degree of job discretion was found in the highly mechanized and more complex industries such as steel, and among specific groups of workers,

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[10] El-Kenz, A. et al, op. cit.

[11] See Thompson, P. op. cit.

especially the young and less senior workers. This latter point seemed to contradict some well established notions about the relative degree of job discretion associated with seniority and long experience of work. Hence, the possibility of workers in our survey overestimating their discretion was not denied.

Thirdly, as far as the evaluation of skill was concerned our findings indicated a general trend toward skill improvement among workers. This was most probably linked to efforts by various enterprises in setting up different training schemes in order to improve the skills and abilities of their workforce. This was a necessary action since local labour markets were dominated by unqualified and unskilled labour. Such skill improvement may be characteristic of all industrialization processes, especially where no strong tradition of craft work existed before. But this process of skill improvement was experienced differently by workers, with those having a minimum qualification benefiting most from this trend while the less qualified benefited less. Such differences were of great significance since they tended to accentuate divisions already existing among workers. Hence, their potential effects in limiting the impact of homogenization brought about by the industrial labour process and thus affecting the formation of a collective identity and common interests among workers.

The fourth important result related to the absence of task variation in work indicating the excessive degree of job fragmentation and task specialization characterizing industrial work generally. But certain differences were found between industries and certain groups of workers. Some task variation was found in less mechanized industries such as mining and chemicals. Variation in tasks was also experienced by less skilled workers and there seemed to be a link between the low degree of mechanization, the employment of large groups of unskilled labour, and the experience of task variation.

The results also revealed contradictory tendencies as far as deskilling was concerned. While skilled workers seemed better placed to improve their skills in the early process of industrialization the degree of specialization and standardization to which they were increasingly subjected was beginning to produce its effects in the form of deskilling, given the absence of task variation

among these workers. Hence, it might be said that in the long run, the homogenizing effects of the industrial labour process will tend to lessen the importance of divisions based on skill differences, giving a new impetus to the process of the formation of a collective identity and the perception of shared interests, although developments in this direction did not rest solely on the progressive erosion of skill differences and included other factors, as we shall find out in the coming chapters.

7.2- Mechanization and its effects

Mechanization and technical change are distinguishing features of work in the modern factory system. As such they play an increasingly important rôle in structuring work and shaping workplace attitudes and relations, although the extent and direction of these influences are still a matter of debate and controversy. Hence, the divergence of views found in studies concerned with the impact of technology on workers' perceptions and their direction, either assuming forms of resistance or consent.[12] First, mainstream industrial sociology has a clear tendency, although with certain exceptions, to emphasize the importance of a linear relationship between technological change and workers' integration and identification with existing forms of work organization and the factory system in general. One of its fundamental presumptions was the predominance of an instrumental orientation among workers.[13]However, more recent studies have, in reaction to this instrumental approach, traditionally represented by Taylor's Scientific Management, tended to stress the relevance of psychological and social aspects in work. Increasingly, the human relations approach came to dominate studies of work in mainstream academic sociology followed in later years by a dominant concern for job enrichment and job re-design.[14] One common denominator in these approaches was the latent, if sometimes expressed, concern to induce workers to accept existing forms of work

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[12]see Thompson, P. op. cit. Ch.1. where he provides an account of these divergent views in the literature, distinguishing mainstream Industrial Sociology from the Marxist Tradition.

[13]See a good example in Goldthorpe et al; The Affluent Worker: Industrial Attitudes and Behaviour. London, Cambridge University Press, 1968.

[14]See, Knights, D. et al. op. cit.

organization and discipline, although strategies differed considerably from emphasis on material incentives, to moral satisfaction and commitment, to participation policies designed to achieve workers' consent.[15] In all cases, the main objective was to change workers' attitudes and behaviour rather than introducing fundamental changes in their situation or the way work was organized. The logic behind the obsession with changing workers rather than the dominant structural and institutional contexts was the assumption that such structures were essentially rational and progressive.[16]

In contrast to mainstream sociology, the Marxist tradition since Marx stressed the irrational character of dominant forms of work organization and the negative effects of mechanization, although these were not considered simply a product of technical change, but were taken into the wider context of dominant relations of production and the inherent contradiction between labour and capital.[17]

Given the importance accorded to technology and mechanization, in sociological studies of work- whether viewed as socially neutral or socially determined- we attempted in our research to investigate workers' perceptions of mechanization and its effects on a selected number of aspects related to work. These included orientation to work, effects of mechanization on skills and creativity, working conditions and wages. We deliberately chose these aspects as representing different yet complementary features of the wage labour condition.

The first question (Q 13) was formulated as follows: "Do you think that with evolution from manual tools and handicraft to machinery and mechanical tools man has lost his creative rôle?" This was a pre-coded question for which two alternative statements were suggested. The first indicated workers' agreement that the process of

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[15]See Brannen, P. Authority and Participation in Industry. London, Bastford Academic education ltd. 1983.

[16]Doray, B. Le Taylorisme Une Folie Rationnelle? Paris, Bordas, 1981.

[17] Marx; M. Capital. Vol.1. London, Lawrence & Wishart. 1974.

mechanization resulted in man's loss of his creativity. The second pointed to their disagreement indicating that such a process of evolution had not resulted in the loss of creativity. The aim of this question was to elicit workers' attitudes and general assessment of the relationship between the advance of mechanization and the state of skills and creative abilities.

The relevance of attitudes toward mechanization and their significance in workers' general orientation to work has for some time constituted one of the major topics of sociological investigation.[18] Given the recency of the process of industrialization in Algeria and the various forms of resistance with which it was faced,[19] we considered that the investigation of this issue might shed some light on the part worker response might play in resisting the process of mechanization and whether such resistance was related to the perceived effects of mechanization on the skills and creative abilities of the labour force.

Table 7.14 - Effects of mechanization on skill by industry

	Mining N=62	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=100	Steel N=137	TOTAL N=360
Loss of skills	14.5	26.2	57.0	33.6	35.6
Has no effect	85.5	73.8	43.0	66.4	64.4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R - 0.15 P 0.00

The results in Table 7.14 revealed two things: first, a majority of workers did not consider mechanization to be a cause of deskilling; second, there were some variations of response, particularly in comparing those in engineering (57%) and, to a lesser

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[18] It was one of the major areas of interest in research carried out by the Tavistock Institute in Britain and the Group Sociology du Travail in France. See Rose, M. Industrial Behaviour: theoretical developments since Taylor. Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1978

[19] Such forms included absenteeism, high rates of labour turnover, acts of sabotage (during our survey in the steel plant one major conveyor belt was sabotaged in the melting house AC02), and many breaches of workplace discipline. See also El-Kenz et al. op. cit.

degree, in steel,(33.6%) who experienced the negative effects of mechanization more than those in mining (14.5%) and chemicals (26.2%).

Table 7.15: Effects of mechanization on skill by skill category

	Unskilled N=78m	Semi-skilled N=134	Skilled N=148	TOTAL N=360
Loss of skills	24.4	36.6	40.5	35.6
Has no effect	75.6	63.4	59.5	64.4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

R - 0.12 P 0.01

These results pointed to a pattern of relationship linking the effects of mechanization on skill to already existing skill differentiation. For example, deskilling as a result of mechanization was seen as important among skilled workers, but less so among the less skilled.

The second question (Q 12) was formulated in the following manner: "How does mechanization affect wages?" This was a pre-coded question for which four alternative statements were suggested as possible answers. The first pointed to the neutrality of mechanization considering it to have no particular effects on wages. The second stressed that mechanization had positive effects on wages in the sense that wages tended to rise in more mechanized activities. The third expressed the opposite view, namely, that wages tended to decline with the extension of mechanization. The fourth expressed a more specific judgement indicating that while mechanization might have had positive consequences for the wages of other groups, it had not positively benefited our workers.

The objective behind this question was to find out whether workers had any grasp of the objective relationship between what the economists call constant and variable capitals whose relative proportions were in constant change to the disadvantage of the latter, representing that part of labour power expressed in wages. This fact constituted one of the fundamental and hotly contested terrains between capital and labour in the developed capitalist formations. The

question was to what extent did Algerian workers, under different working conditions, perceive such a relationship?

Table 7.16 - Effects of mechanization on wages by industry

	Mining N=53	Chemicals N=59	Engineering N=86	Steel N=136	TOTAL N=334
Neutral	30.2	57.6	41.9	47.1	44.9
Positive	17.0	20.3	26.7	25.0	23.4
Negative	47.2	10.2	20.9	22.1	23.7
Don't benefit wkrs.	5.6	11.9	10.5	5.8	8.0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.01			P 0.36	

The results revealed a lack of pattern in the relationship between mechanization and its effects on wages, and branch of industry. Overall, a majority of workers considered that level of mechanization had no effect on their wages. That attitude was particularly significant in chemical, engineering and steel plants. Miners were distinguished from the rest by a sizable minority viewing that mechanization had negative effects on wages. Although no clear pattern emerged from these results, there was a tendency among young workers to stress the neutral character of mechanization in relation to wages, while older workers were more likely to emphasize its negative effects.

Table 7.17: Effects on wages by age

	22-30 N=97	31-40 N=125	41-50 N=69	51-62 N=42	TOTAL N=333
Neutral	50.5	43.2	50.7	28.6	45.0
Positive	23.7	25.6	17.4	26.2	23.4
Negative	18.6	22.4	24.6	35.7	23.4
Don't benefit wkrs.	7.2	8.8	7.3	9.5	8.2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.10			P 0.03	

The third question (Q 15): to be treated in this section

was "How would you describe the effects of mechanization on your reaction to work?" It was a pre-coded question with three alternative statements as suggested answers. The first stressed that mechanization was characteristically neutral, having no specific effects on orientation to work. The second pointed to the positive character of the effects of mechanization, while the third indicated that mechanization had negative effects on the orientation to work.

The objective of this question was to discover whether workers considered that their interest in, and orientation to work, were affected in any way by the process of mechanization. As mechanization contributes to the introduction of various structural changes in the workplace: division of labour, work organization, systems of authority and control, it is likely to affect by the same token, and as a consequence, the orientation to work.[20] The process of mechanization also reflects changes in the nature of work and as such would also be likely to have effects on the workers' orientation to work. These effects might not, however, be felt immediately by workers, hence the view that mechanization had no specific effects on orientation to work; a view which emphasized the neutral nature of technology, as if this latter was not itself the product of social relations at a given point in their development.

Table 7.18: Effects on orientation to work by industry

	Mining N=51	Chemicals N=56	Engineering N=91	Steel N=124	TOTAL N=322
Neutral	25.6	23.2	20.9	19.4	20.8
Positive	33.9	67.9	59.3	66.1	60.3
Negative	39.5	8.9	19.8	14.5	18.9
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.07			P 0.08	

The results in Table 7.18 indicate that a majority of the sample regarded the effects of mechanization on work orientation as positive. This tendency was interestingly, less pronounced among

[20] See, Weddeburh, D. Workers' Attitudes to Technology. London, Cambridge University Press, 1972.

miners (39.5%) of whom considered effects to be negative. From our results it emerged that other selected variables had no significant effect on this particular aspect.

The fourth question (Q 16): was "How does mechanization affect working conditions?" It was a pre-coded question for which four alternative statements were suggested. The first indicated the neutrality of mechanization in the sense that it neither improved nor worsened working conditions. The second pointed to the positive role played by mechanization and the third to the reverse consequence in which mechanization was considered to have negative effects on working conditions. The fourth statement stressed that mechanization worked against the interest of workers, in the sense that it might have positive effects for other groups but such benefits were not extended to workers. This statement pointed to a class character of technology.

The aim of this question was to elicit workers' perceptions of the relationship of mechanization to working conditions. Mechanization by its very nature implies changes in physical and non-physical working conditions. It could save workers effort and reduce risks or add new ones to those already experienced. However, the direction of these effects, as well as workers' assessments, may be determined by a multitude of factors such as previous occupational experience, work organization, rigorous application of safety rules, and the place accorded to mechanization in the dominant value system.

Table 7.19: Effects of working conditions by industry

	Mining N=46	Chemicals N=58	Engineering N=99	Steel N=136	TOTAL N=339
Neutral	13.0	8.6	6.1	12.5	10.0
Positive	71.7	63.8	57.6	66.2	64.0
Negative	8.7	6.9	26.3	17.6	17.1
Don't benefit wkrs.	6.6	20.7	10.0	3.7	8.9
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R. 0.08			P 0.06	

The Results in Table 7.19 indicate that a large majority of the sample considered that mechanization had a positive effect on the conditions of work. That view was especially pronounced among miners, chemical and steel workers. The perceptions of such effects as negative was relatively more important among engineering workers. The significant proportion of chemical workers considered these effects as not beneficial to workers.

All other selected variables had no significant relevance to workers' perceptions of the effects of mechanization on the conditions of work .

Table 7.20: Correlations for the general sample

	Industry	Age	Educa.	Backgr.	Seniority	Skill
Effects on skill	-0.15**	-0.02	0.02	0.09	0.04	-0.12*
" " wages	0.01	0.10	-0.02	-0.05	0.03	-0.04
" " work orientation	0.07	0.00	-0.03	-0.04	-0.04	-0.01
Effects on working conditions	0.08	0.00	0.08	0.01	-0.01	0.05

* - P = 0.01
** - P = 0.00

7.2 - Mechanization and its effects: a discussion

Having presented our findings related to perceptions of the effects of mechanization on some of the aspects characterizing workers' position, we shall concentrate now on interpreting those cases in which a significant pattern of association was found between workers' attitudes and the selected variables.

The first aspect investigated related to the effects of mechanization and technological advance on skills. The majority of workers in our sample (64.4%) considered that mechanization had no specific effect on skills, while one third (35.6%) expressed the view that mechanization led to a process of deskilling among workers. Considering these responses across industries it was found that those who did not see any negative effects related to mechanization were concentrated in the less mechanized industries such as mining and

Table 7.21: Correlations for sub-samples

1 - Mining

	Age	Educa.	Backgr.	Seniority	Skill
1- Effects on skill	-0.08	0.11	0.24	-0.18	0.03
2- " " wages	0.21*	-0.06	-0.36	-0.04	-0.41*
3- " " working orientation	0.10	0.00	0.33	-0.08	-0.20
4- Effects on working	-0.08	0.07	0.64*	-0.13	-0.04

2 - Chemicals

1-	0.19	-0.11	0.11	0.10	0.08
2-	0.28*	-0.00	-0.04	-0.00	0.17
3-	0.10	0.07	0.11	0.16	0.16
4-	-0.07	0.17	0.15	0.13	0.32*

3 - Engineering

1-	0.01	-0.08	0.05	0.03	-0.09
2-	-0.07	-0.07	-0.04	-0.17*	-0.05
3-	-0.11	-0.00	0.07	-0.05	0.25*
4-	-0.05	0.08	0.07	0.12	0.14

4 - Steel

1-	-0.09	0.06	-0.00	0.08	-0.06
2-	0.02	0.03	-0.06	0.04	0.02
3-	-0.09	-0.08	-0.06	-0.27*	-0.13
4-	-0.11	0.06	-0.13	-0.11	-0.08

* P 0.01 ** P 0.00

chemicals and to a lesser extent, in steel. In contrast, engineering workers had the highest proportion of those viewing mechanization as a source of deskilling. Such variation might be accounted for by the degree of mechanization, the character of technology employed and the way it affected work organization. Thus, while in mining the level of mechanization was low, in chemical mechanization was unevenly spread in different departments, some being highly mechanized and others not. However, even in the highly mechanized sections, required qualifications and skills were limited. In steel the level of mechanization was the highest of all the plants and was evenly spread between various departments. This may have accounted for the fact that one third of the steel workers saw mechanization as a threat to their

skills. While mechanization in steel was based on push-button-control machines and a relatively complex production process in the engineering plant, with work organization based on the assembly line, there was a high degree of task specialization. Significantly, there was a widely shared perception among engineering workers of the negative effects of mechanization on skill.

Workers' perceptions of the state of their skills was differentiated according to the skill categories in which they were classified. In fact, our results threw light on an issue which stands at the centre of debates in the labour process theory.[21] Already, evidence and counter-evidence on the relationship between technical advances, job redesign and changes in work organization has reached greater proportions.[22] However, in most cases such evidence put forward by rival claims was based on observation and analysis of objective and structural aspects of the work situation while subjective perceptions were accorded little attention. The deskilling thesis tended, generally, to underestimate existing differences between groups of workers and consequently over-emphasized the extent of deskilling obscuring its differential distribution among groups of workers.[23]

In this respect our findings suggested that workers in different skill categories experienced the effects of technology on their skills differently. They pointed out that workers with higher levels of skill had a clear tendency to perceive mechanization as a source of deskilling while such a view was expressed by a minority of the less skilled workers. This tendency confirmed, therefore, that deskilling was not a general process affecting all workers or, put more precisely, felt by all workers.

The other implication of these results was more specific

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[21]See Wood, S. (ed), The Degradation of Work: Skill, Deskilling and the Labour Process. London, Hutchinson, 1982.

[22]See for example, Braverman, op. cit and the critique by Burawoy, M. Manufacturing Consent: Changes in the Labour Process under Monopoly Capitalism. Chicago, University of Chicago Press 1979.

[23]See Wood, S. op. cit

to the Algerian case. Whereas, official ideology stressed the link between technical advance and the generalization of technical expertise, the actual functioning of the system, given choices of technology and specific forms of work organization, the reality was rather different. The consequence for the process of working class formation might be important. For despite existing cleavages and differentiation among workers, be that in terms of skill, reward and degree of integration in existing structures, the process of deskilling can contribute to the homogenization of different groups of workers and thus enhance the formation of a "collective identity". The political significance of such a process cannot be missed as far as it would contribute to limiting the importance of sectional interests and claims leading to more cohesiveness within the working class. However, developments in this direction would clearly depend on fundamental changes in other aspects, such as the capacity of the workers to develop alternative organizational structures.

The relationship between the effects of mechanization on skill and the selected variables lacked any significance insofar as individual sub-samples were concerned. This was a further confirmation of the important degree of homogenization and similarity in workers' attitudes.

The second issue investigated in relation to the effects of mechanization concerned wages. Our findings revealed that a minority of workers (44.9%) considered that mechanization had no effect on their wages, while equal proportions (23.7% and 23.4% considered it to have either negative or positive effects. When the results were considered across industry no significant differences were observed. One notable exception was the high proportion of miners who considered that technology had negative effects on their wages (47.2%). Such an attitude among miners might be explained by the character of this industry as labour intensive. Hence, any change toward mechanization would be clearly weighted in terms of its effects on security of employment.

What about the belief in the neutrality of mechanization? This attitude clearly contradicted an inherent tendency in the process of capital accumulation represented by employers' constant pursuit of higher productivity and lower labour costs. This contradiction was

vividly experienced by workers in the advanced capitalist formations.[24] While perceptions expressed by Algerian workers did not contradict or deny that tendency, they testified to the importance of specific characteristics of the Algerian formation. The idea that mechanization had no effects on wages or even had positive effects might be a reflection of background effects as many workers were employed in low paid sectors and industries such as agriculture, construction, services and even certain branches of manufacturing before the drive toward industrialization gained its momentum. The other factor which could explain the tendency to perceive mechanization as neutral was the fact that in Algeria and specifically in state enterprises market forces were considerably weakened by sate intervention and control through a system of central planning. This was facilitated further by the rentier character of the economy given oil revenues which helped the state finance budgetary deficits in industrial enterprises facing low levels of productivity and high production costs.[25]

Perceptions of the effects of mechanization on wages also varied in accordance to age. Belief in the neutrality of technology was less important among all those in the top age group (51-62). This group was also different from others in emphasizing the negative character of mechanization in relation to wages (35.7%). Such attitude among older workers might be understood in the light of the relationship that existed between age and skill. This latter seemed to have mediated the relationship between age and wages. For it was a well known fact, and our results reinforced this, that the majority of older workers (over 40 years) were less skilled. As wage levels were generally determined on the basis of skill and qualification older workers tended to be underpaid compared to young ones. Another factor which could explain such different attitudes was the fact that older workers had previous experience in other sectors and thus were able to make comparisons with previous work and pay. Although wages were higher in industry in absolute terms, they might be considerably lower in relative terms when the amount of effort, risk and strain were

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[24] See Goldthorpe, et al. op. cit. and Beynon, op. cit.

[25] Such measures are no longer adopted as many enterprises became autonomous in the process of liberalization, leading them to increase prices and cut their labour force.

taken into consideration as workers tended to do. Younger workers in their early career or with little previous experience may be more satisfied with their wages. But such satisfaction was only relative since many of them with high levels of education would expect their qualifications to be better rewarded than was generally the case.

Considering particular sub-samples, the results revealed no significant correlation between perceptions of the effects of mechanization on wages and selected variables. One exception to this was the relevance of skill category which seemed to affect workers' perceptions in mining. In this case both neutral and positive effects were perceived by skilled workers while the unskilled were particularly critical of the effects of mechanization on wages. Such differences pointed to the underlying relationship between wages and skill. It seemed as if technical changes and innovations were perceived as a threat to wages by the less skilled workers whose lack of qualification undermined the security of their positions. In contrast, skilled workers were more equipped to adapt to technical changes as their qualifications facilitated their conversion through training programmes designed to adjust the workforce to processes of job redesign and technical innovations.

Overall, perceptions of the effects of mechanization on wages were not significantly related to the selected variables. There were a few exceptions including age in the case of mining and chemical, seniority in the case of engineering and skill in mining again. The important point which can be made on the basis of these results is the absence of any consistent relationship between selected variables and perceptions of the effects of mechanization on wages.

The third issue investigated in this section related to the effects of mechanization on orientation to work. Our findings revealed that a majority among workers (60.2%) considered that increased mechanization had positive effects on their orientation to work, while the remainder was divided almost equally between those considering mechanization as essentially neutral and those who saw its effects as negative. The dominance of a positive attitude toward the effects of mechanization on orientation to work must be understood in the wide context privileging industrial development. We have already referred to the systematic rôle played by official ideology which

stressed the rational and modern features of industry.[26] We should remember in this respect that Algerian workers had no strong craft roots and in areas where these existed colonial penetration ensured their destruction. Thus, industrial workers were generally drawn from sectors characterized by low level of mechanization including isolated islands of industry which were developed during colonial rule. All these were important factors contributing to formation of positive attitudes to mechanization and industrial work which were concretized in the processes of labour mobility on a large scale from various branches to industry.

Comparing such attitudes across industry it became apparent that positive perceptions of the effects of mechanization were prominent in all plants except in mining where it was moderately low (33.9%). In this industry perceptions of the effects of mechanization were dominated by a negative attitude expressed by a large proportion of workers compared to other industries. The case of miners was interesting as it departed clearly from others. Two particular factors might help to explain its peculiarity. First, mining was an industry based on labour intensive methods with relatively very low levels of mechanization. As such jobs were most vulnerable to technical innovations and changes which might be introduced in the production process. Secondly, miners have always constituted a closed and relatively homogeneous community based on shared values praising hard work and a long tradition of job discretion. Consequently, mechanization and technical changes were seen as threatening to such characteristics as job security, job discretion, relative cohesiveness and solidarity in the community.[27]

In the other plants characterized by relatively higher levels of mechanization, high division of labour and task fragmentation, workers did not express, as might have been expected, more critical view of the effects of mechanization on their interest in, and orientation to work. This, we argued, was linked to a

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[26] See FLN. La Charte Nationale. Alger, edition populaire de l'Armee. 1976. pp.78-82.

[27] See Touraine, A. La Conscience Ouvriere. Paris, Seuil, 1966. This study based on fieldwork makes interesting Comparisons between workers in various industries including mining.

privileged place accorded to technology in the dominant value system characterizing it as bearer of rationality and progress relieving workers from performing hard, risky and degrading jobs.

When considering the relationship between workers' perceptions of the effects of mechanization on orientation to work in sub-samples it became apparent that such variables were not relevant and did not seem to affect workers' perceptions at all. However, two exceptions must be noted: the first one concerned the significant effect of skill on workers' perceptions in the engineering plant and the second related to the importance assumed by seniority in the steel industry. For the former, skilled engineering workers tended to stress the positive effects of mechanization on orientation to work, but they did at the same time express a critical opinion concerning such effects. In a sense such contradictory views reflected that mechanization was a two-edged phenomenon. It had the capacity to bring both the satisfaction of manipulating complex machinery as well as the dismay related to repetitive and routine tasks.

In the case of the steel plant there was a clear tendency among senior workers to consider mechanization as essentially neutral, while less senior ones tended to consider such effects as positive. But this last group was more critical of the effects of mechanization than the former. Such differences could be explained by subjective experiences. Less senior workers in their early career were generally either attracted to work given their new contact with it or pushed away from it given their sensitivity to risk, fatigue and boredom. Their reactions tended to take extreme forms, while senior workers had gone through a process of adaptation and integration which did not exclude critical assessment of the effects of mechanization. The difference was that such critique might be tempered, and in most cases directed, not to technology as such but to its social organization and its use in specific ways as well as the structures of authority and command which ensured its functioning as a system of production.[28]

The last issue relevant to this section was perceptions

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[28]See El-Kenz, et al. op. cit.

of the effects of mechanization on working conditions. In this case a majority of the sample (64%) stressed the positive character of such effects. Across industry such attitude was, especially pronounced in mining (71.7%) and relatively low in engineering (57.6%), but still expressed by a majority even in this plant. Perceptions of these effects as negative were more pronounced in the engineering and steel industries both examples of relatively high levels of mechanization and rigorous work discipline and organization, especially engineering, based on assembly line method. This method of organization imposed many constraints on workers' discretion as the line determined the intensity and rhythm of work and denied workers the possibility of social interaction, given high noise of machinery, as well as reduced free time, given task integration and interdependence. In chemical, for example, the mechanization of the production process helped to minimize health risk and thus was considered to have a positive role. But in engineering, and to some extent, in steel higher degrees of mechanization combined with specific forms of organization would instead increase health risks and hazards, especially in the absence of the implementation of strict safety procedures as was generally the case in the factories we visited. On the whole, and as far as the general sample was concerned, the effects of mechanization on working conditions were perceived in positive terms. This prevailing attitude was not affected by the selected variables, hence the absence of any significant differentiation among workers.

The important degree of homogeneity of attitudes observed in the general sample was also characteristic of individual sub-samples. In all four plants, workers' perceptions of the effects of mechanization on working conditions were not affected by selected variables. One exception to this general phenomenon was the significance assumed by occupational background in mining. In this case, a positive perception of the effects of mechanization was clearly prevalent among workers recruited from industry. The latter had peculiar characteristics, as they were skilled maintenance workers working in a separate workshop for machine maintenance, they had an important degree of job discretion and did not experience the difficult conditions of extraction workers.

The other relevant variable was skill which appeared to have a significant effect on chemical workers' perceptions of the

effects of mechanization. In this case skilled workers tended to express critical attitudes of mechanization while less skilled ones saw its effects in more favourable terms. Given the uneven level of mechanization in this plant and the concentration of skilled workers in the highly mechanized sections of the production process such critical views represented their experience of high division of labour, intensive work rhythms, task fragmentation.

But if this was the case, it must be true of steel and engineering workers too. However, differences in skill had only a limited effect for the simple reason that mechanization was evenly spread in all departments. Hence, all workers, despite their skill differences were affected by mechanization in terms of their working conditions. In a sense, the even spread of mechanization played a homogenizing rôle for working conditions.

Conclusion:

Our findings revealed that on the whole there were no crystallized and definite perceptions of the effects of mechanization. Instead, workers' perceptions of these effects were dependent on what issues were involved. As far as the effects on skill were concerned, the prevailing view stressed the neutrality of mechanization. But this did not exclude another tendency which considered that skills were negatively affected by mechanization. It was interesting that such attitude was especially expressed by skilled workers and in industries which adopted specific forms of work organization based on high task specialization such as those represented by the assembly line. As a result mechanization seemed to contribute to the process of homogenization through weakening existing differences based on skill and qualification. Hence, its contribution to the emergence and development of a "collective worker" which in turn would enhance the formation of a collective identity among industrial workers.

As for the effects of mechanization on wages our results pointed out that workers in their majority saw no links between these two issues. This attitude was more or less reflecting an objective situation in Algerian industry where market forces did not play the leading rôle in determining wages. This was made possible by state monopoly over strategic economic activities, absence or limited degree

of competition between enterprises over markets, resources and labour force. Wage levels were determined through national development plans and different enterprises had to conform to the general guidelines and parameters set out in those plans. But this did not exclude a degree of variation which concentrated on offers of fringe benefits (medical care, transport, housing, etc.).

It was also interesting that a majority of workers considered that mechanization had positive effects insofar as their orientation to work was concerned. This attitude revealed the contradictory character of workers' perception of the effects of mechanization which was seen as a cause of deskilling but at the same time continued to exercise its attraction on workers. Such attraction, as we argued, found its dynamic in both the absence of a strong craft tradition and the crucial influence of dominant ideology associating technology to progress and modernization presenting a degraded view of non-industrial work. But such attitude was not general as workers in less mechanized industries tended to emphasize the negative effects of mechanization on their orientation to work, especially its impact on job control and group cohesion.

Mechanization was positively judged concerning its effects on working conditions. But such favourable judgement was clearly affected by both the level of mechanization experienced in different industries and forms of work organization associated with it. Thus, in flow process industries, especially those in which the product represented certain health risks such as in chemicals positive attitudes were more pronounced than in industries where mechanization was associated with more task specialization and intensified work rhythms such as in engineering and steel. For it was in these latter industries that workers were more critical of the effects of mechanization on working conditions.

The general trend emerging from our results seemed to indicate that mechanization and technology were favourably perceived by workers. The industrial experience in Algeria was still very recent and the specific conditions under which the process of industrialization was carried out (state monopoly, relative security of employment, absence of a strong craft tradition, etc.) seemed to contribute a great deal towards the emergence of such attitudes. In

this sense future developments may well lead to an important transformation in workers' attitudes.

7.3- Perceptions of authority relations

Authority relations are based on mutual control of one person by another inherit in social interaction and formalized in rules and regulations. Such relationships are linked to positions and rôles in the hierarchical division of labour and distribution of power resources.[29] In the case of industrial work relationships between workers and management are mediated by supervisors and foremen who play an important rôle in the success or the failure of management policies.

However, the position of supervisors is not always well defined and/or perceived by both sides; management and workers. Formally, they represent management and may hold a certain amount of delegated authority. On the other hand, they are more likely to be closer to workers whether through their trajectories or actual position. The relationships between supervisors and workers are direct, constant and intense. Whether through misjudgement or calculated action, workers have a tendency to hold supervisors responsible for what happens to them. Many recent studies[30] have shown that there is a tacit agreement between these two groups to exchange services. While supervisors would keep a blind eye on many unauthorized actions, or help solve some difficult problems, workers would get their jobs done on time and achieve targets.

However, such agreements are fragile and have to be constantly reinforced and negotiated. This adds to the pressure which supervisors have to endure from both sides. It is in this sense that supervisors' attitudes toward workers and the way such attitudes are perceived or read by workers became important indications of the

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[29]See Weber, M. The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, ed, by Parsons, T. New York, The Free Press, 1964.

[30]See for example, Branen, P. Auhority and Participation in Industry. op. cit. Also, Burawoy, M. Manufacturing Consent. op. cit

nature of relations of authority. For workers authority begins at the shop-floor with line supervisors and foremen. Consequently, the attitudes and actions of these representatives of management influence workers views and, perhaps, actions as far as authority relations are concerned. Consent or resentment, acceptance or resistance to authority in its various manifestations might well be determined at the shop-floor in the interaction between workers and supervisors.[31]

In dealing with this aspect attention was focused on three specific points: perceptions of the dominant ethos in the workplace, perceptions of supervisors, and attitudes toward and perceptions of management. The main concern was not to provide an objective description of what authority relations were like, but to give an account of how workers perceived them. To this end workers in our sample were asked four questions dealing with these specific dimensions of authority relations.

The first question (Q: 25) was formulated as follows: "How would you describe the dominant ethos in your workplace?" It was a pre-coded question with three alternative statements providing possible answers. The first insisted on the prevalence of an ethos favouring solidarity among workers. The second pointed to the dominance of an individualistic ethos, and the third indicated the dominance of an ethos which gave predominance to clientage. The assumption behind this question was that perceptions of the dominant workplace ethos may exercise an important impact in shaping workers' attitudes and orientations to work as well as influence the process of the formation of a collective identity and may well affect workers' perceptions of other groups such as supervisors and management.

The Results in Table 7.22 indicate that a majority of workers perceived workplace ethos in terms of solidarity. This was especially true of steel and chemical workers. It was clear that perceptions of an individualistic ethos were experienced by a minority, but clientage was prevalent in cases where solidarity was less important, such as mining and engineering.

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[31]On the importance of the attitudes of supervisors toward workers in The Algerian industry and their crucial rôle in industrial relations, See, EL-Kenz, A. SIDER: Enquete Socio-Professionnelle, op. cit

Table 7.22 - Perception of workplace ethos by industry

	Mining N=70	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=97	Steel N=136	TOTAL N=364
Solidarity	51.4	63.9	49.5	86.8	66.2
Individualism	12.9	13.1	18.5	5.9	11.8
Clientage	35.7	23.0	32.0	7.3	22.0
	100	100	100	100	100

R - 0.26 P 0.00

Table 7.23 - Workplace ethos by background

	Casu.	Self-	Agric.	Servs.	Constr.	Indus.	TOTAL
Solidarity	66.7	66.7	72.2	66.7	80.4	53.8	65.1
Individualism	-	16.7	13.9	16.7	5.4	12.5	11.5
Clientage	33.3	16.6	13.9	16.6	14.2	33.7	23.4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.13 P 0.01

The results in Table 7.23 revealed that solidarity as a workplace ethos was prevalent among those from non-industrial backgrounds while perception of clientage as the ethos of the workplace was expressed by workers from industrial backgrounds. Perceptions of an individualistic ethos was important in all cases.

Table 7.24: Workplace ethos by seniority

	-5 N=127	5-10 N=135	11-15 N=69	16-20 N=10	21+ N=23	TOTAL N=364
Solidarity	77.2	62.2	60.9	70.0	43.5	66.2
Individualism	10.2	8.1	18.8	30.0	13.0	11.8
Clientage	12.6	29.7	20.3	-	43.5	22.0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.16 P 0.00

The results in Table 7.24 indicated a significant

pattern of relationships between seniority and perceptions of workplace ethos. Whereas less senior workers tended to stress the ethos of solidarity, senior workers perceived the prevailing ethos in terms of both individualism and clientage.

The second question (Q:26) was the following: "In your view, on whose side do supervisors tend to stand?" It was a pre-coded question to which three alternative statements were provided. The first indicated that supervisors were on workers' side. The second pointed to the relative autonomy of this group and the third stressed their tendency to stand on management's side. The objective of this question was to elicit workers' perceptions of the orientation of supervisors. The importance of this issue lay in the fact that such perceptions could have serious effects and influence over industrial relations in the workplace. For if workers were to consider supervisors as being on their side this might displace discontent and antagonism from the shop-floor in the form of a conflict between workers and supervisors to one which would oppose workers to management. This would give authority relations an important dimension as a class relation.

Table 7.25: Perceptions of supervisors' orientation by industry

	Mining N=70	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=97	Steel N=136	TOTAL N=364
Workers' side	31.9	48.3	34.4	61.6	46.4
Autonomous	38.9	20.7	22.9	15.9	23.1
Management's side	29.2	31.0	42.7	22.5	30.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R - 0.14 P 0.00

The results in Table 7.25 indicate some interesting differences in the perceptions of supervisors' orientation according to industry. Chemical and steel workers tended to consider supervisors on workers' side while more engineering workers considered them on the side of management and miners had a tendency to perceive them as an autonomous group.

Results in Table 7.26 pointed out that union members had

Table 7.26: Supervisors' orientation by union membership

	Members N=173	Non-members N=187	TOTAL N=360
Workers' side	39.3	52.9	46.4
Autonomous	26.0	20.3	23.1
Management's side	34.7	26.8	30.5
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R -0.12		P 0.01

a tendency to perceive supervisors as being closer to management, while non-members tended to see them on workers' side.

The third question (Q:27) was: "How would you describe supervisors' attitudes to workers in general?" This was a pre-coded question to which four alternative statements were provided. The first pointed out that supervisors showed respect to workers under their command. The second indicated that they were particularly helpful to workers. The third stressed that they were unfair and the fourth indicated that supervisors were formal and authoritarian. This question was a follow-up to the preceding relating to perceptions of supervisors' orientation. Its objective was to elicit, in more specific terms, workers' perceptions of attitudes held by supervisors toward them.

Whereas the preceding question had the aim of establishing the general orientation of supervisors as an intermediary group, this question, by suggesting specific statements describing supervisors' attitudes represented an attempt to pinpoint the character of the relationship which workers had with supervisors regardless of how they perceived their orientation. Its value lay in the fact that it could be considered as an index to existing industrial relations on the shop-floor and a reflection of workers' views on prevailing authority relations. In fact, workers' views of these latter, if judged by results presented in Table 7.27, were mixed as far as the general trend was concerned.

The results in Table 7.27 revealed interesting differences in perceptions of supervisors' attitudes toward workers

Table 7.27: Perceptions of supervisors' attitudes by industry

	Mining N=72	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=99	Steel N=139	TOTAL N=371
Respectful	48.6	26.2	22.2	24.5	28.8
Helpful	11.1	45.9	5.1	17.3	17.4
Unfair	29.2	8.2	34.3	15.8	22.1
Authoritarian	11.1	17.7	38.4	42.4	31.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.25			P 0.00	

when related to industry. In mining and chemical there was a pronounced tendency to perceive supervisors' attitudes in essentially positive terms. In engineering and steel supervisors were considered to have negative attitudes characterized by unfairness and authoritarianism.

The fourth question (Q:28) was formulated as follows: "What do you think of senior staff members?" It was a pre-coded question to which four alternative statements were suggested as possible answers. The first indicated that members of this group were generally sympathetic to workers. The second expressed a critical view related to their monopoly of privileges while the third pointed to their failure to carry out their tasks as managers. The fourth expressed the absence of direct contact between workers and members of this group. This question was aimed at revealing workers' perceptions of senior staff who represented management at the plant level. Given the responses presented in Table 7.28 it would seem that the chain of command or authority structure was seriously affected by a rupture of communication between its lower and higher ends.

the results in Table 7.28 indicate that a majority of workers had no contact with senior staff. This was also true in all industries except mining. In this latter a relatively important proportion considered that senior staff had a sympathetic attitude toward workers.

7.3- Authority relations: discussion

Table 7.28: Perceptions of senior staff by industry

	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=67	Engineering N=100	Steel N=140	TOTAL N=375
Sympathetic to workers	27.0	11.5	7.0	6.4	11.5
Monopolize all privileges	10.8	11.5	20.0	29.3	20.3
Fail their roles	20.3	11.5	11.0	7.9	11.7
Have no contact with them	41.9	65.5	62.0	56.4	56.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.09			P 0.03	

Table 7.29- Correlations for general sample

Perceptions of	Indus.	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union Memb.
Workplace ethos	-0.26**	0.05	-0.04	0.13*	0.16**	-0.00	0.00
Supervisors' orientation	-0.14**	0.03	-0.08	0.00	0.04	-0.00	-0.12*
Supervisors' attitudes	0.25**	-0.04	-0.01	-0.09	-0.03	0.02	0.03
Senior staff	0.09	0.01	-0.06	-0.11	0.00	-0.04	-0.06

* P 0.01
** P 0.00

The results indicate that as far as the general sample was concerned the crucial variable was the place occupied by the conditions specific to each industry in shaping workers' perceptions of authority relations. If this variable was left out then our findings suggested an important degree of homogeneity concerning the perceptions of authority relations. The question is how different were the industry sub-samples from the general one and whether they exhibited differentiation or not relating to perceptions of authority relations.

Looking at the first issue relating to the prevalent ethos in the workplace we found that workers' perceptions were affected by three variables: branch of industry, occupational

Table 7.30- Correlations for sub-samples

1- Mining

Perceptions of:	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union memb.
1-Workplace ethos	-0.14	0.02	0.54*	0.07	0.38**	-0.31**
2-Supervisors' orientation	-0.06	0.04	0.58*	-0.04	0.06	-0.17
3-Supervisors' attitudes	-0.00	-0.03	0.09	0.05	-0.20*	0.05
4-Senior staff	0.01	-0.19*	-0.60*	-0.05	-0.18*	-0.13
2 - Chemicals						
1-	0.18	-0.21*	0.20	0.25*	0.04	0.03
2-	-0.13	0.05	-0.09	-0.02	0.02	-0.21*
3-	0.04	-0.25*	-0.06	0.05	-0.27*	-0.21*
4-	0.02	-0.08	-0.26*	0.21*	0.01	-0.16
3 - Engineering						
1-	0.01	0.02	0.07	-0.10	-0.03	0.06
2-	-0.03	-0.03	0.17	-0.06	-0.01	-0.23*
3-	-0.11	0.13	-0.00	0.04	0.06	0.18*
4-	0.15	-0.02	-0.09	0.22*	-0.13	0.04
4 - Steel						
1-	-0.05	0.02	0.02	0.00	-0.15*	0.08
2-	0.08	-0.14*	-0.09	0.00	0.03	-0.09
3-	0.01	0.03	-0.02	0.09	-0.11	-0.06
4-	-0.00	0.00	-0.04	0.07	0.00	-0.02

* P: 0.01
** P: 0.00

background, and seniority. Although solidarity was seen to represent the prevalent ethos in all plants, such perceptions were especially pronounced in chemical and steel. For miners and engineering workers clientage was the favoured second choice as a prevalent workplace ethos. The latter might be explained by their location and certain aspects of management. Both these plants were located in semi-urban areas drawing their workforce from a rural hinterland where the influence of traditional structures were still relatively important. Second, in both plants, especially mining, recruitment policies based on kinship relations played an important part in sustaining dominant social relations characteristic of an environment in which the labour market was subjected to traditional ties. Furthermore, recruiting policies gave priority to those workers who had parents or relatives employed in these plants. This measure was a long established

tradition in the mine and an accepted practice in the engineering plant given the absence of, or inefficiency of modern structures such as labour exchanges or manpower divisions. In chemical and steel plants the predominance of an ethos of solidarity could be explained by their location in a large and industrialized city, the large and complex nature of the two plants and the heterogeneous composition of their workforce drawn from a wider area. All these factors weakened traditional ties and enhanced solidarity.

Perceptions of workplace ethos were also affected by occupational background, with workers from industrial backgrounds being more likely to stress clientage as a prevalent ethos in workplace relations. This tendency might be explained by those workers' relative awareness of the incompatibility of such an ethos with the formal structures and organization in industry. But for non-industrial workers social relations and forms of solidarity based on clientage did not attract much attention given their vivid past experiences and the deep influence of traditional values.[32]

Seniority was also relevant in differentiating perceptions of workplace ethos. The most senior workers considered clientage to be a dominant ethos in workplace relations. This might be explained by the long experience which these workers had of their plants, thus giving them insights into the mechanisms regulating relations amongst workers and other groups such as supervisors and foremen.

When the sub-samples were considered, important variations emerged between different plants. In mining perceptions of workplace ethos were differentiated according to background and skill. The impact of background was the same as that found in the general sample. As for skill, it was found that whereas skilled workers tended to perceive workplace ethos in terms of solidarity, the less skilled did so more in terms of clientage. Union membership was also relevant in this case, with union members perceiving ethos in terms of client relations while non-members stressed the ethos of solidarity. Chemical

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[32]El-Kenz, A. SIDER: Enquete Socio-Profesionnelle. Alger, Annaba, 1985

workers' perceptions of workplace ethos were differentiated on the bases of education and seniority. Thus, while better educated workers stressed solidarity as a dominant ethos the less educated tended to emphasize clientage. Seniority had the same impact as in the general sample with the most senior workers indicating the importance of clientage as a workplace ethos. In steel, perceptions of workplace ethos were differentiated by skill. The pattern here was the opposite of that observed among miners with skilled workers pointing to the relative importance of clientage and less skilled to solidarity.[33]

The second issue relating to authority relations was supervisors' orientations. In this case, an important percentage (46.4%) of workers in our sample perceived supervisors to be on their side while almost one-third considered them to be on management's side. Workers who perceive them as autonomous group constituted a relatively small percentage of the sample (23.1%). As far as the general sample was concerned these perceptions were significantly differentiated according to branch of industry and union membership. In relation to the former, our findings suggested that steel and chemical workers had a stronger tendency to perceive supervisors as positively oriented toward workers, while perceiving them as an autonomous group was relatively pronounced among miners.

The view of supervisors as positively oriented to management was emphasized by engineering workers. These three different patterns of perceiving supervisors' orientation might well be explained in terms of the prevailing characteristics of each industry. In steel, and to a lesser extent, chemical plants, extensive mechanization, high division of labour and the existence of a short span of control were responsible for an important degree of interaction between workers and different lines of supervision. The greater involvement of supervisors on the shop-floor in these industries also acted as a demarcation line from management.

One of the important characteristics of management-labour relations in Algerian industry, especially in large and complex

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[33]The Steel plant was generally given as an example reflecting the importance of Client-Patron relationships, given the size and regional diversity of it workforce. The same point was made by EL-Kenz, et al. op. cit. 1982.

plants, was the striking disinterest of management in shop-floor problems and a tendency to delegate authority and power to senior foremen and supervisors representing the middle stratum in the management hierarchy. The gulf separating workers from higher echelons of management was not only physical but also symbolic. On the one hand, supervisors and foremen were, in most cases, the product of the shop-floor; workers promoted to these positions given their skill, qualification, or seniority. Those in the higher echelons of management were normally the product of specialized education in technical colleges and universities. The differences in their backgrounds and training had an important impact on their attitudes and orientations to shop-floor life. In all four plants we surveyed management had, for example, separate canteens or eating areas, or ate at different times from the rest of the workforce. The physical and symbolic separation of management made them a sort of caste and this was experienced even by junior technical and administrative staff who were usually perceived by workers as part of management. It was such considerations which made workers perceive supervisors as closer to them in the large and complex industries.[34]

In mining, given the nature of the production process and its character as labour-intensive industry the supervisory corps had a relatively distinct place and status from both workers and management. Thus, supervisors and foremen exercised their delegated authority on workers but were clearly separated from management both physically and symbolically. The nature of industry made such separation appear more clearly than in any other plants. In engineering, the pronounced tendency was to perceive supervisors as being on management's side. This might be explained by organizational characteristics in the engineering plant such as relatively long spans of control but also by symbolic elements such as the fact that supervisors mixed more with senior management and other administrative staff.

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[34]This attitude was expressed to us many times by junior staff members who were very critical of their "big bosses" as they called them. Similar remarks were made by El-Kenz in his study of the steel plant, op. cit 1985. Recently junior staff in this plant created a pressure group in the form of an Association to defend their interests.

The second variable which differentiated perceptions of supervisors' orientation was union membership. In this case, while non-unionized workers tended to consider supervisors as being on the workers' side, union members had among them a relatively higher percentage who considered supervisors to be on management's side. Such difference in perceptions might be explained by an inherent tension between supervisors' rôle in enforcing work discipline and union members and activists who tended to contest that rôle. This pointed to a dimension of competition between supervisors and union branch officials both of whom attempted to act as spokesmen for the workers on the shop-floor. Our experience and observations in the field supported this last point. Competition was made possible not only by the claim to represent workers, but also by the confusion of rôles as many union officials were drawn from the ranks of supervisors and foremen. Given the conciliatory policies of the union organization supervisors appeared to rank-and-file members as manipulating union structures and putting them in the service of management.

When industry sub-samples were considered our findings revealed that perceptions of supervisors' orientations were significantly related to only a limited number of variables. In mining we found that background was an important factor with workers from industrial backgrounds considering supervisors to be on management's side, while those from non-industrial backgrounds perceived them rather on workers' side. Such differences might be related to the extent to which relations between groups of workers and supervisors were characterized by conflict or cooperation. In general, workers from industrial backgrounds tended to contest supervisors while those who were not exhibited a more docile attitude. In chemical and engineering, perceptions of supervisors' orientations were affected by union membership. In both plants the dominant pattern was similar to that observed in relation to the general sample. Thus, union members were more likely to stress that supervisors favoured management while non-members considered them to be favourable to workers.

Overall, these findings exhibited an important degree of homogeneity in workers' perceptions of supervisors' orientations in both the general sample and the sub-samples. Most selected variables were not relevant and lacked any significant impact in differentiating workers' perceptions on this particular issue of authority relations.

The third issue of authority relations was the perception of supervisors' attitudes to workers. The findings revealed that a simple majority (53.8%) considered such attitudes to be essentially negative, characterizing supervisors as unfair and authoritarian. But in looking at cross industry responses we can detect significant variations. In the first pair of plants, mining and chemical, there was a clear tendency to characterize supervisors' attitudes in positive terms considering them to be respectful and helpful towards workers. In the second pair, engineering and steel, the trend was entirely reversed, workers perceiving supervisors as unfair and authoritarian. Differences between these two sets of plants might be explained in the light of specific conditions characterizing the labour process, including the extent of task specialization, level of control and degree of worker resistance to imposed work rhythms and discipline. The engineering and steel plants were clearly distinct in their degree of mechanization, high division of labour and technical organization based on assembly line in engineering and flow production in steel. These and other equally important conditions made worker resentment and resistance much more likely. And this called in turn for greater involvement and, possibly stricter reactions from supervisors whose authority was under challenge, once resistance began to manifest itself.

Another important point which seemed to distinguish these two sets of plants was their style of management generally. Whereas in mining and chemical the higher echelons of management were more involved in running the plants and showed an interest in shop-floor affairs, leading to their frequent intervention, in engineering and steel management was more distant, showing less interest in shop-floor problems. The attitude was perhaps a consequence of both the size and complexity of these plants. The result, in any case, was the delegation of extensive powers to the lower strata of management and supervisors. But supervisors' attitudes toward workers were also a function of the degree of workers' resistance or consent to existing work discipline, production targets and general rules and procedures defining rights and obligations. The outcome depended, to some extent, on the important cultural dimension and the central values and norms which could enhance workers' consent and identification with management objectives or instead contributed to disaffection and resistance.

Considering individual sub-samples our results indicated that perceptions of supervisors' attitudes were less differentiated in mining, engineering and steel. In the first, such attitudes were affected by skill as less skilled workers emphatically expressed a perception in which supervisors' attitudes were considered unfair. In engineering, workers' perceptions were differentiated according to whether they were union members or not. In fact, non-members were relatively more critical of the authoritarian attitude of supervisors. In steel none of the selected variables seemed relevant to the way workers perceived supervisors' attitudes.

The plant in which perceptions seemed most differentiated was chemical. In this case perceptions were affected by education, skill and union membership. The general pattern was one in which the less educated, unskilled and non-members of the union considered supervisors to be unfair and authoritarian. Thus, the general tendency among chemical workers to consider supervisors' attitudes in positive terms (26.2% considered them respectful and 45.9% helpful), were in fact pronounced among specific sections of workers more than others. Hence, it could be said that tensions and resentment were located among groups at the bottom of the workforce hierarchy. The group of workers characterized by these attributes (low level of education, lack of skill and non-affiliation to the union) represented a section of the most under-privileged and under-represented and consequently most vulnerable to supervisors' harsh treatment. It seemed, on the basis of these results that their perceptions were reflecting an objective experience lived by these workers.

However, overall our findings revealed that the selected variables representing major characteristics of the workplace had little effect on workers' perceptions of supervisors' attitudes. The lack of variation in perception among groups of workers indicated an important degree of homogeneity characterizing opinions on this specific issue of authority relations in industry. Consequently, there existed some basis for arguing that workers despite various internal divisions constituted relatively cohesive groups. The first considered that supervisors had shown positive attitudes toward workers, while the second representing a simple majority perceived those attitudes as being unfair and authoritarian.

The fourth and last issue concerning perceptions of authority relations was that relating to workers' opinions of senior staff. In this case one of the interesting points revealed by our findings related to lack of contact between workers and senior staff representing higher echelons of management. Such a view was expressed by an important percentage of the sample (56.5%). Furthermore, this lack of contact and communication did not seem to be affected by any of the selected variables, thus representing a general view shared by all workers despite their various differences. In a sense, this result confirmed our observations about the wide gulf separating rank-and-file workers from management. Having said that we must point out that these results indicated certain variations related to branch of industry. In mining, for example, it was noted that a relatively important percentage of workers considered senior staff to have shown sympathetic attitudes toward workers. This might be explained by several factors characterizing this industry including the small size of the plant, its location in a small and relatively cohesive community and the less complex character of its organization.

Looking at particular sub-samples a degree of differentiation was noticed in workers' opinions. This was especially true of miners and chemical workers. In the mine, workers reporting lack of contact with senior staff were typically less educated, unskilled and with non-industrial background. In chemical such opinion was relatively pronounced among senior workers and those from non-industrial backgrounds. In engineering also lack of contact was reported especially by senior workers. Overall, and with the exception of miners, the gulf separating workers from senior staff was generally felt by all workers regardless of existing lines of division. Such a situation had its roots, in our view, in the dominance of a certain conception of the function and rôle of management which tended to stress the purely administrative dimension at the expense of technical aspects. It also reflected a dramatic lack of awareness of the importance of human relations. Management of personnel was reduced to a process of bureaucratic administration centred around files and concerned with wages and salaries.

Students of management in Algerian industry have pointed out the serious impact of the absence of communication and contact between groups occupying different positions in the hierarchical

structure of plants and enterprises.[35] It was even considered the most crucial problem facing Algerian industry and was held responsible for the dramatic failures of productivity and the explosive character of industrial relations in recent years.[36] Many factors have contributed to this, among them a distorted application of Taylorite principles including a strict division of labour and task specialization, not only between manual and non-manual but also between administrative and technical tasks. Concentration of power and authority in the upper echelons of the hierarchy as well as a monopoly of material and symbolic privileges were not without their effect on the deteriorating of relations between management and workers.

This trend in Algerian society must be seen within the general context of a social formation dominated by a bureaucratic stratum. Thus, state companies for all their appearance as economic institutions, and the emphasis of official ideology on productivity and efficient management, were conceived and run as bureaucracies with all the dysfunctions inherent both in this mode of organization and its forced application on a reality which had a logic of its own.

The dominant grouping in industry was not engineers and technicians and the overriding concern was not economic success and technical innovation. On the contrary, the leading force was the newly constituted bureaucracy, and its value system emphasized respect for hierarchy rather than performance, the rigid application of rules and regulations rather than reasoned communication and dialogue; adherence to preestablished divisions and statuses rather than interaction and flexible adjustment to change. The main objective was to preserve privileges and to maintain the status quo.[37]

Conclusion:

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[35] See, for example, El-Kanz, SIDER: Enquete Socio-professionnelle. op. cit.

[36] See, Chikhi, S. " Greve et Societe en Algerie" Cahiers du CREAD, No.6, Alger, 1986: 85-128.

[37] It must be noted that since strikes were legalized in feb. 1989, a great number of them centred on authority relations with specific demands to change members of management.

Our findings on workers' perceptions of authority relations indicated that as far as the dominant ethos in the workplace was concerned a clear majority in the sample referred to solidarity among workers. This in itself was an important factor reflecting the extent to which workers were aware of their common situation and shared interests. However, perception of solidarity as a dominant ethos was expressed emphatically only by some of the workers. Such differentiation resulted from the specific conditions characterizing the different plants, but were also related to occupational backgrounds and seniority. However, the most important factors affecting workers' perceptions of workplace ethos were situational, that is, the location of the industry, the degree of heterogeneity of the workforce, the size of plants and the degree of complexity of their organization. Despite differences between the four plants there was in all of them a general tendency on the part of the workers to consider solidarity as a dominant ethos characterizing workplace relations. The development of a sense of solidarity represented the real foundation for the emergence and formation of a collective identity potentially transcending various internal divisions among workers.

The important degree of homogeneity characterizing workers' views was confirmed in relation to their perceptions of supervisors' orientations. In this case too there was a general tendency to consider supervisors as having sympathy with workers. However, some differences were apparent depending on the specific conditions of each industry and whether workers were affiliated or not to the union organization. There was also an important trend for a significant group of workers to perceive supervisors as close allies of management. Such a position was associated with labour processes characterized by direct control systems in industries with low degree of mechanization or in those which combined both direct and technical control systems (the engineering plant, for example). But whatever differences existed there was a high degree of consensus about the pro-worker attitudes of supervisors. Such a perception could not be considered too unexpected since supervisors constituted the group most involved with shop-floor workers enduring relatively the same working conditions. On the other hand, views which held supervisors to be close to management were symptomatic of existing divisions among workers, inhibiting the full crystallization of a sense of collective

identity and common interests. Such divisions, far from being fictitious, had an objective base in the position and status of supervisors as an intermediary group in the social organization of work.

The other major point characterizing perceptions of authority relations was the reported lack of contact between workers and management. Such an experience was shared by workers regardless of their various differences. In addition, workers who appeared to have some contact with management exhibited critical views regarding the tendency of managers to both monopolize privileges and to fail to live up to their responsibilities as managers.

Perceptions of this particular aspect of authority relations seemed to point to an important degree of awareness among workers of existing divisions characteristic of workplace relations. Such perceptions were clearly expressive of fundamental cleavages arising out of a monopoly of power and privileges. They may well be representing an objective first step in the development of class identity and class consciousness.

CHAPTER EIGHT

WAGE CONDITION, MOBILITY AND ASPIRATIONS

In this chapter we shall present and discuss data relating to workers' perceptions of their condition as wage labourers, the experience of occupational mobility and their aspirations for the futures of their children. We shall cover various aspects of each issue, first, we hope, the analysis will provide us with the means of understanding the experience of Algerian workers as wage labour. Our investigation of occupational mobility and its determinants provides an important indication of trends in the composition of the Algerian industrial workforce.[1] As for aspirations, we focused mainly on such issues as attitudes toward the education and potential careers of their children. This, we believe, was an important indicator of the process of class reproduction and formation.

8.1 - The wage condition

This section is concerned with data which not only revealed how workers perceived their position as wage labour, but also provided us with factual information on the nature of the wage condition characteristic of these industrial workers.[2] To this end, we looked at various aspects including whether or not workers were the sole providers of household income; their estimates of the monthly income necessary to support an average family of seven members (07);[3] the level of indebtedness, risks relating to job and income security

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[1]There are fewer studies of occupational mobility in Algeria. We have already referred to the survey by AARDES, Pole Industriel..., op. cit. See also; O.N.S. Enquete Main d'Oeuvre et Demographie, 1982, No2, Emploi et Mobilite Professionnelle, Alger; 1982.

[2]Apart from surveys carried out by government agencies like O.N.S, covering samples of industrial plants and dealing with employment and salaries, there is a limited number of field research on the issue. See for example, El-Kenz et al. Industrie et Societe. op. cit.

[3]According to official statistics the average Algerian family at the end of he 1970's was composed of seven members. Working class families are known to be larger.

and finally, their assessment of their situation during the last decade.

Workers were asked to answer questions dealing with each of these five aspects which when combined, will give us a fairly clear idea about workers as wage labour and their perceptions of it. The first part of this section will be devoted to the presentation of results relating to these five aspects, while the second part will analyse the major trends revealed by the responses.

The first question to be treated in this section was (Q 58): "How do you assess changes in the workers' situation and conditions during the last ten years?" It was a pre-coded question to which three alternative responses were suggested. The first indicated that workers had experienced an improvement in their situation. The second pointed to absence of change; the situation being more or less the same. The third stressed that workers' situation had been worsening over the last decade.

The aim of the question was to elicit workers' perceptions and judgement of changes affecting their working and living conditions during a decade which had been characterized as a time of rapid industrialization and urbanization. In a sense, workers were asked to reflect on their situation during the previous decade (1975-85) in comparison with their earlier experiences. Indirectly, workers were asked to judge the impact of industrialization on their lives.

Table 8.1: Evaluation of situation by industry

	Mining N=73	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=100	Steel N=138	TOTAL N=372
Improved	78.1	68.9	61.0	61.6	65.9
Unchanged	12.3	26.2	13.0	24.6	19.4
Worsened	9.6	4.9	26.0	13.8	14.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.12			P 0.01	

Responses in Table 8.1 indicated that a majority in the sample as a whole experienced an improvement in their situation. This tendency was also clear in each of the four plants, but more so in

mining and chemical. In engineering and steel more workers thought that their situation had remained unchanged or worsened.

Table 8.2: Evaluation of situation by education

	Illiterate N=150	Primary N=115	Secondary N=94	College N=13	TOTAL N=372
Improved	61.3	65.2	75.5	53.8	65.9
Unchanged	20.0	18.3	17.0	38.5	19.4
Worsened	18.7	16.5	7.4	7.7	14.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.11			P 0.01	

The results in Table 8.2 indicated a pattern of evaluation linked to the level of education. Thus, while a majority at all levels of education had experienced an improvement in their situation, the less educated were more likely to have experienced a worsening situation although college graduates were more likely to see their situation as unchanged.

Table 8.3: Evaluation of situation by skill

	Unskilled N=83	Semi-skilled N=139	Skilled N=150	TOTAL N=372
Improved	73.5	71.9	56.0	65.9
Unchanged	13.3	16.5	25.3	19.4
Worsened	13.2	11.6	18.7	14.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
	R 0.13		P 0.00	

The responses in Table 8.3 revealed the existence of an interesting pattern of evaluation of the situation by skill. Among the less skilled workers, there was a greater percentage who had experienced an improvement while the skilled had a greater tendency to consider their situation as either unchanged or as worsened.

Results in Table 8.4 indicated that union membership was associated with a tendency to be less positive about the situation over the last decade. Thus, 42.4% of this group pointed out that their situation for the last decade had either remained unchanged or

Table 8.4: Evaluation of situation by unionization

	Unionized N=177	Non-members N=191	TOTAL N=368
Improved	57.6	72.8	65.5
Unchanged	27.1	12.6	19.6
Worsened	15.3	14.6	14.9
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R -0.10		P 0.02

worsened. On the other hand, non-members included a large majority (72.8%) who had experienced an improvement.

The second question presented in this section was (Q 17): "How many persons contributed to the household income?" It was a pre-coded question to which four alternative responses were provided. The first indicated that the respondent was the sole person to provide household income. The second suggested that a second person was contributing to income. The third pointed to the existence of a third contributor and the fourth to more than three contributors including the respondent.

The objective of this question was to discover the extent to which the industrial workers in our sample had to shoulder the responsibility of providing the sole income for their families. A related point was the degree of dependence of workers' families on wages gained from industrial employment. The underlying issue here was to reveal the degree of proletarianization of the labour force and their families, a significant indication of the objective class position of workers in the surveyed branches of industry, and one which would shed light on the process of working class formation.

Results in Table 8.5 indicated that an overwhelming majority of workers in all plants were the sole contributors to the household income.

The results outlined in Table 8.6 revealed a pattern

Table 8.5: Contributors to household income by industry

	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=60	Engineering N=100	Steel N=140	TOTAL N=374
Respondent only	86.5	76.7	80.0	85.7	82.9
A second person	10.8	16.7	18.0	10.7	13.6
A third person	2.7	6.7	-	2.9	2.7
More than three	-	-	2.0	0.7	0.8
	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.00			P 0.45	

Table 8.6: Contribution to household income by age

	22-30 N=104	31-40 N=140	41-50 N=78	51-62 N=51	TOTAL N=373
Respondent only	67.3	85.0	94.9	90.2	82.8
A second person	25.0	12.2	5.1	7.8	13.7
A third person	6.7	1.4	-	2.0	2.7
More than three	1.0	1.4	-	-	0.8
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.22			P 0.00	

linking family income to age. Older workers clearly bore the burden of being the sole providers of income for their families whereas, young workers had support from other family members. Overall, a majority were sole bread winners. This pattern was repeated in the case of seniority (See Table 8.8).

The results in Table 8.7 show the relationship between the number of contributors to household income and the level of education. Whereas the less educated tended to be the sole contributors to family income, the better educated workers had the support of other family members. Age and education were obviously linked to producing this relationship.

The third question (Q 21) presented in this section was "Do you have any debts at the moment?" It was a closed question to

Table 8.7: Contribution to household income by education

	Illiterate N=152	Primary N=115	Secondary N=93	College N=14	TOTAL N=374
Respondent only	91.4	83.5	71.0	64.3	82.9
A second person	7.9	13.0	21.5	28.6	13.6
A third person	0.7	0.9	7.5	7.1	2.7
More than three	-	2.6	-	-	0.8
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.22			P 0.00	

Table 8.8: Contribution to household income by seniority

	-5 N=129	5-10 N=141	11-15 N=70	16-20 N=10	21+ N=23	TOTAL N=373
Respondent only	76.7	83.7	90.0	100.0	82.6	82.8
A second person	16.3	14.2	10.0	-	13.0	13.7
A third person	6.2	0.7	-	-	4.4	2.7
More than three	0.8	1.4	-	-	-	0.8
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.11				P 0.01	

which workers were asked to answer by 'yes' or 'no'. The objective of this question was to reveal the extent to which workers experienced financial problems, which also indicating the extent to which wages fell short of meeting their needs. As a matter of fact, despite the sensitive issue of indebtedness raised by this question, the results revealed that more than one-third of those who answered the question acknowledged that they had unpaid debts at that point in time, revealing quite widespread financial problems.

Table 8.9 revealed an interesting pattern of indebtedness by age, with a large majority of young workers, more than 80%, escaping indebtedness. Surprisingly, indebtedness increased with age, with more than 50% of older workers admitting to owing money. Again this pattern was partially reproduced in the link between seniority and indebtedness (See Table 8.11).

Table 8.9: Indebtedness by age

	22-30 N=99	31-40 N=137	41-50 N=77	51-62 N=51	TOTAL N=364
Indebted	18.2	38.0	50.6	52.9	37.4
No	81.8	62.0	49.4	47.1	62.6
	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.26			P 0.00	

Table 8.10: Indebtedness by education

	Illiterate N=151	Primary N=109	Secondary N=91	College N=14	TOTAL N=365
Indebted	45.7	43.1	22.0	7.1	37.5
No	54.3	56.9	78.0	92.9	62.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.22			P 0.00	

The results in Table 8.10 indicated a clear pattern linking indebtedness to a lack of education. Thus, the higher the level of education, the less indebtedness. Debt was, thus, a characteristic of the less educated workers.

Table 8.11: Indebtedness by seniority

	-5 N=123	6-10 N=139	11-15 N=69	16-20 N=10	21+ N=23	TOTAL N=364
Indebtedness	30.1	31.7	49.3	40.0	73.9	37.4
No	69.9	68.3	50.7	60.0	26.1	62.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.22			P 0.00		

The fourth question was (Q 19): "In your view, what is the necessary monthly income of a family of seven (07) persons?" This was an open question for which responses were later codified for computation purposes. Workers' estimates ranged from the minimum sum of 2,000 Algerian Dinars to 10,000 A.D., with 5,000 representing the

median.[4]

The objective of this question which called for estimates relating to a family of seven persons, representing the average family size in Algeria, was to indirectly identify the wide gulf separating existing wages and the soaring cost of living. As our results revealed, the majority of workers in our sample estimated that the income necessary for a family of seven would be between 3,500 and 5,000 AD. Such an estimate was well above existing wages, even for the best paid workers in the steel industry, which was known for its attractive wages.[5]

Table 8.12: Necessary income by industry

Algerian Dinar	Mining N=72	Chemicals N=58	Engineering N=96	Steel N=133	TOTAL N=359
2000	9.7	3.4	-	0.8	2.8
- 3500	15.3	27.6	58.3	27.8	33.4
- 5000	59.7	55.2	35.4	57.9	51.8
- 6500	12.5	6.9	4.2	9.8	8.4
- 10000	2.8	6.9	2.1	3.7	3.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.00			P 0.49	

Table 8.12 points to the absence of a significant relationship between estimates of the income and type of industrial employment. The majority of workers in all plants, except engineering, estimated a necessary income of between 3,500 and 5,000 AD. This was also reflected in the responses of the sample as a whole (51.8%).

There was also no significant relationship between estimates of income and the level of education (Table 8.13). However, there was a tendency among better educated workers to suggest higher necessary incomes.

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[4]The rate of exchange at the time of the survey was £1=7 A.D., making £300 a minimum wage estimate, and £700 an average estimate. It must be said that prices were soaring as meat, for example, cost 100 AD for one kg., or £14 in official exchange rates.

[5]At the time of the survey (Autumn 1985) average wages for qualified steel workers stood at 3,000A.D

Table 8.13: Necessary income by education

	Illiterate N=146	Primary N=109	Secondary N=91	College N=13	TOTAL N=359
2000	3.4	4.6	-	-	2.8
- 3500	34.2	33.9	35.2	7.7	33.4
- 5000	50.0	50.5	54.9	61.5	51.8
- 6000	11.0	6.4	4.4	23.1	8.4
- 10000	1.4	4.6	5.5	7.7	3.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.09			P 0.04	

The last question in this section was (Q 22): "In your view, who is most affected by job and income insecurity?" It was a pre-coded question with two alternative responses. The first suggested that workers were the group most affected, while the second pointed to other groups, whether wage employees or self-employed.

The objective of this question was to explore the degree of awareness among workers of the peculiarity of their situation as wage labour. It was also hoped that responses to this question might go some way toward indicating workers' awareness of the specificity of their social relations of production, particularly in relation to job and income insecurity. If workers showed such an awareness, then, it might be interpreted as a significant result, reflecting some degree of class consciousness and grasp of prevailing social inequalities.

Table 8.14: Job and income insecurity by industry

	Mining N=26	Chemicals N=21	Engineering N=63	Steel N=116	TOTAL N=226
Workers	100.0	71.4	100.0	95.7	95.1
Other groups	-	28.6	-	4.3	4.9
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.06			P 0.17	

Responses in Table 8.14 revealed that a large majority of workers considered that job and income insecurity was a real

threat. This attitude was predominant in all four plants, although relatively less so in the chemical industry. The reasons given for this attitude were also significant, as 44.6% of workers stressed the dependence on wages as sole income, and 27.1% pointed to the weak bargaining position of workers.

Table 8.15: Correlations in the general sample

	Industry	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union Memb.
Evaluation of situation	0.12*	0.10	-0.11*	0.05	0.06	0.13**	-0.01
Contributors to income	-0.00	-0.22**	0.22**	0.00	-0.11*	0.01	-0.02
Contraction of debts	0.04	-0.26**	0.22**	-0.06	-0.22**	-0.10	-0.03
Necessary income	-0.00	-0.06	0.09	-0.03	0.04	0.07	-0.07
Job & income insecurity	-0.06	0.02	-0.00	0.14	0.02	-0.10	-0.02

* P = 0.01
** P = 0.00

When considering the relationship between selected variables representing major characteristics of the workforce and responses on items relating to perceptions of wage condition, we noted a number of factors. First, some variables such as background and union membership were irrelevant to workers perceptions of the wage condition. Second, some other variables such as branch of industry and skill were significantly related to the "evaluation of situation" during the last decade. Third, a set of three variables, including age, education and seniority were relatively significant in differentiating workers' responses on specific questions such as the "number of contributors to household income" and "contraction of debts". Furthermore, the latter of variables seemed to combine to produce a specific pattern of differentiation among workers. The first group was typically young, well educated and recent recruits; while The second were more senior in age and job and less educated. While the former seemed to enjoy support of other family members in providing household income, the latter were prone to contracting debt in order, possibly, to meet the demands of large families in a situation where inflation was rapidly reducing the buying power of

their wages.

Table 8.16: Correlation in sub-samples

1 - Mining

	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union
1-Evaluation of situation	0.20	-0.03	-0.09	0.15	0.12	-0.04
2-Contributors to income	-0.05	0.22	-	-0.00	0.13	-0.02
3-Contraction of debts	-0.32**	0.38**	0.15	-0.26*	0.05	0.13
4-Necessary income	-0.13	0.23	-0.15	0.00	0.28*	-0.22
5-Job & income insecurity	-	-	-	-	-	-

2 - Chemicals

1-	-0.04	0.12	-0.06	0.04	0.28*	0.07
2-	-0.22	0.31**	0.14	-0.23	0.22	-0.21*
3-	0.06	-0.00	0.23	0.06	0.08	0.11
4-	-0.09	0.22	-0.07	0.05	0.09	-0.16
5-	0.10	-0.01	0.24	0.19	0.10	0.07

3 - Engineering

1-	-0.08	-0.06	0.14	-0.08	0.04	-0.14
2-	-0.24**	0.16	-0.02	-0.21*	-0.04	-0.08
3-	-0.19	0.18	-0.19	-0.27**	-0.13	-0.11
4-	-0.03	-0.09	-0.11	0.10	-0.01	0.03
5-	-	-	-	-	-	-

4 - Steel

1-	0.29**	-0.26**	0.06	0.23**	0.01	-0.23**
2-	-0.32**	0.22**	-0.07	-0.16	-0.06	0.14
3-	-0.27**	0.20*	-0.17	-0.17	-0.20*	0.01
4-	0.05	-0.02	-0.00	0.15	0.11	0.04
5-	0.08	-0.08	0.07	0.02	-0.12	0.05

* P = 0.01
** P = 0.00

8.1 - The wage condition: discussion

In the first part of this section our task was limited

to presenting results concerning workers' perceptions and experience of the wage condition. In this part we shall attempt to interpret those findings looking more closely at where a clear pattern of relationship existed between workers' responses and selected variables. Our attention will be focused on both the general sample as well as the sub-samples.

The first aspect of the wage condition dealt with was the "evaluation of situation during the last decade". The general tendency among workers revealed a positive judgement insofar as 65.9% believed their situation had improved. this might be taken as a positive judgement on a decade which saw the launching of development programmes that reduced unemployment.[6] The remaining third were divided between those who thought that their situation had not changed (19.4%) and those who had experienced decline (14.7%). While improvement seems to have been experienced by a majority in all plants, this was especially so in mining and, to a lesser extent, in chemical. Steel and engineering workers appeared to be more of the view that their situation had either remained unchanged or worsened during the decade. However, it was interesting that of all four plants, only in steel did a significant differentiation among workers exist. A negative assessment of the decade was pronounced among the older, less educated, more senior and union members. Such a pattern might find an explanation in the fact that these characteristics represented negative attributes both within internal and external labour markets. Many career factors such as promotion, training, mobility to better paid jobs whether within present plants or outside them, depended to a large extent on age, education, occupational experience and a strong individualist orientation. Thus, young, relatively well educated, apolitical workers might well have experienced improved life-chances and carer advancement. These workers possessed certain attributes and qualifications sought by management and state agencies whose idealized portrait of the successful modern worker stressed those particular traits.

The fact that such a pattern was found in the steel plant

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[6]Similar views were expressed by workers in a survey in the steel plant. See El-Kenz, A. SIDER: Enquete Socio-Professionnelle. Alger & Annaba, 1985.

might be related to the status and privileged position accorded to this industry in Algeria. This particular plant was located in one of the most industrialized areas of the country. Consequently, the labour market was highly segmented, with various companies and plants competing for a young and qualified labour force. The steel plant was one of Algeria's show-pieces and considered a cornerstone of the government's development strategy. Certainly, the steel management seemed more stringent in applying regulations laid down by the planning agencies, both local and central.

The second set of responses to be interpreted related to the "number of contributors to household income". These results showed that a very large percentage of the general sample were the sole bread winners for their families (82.9%). However, important differences existed among workers relating to age, education and, to some extent, seniority. The pattern of differentiation observed in the general sample was one in which those assuming sole responsibility were older, less educated and senior. However, this line of differentiation was not apparent in all four sub-samples. As we have clearly seen, In engineering, age and seniority were reinforcing, that is to say that, young recent recruits were the least responsible for their family finances, while in the case of steel workers differentiation was based on age and education. The trend in these sub-samples was, then, identical to that observed in the general sample. An explanation for this pattern may well reside in the fact that young workers were either single or married but living with their parents. In such cases they would not consider themselves- nor would their parents- to have prime responsibility for family income. Even in the latter case responsibility would be limited with other members contributing to the household income (father, brothers, sisters, etc.).

Such conditions, despite their relevance, could not be said to constitute the only explanatory factor for the differences. Another factor may be found in the dominant cultural values which play down the responsibilities of young people, emphasizing that of the head of the family- usually the father or the first son- should bear the greater part of the burden. This was a clear and significant characteristic of the patriarchal family, an important institution of traditional social organization in Algerian society, but undergoing change in the process of industrialization. Such changes have not

rendered the old values obsolete so much as incorporating them into the new system in ways which change their function.

Another aspect of the wage condition with a bearing on the possible proletarianization of Algerian industrial workers, was the tendency to contract debt. Despite the sensitive nature of this issue, especially in a cultural context where debt is considered a clear sign of individual failure and dishonour, it was interesting that more than one third of those who answered the question (37.5%) admitted that they had debts. We must, therefore assume that the level of indebtedness was rather greater than our figures suggest. Nevertheless, the pattern revealed may be real, particularly as it shows the older- more reluctantly indebted workers- to be most affected.

Looking at the relationship between the contraction of debts and selected variables it was found that workers were again differentiated on the basis of age, education and seniority. Those who faced the culturally degrading experience of indebtedness were typically the older, less educated and senior workers. This result was particularly significant in the light of previous findings regarding the number of contributors to household income and, as a result, the explanation suggests itself. Those with extensive social responsibilities, being the sole providers of family income, relying solely on their wages, were the most likely to contract debt. Looking at particular sub-samples debt contraction was especially prominent among miners, steel and engineering workers and notably low among chemical workers (10.5%). The tendency to indebtedness in the first three sub-samples was, however, rather unevenly spread. In mining, it was as in the general sample, the old, less educated and senior workers who were more likely to borrow. In steel, it was the old, less educated and skilled workers who exhibited the tendency, while in engineering indebtedness was more characteristic of senior workers.

the overall pattern of indebtedness confirmed the fact that older, less educated workers characteristically enjoyed less support from other family members, and consequently had to rely on their own wages as the main, if not only, source of income. Given that we are looking at first generation workers on the whole we cannot assume that we are observing a generational difference. Rather, it is

likely that such differential experience is a product of the life-cycle. On the other hand, the correlation with education suggested that it might also be linked to an ongoing process of social change, having a significant bearing on the process of working class formation, by creating or reinforcing divisions between sections of the workforce; the living standards of the educated being improved relative to others.

The fourth issue treated in this section related to the estimates of the monthly income necessary to support a family of seven (07) persons. In this case, a simple majority of workers (51.8%) estimated that a sum of between 3,500 and 5,000 AD[7] would be required, this represented between 116% to 166% above existing wage levels for qualified productive workers in industry.[8] As far as the general sample was concerned such high estimates seemed unaffected by any of the selected variables. This was also true of the sub-samples with the notable exception of miners, whose estimates differed according to skill; Skilled workers presenting relatively high estimates. This might be linked to the fact that skilled maintenance workers in mining, were distinguished by their relatively high level of training. This distinction was also related to the uneven level of mechanization and widely different tasks and working conditions leading to varying wage expectations. In other industries where working conditions, including mechanization were evenly spread no such distinction was noticeable.

Overall there was an important degree of consensus among workers on the necessity of higher wages to meet their needs, but what was perhaps surprising, especially to those unfamiliar with Algerian realities, was the seemingly exaggerated sums claimed by a majority of workers. This can be explained by the existing freeze on wages which has been effective for almost a decade, paralleled by the lack of control over prices.

The final issue dealt with in this section related to

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[7] The official exchange rate in 1985 was £1 = 7 AD.

[8] According to official figures released by O.N.S., Enquete emploi et salaire 1982, Alger 1984, average wages for qualified workers in industry were 3,000 AD.

workers' perceptions of job and income security (Q 22). An overwhelming majority (95.1%) of the respondents expressed the view that industrial workers constituted the group whose jobs and incomes were most at risk. This attitude was shared by workers in all four plants, although it was less pronounced among chemical workers, a quarter (28.6%) of whom identified other groups in society as being more threatened by insecurity.

In considering the relationship between workers' responses and selected variables it became clear that feelings of insecurity among workers were pervasive. This was true of both the general sample and the sub-samples. This finding was meaningful to the degree that it revealed a high degree of awareness of labour market realities associated with industrial employment. Some explanation for this attitude might be found in the reasons advanced by workers themselves. Two major factors were stressed: the first, identified by a large percentage of the sample (44.6%) related insecurity to wage dependence, while the second expressed by 27.1%, pointed to workers' weak bargaining position vis-a-vis management and the state bureaucracy.

These responses suggest an acute awareness among workers of both their precarious position as wage labour, and the powerlessness they experience in the social organization of work. This can be considered an important indicator of the process of working class formation, especially in the crystallization of group identity and embryonic class consciousness.

Conclusion:

The results presented and discussed in this section were in many respects significant to the process of social class formation and class consciousness. First, it was found that an overwhelming majority of the sample showed the characteristic of the modern, industrial worker of being the sole bread winners for their families (82.9%), and depended on their wages as the sole source of income (97.3%). These two facts strongly suggest that Algerian industrial workers possess certain of the characteristics fundamental to the emergence of an industrial proletariat. The harsh material conditions experienced by these workers indicated by the fact that more than one

third of our sample acknowledged the culturally degrading fact of indebtedness. However, their acute awareness of the wage relation was clearly reflected in the fact that 95.1% of them considered industrial work as the sector most threatened by unemployment and income insecurity. These results enable us to argue that Algerian industrial workers do exhibit some of the objective conditions of a proletariat. Equally important was the fact that our results revealed significant differences between workers, both in relation to their objective conditions and their perceptions of the nature of was labour.

In the latter respect workers appeared to be divided into two categories: the first category being constituted by young, well educated workers with a relatively short experience of industrial employment; the second category represented by older, less well educated workers with a long experience of industrial work. The former appeared to be in a relatively privileged position compared to the latter, whose members tended to be the sole providers of family income, more dependent on their wages, more prone to debt contraction and whose perceptions of their situation tended to reflect a greater sense of dissatisfaction as well as resignation.

Such internal differentiation of the working class-in-formation might well have an important bearing on the development of a sense of collective identity expressed by class consciousness and action, although the relationship between the two was by no means a direct and a causal one. However, such objective and subjective differentiation could well inhibit the crystallization of class consciousness and the development of organized forms of collective action. On the basis of these cleavages alone it was unclear which of the two groups was, or could become, the more militant.

Despite these differences between workers in the four plants studied, it appeared that the geographical location and industrial context were not themselves major differentiating factors. We cannot fail to observe, on the basis of these results, that Algerian workers exhibited a perhaps, surprising degree of homogeneity both in terms of their objective wage condition and their subjective perceptions. Needless to say, these are tentative conclusions which call for more factual support, some of which will be supplied in the

ensuing chapters.

8.2 Work aspirations and mobility

This section will be devoted to the presentation and discussion of results relating to expressed attitudes on career aspirations and occupational mobility, workers' aspirations and ambitions for the future might be taken as an indication of the existence of a certain life orientation; an aspect of self-identity around which many other views and attitudes might crystallize.[9] Thus, a specific aspiration whether achieved or not, could be considered as an objective so central in the worker's life that other objectives might be subordinated, and defined with reference to it. The existence of such aspirations or their absence; the success or failure in their realization are important elements moderating the various attitudes and orientations to work. Thus, some workers adopt a positive orientation to work and feel high degree of satisfaction and self-realization if they succeed in achieving their ambition. Others might exhibit a fundamental indifference suggesting that work might not be central to their identities. In the first instance, should such aspirations exist but fail to be realized the resentment and disaffection is a likely outcome, especially where satisfaction relating to wages and working conditions is also lacking.[10]

It could also be argued that the degree of resentment and even resistance to forms of work discipline might be related, at least partially, to whether workers had such career aspirations and whether they were successfully realized or not. Thus, to anticipate the discussion of our results, it was significant that an important percentage of workers lacked specific career aspiration (41.4%) and almost one third had (31%) realized their aspirations. While the

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[9]There is a wide range of studies on occupational and social mobility and their impact on attitudes toward work and on the class structure, See for example, Goldthorpe, J.H. Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1987, 2nd ed.
Also, Betraux, D. La Mobilite Sociale, Paris , Hatier, 1985.

[10]See, Touraine, A. "Industrialisation et Conscience Ouvriere a Sao Paulo", Sociologie de Travail op. cit. Also, Hopper, E. Social Mobility: A Study of Social Control and Instability. Oxford, blackwell, 1981.

majority of workers expressed desire for some sort of mobility, only a small minority was seriously preparing for such an eventual move. Hence, lack of career aspiration for some, and its achievement for others represented important elements inhibiting labour mobility despite the fact that many expressed a desire for mobility.

The first question in this section was (Q 32) formulated in the following manner: "Does your present job correspond to what you wanted to do when you applied for it ?" It was a closed question with three possible answers. The first indicated that workers had specific aspirations and had succeeded in realizing them. The second indicated, to the contrary, that they had had such aspirations but had failed to realize them. The third referred to a situation in which workers lacked specific aspirations. The significance of this question lay in the fact that the existence of work aspirations was considered central to the development of a specific orientation to work as was the success or failure in their realization. The question is also linked to the stability or mobility of the workforce and the experience of satisfaction or dissatisfaction in work.

Table 8.17: Career aspiration by industry

	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=60	Engineering N=100	Steel N=140	TOTAL N=374
Realized	24.3	21.7	44.0	29.3	31.0
Failed	16.2	33.3	28.0	30.7	27.5
No aspiration	59.5	45.0	28.0	40.0	41.4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.12			P 0.01	

Two important points emerged from the results in Table 8.17. First, there was as expected, a high percentage of workers who had no career aspiration when they began their working lives. Second, in terms of individual plants it appeared that engineering workers were more likely to express career aspirations and that a good proportion of them had realized such an aspiration. Miners were the least likely to have held a career aspiration.

The results in Table 8.18 revealed a significant

Table 8.18: Career aspiration by age

	22-30 N=105	31-40 N=140	41-50 N=77	51-62 N=51	TOTAL N=373
Realized	33.3	31.4	31.2	25.5	31.1
Failed	39.1	30.0	15.6	15.7	27.6
No aspiration	27.6	38.6	53.2	58.8	41.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.16 P 0.00

relationship between work aspiration and age group (R 0.16). It was clear that while a majority among the older workers had experienced no work-related aspirations, younger workers seemed to have held specific aspirations but with a high proportion failing to realize them. Older workers perhaps had a "realistic" perspective on job opportunities and this tendency would be in accordance with findings elsewhere in this study.

Table 8.19: Career aspiration by education

	Illiterate N=151	Primary N=115	Secondary N=94	College N=14	TOTAL N=374
Realized	29.1	28.7	35.1	42.9	31.0
Failed	16.6	31.3	37.2	50.0	27.5
No aspiration	54.3	40.0	27.7	7.1	41.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.18 P 0.00

Table 8.19 revealed a significant pattern of relationships linking career aspiration to the level of education, a majority of the better educated indicated that they had aspirations while the majority of illiterate workers had no clear aspirations. However, failure was particularly pronounced among the college educated.

The results in Table 8.20 revealed a significant relationship between career aspirations and length of employment (R 0.20). Senior workers were less likely to have claimed such

Table 8.20: Career aspiration by seniority

	- 5 N=130	6-10 N=141	11-15 N=69	16-20 N=10	21+ N=23	TOTAL N=373
Realized	36.9	30.5	27.5	30.0	13.0	31.1
Failed	31.5	30.5	21.7	10.0	13	27.6
No aspiration	31.6	39.0	50.8	60.0	73.9	41.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.20				P 0.00	

aspirations compared to junior workers, although the failure to realize such aspirations was clearly pronounced among the latter. Such tendencies were in accordance with those relating to age which was in some measure related to seniority.

Table 8.21: Career aspiration by union membership

	Members N=177	Non-members N=193	TOTAL N=370
Realized	19.8	41.5	31.1
Failed	28.8	26.4	27.6
No aspiration	51.4	32.1	41.3
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R 0.24		P 0.00

Table 8.21 revealed a significant pattern in which unionized workers were less likely to have claimed specific career aspirations than non-unionized workers, while success in realizing such aspirations was clearly pronounced among the latter group.

the second question in this section related to the "real" desire for mobility, the substance of the question was (Q 38) as follows: "Which of the following you would really like to change?" four categories of responses were possible; each one indicating a specific type of mobility. The first was limited to change of department within the existing plant, thus reflecting internal, short-range mobility. The second referred to a change of factory, representing a medium range mobility. The third indicated a desire to

change the enterprise or the firm and therefore a tendency for a long-range mobility. The fourth statement pointed to a desire to change occupation and was also indicative of a long-range mobility. The significance of this question lay in the attempt to discover which of these orientations, if any, was dominant, and whether specific groups of workers had different mobility orientations.

Table 8.22: Mobility orientation by industry

	Mining N=57	Chemicals N=67	Engineering N=69	Steel N=96	TOTAL N=289
Department	62.7	33.3	52.3	39.6	46.7
Factory	9.0	3.5	18.8	11.5	11.1
Enterprise	17.9	26.3	13.0	27.1	21.5
Occupation	10.4	36.9	15.9	21.8	20.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.09 P 0.05

Two important points emerged in Table 8.22. First, a large proportion of workers expressing their desire for mobility of some kind (77% of the total sample) included a high percentage who aspired to change their departments (46.7%). In all four plants except chemical a change of department came top of the list. Chemical workers had the highest percentage of workers who desired to change occupation.

Table 8.23: Mobility orientation by age

	22-30 N=78	31-40 N=115	41-50 N=59	51-62 N=36	TOTAL N=288
Department	39.7	44.3	52.5	61.1	46.9
Factory	7.7	11.3	16.9	8.3	11.1
Enterprise	23.1	24.3	16.9	13.9	21.2
Occupation	29.5	20.0	13.7	16.7	20.8
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.17 P 0.00

These results reveal a significant relationship between

mobility orientation and age group, two different tendencies could be detected. While older workers expressed a pronounced desire to change department remaining in the same plant, younger workers were more likely to want to change either their enterprise or occupation.

Table 8.24: Mobility orientation by seniority

	-5 N=100	6-10 N=108	11-15 N=51	16-20 N=7	21+ N=22	TOTAL N=288
Department	45.0	43.5	41.2	71.4	72.7	46.5
Factory	8.0	14.8	9.8	14.3	9.1	11.1
Enterprise	22.0	21.3	27.5	14.3	9.1	21.5
Occupation	25.0	20.4	21.5	-	9.1	20.9
TOTAL						
	R -0.14				P 0.01	

Table 8.24 indicated a significant pattern of relationships between mobility orientation and seniority, similar to that observed in relation to age. Whereas senior workers expressed a clear desire to change department the less senior were much more likely to want to change the company or occupation.

Table 8.25: Mobility orientation by skill

	Unskilled N=78	Semi-skilled N=110	Skilled N=101	TOTAL N=289
Department	66.7	40.0	38.6	46.7
Factory	6.4	11.8	13.9	11.1
Enterprise	11.5	23.6	26.7	21.5
Occupation	15.4	24.6	20.8	20.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
	R 0.16		P 0.00	

The self-same pattern emerges in Table 8.25 in relation to mobility orientation and skill differentiation (R 0.16). Again while a majority of unskilled workers expressed a desire to change department, skilled workers were more concerned to change of company or occupation.

The third question (Q 39) presented in this section was as follows: "Are you taking any courses or training to realize your ambition?" This was a closed question, with responses being restricted to 'yes' or 'no'. The objective of the question was to find out whether the desire for mobility was linked to any practical effort on the part of the workers who desired such advancement. This question, we hoped, would permit us to distinguish between those with a realistic ambition and those engaged in fantasy aspirations.

Table 8.26: Mobility preparation by industry

	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=60	Engineering N=100	Steel N=138	TOTAL N=372
Prepared	6.8	15.0	2.0	8.0	7.3
Not prepared	93.2	85.0	98.0	92.0	92.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.03			P 0.30	

Table 8.26 reveals that only a small minority of workers were preparing for a change in their employment situation and that in this there were no significant differences between the four plants.

Table 8.27: Mobility preparation by age

	22-30 N=104	31-40 N=140	41-50 N=77	51-62 N=50	TOTAL N=371
Prepared	11.5	9.3	2.6	-	7.3
No prepared	88.5	90.7	97.4	100	92.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.16			P 0.00	

Table 8.27 does, however, point to a significant relationship between mobility preparation and age (R 0.16). Thus, of all those who expressed a desire for mobility, it was largely young workers who were seriously preparing for such an eventuality. However, even among this group, the percentage of those who making such provision constituted a small minority. Table 8.28 also indicated The

better educated workers had among them a greater percentage of those making serious provision for mobility. The pattern was repeated, if rather more weakly, in relation to skill (Table 8.29)

Table 8.28: Mobility preparation by education

	Illiterate N=150	Primary N=114	Secondary N=94	College N=14	TOTAL N=372
Prepared	2.0	1.8	19.1	28.6	7.3
No prepared	98.0	98.2	80.9	71.4	92.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.30			P 0.00	

Table 8.29: Mobility preparation by skill

	Unskilled N=81	Semi-skilled N=141	Skilled N=150	TOTAL N=372
Prepared	1.2	7.8	10.0	7.3
Not prepared	98.8	92.2	90.0	92.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
	R -0.12		P 0.01	

Table 8.30: Correlations in the general sample

	Indus.	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union Memb.
Career aspirations	-0.12	0.16**	-0.18**	0.01	0.20**	-0.07	-0.24**
mobility Orientation	0.09	-0.17**	0.12	-0.04	-0.14*	0.16**	-0.02
mobility preparation	0.03	0.16**	-0.30**	-0.08	0.02	-0.12*	0.04

* P = 0.01
** P = 0.00

As far as the general sample was concerned the most relevant characteristics tending to differentiate workers' attitudes and orientations were age, education, skill, and seniority. Furthermore, it was noticeable that variables such as age, education and seniority produced rather similar effects. Less important were occupational background, branch of industry and union membership. One important point brought out by these results overall was that differentiation of attitudes relating to career aspiration and mobility were similar, if not identical to those found in relation to workers' wage condition and their perception of it.

Table 8.31: Correlation in sub-samples

	Age	Educa.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union Memb.
1 - Mining						
1-Career Aspir.	0.25*	-0.31**	0.19	0.33	-0.04	-0.11
2-Mobility Orienta.	-0.17	0.14	0.62	-0.15	0.31*	-0.29*
3-Mobility Prepara.	0.29*	-0.43**	-0.19	0.18	-0.13	-0.13
2 - Chemicals						
1-	0.02	-0.28*	-0.44**	-0.00	-0.17	-0.34**
2-	-0.13	0.26	0.17	0.08	0.15	0.02
3-	0.19	-0.41**	-0.16	-0.03	-0.48**	-0.03
3 - Engineering						
1-	0.13	-0.03	0.07	0.05	-0.04	-0.22
2-	0.06	-0.12	0.02	0.08	0.02	0.15
3-	0.12	-0.05	0.04	0.16	-0.01	0.18
4 - Steel						
1-	0.19*	-0.23**	0.05	0.22*	0.12	-0.25**
2-	-0.15	0.03	-0.34**	-0.03	0.30**	0.19
3-	0.05	-0.19*	-0.00	-0.19*	0.13	0.03

* P = 0.01
** P = 0.00

Considering the synthesising table (8.31) we might notice the important degree of variation in the relevance of selected

variables to responses relating to career aspiration and mobility. The most consistent variables were education, skill. Other variables were less important and had no consistency in their effects across the four plants. The other important factor brought out by table (8.31) is the degree of variation of workers' responses within each plant when related to the major characteristics of the workforce. For example, such characteristics seemed to assume relatively greater significance in differentiating attitudes and opinions among steel workers, than they did in other plants.

8.2 - Aspiration and mobility: discussion

In our attempt to interpret the major tendencies and trends observed in both the general sample and individual sub-samples representing particular plants, the main concern will be to understand the significance of the differentiation resulting from specific characteristics represented by the selected variables, and beyond that the importance of such differentiation in workers' attitudes for the process of working class formation.

The first item considered was career aspirations and the importance of this issue cannot be overemphasized. The existence or realization of such aspirations might well contribute to, or inhibit, the enhancement of workers' cohesiveness, collective organization or action. Workers' responses revealed two tendencies as far as the general sample was concerned. The first tendency was represented by that group of workers with positive career aspirations. This group was typically young, better educated, lacking long experience of employment and were non-unionized. The second group without specific career aspirations, had the reverse characteristics. Such differentiation could have been expected in relation to age and education.

The fact that the young and relatively better educated had definite career aspirations might be explained in terms of the job opportunities which were relatively abundant in the late sixties and seventies. Second, education was a valuable resource, giving a clear advantage to those who possessed such qualification. While both factors might explain the holding of such career aspirations, they must be seen in the light of a congruence between such widespread

aspirations and the limited objective possibilities of realizing which led to the high rate of failure experienced among this group. The length of employment could be considered as a mediating factor between career aspirations, age and education. The second more senior group joined the labour market at an earlier period (from the launch of the liberation war in 1954 to 1967 when the first economic plan was adopted) when education was largely restricted to the settler community and job opportunities were very limited indeed. Under such conditions the structures of career aspirations were very different. Also, the younger, educated workers were very much affected by the nationalist ideology in the post-colonial period.

The relevance of union membership to career aspirations could also be seen as a mediating factor. The union organization had fewer members among the younger and better educated. Consequently, as with seniority union membership tended to be negatively related to the existence of career aspirations. The younger workers did not hold the union organization in high esteem; rather they looked down on it as a refuge for the incompetent and corrupt. On the other hand, the older, less educated workers, with no career aspirations, tended to see union membership as a compensating factor in the light of their lack of specific resources and qualifications.

However, when the issue of career aspirations was considered in relation to the sub-samples the degree of variation between them was not important. The only case where the trend observed in the general sample was reproduced was that of the steel plant. In other plants differentiation was relatively limited.

Given that we were unable to measure the actual rates of mobility of the workforce we focused our attention on whether the workers surveyed had a real desire for mobility, but also the direction of this desired mobility. As we have seen the results revealed that a majority of the workers expressed a desire for mobility (77% of the sample). However, on considering what could be seen as orientation of mobility, it was notable that a large proportion (46.7%) were interested only in moving to other departments within their plants or factories. There was, then, a predominant trend toward short range mobility which was particularly pronounced in mining and engineering. An obvious explanation for its importance in

these particular work situations could be found in the specific character of local labour markets and the limited opportunities for employment in areas where those plants were located. The proportion of those considering a long range mobility in terms of changing either factory or enterprise was less important. The same could be said of those who desired a qualitative change in their occupation. Both these last two tendencies were relatively important in steel and chemical.

The results also revealed that what we called short range mobility was clearly favoured by workers who were old, unskilled and with a long period of employment. Long range mobility was particularly desired by the young, less senior and skilled workers. Such a typology might be explained by a number of factors: first, the degree of adaptation and integration within work situations could be stronger among the older and more senior workers. Second, the first group might have more to gain through short range mobility so preserving the promotion and wage claims related to their seniority. Third, there existed an objective difference in the market situation which was clearly advantageous to the second group given their age and possession of qualifications. Fourth, there was an important objective difference, with subjective consequences, related to social responsibilities and duties shouldered by workers in these two groups. In the second group most workers were either single or had just started their own family life and hence were under less pressure compared to those in the first group whose duties would give them little reason for any adventures.

When considering the results at the level of particular sub-samples we noted certain important variations in responses. Take miners, for example: their desire for mobility was affected by skill differentiation and union membership, with long-range mobility specifically favoured by skilled and unionized workers, while the less skilled, non-unionized workers were oriented toward short-range mobility. The link between skill differentiation and union membership was very important in mining as around 70% of skilled workers were unionized. In chemical and engineering different orientations toward mobility were not significantly associated with specific characteristics in the workforce, although there existed a tendency among those possessing qualifications to favour long-range mobility. Among steel workers mobility orientation was affected (in addition to

skill, as was the case among miners) by occupational background. In this instance workers from non-industrial backgrounds (self-employment, agricultural and services), favoured more than others, long-range mobility, stressing a desire to change their present occupations. Although workers from industrial backgrounds expressed a similar tendency to favour long-range mobility their main objective was to change the factory or enterprise rather than occupation. The important point brought out by this pattern of mobility orientation was that while workers from industrial backgrounds were probably not satisfied with certain aspects of their present work situation, those from non-industrial backgrounds, particularly agriculture and self-employment seemed dissatisfied with their occupation and status as industrial workers. Their desire, if it could be successfully carried out, was to leave industry altogether. Such differences probably point to difficulties of adaptation and integration of workers recruited from non-industrial backgrounds. Those from agriculture and self employment shared one important characteristic, namely, a sense of relative autonomy and considerable job discretion given the absence of rigid hierarchical organization, and high division of labour.

We are, of course, unable to reach any definite conclusions about worker mobility based on the mere expression of a desire for mobility. For although such a predisposition might be necessary condition it is by no means sufficient insofar as other conditions must be fulfilled. It was in order to move a little in this direction that the question concerning the preparation for mobility was administered.

The question as to whether workers were making serious provision for their desired mobility indicated that only a small minority (7.3%), were actually preparing for such an eventuality. Workers in the chemical industry had the highest percentage making such serious provision (15%), while engineering workers had the lowest (2%). In the steel plant, with the highest percentage of workers desiring mobility and, according to official estimates, the highest rate of labour turnover, only 8% were actually preparing for their desired mobility. Looking at the general sample one could see that the most relevant variables relating to preparation of mobility were age, level of education and skill.

The emerging pattern, on the basis of these characteristics, was that active preparation for mobility concerned young, better educated and skilled workers. Such characteristics were interrelated and their effects tended to confirm our interpretation of orientation expressed by this group in favour of a long-range mobility given the privileged position they occupied in the labour market. But when particular sub-samples were considered the pattern varied according to specific plants. Thus, while in mining some lines of differentiation based on age and education were important skill differentiation seemed irrelevant. In chemical the relevant variables were education and skill while age was unimportant. In steel, preparation or lack of it was rather affected by education and seniority. In the latter case those who were preparing for mobility were among the most senior and it was important to note that in the steel plant the most senior workers were also the most skilled.

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The general point which must be emphasized related to the fact that while only a small minority of workers were actively preparing for mobility, its significance resided in the fact that however small the group, it was constituted of the "cream": the young, better educated and skilled workers. Secondly, its significance resided in the long-range mobility for which such workers were preparing. The consequence was that such a process of mobility, if realized, would deprive the working class-in-formation of some of its best qualified and perhaps potentially more militant elements; the candidates capable of constituting a working class "vanguard".

Conclusion:

The results considered in this section revealed important tendencies relating to workforce differentiation along the lines of age, level of education, skills and, to some extent, union membership. The important fact was that these variables were interrelated; reinforcing and sustaining each other so reproducing existing differentiation.

Furthermore, the fact that such cleavage was based on deep seated structural differentiation whose requirements were generated and sustained by the inequality of access to important resources in society at large pointed to the importance of such

division as it affected the working class-in-formation.

The complex way in which such differentiation affected the process of working class formation was reflected in the workers' responses on issues such as career aspirations, and mobility orientation and preparation. Thus, workers who possessed important market resources were potentially the more assertive and critical of work organization and relations. The others lacking such resources tended to be more acquiescent, expressing attitudes bordering on resignation. Many conflicting tendencies could emerge and develop from this particular differentiation of the working class.

The first possibility was a gradual change in the composition of the working class in favour of a young, better educated and skilled generation. These latter with relatively clear career aspirations have already shown signs of their disaffection with existing arrangements in which they found themselves. Given the structural limits to the successful realization of their aspirations the possibility, indeed the probability, was that these workers would be gradually forced to realize the limited value of career resources. This would perhaps lead them to consider more seriously collective organization and action as an alternative and viable strategy.

The second tendency was incorporated in different patterns of mobility expressed by workers. The group of young, better educated and skilled workers expressed a clear desire for the long range mobility, and it was among this group that serious preparations were made. In the short run, an important section of the emerging working class were considering, alternatives to confrontation with management in order to improve their conditions.

Such a strategy reflected the fact that these workers continued to believe in the possibility of individual salvation, a belief reinforced by the modern liberal ideology associated with capitalist industrialization. Such a belief was greatly enhanced by the particularly favourable conditions of economic expansion in Algeria during the 1970's, postponing the harsh reality of unemployment and economic recession following on the crisis associated with the decline in oil revenues. However, the profound effects of such conditions are beginning to be felt by large groups of the youth

and even among the privileged college and university graduates.

Such individualist orientation weakened the potential for resistance and inhibited the development of a sense of collective identity and class consciousness. Thus, internal cleavages among workers and the predominance of the individualist sense of salvation contributed to the maintenance of working class subordination to the state bureaucracy.

8.3- Children's education and career

Education plays an important rôle in the lives of individuals and groups. As a power resource it contributes to structuring society as well as affecting relationships between different groups.[11] This crucial rôle is perhaps more pronounced in less developed countries like Algeria where the benefits of education as a power resource are not widely shared among the various groupings.

In this section our main interest was to identify workers' attitudes to the future of their children. Two specific points were investigated in this respect; one relating to education, the other to children's potential careers. our first aim was to find out how workers perceived the educational chances of their children, the type of education they preferred for them, and the nature of obstacles blocking their access to higher education.

In the second case, our attention focused on types of career workers would choose for their children. The objectives of these questions were three-fold: first, through their assessment of existing educational opportunities we wished to grasp how open or closed an image workers held of society. Having identified such an image, we would also discover what type of education workers desired for their children, and what obstacles to such an ambition they foresaw. Our third aim was to identifying the types of occupation most desired by workers once their ambitions were given free reign.[12]

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[11] See, Boudon, R. L'Inégalité des Chances. Pairs, Colin, 1973. Also, Heath, A. Social Mobility. London, Fontana. 1981.

[12] On the importance of unequal access to education and related opportunities in terms of occupational and social mobility, See.

(Footnote continued)

The first question (Q 41) was formulated as follows: "Do you think that all people enjoyed equal chances of access to education?" This was a pre-coded question to which two statements were supplied representing possible answers. The first indicated the existence of equal opportunity while the second denied it. The aim of this question was to discover the image workers had of society in terms of equality of opportunity and, by extension, whether their own children were in a position to benefit from such opportunity. As the results presented below show more than two thirds of the workers in our sample held the belief that there was equality of access to education. But such equality was limited to an abstract principle, a juridical category expressing existing rights of every citizen to education. In reality, however, the specific position and limited resources of large strata in society would be erected as the major obstacles against the realization of such aspirations as access to education.

Table 8.32: Educational opportunity by industry

	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=100	Steel N=140	TOTAL N=375
Equal opportunity	83.8	59.0	59.0	72.1	68.8
Unequal "	16.2	41.0	42.0	27.9	31.2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.06			P 0.13	

The results in Table 8.32 reveal two important tendencies. The first is the tendency among the majority of workers to believe that their children enjoyed equal opportunity of access to education. Second, variations existed across industry with workers in chemical and engineering being more convinced of existing inequality. But, overall, no significant correlation was found between workers' perception and branch of industry.

The results in Table 8.33 pointed to a lack of a pattern

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[12] (continued)
Halsey, A.H. Origins and Destinations: Family, Class and Education in Modern Britain. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1980.

Table 8.33: Educational opportunity by age

	22-30 N=105	31-40 N=140	41-50 N=78	51-62 N=51	TOTAL N=374
Equal opportunity	64.8	67.1	69.2	80.4	68.7
Unequal "	35.2	32.9	30.8	19.6	31.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.10				P 0.03

linking perception of educational opportunity to age. However, more older workers seemed to believe in the existence of equal opportunity.

Table 8.34: Educational opportunity by education

	Illiterate N=152	Primary N=115	Secondary N=94	College N=14	TOTAL N=375
Equal opportunity	75.0	67.8	62.8	50.0	68.8
Unequal "	25.0	32.2	37.2	50.0	31.2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.13			P 0.01	

the results in table 8.34 revealed a pattern of relationship between belief in educational opportunity and the level of education of respondents. Such Belief was relatively stronger among less educated workers.

Our second question (Q 42): relating to the type of education desired read "In your opinion what type of education best suits working class children?" It was a pre-coded question and workers were given two possible answers. The first statement suggested that post-secondary vocational training was to be preferred. The second statement suggested that working class children should pursue conventional academic studies in higher education. It must be noted that vocational training had become relatively important in Algeria in recent times only as the process of industrialization had been extended to various branches of the economy and different regions of

the country.

Table 8.35: Desired type of education by age

	22-30 N=102	31-40 N=127	41-50 N=73	51-62 N=49	TOTAL N=351
Vocat. training	8.8	3.9	2.7	2.0	4.8
Acad. studies	91.2	96.1	97.3	98.0	95.2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.11 P 0.02

Table 8.35. indicates that the large majority in all age groups favoured academic studies to vocational training for their children, and this attitude was stressed among older workers. The results in Table 8.35 also showed a link between the desired type of education and level of education. The better educated workers were, relatively, less inclined to favour academic education. Other variables had no significant bearing on workers' opinion concerning the desired type of education.

Table 8.36: Desired type of education by education

	Illiterate N=141	Primary N=109	Secondary N=89	College N=13	TOTAL N=352
Vocat. training	2.8	3.7	7.9	15.4	4.8
Acad. studies	97.2	96.3	92.1	84.6	95.2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.12 P 0.01

The third question in this section (Q 43) was formulated as follows: "There are relatively few working class children in colleges and universities, in your view what is the principal reason for this ?" It was a pre-coded question and four alternative answers were suggested. The first of these referred to a lack of material or financial resources as the major obstacle. The second statement identified social attitudes and values as inhibiting such as the tendency not to send girls on to higher education, and the custom to

keep the eldest males at home to share responsibility for the family as soon as they finished high school. The third possible response highlighted certain cultural conditions such as the levels of illiteracy and the size of families. The fourth statement allowed for an outright disagreement with the proposition made in the question.

The aim of this question was to identify what workers themselves considered as major obstacles limiting access to higher education as far as their children were concerned.

Table 8.37: Obstacles to higher education by industry

	Mining N=71	Chemicals N=54	Engineering N=99	Steel N=107	TOTAL N=331
Material conds.	63.4	48.1	49.5	72.0	59.5
Social attits.	15.5	27.8	26.3	8.4	18.4
Cultural conds.	18.3	20.4	24.2	19.6	20.8
Disagree	2.8	3.7	-	-	1.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.07			P 0.11	

Table 8.37 shows that a largest percentage of workers considered material conditions to be the main obstacle to working class children. Responses across plants revealed no major differences although miners and steel workers were more likely to stress the relevance of material conditions. In general, the results failed to reveal any pattern associated with the major characteristics of the workforce considered as important to this study.

The final question in this section (Q 44) was : "If you had the possibility to choose your children's career what would you like them to be?" This was again a pre-coded question with four alternative responses. The first suggested careers in industry, following that of the respondents. The second suggested careers as technicians or engineers, that is not unfamiliar to the respondents. The third referred to careers as white collar employees (teachers, health workers, etc.), while the fourth statement suggested careers in the professions (doctors, lawyers, etc.). The objective behind this question was to release workers' aspirations; giving their ambitions relatively free reign.

Table 8.38: Career choice by industry

	Mining N=70	Chemicals N=46	Engineering N=93	Steel N=131	TOTAL N=340
Workers	-	-	-	0.8	0.3
Technicians & engineers	81.4	84.8	65.4	70.2	72.9
White collar employees	8.6	10.9	19.4	12.2	13.2
Professions	10.0	4.3	16.1	16.8	13.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.11			P 0.02	

Considering the sample as a whole Table 8.38, showed that the overwhelming majority of workers favoured technical manual occupations as careers for their children. Also, while it was clear that non-manual occupations were less attractive, the most significant point was that all but one steel worker considered their present occupations and status to be unworthy as a career for their children.

There was also a pattern linking career choice to branch of industry. Thus, while miners and chemical workers clearly favoured technical occupations, workers from engineering and steel were more likely to favour white collar and professions. It was also clear from our results that career choice was not significantly affected by other major characteristics of the workforce.

The correlation table (8.39) reinforces the obvious point that there existed an important degree of similarity of opinions and attitudes relating to children's education and careers among workers. In only two cases were such perceptions significantly differentiated on the basis of one major characteristic, namely, the level of education. The first item on which workers' attitudes were differentiated related to the issue of whether their children had an equal opportunity to be educated. The second concerned their perceptions of the desired type of education they wished for their children. The general trend revealed by these results was that a majority of workers felt that their children enjoyed equal opportunity of access to education. However, they also stressed the obstacles they

Table 8.39: Correlation in the general sample

	Indus.	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union memb.
Educational opport.	0.06	-0.10	0.13*	0.06	-0.06	0.04	0.01
Desired education	-0.01	0.11	-0.12*	0.00	0.08	0.02	-0.03
Obstacles to higher education	-0.07	-0.08	0.04	0.01	-0.04	-0.07	-0.01
Career choice	0.11	-0.07	0.03	0.02	-0.02	0.06	0.09

* P = 0.01

faced on their way to higher education. Such obstacles were generally conceived as unfavourable material conditions, mainly financial. Academic higher education was favoured by workers as the desired type of education for their children against vocational training which was generally undervalued except by workers with relatively high levels of education themselves. Workers' responses also revealed a significant degree of homogeneity in their aspirations for the occupational future of their children with a majority stressing occupations such as technicians and engineers. Overall, these results indicated lack of differentiation in the aspirations held by workers for their children.

8.3: Children's education and careers: discussion

Considering the general sample first, perhaps the most important tendency emerging from the synthesis table (8.39) was the homogeneity in workers' perceptions and attitudes. Thus, the majority of workers (68.8%) believed their children enjoyed equal opportunities in education. Only the level of education and age seemed to provide some basis for differentiation. The pattern emerging was one in which older, less educated workers were more likely to believe that working class children had equal access to education. Such judgements might be explained in terms of different frames of reference adopted. While the less educated, older workers had in mind their own experience during colonial and immediately post-colonial periods in which education was a near monopoly of the privileged few, the fact that their own

Table 8.40: Correlation for sub-samples

1 - Mining

	Age	Educa.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union memb.
1-Educational opportunity	-0.03	0.02	0.28	-0.02	0.10	-0.06
2-Desired type of education	0.04	-0.17	-0.19	0.16	-0.05	-0.04
3-Obstacles to higher educ.	0.11	0.12	-0.28	0.03	0.23	-0.07
4-Career choice	-0.29*	0.16	-0.03	-0.14	-0.03	-0.04

2 - Chemicals

1-	-0.32**	0.26	0.17	-0.16	-0.02	0.03*
2-	0.13	0.04	-0.12	0.21	0.11	-0.18
3-	0.00	-0.02	-0.45**	-0.05	-0.04	0.05
4-	-0.25	-0.05	-0.31	0.05	-0.14	-0.01

3 - Engineering

1-	-0.09	0.11	0.02	-0.09	0.09	0.05
2-	0.14	-0.17	-	0.03	-0.09	0.13
3-	0.04	-0.15	0.12	-0.04	-0.13	-0.24*
4-	0.07	0.01	0.03	0.14	0.10	0.25*

4 - Steel

1-	-0.00	0.14	-0.01	0.04	-0.06	-0.09
2-	0.08	-0.15	0.16	-0.07	-0.00	-0.05
3-	-0.29**	0.21*	0.06	-0.34**	-0.19	0.24*
4-	-0.01	0.03	0.19	0.05	-0.04	0.01

* P = 0.01
** P = 0.00

children could now go to school was, in itself proof of equal opportunity. However, in this case of the younger, better educated workers the extension of educational opportunity, however important, was not to be confused with genuine equality. This was so because of persisting disparities between various sections of the society in terms of economic and cultural resources influencing not only access to education, but also performance and achievement in schools and, therefore, rates of success or failure among children of different

social backgrounds. This was especially true for higher levels of education beginning with secondary schools where parents' support, both material and intellectual, were crucial.[13]

The general agreement that working class children enjoyed equal opportunities, however, might well reflect the influence on attitudes exerted by the massive extension of education, especially primary education, to all children of schooling age. In fact, primary education was made compulsory from 1976. The priority given to education by the government could be appreciated by looking at its share in annual budgets which has been increasing since the early years of independence.[14]

The degree of homogeneity characterizing workers' attitudes on this particular issue was also apparent in the various sub-samples representing individual plants. In this case the only significant degree of differentiation was found among chemical workers and was related to age and union membership; the first of these repeating the pattern observed in the general sample, with older workers more likely to recognize the existence of equal opportunity. The relevance of union membership was specific to the chemical workers, the unionized having a relatively pronounced tendency to believe in existence of equal opportunity while non-members tended to express the opposite view. Since union membership was found to be related to certain other characteristics such as age and education, it might well be that its effects on workers' attitudes was, to some extent, a function of such interconnection between it and those variables. In general unionized workers were drawn more from among the older and less educated, and we have seen that this group was more likely to believe in equal opportunity. However, these results raised one important question, namely: Why were these two variables relevant only in the case of the chemical plant? This is a question which

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[13]Rates of success in high school exams are very low usually not exceeding 25% of the total number sitting for such exams each year. We also noticed, from our observations, that school standards differed according to residential areas with schools located in the popular areas having lower success rates in such exams.

[14]As an example , the share of education in the budget attained 26% in 1978, then increased to 28.2% in 1980. See, ONS; Annuaire Statistique de L'Algerie, Alger, 1981.

existing information failed to answer adequately, underlining the need for further research.

Turning to the preference for a specific type of education for working class children, our results revealed that an overwhelming majority (95.2%) were in favour of their children going on to higher education rather than vocational training courses (4.8%). Again only age and education affected the response, this only marginally. The greater tendency of younger, better educated workers preferring vocational training is highly likely to be linked to their more realistic appreciation of what was possible. For the older, less educated workers academic studies in higher educational institutions were most desired perhaps because of the impact upon them of a dominant colonial and pre-industrial value system, in which technical education and careers had less prestige.

Recent changes affecting economic and social structures and the emphasis laid on industrialization represented a turning point in the sphere of dominant values shaping attitudes towards education, career prospects and preferences. This seems a both plausible and tempting way to explain the orientation of younger, better educated workers to vocational training as a specific type of education. To this must be added the fact that prevailing attitudes to education were becoming increasingly instrumental. In this respect, and given the structural changes in the economy, vocational training assumed greater significance as a means of securing employment and income in an expanding industrial economy with needs for qualified and skilled labour representing one of the major challenges for the educational system. As a result, official policies on education tended to favour, quite consciously, technical education, in general, and vocational training, in particular.[15]

However, the overwhelming majority of the sample

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[15]Changes in attitudes at the level of government concerning the importance of vocational training was reflected by the creation of a department for this latter within the Ministry of Employment in 1977. Since then interest in vocational training grew even further leading to the establishment of a State Secretariat for vocational training in 1980 and a great expansion in the number of centres specializing in all sorts of vocational training and technical education.

expressed a clear desire to see their children in higher education. This in itself highlights the important place occupied by education in the minds and hearts of Algerian workers. Nevertheless, these same workers were overwhelmingly (88.2%) convinced of the fact that their children faced major obstacles to making their way into higher education.

The majority in our sample (59.5%) identified poor material conditions and the lack of finances as inhibiting the educational advancement of their children. Such recognition must be understood in the light of harsh conditions characterizing workers' situation and represented by dwindling income and large families to support. It should be remembered from the first section of this chapter that most workers were the sole bread winners for their families depending almost entirely on their wages as a source of income.

However, the emphasis on material conditions did not exclude reference to other obstacles such as social attitudes (18.4%) including continuing resistance to educating girls and in general instrumental attitude toward the education of boys who were encouraged to find employment as soon as they achieved a minimum level of education giving them access to relatively secure employment. For others (20.8%) the major obstacle was seen to be represented by cultural conditions such as widespread illiteracy among parents which inhibited them from providing much needed practical support for their children. These three elements are likely to be closely interconnected making the task for working class children even harder within the context of a competitive system.

Our results revealed that such attitudes were little affected by the various characteristics differentiating the workforce, except that material conditions were more likely to be seen as a major obstacle to higher education among steel workers and to a lesser extent, miners. By contrast, reference to social attitudes and cultural conditions as obstacles was greater among chemical and engineering workers. Despite these minor variations there was a high degree of consensus among workers on the importance of material conditions, the major obstacle facing working class children in their desire to gain higher education. When considering the various

sub-samples it became apparent that in the chemical plant occupational background was an important factor, with workers from industrial backgrounds (construction and manufacturing) emphasizing material conditions, while those from non-industrial backgrounds (self-employment and agriculture) stressed social attitudes and cultural conditions. In engineering, union members referred more often to social attitudes and cultural conditions as obstacles to advancement, while non-members underlined material conditions. A greater degree of differentiation was found among steel workers whose views varied in accordance with four variables: age, education, seniority and union membership.

Whereas material conditions were considered the major obstacle by older, less educated, more senior and unionized workers, the obstacles of social attitudes and cultural conditions were more important among the young, better educated, less senior and non-union members. It is likely that these variables were closely interrelated, with age and education being the most important, mediating the effects of seniority and union membership. The younger, better educated workers were often lacking seniority and were not members of the union organization. This group of workers exhibited a limited degree of awareness of the nature and extent of the difficulties faced by the older group who had the burden of educating a relatively large number of children of schooling age. The financial difficulties experienced by this latter group were very serious and all the more so given their total dependence on dwindling wages as their sole source of income in the face of mounting inflation.[16] Given the limited responsibilities of young workers in these matters it was not surprising that they tended to stress the importance of social attitudes and cultural conditions as major obstacles. But it was important to note that such a view had some truth in it since it was among the older, less educated workers that little support and attention was accorded to the education of children. To be sure, this was not always a conscious choice but rather an unexpected consequence of the difficult conditions

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[16] On average parents had to equip four children at the beginning of each academic year. Usually one or two of these were teenagers in secondary school or college. Such equipment could cost up to 3,000 AD which is more than a month's pay for a skilled worker. Such needs would continue to take at least 10% of pay throughout the year.

characterizing the situation of such workers. In other words, they were invariably overwhelmed by their struggle for survival and had themselves little if any moral and practical support to offer their children. As a result the latter were generally left without proper guidance and instruction. In this case, higher percentages of working class children tended to fail their exams, especially those giving access to college and higher education in which stringent rules of selection were applied.

The fourth issue considered in this section was the type of careers that workers desired for their children. As far as the general sample was concerned the results suggested some significant tendencies. First, all workers avoided identifying their own jobs as desired careers for their children. This might, in fact, reflect a clear dissatisfaction with their current positions as workers. It could also be seen as expressing a strong aspiration for inter-generational mobility. Second, a large majority expressed a desire to see their children taking up careers as technicians and engineers (72.9%).[17] This might be interpreted as a sign that although workers were dissatisfied with their own jobs they were nonetheless attracted to careers with which they were familiar. The choice of such technical careers for their children might well reflect their commitment to shop-floor, and productive labour, but involve a targeting of jobs which had certain prestige, and higher status as well as being seen as more satisfying in terms of both job discretion and material rewards. This interpretation was reinforced by the small number who desired white collar occupations, or liberal professions for their children.

It might be argued that workers did not express wild aspirations which, if they had the resources to realize them, would result in cutting off their children from the working class, but, on the contrary, held desires which placed their children firmly within the boundaries of their class, albeit as relatively well educated, skilled and well remunerated but workers.

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[17]The preference for technical occupations seems to be widely held by workers, See El-Kenz, A. SIDER: Enquete Socio-Professionnelle, op. cit.

There was little to distinguish workers in their responses to this issue, although it was noted that technical careers attracted more miners and chemical workers, while white collar occupations and the liberal professions were more attractive to engineering and steel workers. However, even among the latter a majority was still in favour of careers in technical occupations. The absence of significant differentiation in workers' views was also apparent within particular sub-samples representing the four plants. This was especially true for chemical and steel workers whose attitudes were not affected at all by any of the selected variables. But among miners, views on career choice were significantly affected by age with older workers favouring technical occupations, while the younger had a preference for white collar occupations and professions. This undoubtedly reflected the influence of education and the patterns of aspirations linked to it.

In the case of engineering workers views on career choice were affected by union membership. The unionized workers tended to favour careers in technical occupations while non-union members were more likely to have a preference for careers in white collar occupations and professions. It was not clear why union membership should lead to such differences in views. It might be that the effect of union membership was a function of some other variable(s) which we did not investigate further in this case.

Conclusion

The general tendency emerging from workers' responses in this section seem to point to the belief that there exists in Algeria equal opportunities in access to education. This view reflects both an awareness of a considerable expansion of education as well as the influence exerted by the egalitarian populist ideology disseminated through official discourse. However, the differences between workers relating both to age and level of education pointed to the uneven character of this ideological influence. Its limited effect was clearly evident among young and better educated workers for whom equal opportunity in education was more an abstract claim than a concrete reality. On this ground it would seem that the younger generation of the working class might be less prone to the influence of official ideology.[18]

Strong views on the importance of education and its relevance to the future of working class children were also apparent in responses concerning the desired type of eduction. In this respect, it was not surprising that an overwhelming majority of workers wished to see their children attending institutions of higher education. Despite a general consensus favouring academic higher education as the desired type there was a divergence of opinion, reflected in the relatively favourable orientation to technical education in the form of vocational training among the younger and better educated workers. This attitude was most probably linked to wider structural changes associated with industrialization which seemed to tip the balance in favour of this type of education.

Our results were significant in revealing that workers in their overwhelming majority harboured no illusions concerning the obstacles faced by their children in gaining access to higher education. There was as we have shown a clear tendency to perceive existing obstacles in terms of material conditions, particularly inadequate financial resources needed to support children's demands at this stage of their education. This highlighted the inherently fragile position of most workers who depended on their wages as the sole source of secure income. In addition, other obstacles in the form of hostile social attitudes and cultural values were recognized by the workers. It was also significant that such views were held for all types of workers stressing the fact that they held images of a disadvantageous position when it came to higher education and this was mainly because of existing social and economic disparities linked to class division.

Furthermore, such awareness of existing structural limits was confirmed in relation to desired children's careers. Despite the fact that such desire was expressed in response to a highly hypothetical question it had an indicative value. This was manifested in the qualified commitment to their position as workers. The commitment was reflected in the desire of the overwhelming majority to see their children as technicians and engineers;

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[18] All recent events in Algeria reinforce this claim as the youth has been involved from 1986 in protest and rioting movements against the establishment, targeting in their actions particularly the symbols of the regime such as official buildings and vehicles.

occupations which had clear links to shop-floor, productive and manual activities. But that commitment was qualified as these occupations represented a sort of upward mobility in the occupational hierarchy from routine, less skilled, less discretional jobs to careers which were seen to offer both moral and material satisfaction. In this respect, it was highly significant that a majority of workers rejected both their actual position and that which would result in cutting off their children from the working class.

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CHAPTER NINE

REFERENCE GROUPS, SOLIDARITY AND ATTITUDES TO TRADE UNIONISM

This chapter will deal with three specific issues concerning the development of class consciousness among workers. In the first section we present and discuss results relating to the process of reference group formation. The second section is devoted to a discussion of specific forms of solidarity among workers. In addition we discuss workers' perceptions of their interest groups. In the third section we shift the focus of our attention to workers' attitudes toward trades unions.

9.1 - Reference groups

In our investigation of reference groups the main objective was to identify the basis upon which such groups, where identified, were constituted. The central hypothesis informing our investigation of this issue was that under the apparently diverse conditions characterizing employment in industry and urban, life leading to the possibility of developing a variety of reference groups, there exists a strong tendency toward the relative homogenization of the working and living conditions of the majority of the labour force.[1] This tendency is, it is argued, accelerated by the gradual but firm imposition of a dehumanizing industrial rationality and rigid and bureaucratic forms of management at work.[2] Furthermore in Algeria, at the time of the survey standards of living had deteriorated in the face of soaring inflation and wage stagnation. Such conditions, we suggest, would be conducive to the development of an awareness of the common conditions under which the majority of the

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[1] See, Touraine, A. La Conscience Ouvriere, op. cit., Also, the classical study by Goldthorpe et al, The Affluent Worker, (1968), op. cit.

[2] This point has been stressed by labour process theorists, See for example, Braverman, H. Labour and Monopoly Capital, op. cit. Also, Beynon, Working for Ford, op. cit.

labour force lived.[3] Hence, the emergent tendency among workers to identify themselves as a "we" group, cutting across the various lines of differentiation which countered the homogenizing effects separating them into small, plant-based, skill-based, residence-based groups. In order to test the effectiveness of these two tendencies we selected four questions whose results are analysed in this section.

The first question (Q 30) was formulated as follows: "To which of the following do you have a strong feeling of commitment and belonging?" Workers were provided with four categories of responses: occupation, industry, skill or a combination of all three. The aim was to discover which of those aspects of the work situation workers tended to identify themselves with. Those elements which most influenced the process of social interaction attracting the loyalty and commitment of workers. The significance of the chosen categories of responses lay in the attempt to grasp the specific attributes used by workers to identify their network of social interaction and the character of the group to which they owed loyalty.

Table 9.1: Self identification, by industry

Industry identification	Mining N=71	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=99	Steel N=138	TOTAL N=369
Occupation	52.1	32.8	30.3	36.3	37.1
Industry	18.3	31.1	38.4	26.8	29.0
Skill category	15.5	6.6	7.1	1.4	6.5
All	14.1	29.5	24.2	35.5	27.4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.11			P 0.01	

Our results revealed a good deal of diversity in the way workers identified themselves. Table 9.1 reveals two important points. first, occupation appeared as a major factor in the process of self-identification and, therefore, in the potential for group formation. The wider basis of industry was also important. Secondly,

[3]See, Marshall, G. "Some remarks on the study of working class consciousness", Politics & Society,12, No.3, 1983:263-301.

there were significant differences between the plants representing different industries and work situations. The importance of occupation, although general, was most clearly marked in mining while that of the branch of industry was particularly important in engineering and chemical. Steel workers stressed all three attributes as determining their locus of commitment. However, such differences were limited as the degree of correlation revealed (R 0.11).

TABLE 9.2: Self-identification, by skill

	Unskilled N=82	Semi-skilled N=138	Skilled N=149	TOTAL N=369
Occupation	54.9	30.4	33.6	37.1
Industry	25.6	31.9	28.1	29.0
Skill	6.1	8.0	5.4	6.5
All three	13.4	29.7	32.9	27.4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
	R 0.17			P 0.00

Table 9.2 reveals the existence of a pattern relating the focus to loyalty as varying with skill. Whereas a majority of unskilled workers clearly considered occupation as central to their identity, skilled workers stressed the importance of elements other than skill itself. Such difference was reflected in a statistically significant correlation (R 0.17).

Table 9.3: Self-identification, by union membership

	Union members N=176	Non-members N=189	TOTAL N=365
Occupation	33.0	39.7	36.4
Industry	26.7	31.7	29.3
Skill	6.8	6.3	6.6
All three	33.5	22.3	27.7
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R -0.12		P 0.01

Table 9.3 indicates minor differences between union

members and non-union members, with the former having a slight tendency to identify themselves in the broader terms of all three attributes. the correlation was (R 0.12).

The second question (Q 45) was formulated: "With whom do you feel really relaxed and at your ease?" In order to answer this question five categories were supplied, so widening the perspective of the question. These included the status or position in the production process, occupation, individual affinities, the similarity of conditions and finally kinship relations. The objective of this question was to discover the extent to which social class or some other dimension such as kinship, or work were important in reference group formation. Whereas the first question was limited to perceptions of identity in terms of the work situation, the second had a wider scope and went beyond the sphere of work pointing to various sources of identification.

Table 9.4: Group identification, by industry

	Mining N=73	Chemicals N=59	Engineering N=100	Steel N=140	TOTAL N=372
Workers in general	26.0	15.3	35.0	57.1	38.4
" same occup.	21.9	27.1	19.0	11.4	18.0
Individ. affinities	32.9	23.7	31.0	20.1	26.1
Those in similar conditions	11.0	27.1	15.0	11.4	14.8
Family & relatives	8.2	6.8	-	-	2.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.26			P 0.00	

Table 9.4 reveals two important points. First, in the sample as a whole the largest percentage identified themselves with workers in general. Second, when we look at the individual plants, we find that steel and engineering workers more strongly oriented in this direction a tendency which could be seen to reflect a class dimension in the formation of their reference groups. Relatively, miners and chemical workers lacked such orientation, tending to stress occupation and individual affinities. The most important finding, however, is the low family orientation to be found in this pattern of response. Miners

showed more identification with the family, followed by workers in chemicals but overall the commitment is extremely low. This is an indication of a profound shift in the significance of kinship and is something we will come back to.

Table 9.5: Group identification, by skill

	Unskilled N=81	Semi-skilled N=140	Skilled N=151	TOTAL N=372
Workers in general	23.5	32.9	51.7	38.4
" some occup.	28.4	15.7	14.6	18.0
Individ. affinities	22.2	33.6	21.1	26.1
Those in similar conditions	16.0	16.4	12.6	14.8
Family & relatives	9.9	1.4	-	2.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

R -0.22 P 0.00

Table 9.5 reveals that whereas skilled workers tended to identify with "all workers", unskilled workers stressed occupation and, to a large degree their own kinship relations as bases of group identification. This was reflected in a significant degree of correlation (R -0.22).

The third question (Q 46) was: "Could you tell us what do your best friends do for a living?" As the categories of possible answers reveal, the aim of this question was to elicit the particular locations of reference groups members. Such locations were defined in terms of the general category of worker as well as occupation, factory and sector of work activity. This question also attempted to distinguish the class dimension of group locations from more restricted contexts. We classified answers in terms of; same occupation, same plant, other sectors, etc. The significance of such a classification lay in the fact that it allowed us to examine the extent of networks of social interaction and at the same time avoid the complexity of making reference to a detailed list of specific occupations. the question was complementary to the previous one, and as such was intended to provide an alternative means of locating reference groups despite the difference in the proposed categories of

responses. And to anticipate our analysis of the responses, we could say that there was a high degree of reliability in workers' responses as the comparison between results of the two questions would reveal.

Table 9.6– Group location, by industry

	Mining N=72	Chemicals N=58	Engineering N=100	Steel N=139	TOTAL N=369
Workers in same factory	23.6	5.2	34.0	23.0	23.3
" same occups.	30.6	6.9	13.0	7.2	13.3
" diff. occups.	37.5	60.3	34.0	32.4	38.2
Employees in other sectors	8.3	25.9	14.0	30.0	21.1
Self-employed	-	1.7	4.0	4.3	3.0
Had no friends	-	-	1.0	2.2	1.1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.13 P 0.01

Insofar as the sample as a whole was concerned the responses in table 9.6 reveal a tendency among workers to locate their reference group in a wide network of social interaction as represented by workers in a variety of locations. This response was clearly in accordance with results we observed in previous tables. Also, a comparison between the four plants reveal that despite this general tendency there were important differences. Thus, in mining and engineering an important percentage located their reference group in the same factory or the same occupation. chemical and steel workers were more likely to find their friends in other sectors of activity. Such differences between the various plants were relatively significant as reflected in the degree of correlation between group location and industry
(R 0.13).

Table 9.7 suggests that the older workers were more likely to find their friends within the same factory or occupation, while the younger workers claimed a wider network of social interaction including a variety of occupations and sectors of activity. As such, there was a significant correlation between the two variables (R -0.20).

Table 9.7: Group location, by age

	22-30 N=103	31-40 N=138	41-50 N=77	51-62 N=50	TOTAL N=368
Workers in same factory	19.4	22.5	26.0	28.0	23.1
" " " occup.	7.8	12.3	14.3	26.0	13.3
" " diff. occups.	32.0	40.6	44.1	36.0	38.3
Employees in other sectors	33.0	21.0	14.3	8.0	21.2
Self-employed	6.8	2.2	-	2.0	3.0
No friends	1.0	1.4	1.3	-	1.1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.20 P 0.00

Table 9.8: Group location, by seniority

	1-5 N=127	6-10 N=139	11-15 N=70	16-20 N=10	21+ N=22	TOTAL N=368
Workers in same factory	22.8	22.3	22.9	20.0	36.4	23.4
" " " occup.	13.4	7.9	15.7	20.0	31.8	13.0
" " diff. occups.	29.1	43.2	47.1	60.0	22.7	38.3
Employees in other sectors	29.9	21.6	11.4	-	9.1	21.2
Self-employed	3.2	3.6	2.9	-	-	3.0
No friends	1.6	1.4	-	-	-	1.1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.16 P 0.00

Also Table 9.8 reveals a similar pattern with senior workers having friends within the same factory or in the same occupation while the less senior ones tended to have friends in other sectors and, to some extent, among people with various occupations. Such differences were reflected in a significant degree of correlation between these two variables (R -0.16).

The fourth question (Q 48) read: "Do you think there is anything that could stop two persons in love from marrying?" The aim was to identify barriers to social interaction as perceived by respondents. To this end we proposed a broad three category band of possible answer ranging from the rejection of any barriers, the perception of barriers expressed in terms of individual

characteristics such as personality, or their identification in terms of social and economic differences.

Our choice of the intimate relationship of "marriage" was intentional since it was felt that no other subject would reveal with the same clarity the degree and extent of people's awareness of existing social constraints on the processes of group identification and interaction. Marriage is an institution taken seriously by people and, in almost all cases, not restricted to individual choice, but regulated by the norms and values of the social group. As such it was the "ideal" subject from which to assess the degree and nature of awareness of social constraints on the process of interaction.

Table 9.9: Perception of constraints, by industry

	Mining N=70	Chemicals N=60	Engineering N=100	Steel N=137	TOTAL N=367
No constraints	27.2	8.3	6.0	8.8	11.4
Individual characteristics	31.4	20.0	35.0	21.9	27.0
Socio-economic position	41.4	71.7	59.0	69.3	61.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.20 P 0.00

The results in Table 9.9 proved very interesting. First, a large majority of workers overall believed social constraints on marriage were important. Furthermore, this majority were more likely to perceive such constraints in terms of socio-economic factors. Also, this latter tendency varied markedly according to the branch of industry. It was weakest among the miners (41.4%) and highest in chemicals (71.7%) and steel (69.3%). The degree of correlation was significant (R 0.20).

Table 9.10 indicates surprisingly that while union members had a greater tendency to dismiss the existence of such constraints, non-members were more oriented towards perceiving existing barriers in terms of the socio-economic factors an indication of the perception of those barriers in class terms (R 0.18).

Table 9.10: Perception of constraints, by union membership

	Members N=172	Non-members N=191	TOTAL N=363
No constraints	18.6	5.2	11.6
Individual characteristics	26.2	27.7	27.0
Socio-economic position	55.2	67.1	61.4
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R 0.18		P 0.00

Table 9.11: Correlation for the general sample

	Indus.	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union memb.
Self-ident.	0.11*	0.01	0.02	0.12	0.07	0.17**	-0.12*
Group ident.	-0.26**	-0.06	0.04	0.09	0.01	-0.22**	-0.01
Group loca.	0.13*	-0.02**	0.10	-0.01	-0.16**	-0.06	0.06
Perception of constraints	0.20**	-0.05	0.04	-0.03	0.04	-0.05	0.18**

* P = 0.01
** P = 0.00

The degree of correlation between the responses to the four questions and the selected variables suggests that in response to the first question workers exhibited a high degree of homogeneity concerning their identification and commitment. In this case, only skill and, to a lesser extent, union membership proved relatively significant elements of differentiation.

The same could be said in relation to responses to the second question concerning identification of reference group. But in this case the two significant variables which seemed to differentiate workers were the branch of industry and skill. The third question concerning the location of reference groups revealed a greater degree of differentiation associated with branch of industry, age and seniority.

As for the fourth question dealing with the awareness of

social barriers to interaction, it appeared that workers were differentiated only on the basis of the branch of industry and union membership. Accordingly, and as far as the general sample was concerned, there was only a limited degree of differentiation among workers concerning the four items which, together, made up a significant basis for studying the issue of reference group and the dynamic elements on the basis of which such groups emerged and developed. These results led us, therefore, to believe that there was a significant degree of homogeneity in our sample and that the effects of the selected variables were limited. Furthermore, it was noted that these variables had not consistently affected workers' responses to particular questions in this section, except for branch of industry and, to a lesser extent, skill and union membership.

9.1 - Reference Groups: discussion

In the first part of this section we concentrated on the presentation of the results with the aim of identifying significant patterns of relationships between workers' responses to the four selected questions and a number of variables representing major characteristics. Now we shall turn to the analysis and interpretation of those results, especially in cases where significant patterns have emerged.

Self-identification in terms of the work situation was characterized by a high degree of homogeneity as reflected by workers' responses. Most of the variables selected lacked any significant relationship with the way workers perceived their identities and affiliations. The only exceptions were skill differentiation and union membership which correlated with workers' conceptions of their identities. It was observed that unskilled workers- that is to say those whose work was less likely to be characterized by occupational characteristics tended to identify themselves by occupation more than anything else. This orientation cannot be understood as a reflection of the centrality of occupation in their lives, but there is also an absence of any other specific distinguishing features. As we will see later the links between the unskilled, older workers suggest a local identification and it is likely that the concept of occupation involved here is no more than an identification with people doing the same kind of work. The self-identification of this group with industry

Synthesis table - 9.12: Correlations, by industry

1 - Mining

	Age	Educa.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union memb.
1-Self-ident.	-0.01	-0.00	0.30	0.13	0.40**	-0.21
2-Group "	-0.02	-0.07	0.06	-0.10	-0.29*	-0.01
3- " locat.	-0.07	0.19	-0.13	-0.13	-0.08	0.20
4-Perception of constrs.	0.12	-0.07	0.44	-0.02	-0.27*	0.37**

2 - Chemicals

1-Self-ident.	-0.16	0.38**	0.22	0.07	0.36**	0.02
2-Group "	0.01	-0.09	0.00	0.12	0.08	-0.21
3- " locat.	-0.13	-0.03	0.06	0.12	0.08	-0.16
4-Perception of constrs.	-0.03	-0.13	0.04	-0.04	-0.14	0.26

3 - Engineering

1-Self-ident.	-0.09	0.09	0.16	-0.06	-0.06	-0.12
2-Group "	-0.15	0.15	0.06	-0.17	-0.09	0.01
3- " locat.	-0.11	0.01	-0.02	-0.04	-0.21	-0.16
4-Perception of constrs.	0.15	-0.08	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.02

4 - Steel

1-Self-ident.	0.23**	-0.20*	0.09	0.30**	0.07	-0.13
2-Group "	-0.15	0.09	0.01	-0.08	-0.13	0.13
3- " locat.	-0.22**	0.11	-0.06	-0.13	-0.01	0.32**
4-Perception of constrs.	-0.19*	0.22**	-0.04	-0.13	-0.09	0.26**

* P = 0.01
** P = 0.00

was also weak, however, perhaps reflecting the absence of a basis for the emergence of a wider, more complex forms of self-identification. However, the failure of industry to present grounds for self-identification was also observed in the case of skilled workers. These latter seemed to have developed a more complex sense of identity, loyalty, and affiliation as they tended to identify themselves in terms of a combination of factors including occupation, industry and skill. Such an orientation among skilled workers might well point to the development of a more cosmopolitan identity, as compared with unskilled workers.

We have also observed that union membership was

significantly linked to the way in which workers perceived their identities and affiliations. For example, non-unionized workers were more likely to identify themselves occupationally or by branch of industry, while union members, although occupationally oriented, had a much wider sense of identity, combining occupation, industry and skill. However, the extent to which union membership or lack of it could explain such differences in the perception of self-identity and affiliation was unclear. One possible explanation was that unionized workers were more likely to identify with all aspects of workers identity, to have a more corporatist conception of what being a worker entailed. Non-union workers, on the other hand stressed the individualistic career characteristics implied in the notion of occupation.

Considering the plant samples individually, a certain degree of variation from the general sample was observed. In mining, for example, the only variable which differentiated workers' perception of their identity was that of skill which producing a similar tendency to that observed in the general sample. Thus, less skilled workers identified themselves either in terms of occupation or industry while skilled workers were more likely to identify themselves with a combination of factors. This tendency was also apparent, despite certain differences, in the case of chemical workers, but in this plant self-identification was also affected by the level of education; the less educated identifying themselves either in terms of occupation or industry. the better educated again combined the three aspects. Thus, in the case of chemical workers the effects of both education and skill seemed to combine to produce more complex and cosmopolitan basis for self-identification. While engineering workers could not be significantly differentiated from the overall sample, steel workers' perceptions were clearly affected by age, education and seniority. In this case, paradoxically, the complex and multi-dimensional identity was favoured by the older, less educated, senior workers while a much simpler unidimensional identity was expressed by the young, better educated, junior workers.

Given the tendency that old age, seniority and lack of education are interlocked in the total sample as a whole and particularly in the case of steel workers, there was a strong temptation to consider them as a triad in which the effects of each

were reinforced by those of the others generating such a particular pattern. however, as we have already seen once we include skill as a factor this pattern breaks down. It is, in this case, unclear why the age/education combination should lead to the pattern of slef-identity it does.

The identification of reference groups by workers as a whole was affected by two variables: branch of industry and skill differentiation. In relation to the first, workers in engineering and steel seemed to identify their group on what could be considered a class basis, that is, "workers in general". Miners and chemical workers expressed divided loyalties among a number of groupings based on occupation, personal affinities, kinship and similar working conditions. These differences, based as they were on branch of industry might be explained by both the specific work conditions and organization prevailing in these plants as well as by external factors related to the location of these plants in different environments. It has already been mentioned that the steel and engineering plants were relatively more mechanized leading to high division of labour and task fragmentation. This, in turn had the consequence of homogenizing work conditions in the various departments and workshops. In terms of external environment both these plants were located in relatively large and industrialized urban centres. Thus, both the internal characteristics of the workplace and its environment were conducive to the development of large networks of social interaction giving rise to reference groups which were not based on exclusive attributes such as occupation, branch of industry, etc.

In the other two plants, mining and chemicals, work conditions and organization were different. They were less conducive to extensive division of labour and specialization, and hence the degree of homogeneity in workers' situation was considerably reduced with separate workshops based on specific occupations playing a central role in the process of interaction (These were, for example, diggers in mining, machine operators in chemicals, and mechanics in both cases).

Location, especially in the case of miners, seemed to have played an important role. The mine was situated adjacent to a small village where a closely knit community had developed. Under such

conditions the identification of reference groups was influenced more by individual affinities (where work or occupation was a given that all shared), similarity of occupation and even kinship relations. But those external relations did not apply for the chemical plant which was situated in the same large urban area as that of the steel works. What distinguished the chemical plant was the fact that a large proportion of its workforce was composed of immigrant workers from the hinterland of this large industrial centre. Until very recently these workers were unsettled shuttling between work and their home villages, where their families lived. This specific character distinguishing workers in chemicals from those in steel might well explain the diversity of referencing among workers in the former plant.

The most important finding was, undoubtedly, that of the lack of referencing on the basis of kinship. This more than any thing else suggests that an important change has occurred in workers attitudes. It clearly indicates the potentiality for the development of class-based interaction. It also points to the importance of modern industry as a factor enhancing this potentiality since kinship relations were mentioned only by miners (8.2%) and chemical workers (6.8).

Reference group identification in the general sample also varied in relation to skill differentiation. It was observed that skilled workers (largely concentrated in the steel and engineering plants) expressed views which reflected a distinctly positive class orientation. In contrast, the less skilled workers divided their loyalty and commitment among various groups, notably groups based on the same occupation and individual affinities, although a class aspect was not altogether absent. This result seemed to reinforce responses on self-identification where skilled workers appeared more cosmopolitan in their definition of self-identity. These findings run counter to the general thesis that skilled workers have a tendency to form closely knit groups based on specific characteristics.[4] In this case, it was the less skilled who tended to present such a portrait. It might be argued that with the further development of industry and the improvement in the skill of the workforce such potentiality would

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[4]This tendency seems to be more prominent among skilled miners. See, Touraine, A. op. cit. pp.175-180

become a more dominant tendency.

Considering the plant samples we found a repetition of the degree of homogeneity which has been a major characteristic throughout. Only in mining was there some differentiation based on skill, with skilled workers tending to identify their reference groups in class terms, as "workers in general". Unskilled workers, on the other hand, stressed occupation and personal affinities. In the other plants the identification of reference groups was not significantly related to any of the major characteristics selected, reinforcing our conclusion regarding the homogenizing effects of industrial work in general.

Having discussed the basis upon which workers identified their reference groups we now turn to the location of these groups. As far as the general sample was concerned the tables revealed the significance of three variables; branch of industry, age, and the related seniority. A high percentage in both mining and engineering located their reference groups either in the same factory or in the same occupation, indicating a rather limited network of social interaction. By contrast, chemical and steel workers were clearly part of a wider network of interaction as they more often located their reference groups in other occupations or in other sectors of industry and work. These differences might be again related, at least partly, to the particular environment in which these plants were located. This is particularly true of steel workers who were situated in an urban industrial environment. In the case of chemical workers such an orientation might also have been affected by their recent migrant character bringing them into contact with people from various occupations and sectors thus widening their network of social interaction.

In mining the limitations on interaction in a small semi-urban community in which the mine or agriculture were the only important activities, restricted the location of reference groups to the same factory, the same occupation and, to some extent, different occupations. In engineering also the main location of reference groups was in the same factory, or workers from other occupations. This may very well find an explanation in the location again of this plant in a provincial town newly industrialized, but still dominated by

agriculture.

Considering the variable age, we found that older workers had a relatively more restricted network of interaction, thus limiting their reference groups to either the same factory or the same occupation. By contrast, younger workers were especially likely to interact with employees in other sectors including the self-employed, reflecting a wider and open network of social interaction. There were two possible explanation for such differences in the location of reference groups. First, it may be that old workers joined particular reference groups in a period when the diversity in economic activity was very much more limited.

When we look at industry samples, the location of reference groups was significantly varied only in the case of steel workers and the most important variables of differentiation were age and union membership. The relationship between location and age was similar to that observed in the general sample. Thus, older workers had a tendency to restrict their interaction to the same factory or occupation while the younger workers were more open, cultivating wider networks of social relations. We have already attempted to explain such differences in terms of either the opportunities offered by different environments and periods of integration in the workforce or a certain "natural" tendency, given the association between age, stability and possibilities for selective interaction.

In relation to union membership we had the interesting pattern that union members tended to be more selective in their interaction, concentrating more on the same factory or the same occupation. By contrast, non-unionized workers tended to establish wider networks of social interaction, the largest percentage locating their reference groups in other sectors of the economy. These results departed from our general hypothesis that unionization would, in principle, enhance industry-wide solidarities so widening the scope of interaction among workers. On the contrary, it appeared that union membership was an important factor contributing to the restriction of networks of social interaction. Should we consider, on these grounds, that unionization was a dynamic factor restricting interaction? At this stage, given our survey results it is difficult to answer this question.

We also noticed that the location of reference groups in the general sample was related to seniority in the job. Whereas the most senior workers tended to have a limited scope of interaction, restricted to the same factory and occupation, the less senior workers enjoyed a wider network of interaction. In this respect the scope of interaction and, therefore, the location of reference groups seemed to be determined by a combination of the effects of age and seniority. In the end, these results might be interpreted as an indication that networks of social interaction and, consequently, the formation of reference groups were clearly influenced by the specific conditions prevailing in individual plants and certain objective characteristics of the workforce such as age and seniority in the job. But, what is the relevance of these results to our major concern, that is, the process of working class formation and in particular, the development of class consciousness?

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In general the tendency toward homogenization of the workforce overall appears to vary in accordance with factors that are transitory in nature. That is to say the various locations of the plants surveyed appear to be significant in explaining variations in workers perceptions and attitudes. These variations would, then, be likely to disappear as the industrial, urban context became more uniform. Also the source of differentiation appears to be associated with differences in age, education and seniority. Here we appear to be looking at two generations of workers with different experiences of work associated with the recency of industrial development in Algeria. The factor which remains is that of skill; while it is important in explaining differences between workers its effects tend to be often overdetermined by age, education and seniority, i.e., the younger, skilled, better educated, less senior workers composing an identifiable group. Once skill is differentiated will it continue to exert such a differentiating effect.

The final issue to be discussed in this section is that relating to the workers' awareness of the existence of social barriers to interaction. As we have argued, it was important to investigate not only the nature of reference groups, the basis on which they were formed and their location, but also whether workers were aware of barriers to social interaction of a potentially class nature.

Considering the general sample our results revealed significant differentiation among workers based on branch of industry and union membership. In relation to the first, we found that miners were the least likely to exhibit an awareness of social barriers. The explanation of this result might be associated with the fact that there was little social differentiation on the basis of skill or occupational status, etc. in the mine. Also, we have pointed out the mine was located in a small town in which social and economic differentiation was limited; based on "traditional" rather than modern attributes, specifically tribal and regional in character.

By contrast, workers in steel, chemicals and, to a lesser extent, the engineering plant were more sensitive to social barriers and identifying them as social and economic in character, although in both mining and engineering the barriers to interaction were seen to be personal. Such perceptions were, however, predominantly in terms of social and economic differentiation which suggest that class-based images of social structure were emerging. These attitude might be explained by both the work experience in large and complex industrial plants as well as the location of steel and chemicals in a major urban and industrial centre. Both factors mutually reinforce one another enhancing the awareness of class barriers. Such an interpretation, however, runs counter to some classic arguments that urbanization and industrialization lead to atomization of industrial relations, fragmentation of social groups, and the dominance of individual values and norms.[5] But as these processes contributed to the destruction of old forms of social relations and institutions- i.e. the lack of significance of kinship- atomization and disintegration gave way to new forms of social relation leading to group formation on the basis of newly emergent social and economic cleavage.

The other relevant variable was the union membership. Unionized workers were less likely to be sensitive to social barriers with almost one fifth of them dismissing their relevance altogether. However, the most important difference was that union members, as against others, were less inclined to identify such barriers in terms of social and economic position. This was a rather difficult result

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[5]See for example, Goldthorpe et al. The Affluent Worker: (1968) op. cit.

for us, as it undermined the basic expectations we had of the effects of union membership on attitudes. It was results such as this that raise questions relating to the very nature of unionism in Algeria; that membership of state-controlled unions have different characteristics to those represented in the literature.[6]

Looking at the sub-samples certain similarities as well as differences were revealed. for example, skilled and unionized miners appeared less sensitive to social barriers than did their unskilled and non-unionized colleagues. Furthermore, of those who showed awareness of barriers it was the less skilled workers who were more likely to identify them in what could be considered class terms, while skilled workers perceived them as arising from individual traits. One possible explanation of these differences could be found in the fact that skilled workers were mostly young, well educated and consequently better off economically and in terms of social prestige. These were important factors which might have led these workers to be less sensitive to, or even less confronted by, social and economic differences and the barriers which they represented for social interaction and affiliation. As the situation of unskilled workers was the reverse they appeared more sensitive to such barriers and tended to identify them in quasi-class terms.

In relation to steel the common pattern identified was reversed. The younger, better educated, and non-unionized workers were more sensitive to social barriers identifying them as social and economic in character thus reflecting a class awareness. the older, less educated and unionized workers proved less sensitive and tended to perceive barriers in terms of personal characteristics. This suggests again the important effects exerted by the specific conditions of the environment in which different plants were located.

Conclusion:

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[6]The specific character of unions in situations characterized by strong state interventionism was pointed out by Weiss, F. Doctrine et Action Syndicale en Algerie, op. cit. See also, Bekheira, H. "Etat et mouvement ouvrier dans l'Algerie independante: Approche du mouvement greviste de 1977" Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord, 21, 1982, pp. 197-207.

Looking at the general sample our results revealed an important degree of homogenization among workers whether in relation to self-identification, definition of reference groups and their location or awareness of social barriers. The variables selected clearly failed to produce any consistent effect on workers' views and perceptions. The specific context represented by both the conditions at plant level and the environment in which they were located proved to be the most significant factors affecting workers' attitudes (see Table 9.11.

Most important, however, is that on all the issues investigated in this section responses have shown a clear tendency toward what might be considered a class-based form of group formation and awareness. It is true that some differences, based on factors such as branch of industry, skill and union membership, were revealed. However, these seem to be transitional factors, that is to say, relating to a specific period in the development of industrial work in Algeria or to a peculiar political context (state-controlled unions).

Changes in these situational determined factors with the expansion of industry, urbanization, extension of skill to wider sections of the workforce and political openness providing the unions with their autonomy would reinforce the tendency revealed by these results. One of the most significant findings of this survey is undoubtedly the lack of relevance of kinship as a basis for group formation. This suggests the potentiality for the development of class-based groups is greater and could be enhanced further with the absence of such traditional barriers as kinship.

9.2 - Solidarity and interests

This section is devoted to the presentation and discussion of data relating to issues of worker solidarity and interests. The central objective was to discover first whether solidarity existed and then further to elicit the forms of solidarity that existed among workers and, finally, identify what kinds of acts, if any, workers perceived as examples of lack of solidarity.[7]

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[7]The importance of the issue of worker solidarity is discussed in a
(Footnote continued)

A further related issue was the attempt to find out whether workers saw themselves as having interest in common as well as their perceptions of what such interests involved. Behind the investigation of these issues lay an attempt to grasp the reality, as perceived by workers themselves, of the emergence of group solidarity. These issues, we believe represented necessary prerequisites for the development of class consciousness, itself a sine qua none for the emergence of class as an historic agency.[8]

We have selected for discussion in this section five questions which were specifically formulated to elicit workers' views on these issues. The first question was designed to discover whether workers actually experienced something akin to solidarity. As a follow up- to an affirmative or negative response- workers were asked to provide examples of the kind of solidarity that they experienced or failed to experience. The remaining two questions dealt with the issues of interest groups and the nature of interests workers believed they had in common with others.

To anticipate the discussion we can say that these questions yielded significant responses. First, the experience of solidarity seemed important, both in its regularity and intensity. Second, and as far as its forms are concerned, solidarity among workers appeared to be mainly confined to task associated activity in the workplace, rather than major forms of resistance associated with collective militancy. However, it is nonetheless, important to note that solidarity, not only as an ideal aspired to, but as a social praxis, had some of the roots of realization among these workers. Before elaborating further on the significance of our results let us first present them, underlining the important tendencies and patterns.

9.2 - Solidarity and interests

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[7](continued)
wide range of literature. See Touraine, La Conscience Ouvriere, op. cit. pp. 227- 35. Also, Tripier, P. "Expression Salariale et Crise du Mouvement Ouvrier" Sociologie du Travail Vol 29, No1, 1987, pp.120-135.

[8]See Touraine, op. cit. Also, Marshall, G. op. cit.

The first question (Q 60) is formulated as follows: "During the period you have been working here, have you experienced any form of solidarity among workers"? This was a closed question for which we provided three alternative responses which categorized the relative intensity of the experience of solidarity as; very frequent, occasional, or absent. the answers were then conceived as revealing the degree of regularity and intensity of solidarity. We were in this question confronted with the problem that arises with all kinds of attitudinal research based on interviewing. It is an undeniable fact the results represent personal judgements of our respondents; judgements which could and did diverge as to what was considered a form of solidarity. Such problems are inherent in sociological investigation in general, and survey methods and techniques in particular, and could not be overcome by any degree of precision in formulating the questions. In this sense, it was one of the major limitations of the survey and one with which we had to contend given our choice of this technique of data collection.

Table 9.13: Solidarity, by industry

Solidarity	Mining N=53	Chemicals N=58	Engineering N=98	Steel N=136	TOTAL N=345
Very frequent	11.4	65.5	10.2	45.6	33.6
Sometimes	35.8	20.7	26.5	30.9	28.7
Never	52.8	13.8	63.3	23.5	37.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.14 P 0.01

Nevertheless, Table 9.13 reveals that a considerable proportion of workers (over one-third) had no experience of solidarity as they perceived it while another third saw it as frequent experience. The significant variations emerged, however, when we look at the different plants. Whereas in mining and engineering a majority thought solidarity was absent, a majority of workers in chemical and steel plants took the opposite view. Such variations were reflected in a significant degree of correlation (R -0.14).

The results in Table 9.14 revealed a clear tendency

Table 9.14: Solidarity, by union membership

Solidarity	Members N=164	Non-members N=177	TOTAL N=341
Very frequent	43.3	25.4	34.0
Sometimes	23.8	32.8	28.4
Never	32.9	41.8	37.6
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R 0.16		P 0.00

linking experience of solidarity to union membership. Unionized workers (43.3%) being more likely to report the existence of solidarity while non-members (41.8%) reported the opposite view. Such variation was reflected in a significant degree of correlation (R 0.16). Other variables including age, seniority and skill were not significant (See Tables in Appedix).

The second question (Q 61) was: "Can you give examples of workers' solidarity?" This was an open question designed to elicit specific forms of solidarity experienced by workers. The qualitative responses were later coded to facilitate the computation of the results. Five major themes were detected and classified accordingly: first, those referring to collective decision and action; second, responses referring to moral assistance (advice, sympathy, etc.); third, community assistance including financial aid and self-help community projects of various kinds; fourth, assistance at work taking mainly the form of providing help to carry out specific tasks in the workplace; and, fifth, what was loosely termed commitment to a general ideal or interest referring to a certain feeling of the common duty which brings workers together as members of a nation or citizens (commitment to national interest).

Table 9.15 reveals two important points. First, in the general sample the majority of those reporting forms of solidarity stressed the help in carrying out tasks provided by fellow workers in the workplace. when we look at the variations across plants, there are several tendencies. The first was among the miners and engineers who stressed collective action in the pursuit of their demands. Second in

Table 9.15: Forms of solidarity, by industry

	Mining N=20	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=35	Steel N=86	TOTAL N=202
Collective action	45.0	1.6	42.9	25.6	23.3
Moral assistance	-	16.4	2.8	5.8	7.9
Community assist.	30.0	9.8	34.3	15.1	8.3
Help at work	25.0	67.2	20.0	52.3	48.5
Commitment to general interest	-	5.0	-	1.2	2.0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

both chemical and steel there was a greater tendency to stress workplace help.

Table 9.16: Forms of solidarity, by skill

	Unskilled N=49	Semi-skilled N=77	Skilled N=77	TOTAL N=203
Collective action	18.4	15.6	33.8	23.1
Moral assistance	12.2	9.1	3.9	7.9
Community assist.	14.3	14.3	24.7	18.2
Help at work	53.1	59.7	35.1	48.8
Commitment to general interest	2.0	1.3	2.5	2.0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

Table 9.16 reveals important variations relating to skill. Whereas less skilled workers reported, in their majority (53.1%) a form of solidarity limited to assistance in the workplace, skilled workers were more likely to report forms of solidarity related to decision on collective action (33.8%) and community assistance (24.7%). Again other variables such as age, education, seniority, background and union membership had no significant effect on workers' responses (See tables in appendix).

The third question (Q 62) was also open ended: "Can you give examples of the absence of solidarity?" It was designed to elicit

from workers' experiences actions or relationships which reflected the failure of solidarity. Here again the qualitative responses were classified into five categories for computation.

However, we will not present the full results in relation to this question which in the event did not enable us to differentiate between workers in the manner we had hoped. First, it is clear from the general table that workers could cite failure in solidarity itself a telling outcome. However, more importantly our categories; in particular "lack of consensus", "opposition to collective decisions" and "mistrust" are inevitably overlapping and do not allow us to clearly differentiate the responses. The best we can say is that all these categories which suggest a breakdown of solidarity- and little more- account for the responses of the largest percentage of the workers overall (47.2%).

Table 9.17: Breakdown of solidarity, by industry

	Mining N=27	Chemicals N=36	Engineering N=70	Steel N=28	TOTAL N=161
Lack of consensus	18.5	11.1	38.6	46.4	30.4
Prominence of individualism	3.7	63.9	27.1	46.4	34.8
Opposition to collective dec.	29.6	-	2.8	-	6.2
Clientele divisions	48.2	16.7	12.9	3.6	18.0
Mistrust among workers	-	8.3	18.6	3.6	10.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

Rather than consider the variations in these categories which are overlapping, we will focus on the significance of the two disparate categories; individualism and divisions based on clientage. Clearly of significance is that according to worker responses individualism among the workforce and clientage- a factor newly identified in West European studies- accounted for 52.8% of the responses among those reporting the absence of solidarity.

It will be seen that while miners experience little problems in relation to individualism, 63.9% of chemical workers and

46.4% of steel workers identified individualism as the main problem. Table 9.17 suggests that clientage was viewed as a factor undermining solidarity by a little less than 20% of respondents reporting breakdown of solidarity whatever age group they were in. Similarly, age did not appear to greatly affect the workers views of the importance of individualism.

Table 9.18: Breakdown of solidarity, by age

	22-30 N=48	31-40 N=59	41-50 N=31	51-62 N=23	TOTAL N=161
Lack of consensus	35.4	27.1	32.2	26.1	30.4
Prominence of individualism	39.6	33.9	25.8	39.1	34.8
Opposition to collective decision	2.1	3.4	12.9	13.1	6.2
Clientele divisions	16.7	18.6	19.3	17.4	18.0
Mistrust among workers	6.2	17.0	9.8	4.3	10.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

As might be expected Table 9.19 shows that union members identified individualism as a major factor undermining solidarity, but less expected they also suggest that clientage was an important factor in inhibiting its development. It must be said that other variables were less significant in differentiating workers' experiences of the absence of solidarity (See tables in Appendix).

The fourth question (Q 54) was: "Who do you think are the people with the same or similar interests to your own?" This was a closed question categorizing five alternative answers. The first of these referred to workers-in-general offering the possibility of identifying interests on a class dimension. The second category was occupation. The third and fourth categories were much more diffuse, loosely defined groups, namely "popular masses", and "all patriots" respectively. While the second statement attempted to capture a corporate dimension these last two offered forms of identification specifically linked with the elite-mass dichotomy and national identification; that is negating any class dimension. The fifth statement denied the existence of common interests altogether;

Table 9.19: Breakdown of solidarity, by union membership

	Members N=74	Non-members N=86	TOTAL N=160
Lack of consensus	23.0	37.2	30.6
Prominence of individualism	44.6	26.8	35.0
Opposition to collective decisions	1.3	9.3	5.6
Clientele divisions	25.7	11.6	18.1
Mistrust among workers	5.4	15.1	10.7
TOTAL	100	100	100

offering an individualist orientation. The main objective behind this question was to reveal whether Algerian industrial workers had a conception of affiliation based on their awareness of specific interests.

Table 9.20: Perception of interest by industry

	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=58	Engineering N=100	Steel N=139	TOTAL N=371
All workers	51.4	31.0	64.0	64.7	56.6
Workers in similar occupations	24.3	34.5	14.0	5.0	15.9
The masses	17.6	1.7	19.0	2.2	9.7
Patriots	6.7	19.0	3.0	28.1	15.6
None	-	13.8	-	-	2.2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.03			P 0.29	

Table 9.20 reveals that in three of the four plants a majority of workers declared that their interest group was represented by "all workers" without distinction. In only two cases mining and chemical did occupation prove a significant basis of shared interest. Overall a majority of workers in our sample perceived their group as "all workers" (56.6%).

Table 9.21: Perception of interest by skill

	Unskilled N=81	Semi-skilled N=140	Skilled N=150	Total N=371
All workers	42.0	49.3	71.3	56.6
Workers in similar occupations	21.0	22.1	7.3	15.9
The masses	19.8	7.1	6.7	9.7
Patriots	12.3	18.6	14.7	15.6
None	4.9	2.9	-	2.2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
	R -0.17		P 0.00	

A clear relationship emerges in Table 9.21 between perceptions of interests and skill. Whereas an overwhelming majority of skilled workers perceived interests in common with "all workers" less skilled workers were less likely to do so, with the unskilled, in particular identifying the "masses" (19.8%) as comprising their interest group. Other variables were even less significant in affecting workers perceptions.

The fifth and final question (Q 55) in this section was a follow-up: "What is the nature of these shared interests?" This was posed as a closed question with four alternative answers, each stressing a particular characteristic such as economic, occupational, sociocultural, or political interest. These statements were not only intended to underline the nature of the perceived interests, but also to grasp the type of consciousness prevailing among workers. For example, the characterization of shared interests as occupational would betray a form of consciousness which lacked class dimension and perhaps even operating as an obstacle to its development. Other forms include emancipatory consciousness,[9] and revolutionary consciousness.[10]

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[9]See Touraine, A. La Conscience Ouvriere, op. cit. He advocates the idea that the prominent form of consciousness in modern capitalism is that claiming emancipation in the development of society expressed by a new generation of qualified workers.

[10]See Giddens, A. The Class structure of the advanced Societies, op. cit. Also, Mann, M. Class Consciousness and Action Among the Western Working class. London, Macmillan, 1973.

Table 9.22: Nature of interest, by industry

	Mining N=73	Chemicals N=50	Engineering N=98	Steel N=138	TOTAL N=359
Economic	46.6	22.0	70.4	70.3	58.8
Occupational	47.9	48.0	12.3	10.9	24.0
Social & cultural	4.1	24.0	16.3	10.1	12.5
Political	1.4	6.0	1.0	8.7	4.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.08			P 0.06	

Table 9.22 shows that workers overall were more likely to identify their shared interests as economic (58.8%) while very nearly a quarter of the respondents saw their interests as occupational in character. The significance of the economic or class-based interests was particularly strong among the engineering and steel workers, but was expressed by a small minority in chemicals. Those seeing occupational interests as primary were numerous in the chemical plant whereas miners were equally likely to stress economic or occupational interests.

Table 9.23: Nature of interests, by education

	Illiterate N=148	Primary N=109	Secondary N=90	College N=12	TOTAL N=359
Economic	66.9	63.3	37.8	75.0	58.8
Occupational	20.9	18.3	37.8	8.3	24.0
Social & cultural	8.8	13.8	16.7	16.7	12.5
Political	3.4	4.6	7.7	-	4.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.16			P 0.00	

The results in Table 9.23 reveal the existence of a significant relationship between the perception of the nature of interests and the level of education. The college educated had a strong tendency to consider their interests as being economic (75%), as did the less educated, those with secondary school background were,

on the other hand, less likely to do so.

Table 9.24: Correlations in the general Sample

	Indus.	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union
Existence of solidarity	-0.14*	0.09	0.03	-0.05	0.10	0.09	0.16**
Forms of solidarity	(1)-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Absence of solid.	(1)-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Percep. of interest gr.	-0.03	-0.03	0.07	0.04	-0.01	-0.17**	0.01
Nature of interests	-0.08	-0.08	0.16**	-0.02	-0.07	-0.02	0.06

* P = 0.01
** P = 0.00
(1) It was not possible to calculate the degree of correlation for these two items given the coding of their categories as separate questions.

When we consider the correlations relating to all three issues that is solidarity, the perception of interest groups and the nature of interests, as against selected characteristics of the workforce it is evident that the degree of differentiation within the sample is rather limited. In respect of the extent to which workers experienced solidarity, the responses were significantly related to only two variables; branch of industry and union membership. As for the perception of interest groups only skill proved the differentiating factor while the identification of the nature of interests was significantly related only to the level of education.

Overall, once again workers responses exhibited an important degree of homogeneity notwithstanding the various lines of differentiation represented by these selected variables.

9.2- Solidarity and interests: a discussion

Looking at the extent to which workers experienced solidarity we found that one-third of the sample (33.6%) expressed the frequent experience of solidarity while less than one third (28.7%) experienced it only occasionally and just over one-third (37.7%)

reported the breakdown in solidarity. These were in themselves important indications testifying that solidarity was experienced by groups of workers in the four plants.

However, when we consider these plants individually some significant variations appeared. In mining and engineering, workers tended to report the absence of solidarity or its experience occasionally. Chemicals and steel workers expressed the reverse view, with a majority reporting frequent experience of solidarity. Such differences concealed other important features, in mining and engineering where solidarity was not frequently experienced when it occurred it centred around the significant issue of collective actions. In steel and chemicals it assumed the less significant form of task related help in the workplace.

Three factors might be relevant in explaining why the more significant forms of solidarity were experienced as they did by miners and engineering workers. First, there was the relatively small size of the workforce in these two plants compared to the other two. This was an important characteristic which contributed to the existence of intensive interaction and facilitated communication among workers. Second, the layout and structure of these plants was also conducive to frequent and intensive contact since departments or workshops were not separated or isolated in different places, except that is the maintenance department in mining. Third, both the mine and the engineering plant were located in relatively small and less heterogeneous communities. The majority of workers were recruited locally while chemical and steel workers were recruited from various regions constituting the hinterland of the industrial and urban centre of Annaba. The fact that workers in mining and engineering were local residents was a significant factor enhancing the emergence and development of a sense of collective identity. Thus, the influence of the environment represented by preestablished networks of social relations might well have played an important role in the emergence of solidarity.

Also, union membership emerged as an important factor in the experience of solidarity. Thus, while unionized workers tended to report frequent experience of solidarity non-members have stressed its absence. This result seemed to confirm the importance of the union

organization, however limited its role may be, to the development of solidarity among specific groups of workers. unions are channels of communication among members providing them with a relatively better chance of being informed about their common situation and problems. This in itself was important in the sense that it would enhance the possibility for the mobilization of workers around certain issues and events which were of interest to them. However, in the case of Algeria the role of the union is determined by its dependence and subordination to the state, leaving it with very limited possibilities for mobilizing workers around issues of collective action which would threaten industrial relations.

The experience of solidarity was also related to skill, with the skilled workers more likely to report solidarity in the form of collective action while the less skilled reported task related help. Such differences lend support to the hypothesis that high levels of skill contribute to the emergence and development of group identity and strengthen awareness of interests.

This relationship between higher skill levels and more significant forms of solidarity might be explained by the fact that the bargaining power of skilled workers provided them with a degree of job security which the less skilled obviously lacked. This differentiation among various groups of workers in terms of their hierarchical position and distribution of bargaining power may be significant in that skilled workers had a number of shared characteristics which might have contributed to enhance their group identity. These included, among others, longer job experience, affiliation to formal schools or training centres, certain similarities in their activities and working conditions, etc. Skill is also related to preestablished networks of social relations with skilled workers were more likely to have been recruited from the local labour markets while the less skilled workers were recruited from a wider range of areas.

When we looked at the issue of break down of solidarity some interesting results were revealed. Solidarity was specifically hindered by individualism and clientage. However, their effects varied according to branch of industry, education, skill and union membership. Even here the emerging patterns were not clearly

established they were rather revealing slight tendencies except that is branch of industry. Thus miners stressed clientage as a particularly important factor inhibiting solidarity among workers. This might be explained by the location of the mine in a small community representing the principal branch of activity for a long period of time. The fact that it was a closely knit rural community meant "traditional" structures remained strong. The absence of alternative employment opportunities, except for seasonal agricultural activity, increased demand for jobs creating a context of competition. Under such conditions the industry could not resist the influence of the environment and its dominant pattern of social relations based on traditional structures.

In chemicals individualism appeared as the main element inhibiting the development of solidarity among workers. The importance of individualism can be linked to the migrant character of a large proportion of workers in this plant. The same phenomenon was also observed in the steel plant which constituted together with chemicals the earliest and most important industrial projects in the Eastern region of Algeria. Conditions of migrant labour including a gradual rupture with previous structures and difficulties relating to their integration in the new environment might have accentuated their sense of individualism.

In relation to education we had a pattern of responses in which the better educated workers stressed clientage as an obstacle to solidarity while the less educated tended to stress individualism. It is not unexpected since those who possessed some resources to draw upon will tend to use that. consequently, they would appear individualistic and undermining solidarity. Those lacking such resources will tend to find in clientage an alternative means and appear to others to be undermining solidarity. This interpretation is reinforced by the pattern relating skill to breakdown of solidarity. Again the skilled workers perceived clientage as a major obstacle in the face of solidarity while the unskilled stressed individualism.

Perceptions of breakdown of solidarity were also related to union membership. Union members were particularly concerned with the prominence of individualism and, to some extent, clientage both considered as important obstacles inhibiting the emergence of

solidarity among workers. However, if individualism was expected to be a favourite target for union members, clientage was less likely to attract their attention. Concern with individualism and clientage among union members can be explained by their own experience of the functioning of the union organization. It was characterized by absence of democracy and accountability to its members as well as lack of respect for normal procedures governing its functioning. Clientage also flourished becoming a dominant pattern of behaviour and conduct within the union organization and in its relation with management. This may be a specific feature of state- controlled unions as is the case in Algeria.

The results revealed important tendencies relating to identification of interests and their location with a majority of workers identifying their interest group as "all workers" (56.6%), reflecting a sense of collective identity which distinguished workers as a specific social group. Furthermore, this perception was not affected by various characteristics differentiating the workforce. Only skill, once again, seemed significant in this respect, whereas an overwhelming majority of skilled workers (71.3%) identified their interests on class basis, the unskilled workers were more likely to use occupation or the diffuse category "masses" as a basis to identify their interests. These differences provide more support to the argument that skill was positively related to the emergence of calss-based attitudes and perceptions of identity and interests. This might be explained by some specific features of the skilled workers as against the unskilled.

- Standardized work situation and experience given similar positions in the production process (e.g. machine operatives and maintenance workers).
- Such position included similar working conditions (intensified work rhythms, routine and task fragmentation, etc.) leading to the homogenization of their experiences and attitudes to work.
- The possession of skills and qualifications entailed a relative degree of job discretion and some differential treatment by supervisors and even management.

By contrast, the less skilled workers lacked the homogenizing effects of job specialization as they were scattered on

various subaltern jobs and tasks. In addition, many were migrant labourers recruited from different areas and they continued to lead their lives in separate ways and manners given lack of integration in new and stable communities. This was, particularly, true of single workers and those who left their families in their villages. Hence, the relative importance of either occupation or "the masses" as their reference point.

The significant degree of homogeneity exhibited in relation to the perception of interest group was confirmed by responses concerning the nature of shared interests. The majority (58.8%) in the sample identified them as economic in character. Such a view reflected awareness of the immediate position as wage labour. While it might be argued that such a perception expressed narrowly conceived interests. It has, nonetheless, pinpointed the main arena of conflict and struggle between workers and management. It also represents the issue most likely to reveal the common position and interests of workers and that of opposed groups.

These perceptions were more pronounced among steel and engineering workers and, to a lesser extent, in mining. Again these results point to the importance of the composition of the workforce in terms of skill and the nature of the production process. Both these plants had a high percentage of skilled workers and they had complex, hard working conditions and intensified work rhythms. This suggests that class-based perceptions were more likely to emerge and develop in large-scale complex industries.

Significant variations were also found in relation to education with the better educated strongly identifying shared interests as economic in character while the less educated had a tendency to perceive them as occupational. These differences lend more weight to the tendency observed above in which groups of workers in complex technically more advanced industries possessing specific resources such as, skill and education are more likely to develop class-based perceptions of their position and interests.

Conclusion:

In this section we were able to show that a relative degree of solidarity existed among workers and that a high level of homogeneity characterized their perceptions and attitudes. However, solidarity was affected by specific conditions characterizing different plants and their respective workforce. Its development also depended, to some extent, upon the existence of structures which enhanced social interaction among workers. In this case the union branch and its structures proved to be of some relevance, if only as channels of communication.

However, forms of solidarity experienced by workers revealed both the extent and limits set upon its development. Thus, in view of the absence of clearly knit ties and intensive social interaction among various groups of workers the most common forms of solidarity were limited to mutual help in the workplace. It has also emerged that more significant forms of solidarity were more likely to developed when close links existed among workers leading to intensified social interaction. Such conditions included: the size of the workforce, preestablished networks of social relations including those based on informal groups.

The Breakdown of solidarity and, its limited forms when it existed, were perhaps symptomatic of the absence of a strong and independent working class organization. This case has confirmed that the emergence of collective identity and awareness of common interests were not a given phenomena or unrelated to everyday struggles, something which precedes in existence the concrete forms of struggle. On the contrary, solidarity among workers can only express a developed sense of identity and shared interests and strengthen it further.

Another important finding related the absence of solidarity was the prominence of individualism among workers and the flourishing of clientage. Many students of developing societies have argued that such phenomena were the inevitable outcome of rapid and sudden social change and lack of adaptation on the part of workers whose rural origin and background have facilitated their insertion into such networks of social relations.[11] While we cannot deny the

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(Footnote continued)

significance of rapid changes and problems of adaptation to new social and economic structures whose rationality and values differ from those of traditional structures. However, such arguments suffered from over simplification as well as a tendency toward psychologist reductionism. The major problem is not lack of adaptation to a new rationality and new forms of organization as much as their absence. In the case of Algeria, these were either suppressed or dominated and controlled by a powerful bureaucratic stratum using them to consolidate its position and interests in the confusion and eclecticism which characterized Algeria' development since independence.[12] In fact new forms of rationality and organization express developed and mature forms of social relations of production themselves expressing the interests and ideologies of dominant social classes. In Algeria, however, the crystallization of class relations is yet to be achieved.

9.3 - Participation and attitudes to trade unionism

The third and final section of this chapter is devoted to the presentation and analysis of data relating to issues bearing on workers' participation in union activities; their attitudes to union officials, and their position regarding the principal objectives of trade unions.[13]

We have already seen that the level of unionization in our sample was relatively high (48%), although there were variations between plants. The question remains, however, as to whether such a level of unionization was matched by their involvement in union affairs. In order to measure the extent of this participation we

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[11](continued)
[11]See, in the case of Algeria the example, among others, of Bernard, Ch. "Les Resistances Ouvriere dans l'Algerie en voie d'Industrialisation", Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord, Vol.21, 1982. pp.133-45.

[12]As an example of confusion and absence of a clear development strategy the political orientation and choice of a future society has seen many contradictory ideological expressions and concrete measures of implementation, starting by workers self-management (1962-65), statism (1967-79) and now a more liberal capitalist orientation (1980-).

[13]On the importance and specific character of the unions in North African countries. See, Salah-bey, A. "Trade unions and economic and social development in the Maghreb" International Labour Review, 94, No.4, 1966,pp. 375-97.

looked at two indices: first, attendance at branch meetings, and second, the number seeking (or who had sought) union office. These two measures would, we believe, provide us with some insight into workers' commitment. In the event, it appears that union participation was extremely limited, revealing that the high level of membership was perhaps the result of bureaucratic mobilization of the workforce, and instrumental attitudes on the part of the workers.

In this section we also consider workers' attitudes to union officials and their perception of the unions objectives. [14] These issues were not only important subjects in themselves, but it was felt that their investigation might also help us to interpret the participation rates as well as providing data relating to the dominant pattern of management to which union organizations and the branches were subjected.

To anticipate, it was possible to argue that unionized workers in our sample were largely due-paying members with no effective participation in union branches. This lack of participation was not only due to apathy and lack of commitment on the part of workers, but had roots in the very status and orientation of union organization, and the lack of democratic practices at all levels. Before going any further we will first present the results.

9.3 - Participation and attitudes to unionism [15]

The first question was (Q 66): "How many branch meetings have you attended last year? It was a closed question with three alternative answers, the first category pointed to attendance once in a year, the second, twice or more, and the third, no attendance. The significance of attending branch meetings resided in the fact that it

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[14] See for example, Benhlal, M. "Le syndicat come enjeu politique au Maroc: 1955-1981". Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord, 21, 1982, pp. 217-58.

[15] It must be noted that the rates of participation were calculated in relation not only to union membership but to the sample as a whole. Two reasons led us to adopt this; first there is an institutional confusion between union branches and Workers' Councils developed under the scheme of Socialist Management of Enterprises launched in 1973. Second, unions activities in Algeria are not restricted to membership but extended to all workers. Unions claim the representation of all workers and act accordingly.

represented a simple form of participation in union affairs. Participants can, at least theoretically, influence the process of decision making through suggestions, approval or disapproval of particular ideas or action taken by the leadership.[16]

According to the union Statutes, branches have two ordinary meetings. In addition, extra-ordinary meetings could be convened when it was necessary. Thus, in principle workers had at least two meetings to attend each year. But our results revealed that in practice things were different.

Table 9.25: Meeting attendance, by industry

	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=100	Steel N=140	TOTAL N=375
Once	6.8	9.8	24.0	2.1	10.1
Twice or more	35.1	23.0	42.0	6.4	24.3
Never	58.1	67.2	34.0	91.5	65.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.18			P 0.00	

Table 9.25 reveals two important points. First, the level of attendance was generally low (just one third of the sample). Second, attendance varied quite considerably from one plant to another. It was relatively high in mining and engineering, and low in chemicals and, especially steel.

Table 9.26 also shows a significant relationship between meeting attendance and age. While the older workers had a greater percentage of attendance (45.1%) the younger were less likely to attend (19%). Again, Table 9.27 reveals a significant pattern linking attendance and seniority, with senior workers more likely to attend (52.2%) than did the less senior workers (16.2%).

A similar pattern emerges from Table 9.28 with a

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[16] On the significance of participation in union activities; see, Hemingway, J. Conflict and Democracy: studies in trade union government. Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1978.

Table 9.26: Meeting attendance, by age

	22-30 N=105	31-40 N=140	41-50 N=78	51-62 N=51	TOTAL N=374
Once	5.7	8.6	12.8	19.6	10.2
Twice or more	13.3	26.4	34.6	25.5	24.3
Never	81.0	65.0	52.6	54.9	65.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.21				P 0.00

Table 9.27: Meeting attendance, by seniority

	1-5 N=130	6-10 N=141	11-15 N=70	16-20 N=10	21+ N=23	TOTAL N=374
Once	6.9	10.6	18.6	-	4.4	10.2
Twice or more	9.3	34.0	22.8	40.0	47.8	24.3
Never	83.8	55.4	58.6	60.0	47.8	65.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.17					P 0.00

Table 9.28: Meeting attendance, by skill

	Unskilled N=83	Semi-skilled N=141	Skilled N=151	TOTAL N=375
Once	2.4	12.1	12.6	10.1
Twice or more	19.3	24.1	27.2	24.3
Never	78.3	63.8	60.2	65.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
	R -0.15			P 0.00

relatively high percentage of skilled workers attending meetings (39.2) compared to the less skilled (21.7%). The same pattern is indicated by Table 9.29 with union members more likely to go to meetings (42.7%) than did non-union members (27.5%).

The second question (Q 67) was: "Have you ever been a

Table 9.29: Meeting attendance, by union membership

	Members N=178	Non-members N=193	TOTAL N=371
Once	9.6	10.9	10.2
Twice or more	33.1	16.6	24.5
Never	57.3	72.5	65.3
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R 0.10		P 0.02

candidate for union office or the workers' council?" It was a closed question with three possible answers similar to those provided on the previous question. Contrary to the attendance of meetings, candidature for office presupposed a higher level of commitment, abilities and qualifications to fulfil the task of representing workers on management structures and acting as a mediating agency between members and the union leadership at both regional and national levels. Given these complex and demanding tasks candidature for union office was a much more serious test which might reveal, on one hand, the degree of commitment among workers and, on the other, the extent of democratic government of the unions.

Table 9.30: Candidature for office, by union membership

	Members N=178	Non-members N=193	TOTAL N=371
Once	7.9	3.6	5.7
Twice or more	4.5	0.5	2.4
Never	87.6	95.9	91.9
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R 0.13		P 0.01

Table 9.30 indicates that candidature to hold office was low even among union members. However, they were more likely to put their candidature (12.4%) than did non-union members (4.1%) who were not admitted to do so any way.

The third question was (Q 69): "What do you think of workers representatives in the union branch and workers' council?" Six alternative answers were provided. The first expresses workers' satisfaction with them, the second pointed to their biased position toward management, the third stressed their commitment to workers' interests, the fourth portrayed them as a self-interested group, the fifth referred to their lack of effective power, and the final category referred to breakdown of communication between workers and their representatives.

This question is not only an attempt to discover various opinions held by workers about their representatives but might help explain lack of workers' participation and the way union branches and councils were run.

Table 9.31: Opinion on delegates by industry

	Mining N=70	Chemicals N=60	Engineering N=99	Steel N=136	TOTAL N=365
Do their best	14.3	21.7	14.1	13.2	15.1
On management's side	8.6	3.3	25.3	11.8	13.4
On workers' side	12.9	3.3	-	2.2	3.8
Self-interested	62.9	66.7	50.5	63.2	60.3
Lack authority	-	-	7.1	5.9	4.1
Don't know them	1.3	5.0	3.0	3.7	3.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.04			P 0.19	

Table 9.31 reveals one important tendency, that is in all four plants fifty per cent or more of respondents perceived delegates as a self-interested group. The same tendency was also apparent in relation to the general sample (60.3%).

Table 9.32 indicates a pattern linking opinion on delegates and occupational background, with workers from non-industrial backgrounds more likely to express a positive opinion on delegates than those from an industrial background who stressed that delegates constituted a self interested group.

Table 9.32: Opinions on delegates by background

	Casual labour N=3	Self-empl. N=18	Agric. N=37	Servs. N=16	Constr. N=56	Indus. N=105	TOTAL N=235
Do their best	33.3	11.1	29.7	25.0	7.1	11.4	14.5
On manag't's side	33.3	27.8	10.8	25.0	10.7	11.4	13.6
On workers' side	-	-	2.7	-	3.6	2.9	3.6
Self-interested	-	55.6	48.6	37.5	71.4	62.9	59.6
Lack authority	33.3	5.6	2.7	12.5	5.4	4.8	5.5
Don't know them	-	-	5.5	-	1.8	6.6	4.2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.18 P 0.00

The final question in this section was (Q 70) formulated as follows: "In your view, what is the principal mission of the union organization?" Three alternative answers were provided; the first expressed a "traditional" task relating to wages and working conditions, the second pointed to the role of mobilizing and uniting workers, the third expressed a conception of unions as agencies of representation defending workers in society at large.

The significance of this question extended beyond eliciting workers' conceptions of the unions mission to that of revealing the type of unions workers aspired to have. Alternative responses referred indirectly to three particular types of unions: the traditional corporatist; the militant union with limited class objectives; and the more militant, class-oriented union extending its role beyond the workplace and grievances raised there.

Table 9.33 reveals two important points: first, a majority in the sample (66.5%) perceived the union's mission as the defence and representation of their interests in society at large; second, whereas chemical, engineering and mine workers stressed the broad mission, steel workers had stressed both traditional and broad missions.

Table 9.34 shows a significant pattern linking workers'

Table 9.33: The union's mission, by industry

	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=57	Engineering N=100	Steel N=139	TOTAL N=370
Wages & working conditions	8.1	1.8	13.0	41.0	20.8
Mobilize & unite workers	24.3	8.8	16.0	5.8	12.7
Defend & represent workers	67.6	89.4	71.0	53.2	66.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.26				P 0.00

Table 9.34: Union's mission, by education

	Illiterate N=150	Primary N=113	Secondary N=93	College N=14	TOTAL N=370
Wages & working conditions	26.0	19.5	14.0	21.4	20.8
Mobilize & unite workers	13.3	16.8	7.5	7.1	12.7
Defend & represent workers	60.7	63.7	78.5	71.5	66.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.13				P 0.00

perceptions of the union's mission and education. While the less educated had a divided conception in which unions had various missions, the better educated expressed a strong preference for a union with a broad mission.

Table 9.35 reveals that the unskilled workers were more likely to stress both the broad mission and that of mobilization. Unexpectedly perhaps, the skilled workers showed more concern with the mission of defending wages and working conditions.

9.3 - Participation and attitudes to unionism

Table 9.35: Union's mission, by skill

	Unskilled N=82	Semi-skilled N=138	Skilled N=150	TOTAL N=370
Wages & working conditions	13.4	13.0	32.0	20.8
Mobilize & unite workers	23.2	11.6	8.0	12.7
Defend & represent workers	63.4	75.4	60.0	66.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
	R -0.13		P 0.01	

Table 9.36: Correlation for the general sample

	Indus.	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union
Attendance to meetings	0.18**	0.21**	0.08	0.06	-0.17**	-0.15**	0.10
Candidature for office	0.14**	0.03	0.06	-0.03	-0.06	-0.05	0.13*
Opinion on union offs.	0.04	0.10	0.04	0.18**	-0.01	0.09	0.03
Union's miss.	0.26**	0.07	0.13**	-0.02	0.05	-0.13*	-0.00

* P = 0.01
** P = 0.00

The results indicate that as far as the general sample was concerned participation in the form of attendance to meetings and candidature for office was generally low. However, such lack of participation was not evenly spread among workers. This was especially true of attendance to branch meetings which seemed to vary significantly according to a number of variables, including branch of industry, age, seniority and skill. In relation to industry, attendance to meetings was relatively high in mining and engineering. Two different reasons might explain this; first, in mining the important factor of clientage operated between workers and their local leadership . Traditional bonds based on regionalism and kinship were relatively strong. delegates in the branch competed among themselves to secure commitment and support from workers who were tied to them by those various relationships. To this must be added the fact that

Table 9.37: Correlation for plant samples

	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union
1 - Mining						
Attendance to meetings	0.03	0.05	0.03	0.01	0.33**	0.44**
Candidature for office	0.12	-0.14	0.19	0.15	0.25*	0.19
Opinion on union offs.	0.09	0.02	0.54	0.10	0.11	-0.02
Union's miss.	-0.11	0.24*	0.24	0.08	0.33**	-0.10
2 - Chemicals						
Attendance to meetings	-0.28*	-0.04	0.08	0.10	0.33**	0.06
Candidature for office	-0.02	-0.08	0.23	0.13	0.10	0.29*
Opinion on union offs.	-0.34**	0.40**	0.34**	0.34**	0.20	0.23
Union's miss.	-0.24	0.19	0.18	0.26	0.10	-0.08
3 - Engineering						
Attendance to meetings	-0.21	0.04	0.04	0.23**	0.07	0.05
Candidature for office	-0.13	0.00	0.11	0.17	0.11	0.04
Opinion on union offs.	0.00	-0.07	0.06	0.14	0.17	-0.01
Union's miss.	-0.08	0.06	0.15	0.06	0.16	0.01
4 - Steel						
Attendance to meetings	-0.19*	0.10	0.25**	0.12	0.13	0.25**
Candidature for office	-0.03	-0.03	0.05	0.20**	0.04	0.03
Opinion on union offs.	0.11	-0.09	0.18	0.10	0.00	0.03
Union's miss.	-0.13	0.14	0.16	0.03	0.26**	0.06

* P = 0.01
** P = 0.00

miners constituted a small and closed community in which the union had a traditionally strong influence.

The case of engineering has a different explanation. The plant was relatively new and located in an agriculturally dominated area with the union branch and its activities representing a genuine qualitative change for the workforce. This resulted in workers showing

greater interest in the union branch and the "workers' council". The recency of this plant meant that such organs of participation were an alternative experience to authoritarian forms of management and control experienced in the private sector.

One of the other factor affecting participation in meetings was age. The younger workers were clearly less enthusiastic. This might be explained by two reasons. First, young age in itself can be associated with less interest both in work and union activity. The younger workers, as we have already seen, were highly instrumental in their conception of work thus minimizing the extent of their involvement in workplace activities. The second point, not unrelated to this, is that younger workers were in their early careers, feeling more the intensity of the pressure and anxiety generated by this new experience and negatively affecting their orientation to work and related activities.[17]

This interpretation is confirmed by the pattern linking participation to seniority with the more senior workers reporting higher rates of attendance to union meetings. Two factors might explain this tendency. First, seniority means experience and more interests at stake. One of the channels to defend them is through greater participation in union affairs, if only in order to be better informed. Second, seniority also means familiarity with work and its organizational environment leading to the emergence of consent among workers toward existing structures and participating in the "game". In a sense, the instrumental attitude observed among younger workers which led to their withdrawal assumes here a different form, one of calculated and pragmatic participation.

The results indicated that skilled workers had a higher percentage of participation in union meetings. This tendency confirmed the general proposition that skilled workers were the group most active in the workforce. The reasons may vary, but in this case we have already seen that skilled workers have developed a sense of shared interests and were better placed, given their qualifications, to defend those interests. The participation in union meetings did not

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[17]See for example, Beynon & Blackburn, Perceptions of Work, op. cit. pp.123-34

express an abstract commitment to trade unions as much as the defence of specific interests. We are facing a paradoxical situation with unskilled workers in a more disadvantageous position participating less than the skilled better placed to defend their interests without the unions. In fact, this situation points to the unequal distribution of resources to influence decision making even inside the union organization.

Looking at the sub-samples we found some variations between plants. In mining attendance was more important among skilled and unionized workers while in chemicals attendance was significantly affected by skill and age with the older workers reporting a higher rate of participation. In engineering, however, differences in attendance were related to seniority with the more senior workers reporting a higher rate of participation. In steel a high percentage of participation was found among the older workers. Overall, workers' attendance to branch meetings was significantly related to age, skill and seniority. The participants were generally old, skilled and senior.

However, the most important tendency revealed by the results is that of a general attitude of disinterest and withdrawal from unions activity regardless of specific characteristics. Workers considered union meetings in their own terms as "a waste of time", which could be spent on some other urgent matters. Most of them indicated that they would rather use that time to recuperate, attend to family problems and even to take up parallel jobs outside the plant to increase their meagre wages. Union officials and delegates, however, took the opportunity of such meetings to emphasize their own role, pressing for higher productivity and urging greater worker discipline. Workers considered that such statements echoed management interests, a further confirmation of the leaders' betrayal of their cause. In fact, workers were discouraged from taking part in union meetings by the dismissive, arrogant and patronizing attitudes of their laders.[18]

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[18]Through our observations and discussion with some union leaders we felt a strong tendency among them to overestimate both their role and achievements, while underestimating workers' grievances and problems.
(Footnote continued)

The second and more important form of participation in union affairs was candidature to hold union office. As expected our results revealed a very low degree of commitment to such an active and effective participation (12.4% of total union membership in the sample).

Looking at the general sample the only variable differentiating workers in this respect was, of course, union membership.[19] It was interesting to discover that non-union members also put forward their candidature to hold union office. In industry samples differences among workers on the grounds of union membership was found only in the chemical plant. In other plants the degree of homogeneity among workers was very high, with the overwhelming majority, regardless of any distinction, not interested in holding union office. It was significant to consider the reasons behind this total lack of interest. Four major reasons were invoked by workers: a simple lack of interest in the union (26.5%); lack of ability to hold office (20%); ineffectiveness of union organs (37.%); and finally, avoidance of responsibility (16.5%).

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[18] (continued)
In most cases, they tended to perceive their relationship with workers in what was typically patron-client terms. They also revealed a high degree of sensitivity to criticism coming from rank-and-file members and considered it a challenge to their legitimate authority, dismissing it as individually motivated and consequently harmful to the union.

[19] Membership of the union is a necessary condition for election to any union organ whether branch council or workers' council. This was made explicit in Article 13, decree no. 72-47 of March 3, 1972, regulating workers' participating under the charter of "Socialist management of enterprises". See the National Commission for Socialist Management of Enterprises: Gestion Socialiste des Enterprises: Charte et Textes d'Application. Alger, 1975. p.34.

The process of control of the union organization was strengthened further by the introduction of new regulation adopted by the FLN, Extra-ordinary Congress of June 1980. The party statutes were revised to include article 120 explicitly stating that all elected leadership of mass organizations, i.e., trade unions, the youth organization (UNJA), the women's organization (UNFA), the peasants' union (UNPA, etc.) must be party militants. The application of this regulation was immediate and had profound repercussions on the unions. See, Taleb, A. "Les Rapports Parti-Syndicat en Algerie a Taravers l'Application de l'Article 120 des Statuts du FLN", Annuaire de 'Afrique du Nord, Vol.21, 1982, pp.183-96.

The lack of interest in active participation might be explained by both structural and subjective factors. These referred to the fact that workers were neither prepared nor motivated for such a role. It also pointed to the lack of internal democracy and autonomy as union branches were subordinated to various external interests and pressures.

It is important to consider the relation between lack of active participation in the union and workers attitudes regarding union leaders and union objectives. It might be argued that such phenomena as disinterest and withdrawal from unions were determined by attitudes of mistrust towards local leadership and disagreement about the actual objectives of the union organization.

The results revealed an important degree of discontent with union officials and disagreement with union objectives determined more by the leaders interest in power sharing with the state bureaucrats than by their members interests. it is significant that 60.3% of the sample regarded union officials and delegates as constituting a self-interested group as against only 18.9% expressing a positive judgement. More importantly, such attitude was held by all workers regardless of various distinctions. Only in chemicals, was this attitude differentiated according to age, education, background and seniority. The emerging pattern was that the older, less educated, more senior workers from an agricultural background expressed positive attitudes towards union officials.

How can we explain the consistent and general tendency among workers to see their representatives as a self-interested group? Two important points seemed to converge in generating such a widely held opinion. First, there is a concerted effort to bring the unions under tighter control of the state and party bureaucracies and management. This was achieved, among other things, by a systematic intervention in the selection of candidates for union office and workers' councils.[20]

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[20]Among the mechanisms of control of the unions and workers' representation in the applied scheme of socialist management of enterprises was the "election commissions". These were composed of six
(Footnote continued)

The second point relates to the composition, occupational status and future trajectories of the officials. Over the years workers' representation became a target for line supervisors, foremen, technicians and junior staff members.[21] These were, through their status and position in the hierarchical system, more prone and adapted to the role conferred on them by the state and management. They intended to achieve their share of authority and privilege, denied to them on grounds of expertise and seniority, through appropriation of union office and organs of workers' representation, posing as the "interlocuteurs valables" for the dominant bureaucracy. Their trajectory, once "elected" to office, was a testimony to this desire and ambition. On assuming office most of them leave their jobs on the shop-floor or in offices and seldom return after their mandate. They become an integrated part of the complex bureaucratic machinery and their newly acquired position and status put them into wider networks of social relations whether inside or outside the plants.

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[20] (continued)
members: two representatives for the union, two for the party, and two for the ministry of tutelage. One of the main tasks of these commissions was to ensure the respect of three criteria in the chosen candidates: political loyalty to the party, adherence to union policy, and a good record of discipline in the factory or enterprise. It was made certain, therefore, that selected candidates were acceptable to all, especially the state, doubly represented. For the complete set of regulations, see Circulaire Presidentielle of 21st November, 1973 in Commission Nationale... op. cit., p.34.

[21] We reproduce here one telling example of an election list in a factory for metal transformation in the Western region. While unskilled and semi-skilled workers were totally absent from the list, only six skilled workers were included but none of them was selected by the Commission.

The complete list of candidates

Occupation	No. of candidates	Selected	Elected
Production workers	6	-	-
Non-production workers	12	2	-
Administrative employees	14	1	-
Supervisors (production)	33	8	6
Supervisors (admin.)	16	7	3
Junior staff	10	8	4

Source: Mebtoul, M., Discipline d'Usine, Productivite et Societe en Algerie. Office des Publications Universitaires, Alger, 1986, p.191.

Furthermore, this group was clearly aware of the sensitive position it occupied and took advantage of it to improve their own situation. In fact, most workers referred to this aspect when the issue of workers' representation was discussed with them.

The perception of union mission was clearly dominated by concern for the defence of wider interests (66.5%). While those who expressed the need for the union to concentrate on more immediate demands such as wages and working conditions represented only one fifth of the sample (20.8%) and an even less important place was given to the objective of uniting and mobilizing workers (12.7%). The defence of wider interests was particularly expressed by workers in engineering, chemicals and to a lesser extent, in mining. It was also most emphatically expressed by the better educated workers while the less educated were relatively more concerned with immediate interests such as wages and working conditions. Paradoxically, the skilled workers expressed, more than the less skilled, a desire to see the union oriented towards more immediate and concrete demands related to wages and working conditions.

However, when looking at plant samples we found that this pattern was reversed. In mining and steel skilled workers showed a clear desire for a union that had as its mission the defence of workers' interests in society at large.

It is important to ask what is the relevance of these results for the process of working class formation in Algeria? First, the results indicate an important degree of homogeneity in workers' position and attitudes toward the actual union structures and leadership. Second, the lack of active participation in union affairs cannot be taken as a sign of inherent conservatism or lack of adaptation to new and modern forms of collective identity generated by abrupt and sudden changes.[22] On the contrary, given the subordinate character of the unions and the specific conditions under which they operated, this lack of participation should be interpreted as a sign

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[22] Such seems to be the position adopted by most of those who reject the adequacy of class analysis for dependent social formations. See Lloyds, P. C. A Third World Proletariat? op. cit. Such arguments were dealt with in Chapter One.

of resistance and class awareness. Third, despite the important degree of class consciousness exhibited by Algerian workers the absence of a democratic and representative union organization has contributed to hinder the process of working class formation putting this embryonic class in a disadvantageous position. Fourth, this situation also meant that the working class did not overcome its internal divisions and cleavages its actions remained sporadic and isolated without coherence in the absence of class-based organization. Fifth, this led to a generalized sense of apathy and resignation in the face of consistent and systematic attacks on workers' interests at all levels. It had also contributed to the rise of a sense of individualism and pragmatism facilitating the acceptance of practices dominated by clientage, favouritism, and regionalism. Obviously, such conditions can only weaken further the working class-in-formation and inhibit the crystallization of class consciousness.

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Conclusion

In this chapter we attempted to show that the Algerian industrial workers possessed and developed a conception of collective identity. We showed to what extent they have developed certain forms of solidarity and discovered their attitudes to the union organization and the degree of their participation in its affairs.

The results presented and interpreted in this chapter indicate the existence of an important degree of homogeneity in workers' attitudes and perceptions concerning the issues investigated. Furthermore, they revealed that a conception of collective identity existed among the majority of workers. This collective identity was clearly class-based despite some minor variations. The emergent collective identity was further confirmed by a strong tendency to conceive existing social barriers for what they really were, i.e., class distinctions based on different class locations and expressing differential distribution of resources and power in society as a whole.

This identity was also expressed in various forms of solidarity experienced by workers whether in the workplace or outside

it. However, The results also revealed the limits imposed on worker solidarity, especially expressed in the rise of individualism and clientage which undermined the consolidation of such solidarity and its development. In this respect, the Algerian industrial workers have shown what could be regarded as a form of class consciousness, but one that was limited to the perception of common position and interests as wage labour. The class identity was, therefore, to some extent, passively grasped and has yet to be experienced as a dynamic and active factor influencing both attitudes and behaviour in everyday life. The limits set upon the further development of class consciousness varied, most important among them were the internal cleavages continually reproduced by objective conditions expressing both past and present subordinate position of workers in the social structure. This situation was also maintained by various forms of political and ideological domination of hostile social groups opposed to the rise of workers into a class and to their emancipation despite the lip service paid to their cause.

The results have also underlined obvious contradictory tendencies in the process of working class formation. While a certain grasp of class identity and interests existed among workers, the absence of an autonomous collective organization was only too clear. Disenchantment with, and desertion of, the actual union organization while underlining disaffection from subservient and bureaucratic trade union structures had, at the same time, laid bare the weakness of the working class to develop alternative and viable class organization.

This situation expressed class struggle in which workers were on the defensive. Far from denying the fact that workers were resisting the process of their subordination, such resistance was mostly disorganized reflected in noncooperation with the actual unions, in sporadic and isolated actions of limited importance and scope.

CHAPTER TEN

CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS AND ACTION

We noted at an earlier point in our thesis that one of the major arguments raised against the view that working classes existed in a number of dependent social formations was that such groupings lacked class consciousness. Despite such claims class consciousness remained an under- investigated phenomenon. In the few instances in which it has been researched there was no clear definition of what was meant by "class consciousness", and the various forms in which it might be expressed.[1]

The concept of class consciousness has usually referred to the perception of, and action upon, one's social world in terms of class membership and conflicting interests. In this respect, what distinguished the consciousness of class from other forms of social consciousness was a perception of one's position and interests, as well as those of antagonistic groups, as a product of specific locations in a system of social production and its hierarchical organisation. As such, class consciousness was composed of three different, but integrated levels. The first was represented by a simple self-identification in terms of common position and shared interests. The second concerned the identification of other classes whose interests were conceived as antagonistic, and the third level related to the development of a general and coherent view of an alternative form of societal organisation.[2]

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[1]See, for example, Lloyd, P., A Third World Proletariat ? George Allen & Unwin, London, 1982.
See also, Waterman, P. "Consciousness, organization and action amongst Lagos port-workers". Review of African Political Economy, 13, 1978: 47-62.
See also, Gutkind, P. C. W. "The view from below: political consciousness of the urban poor in Ibadan". Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines, 16, 1975: 5-35.

[2]Touraine, A., Sociologie de l'Action, Paris, Editions Seuil, 1965; See also - Giddens, A. The Class Structure of Advanced Societies. op. cit.

Consequently, our main concern in this chapter has been threefold. First, an attempt to discover whether Algerian industrial workers had developed a class perception of their common position. Second, the question of the perceptions workers held regarding existing societal divisions and third the extent to which Algerian workers were prepared to engage in forms of collective acts of struggle and resistance, of a class character.

10.1 - Class identity

Workers in our sample were asked four questions bearing on class identity First, they were asked to indicate the class to which they thought they belonged. Second, they were asked to characterize the composition of that class. Third, what factors were involved in the determination of that class position; and fourth, what the term "workers" meant for them.

The first of these questions (Q 52) was open-ended and formulated as follows: "In your view to which social class do you belong?" This question, as can be seen from its formulation, had the goal of providing workers with the opportunity of expressing, in their own terms, the specific class to which they thought they belonged. The responses were classified and coded for computation purposes into five categories: the poor, workers (or working class), intermediate class, subordinate class, and lower class. As could be seen from the results presented in Table 10.1 the first two categories had attracted between them the bulk of the responses

Table 10.1: Class identification, by industry

	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=59	Engineering N=100	Steel N=140	TOTAL N=373
The poor	31.1	18.6	53.0	27.1	33.5
Workers (working c.)	48.6	37.3	32.0	45.0	41.0
Intermediate class	18.9	20.3	13.0	15.7	16.4
Subordinate class	1.4	20.4	1.0	-	3.8
Lower class	-	3.4	1.0	12.2	5.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.05			P 0.17	

These results suggest that in our sample the largest percentage (41.1%) stressed a class model based on economic/ production/ wealth relations. A further third identified themselves as "the poor". There were, however, certain variations across industry. Thus, engineering workers included the highest percentage (53%) identifying themselves as "the poor" while miners (48.6%), steel (45%) had a greater tendency to see themselves as "workers" or "working class".

Table 10.2: Class identification, by age

	22-30 N=104	31-40 N=139	41-50 N=78	51-62 N=51	TOTAL N=372
The poor	31.7	31.7	28.2	49.0	33.3
Workers (working c.)	36.5	42.4	48.7	35.2	41.1
Intermediate class	21.2	18.0	10.3	11.8	16.4
Subordinate class	7.7	2.9	1.3	2.0	3.8
Lower class	2.9	5.0	11.5	2.0	5.4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.08 P 0.06

Table 10.2 reveals little in the way of a pattern of relationships between class identification and age although there was a tendency among the old to identify themselves as "the poor", while the 41-50 year-olds use the terms "workers" and "working class" and for the young to see themselves as an "intermediate" class.

The second question (Q 53): was formulated as follows: "Can you name other groups belonging to the same class as you?" This was an open question aimed at finding out how our respondents saw the composition of the class with which they identified. The qualitative responses were coded for computation purposes into seven categories: productive manual workers, small peasants and agricultural labour, junior employees, craftsmen, the poor mass, the unemployed, and the powerless. This question represented a probe for the preceding one dealing with class identification. The objective of the question was to clarify the previous set of responses; to try to get beyond such terms as "the poor", "workers", etc. It was important to discover whether workers saw their social grouping as more or less cohesive.

Table 10.3: Class composition, by industry

	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=100	Steel N=140	TOTAL N=375
Manual productive workers	62.7	69.3	52.0	50.0	55.6
Small peasants	15.7	8.1	30.0	30.5	24.3
Junior employees	7.8	4.8	3.0	9.2	6.5
Artisans & craftsmen	3.0	-	-	4.3	2.1
The poor mass	3.0	6.5	3.0	1.1	3.0
The unemployed	7.8	-	10.0	4.9	6.5
The powerless	-	11.3	2.0	-	2.0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

Table 10.3 reveals more than a half of the general sample considered their class grouping as composed of productive manual workers while another 25% identified their class as being made up of small peasants and agricultural labourers. Although the identification with manual workers was more pronounced among miners and chemical workers, the engineers and steel workers were more likely to identify with peasants and agricultural labourers. Table 10.4 suggests that this identification with agricultural workers was also more likely among those with an agricultural background themselves, or coming from a service or casual labour background.

Table 10.4: Class composition, by background

	Casual N=3	Self- N=18	Agric. N=37	Servs. N=18	Constr. N=57	Indus. N=106	TOTAL N=239
Manual p. wkrs.	66.7	46.4	42.9	53.3	63.2	62.6	57.2
S. peasants and agric. labour	33.3	39.3	32.1	26.7	15.8	20.6	23.7
Junior employees	-	3.6	5.4	-	5.3	6.9	5.2
Artisans & craftsmen	-	3.6	-	3.3	-	-	0.6
The poor mass	-	-	3.6	3.3	3.9	3.0	3.1
The unemployed	-	7.1	10.7	13.4	7.9	3.8	7.1
The powerless	-	-	5.3	-	3.9	3.1	3.1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Having identified their own class position and its composition the respondents were then asked to suggest the main factors determining social class position. This was the substance of the question (Q 57): "In your view, what is the principal determinant of the class position of workers?" This was a closed question offering four alternative answers. The first pointed to occupation as a determining factor; the second, to socio-economic position; the third, to a general condition of material hardship; and the fourth to cultural backwardness, Including such phenomena as illiteracy. The assumption was that whereas occupation might entail a narrow conception and socio-economic position broad conception of social class. The other two categories could not be taken as class conceptions, thus involving a non-class image of society and their place within it.

Table 10.5: Determinants of workers' position, by industry

	Mining N=70	Chemicals N=60	Engineering N=100	Steel N=139	TOTAL N=369
Occupation	35.7	50.0	18.0	24.5	29.0
Socio-economic position	44.3	13.4	54.0	53.9	45.6
Material hardship	8.6	15.0	17.0	14.4	14.1
Cultural attributes	11.4	21.6	11.0	7.2	11.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.09				P 0.03

Table 10.5 suggests that three quarters of the general sample perceived occupation and socio-economic position as the factors determining class position. Only chemical workers among the individual sub-samples fell significantly below this percentage. These latter workers and miners were also far more likely to identify occupation as the determining factor. Other factors received less consideration, and overall, such variations were not significant and no correlation was found between perception of working class determinants and branch of industry (R -0.09).

The final question (Q 71) was: "What does the term workers mean to you?" This was presented as a closed question,

respondents being provided with three possible answers. These statements pointed to three different attribute; the first stressing workers as those engaged in manual as against mental labour. The second stressed the role of the worker in the production process and the division between productive and unproductive labour. Thirdly, workers were characterized as "wage" labour; those whose labour power was exchanged on the market for wages. Although the term "workers" referred to all these groups, at the same time there were certain fundamental differences. The meaning given to the term "workers" depending on which of these general attributes was chosen, had a significant bearing on the perception of class position and class interests as we shall argue when it comes to the discussion of these results.

Table 10.6: Definition of workers, by industry

	Mining N=73	Chemicals N=60	Engineering N=98	Steel N=139	TOTAL N=370
Manual workers	21.9	10.0	14.3	8.6	13.0
Productive workers	52.1	51.7	61.2	53.2	54.9
Wage earners	26.0	38.3	24.5	38.2	32.1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.11 P 0.01

Table 10.6 reveals that a majority overall sample defined workers as those engaged in the production process. Such a definition was predominant in all four plants, but especially among engineering workers. Nevertheless a third of the sample overall regarded the wage condition as the most important defining characteristic and this was especially stressed by chemical and steel workers.

The correlations in the Synthesis Table 10.7 reveals the lack of significance of the selected characteristics. As a result it is possible to argue that such lines of differentiation had little effect on workers' perceptions of their own class, its composition and

Synthesis Table - 10.7: Correlations for the general sample

	Indus.	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union Memb.
Class ident.	0.05	-0.08	0.06	0.03	-0.03	-0.03	-0.08
Class comp. (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Determinants of wkr. posit.	-0.09	0.02	0.06	-0.00	0.03	0.06	0.06
Definition of "workers"	0.11*	-0.01	-0.01	-0.09	-0.05	-0.03	-0.04

(1) Correlations for this question were not calculated given the codation of various groups as separate items for computation.

the factors determining their position as a class, or the particular meaning they attributed to the term "workers". In fact these results again pointed to the degree of homogeneity expressed by the perceptions of such issues. However, our results do not exclude the existence of varied and, sometimes, contradictory conceptions among workers concerning the issues under investigation. It is to the interpretation of such results that we must turn now.

10.1 - Class identity: discussion

The first important point revealed by workers' responses was the clear and pronounced tendency among the majority to identify themselves with the working class. Thus, despite some variations relating to conceptions of class, its composition and the factors determining class position, the results indicated a strong sense of class identity and an awareness of the conditions determining position in the social structure. Some 41% of the sample unequivocally identified themselves as working class and more than half (55.6%) considered productive manual workers as the principal group composing this class. While these results question certain general propositions concerning the nature and composition of the working class in dependent social formations, they have, at least, party lent support to some other propositions.[3]

[3]One of those refuted propositions was the thesis that workers were neither objectively nor subjectively distinguishable from the mass of under- and unemployed. See, for example, P. C. Lloyd, op. cit.
(Footnote continued)

Synthesis Table - 10.8: Correlations for sub-samples

	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union Memb.
1 - Mining						
Class ident.	-0.10	0.23	0.32	0.01	0.06	0.07
Class comp. (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Determinants of wkr. posit.	0.10	-0.09	0.19	-0.02	0.00	0.10
Definition of "workers"	0.11	-0.09	-0.34	0.12	-0.06	0.03
2 - Chemicals						
Class ident.	-0.04	-0.16	0.11	0.25	-0.14	0.08
Class comp. (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Determinants of wkr. posit.	0.03	0.27*	0.26	0.02	0.45**	-0.07
Definition of "workers"	0.05	-0.20	-0.24	-0.00	-0.21	0.15
3 - Engineering						
Class ident.	-0.24*	0.18	0.02	-0.01	0.03	-0.10
Class comp. (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Determinants of wkr. posit.	-0.13	0.19	-0.05	-0.01	0.19	0.11
Definition of "workers"	0.09	-0.18	0.04	-0.02	0.04	-0.14
4 - Steel						
Class ident.	0.13	-0.04	-0.08	0.00	0.24*	-0.06
Class comp. (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Determinants of wkr. posit.	-0.04	0.00	-0.16	-0.06	-0.13	0.03
Definition of "workers"	-0.06	0.18*	-0.10	-0.09	-0.04	-0.04

(1) Correlations for this question were not calculated given the codation of groups separately in the computation process.

* P = 0.01
** P = 0.00

Among the propositions questioned by our results was the

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[3](continued)
One of the confirmed propositions is the idea that the working class was composed of various groups including small peasants and tenant farmers in the rural areas. See V. Allen, "The meaning of the working class in Africa". Journal of Modern African Studies, 10, No2, 1972: 169-88.

view, expressed by many students of social class in dependent social formations that workers in general lacked a sense of class identity and did not constitute a specific class since they were effectively submerged into a large mass of the underprivileged, including small producers, the underemployed and chronically unemployed.[4] Concerning this specific issue, our responses clearly show a relatively high level of class identity differentiating workers from other groups. The only other grouping which was considered to be integral to the working class was that of small peasants and agricultural wage labourers (24.3% of the sample expressed such a view). Others such as clerical employees, craftsmen and the unemployed were not regarded as constituting part of the working class.

The line of argument advanced by those who deny the existence of even an embryonic working class in countries such as Algeria is to stress certain conditions as low and insecure incomes and the lack of a distinctive sense of identity. However, workers in our sample seemed to suggest that it was not the general conditions of hardship, backwardness, low and insecure income and even less the lack of a sense of distinctive identity that determined class. On the contrary, position in the system of social production was singled out as the most important factor determining their class position (such a view was expressed by 45.6% of the sample). Occupation was also perceived by many as a determining factor of class position, while other factors which would not differentiate workers from the rest of the underprivileged were referred to only by a small minority (see Table 10.5).

Awareness of a specific identity was confirmed when a majority of the sample defined the term "workers" by reference to those who were engaged directly in the production process (54.9%). This did not exclude other relatively important meanings being attributed to the term "workers", such as was revealed by a significant percentage (32.1%) defining workers as "wage labour". Together these responses, we would argue, reflect a significant degree of class consciousness.

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[4]See for example, Lloyd, P. C. Class, Crises and Coups . op. cit. Also, Balandier, G. " Problematique des classes sociales en Afrique Noire" Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie, Vol38, 1965: 131-60

The second important point revealed by these results related to the limited relevance of the general characteristics differentiating workers in our sample. Thus, if we considered the relationship between items intended to reflect class identity and the various general characteristics on the basis of correlations shown in the Synthesis Table (10.7), we could find no significant relationship indicating or confirming the hypothetical effect of such variables as differentiating factors. However, when considering more closely responses related to this issue certain relatively important variations could be observed. These responses, relating to class identification were, as we have seen to some extent, influenced by branch of industry. In both the mine and steel plant there was a pronounced tendency for workers to identify themselves in terms of socio-economic position as members of the working class (48.6% and 45% respectively). Such self perceptions were less important among chemical and engineering workers. In the first case responses were diffuse, although there was a higher percentage identifying themselves as members of the working class (37.3%). In the second, class identification was clearly influenced by a conception of class based on a wealth model. Consequently, the majority of engineers considered themselves amongst the "poor" (53%), (See Table 10.1).

The pronounced tendency of miners and steel workers to perceive themselves as working class might be explained by two factors. As we have argued above miners were located in a semi-rural environment. Consequently, mining as a work activity clearly marked them off from all other groups and strata such as small producers, agricultural labour, the unemployed, in the neighbourhood. Their position as industrial wage labour was markedly different in terms of regular employment, secure income and the specific rationality and discipline to which they were subjected. Thus, the fact that they were confined and concentrated in the exclusive space of the mine and subjected to specific rules characterizing work organization and the hierarchy of social relations contributed to the emergence and crystallization of a sense of collective identity and sharpened their awareness of the specific position they occupied in the social structure of the local community.

The case of steel workers was rather different for despite the heterogeneous character of the labour force which was

recruited from a wide, diversified geographical area the identity of steel and its high status in the Algerian industrial policy were important factors contributing to the development of a sense of collective identity. In fact, the steel plant occupied a highly sensitive and strategic position in the government development plans based on a model favouring heavy industry. As a result, the steel plant was for a long time the focus of interest in and site of experiments in the implementation of the industrial rationality and management policies. The nature of the industry also required a labour force with a degree of industrial experience and skill. Consequently, steel workers, both through their background and the interest they attracted, represented the politically recognized vanguard of the industrial working class. They were undoubtedly aware of their special position. This self-awareness of their collective identity and class position was enhanced not only by the industrial rationality to which they were intensively and systematically exposed, but also by the external conditions of their specific environment. For example, employment policy in this plant included the provision of a range of special services including housing, transport and consumer cooperatives; services which had the effect of bringing together workers from a whole range of plants, workshops and departments. Consequently, the process of social interaction was enhanced leading in turn to strengthen links among workers and contributing, thereby, to the crystallization of a sense of collective identity.

The cases of both the chemical and engineering plants was different. In the first, the labour force was composed predominantly of migrant workers many of whom were, for some time, employed on a part-time basis. Lack of stability led, therefore, to weak interaction among workers who already lacked cohesion and a sense of collective identity. This instability was also pertinent in the experience of workers in the engineering plant, as many of them were still living scattered among the many villages and hamlets around the city in which the plant was located. Hence, the features which distinguished both miners and steel workers were absent leading, as a result, to a low degree of interaction and consequently to lack of cohesion and atomization which was reflected in the absence of self-awareness of collective identity based on the grasp of their class position.

The general lesson that we can learn from this discussion is that there are no significant explanations to be found for the emergence of class consciousness. The varied historical conditions affecting social interaction and the ways in which these impact on worker consciousness vary greatly. It is, therefore, insufficient to identify social interaction in the work situation as the factor determining the emergence of class consciousness. Rather, we need to identify the historically and situationally contingent factors which condition the emergence of such a relationship- affecting different workers in different ways with varying effects on action potential.

Length of employment had a very limited effect on class identification, while the most senior workers had a tendency to perceive themselves as members of the working class, the less senior tended to identify their class in terms of a wealth model. Such differences in the subjective identification of class were not unexpected given the well known view that seniority enhances awareness of collective identity.[5] It was during such long-term experience that workers were likely to have taken part in various forms of plant based conflicts and struggles which might contribute to a more clear view of the class nature of their position and interests as well as that of other groups to whom they were related industrially.

It is also important to note that the effects of seniority were reinforced by skill differentiation. Although the impact of skill on class identification lacked consistency, it was nonetheless clear that an awareness of class identity was more common among skilled as against unskilled workers. While these results do not fully support the thesis that skilled workers represent the most class consciousness section of the working class, the tendency reveals a positive relationship. This could be explained, at least, in this case by the combined effects of mediating factors such as education and seniority which tended to coincide with skill differentiation. Hence, a relatively higher degree of awareness of class identity exhibited by skilled workers might be related to their long experience of industrial conditions, their relatively high education and the specific position they occupied in the production process. For they

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[5]See Touraine, A. "Idustrialisation et Conscience Ouvriere a Sao Paulo", op. cit.

were the group most exposed to the effects of intensive division of labour, mechanization and rigorous forms of control. In a sense their objective position in the forefront of the production process led them to be the most involved in conflicts related to working conditions, norms of remuneration, problems of qualification and promotion, job discretion and control, etc. It was precisely such struggles which provided the objective conditions for the emergence and development of a class identity and consciousness. However, we must remember that these variables had a limited significance leading to a high degree of homogeneity among workers.

When asked to identify the composition of the social class of workers, at least 50% of all the industry sub-samples considered that productive manual workers composed the majority. Also, insofar as the general sample was concerned, it was found that only three of the selected independent variables played a significant role in differentiating workers' perceptions of class; branch of industry, social background and seniority. Miners and chemical workers were most likely to identify productive manual workers as the main group composing their class, while engineers and steel workers were more likely to include small peasants and agricultural labourers in the working class (30% in each sub-sample).

Other groups such as craftsmen and the unemployed often considered as part of the working class in dependent social formations were so identified by only a small minority of the sample (20%). The results reveal an important degree of awareness among workers regarding structures differentiating them from other groups.

As we noted earlier, one of the interesting points was the tendency among miners and chemical workers to identify productive manual workers as the main group composing their class. Such perceptions are clearly related to the factors associated with the characteristics of the mining community referred to above. It was not, however, clear why the same tendency should be pronounced among chemical workers; a tendency more to be expected among engineering and steel workers. One possibility which could, however, throw some light on this issue had to do with a sense of demarcation of productive manual workers in the chemical plant vis-a-vis those in other non-productive divisions or departments such as maintenance and other

support activities such as transportation of raw materials and final products. In this sense, the category of manual production workers was given a different meaning; that is, it was restricted to those engaged in the immediate production process (specifically machine operatives). If our interpretation is correct then such a conception represented a restrictive identification of class position and composition on the grounds not only of occupation in the more general sense but on specific positions within the production process determined by the dominant forms of division of labour.

The perception of class composition also varied according to workers' socio-occupational backgrounds. Workers previously employed in construction and industry had a tendency to perceive productive manual workers as the main group composing their class. This response might be explained by the socializing effects of previous work experience, contributing to the development of a sense of identity and awareness of the significance of productive work in society. Although workers from non-industrial backgrounds expressed similar views, there was a stronger tendency among these to include small peasants and agricultural labourers reflecting perhaps the continuing influence of their previous social and economic position and their attachment to reference groups defined in terms of those experiences.

The problem of relating perceptions of class composition to work experience is evident when considering the effects of seniority. It is clear that the tendency to regard manual workers as the defining group among the working class was not linked in a linear and simple manner to seniority and experience of industrial employment. Our results seemed to suggest a reverse tendency except for workers characterized as the longest serving who included a majority (71%) believed the working class was largely composed of productive workers. On these grounds, it could be argued that despite the importance of industrial and work experience there was no consistent and definite relationship between this and the development of class identity. This again questions assumptions to be found in the dominant literature.[6]

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[6]See Balandier, G. op. cit. Also, Lloyd, P. C. A Third World Proletariat. op. cit.

The relevance of skill to conceptions of class composition was, to say the least, inconsistent, and contradicted certain arguments in the literature which stressed the tendency of skilled workers, the aristocracy of labour, to adopt elitist attitudes. The skilled, it has been argued, constitute a stratum of labour distinguished from the rest, by its privileged position, and by its identification with dominant social groups and values.[7] Our results reveal that less skilled workers were less likely to believe that productive manual workers were considered the main group composing their class. Such a view seems in accordance with certain arguments in the literature on workers in dependent social formations characterizing workers generally and the less skilled in particular by their lack of a sense of collective identity.[8]

In our investigation of class identity workers were also asked to identify the factors they considered as determinant of class position. The results (Table 10.5), suggest socio-economic position and occupation as the two most important determining factors. Reference to socio-economic position was especially pronounced among engineering and steel workers and, to a lesser degree, among miners. The importance given to socio-economic position by engineering and steel workers suggests a more developed awareness of the role played by social relations of production in determining class position; an awareness that might be taken as a further indication of effects of the relatively intensive social division of labour and more complex forms of organization characteristic to these plants.

On the other hand, miners and chemical workers accorded greater significance to occupation as a determinant of class position. We might understand these results in the light of environmental factors in the first instance and the composition of the workforce for the second. The occupational structure of the mining community was for years (from the turn of the century) centred around work in the mine to the extent that it became known in the whole region. In addition

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[7] See, on this point Waterman, P. "The 'labour aristocracy' in Africa: an introduction to a debate." Development and Change, 6, No.3, 1975: 57-73.

[8] See, Cooper, F. Struggle for the city: migrant labour, capital and the state in urban Africa. London, Sage Publications, 1983.

there is little in the form of other occupations. This might have provided miners with an acute sense of occupational identification. In the case of chemical workers, the emphasis laid on occupation might be related to the composition of the workforce, the overwhelming majority of workers were migrants recruited from rural areas where they had worked as journeymen, family labour or were simply unemployed. Thus, the change in occupation and, for some status, was the most meaningful event; one which seemed to be the major factor in determining their class position.

Workers' perceptions of the factors determining class position was also, but to a lesser degree, affected by differences in age. The results suggest a weak tendency among older workers to consider socio-economic position as the determining factor of class position while the younger were more inclined to identify such factors as material hardship and cultural characteristics as crucial. It is difficult to ascertain whether such differences are the outcome of age difference, or relative maturity or had more to do with accumulated experience, both in and outside the workplace. Consideration of education as a differentiating factor suggests that age was a mediating variable. Thus, the perception of occupation as a determining factor of class was more common among the better educated young, while the less educated, generally drawn from the older workers, tended to emphasize socio-economic position as a determining factor. The better educated were more exposed to a value system which tended to construe class differences in terms of occupational structure.; an objective necessity of the division of labour as well as a "natural" outcome of individual capacities and aptitudes. Class division was generally denied any significance in the dominant nationalist ideology. Consequently, the less educated might be less exposed to such views and tending to see occupation as less important. In fact, many considered the unequal distribution of wealth and the possession of certain resources, particularly, education as cultural capital as more important in determining class position.

Again respondents from non-industrial backgrounds, especially agriculture and services, were more disposed to identify socio-economic position as a determining factor of class position. This represents a confirmation of the tendency revealed above regarding perceptions of the composition of the working class. It was

argued then that the mobility from non-industrial to industrial employment represented a radical change of condition contributing to elevate the level of awareness of differences in the position they occupied in the social structure before and after their mobility. However, in considering length of employment as a factor a certain contradictory tendency emerged; that is workers with the lengthiest industrial experience revealed an inclination to identify occupation as determinant of class position. However, this tendency was not consistent since the same group of workers accorded equal importance to socio-economic position. Hence, it was difficult to assess the relevance of seniority. On the other hand, when the effects of skill differentiation were considered, it was found that the less skilled workers were more inclined to see occupation as a determining factor of their class position, while skilled workers clearly stressed the importance of socio-economic position. It was noticeable that the impact of skill differentiation on this particular item was more in line with its effects in relation to class identification. In that instance skilled workers tended to identify themselves as members of the working class. By almost the same percentage they considered that socio-economic position was the main determinant of class position. The results could be considered as a clear indication of the relevance of skill to class consciousness. However, this statement must be qualified in the light of other tendencies expressed by skilled workers, particularly in regard to class composition. Again, the effects of these variables were limited giving way to a high degree of homogeneity among workers.

Nevertheless, the main tendency revealed by the results suggests that skilled workers were more likely to develop a sense of class identity and consciousness by virtue of their position as a vanguard group involved, more than others, in the struggle for job discretion and control, providing more potentiality to enhance class awareness.

having seen that a significant percentage of the overall sample identified themselves as "workers" or members of the working class and that in specifying the composition of this class a majority considered productive manual workers to be the main group composing it, it follows that we need to ask what the term "workers" meant for our respondents. This was in fact the substance of the fourth question

discussed in this section. On the basis of our results it was clear that a majority believed "workers" were those directly involved in the production process (54.9%). Such a definition came as a confirmation of the tendency revealed by earlier responses. However, it is also important to note that almost one third of our sample used the term "workers" to refer to wage labour. Such a view reflected the importance of the phenomenon of wage employment which was extended rapidly in the last two decades in Algeria to include the overwhelming majority of the working population (See Chapter Five).

While the patterns revealed by the answers to this question were rather weak we can discern some important tendencies. For example, it was found that in a less mechanized industry such as mining respondents tended to use the term "workers" to refer to manual workers. However, more generally the majority of workers, especially in engineering used the term to refer to productive workers. Those identifying " workers" as wage labour in general were more likely to work in the chemical and steel plants. The largely urban environment of these latter plants ensured that the overwhelming majority of the population was wage labour so representing the shared character of residents and constituting the reference group basis of community life. In comparison miners and engineering workers were located in rural areas where wage employment lacked such significance and impact.

While it was notable that a majority in all age groups saw workers as all those who were directly engaged in the production process, the tendency was slightly pronounced among older workers. Younger workers more frequently used the term to refer to wage earners. These variations, we would argue, have a significant bearing on the way workers identify their class, its composition and the factors determining class position. It is clear that there is a degree of consistency to be observed in the relationship between age and the responses to all these issues (class identification, composition determining factors, etc.). It was unlikely, however, that age alone was positively related to class consciousness.

It is, for example, more likely that this relationship was overdetermined by other factors. The level of education seemed to account for some variation in the meaning given to the term "workers". However, it is significant that at least 50% of workers at any given

level of education used this term to refer to productive labour, although this tendency was relatively more pronounced among the less educated. The better educated were more likely to use the term to refer to wage labour in general (42.9%).

These differences relating to education were, to some extent, unexpected in the sense that education was considered a factor which might enhance awareness of class identity as centring on production rather than wage labour. Our results reveal that education had no such impact, but was inconsistent in its effects on the various items relating to awareness of class identity among workers. In fact, these results reinforce our view that factors such as education do not express themselves in a predictable, clear-cut fashion, but take on significance only in the context of other effects and situational circumstances. What the relatively highly educated worker will think and do will not be determined by education alone but will have its effect in the context of a variety of other factors, some of which may overdetermine the outcome- in the multiple effects of education, skill, age, seniority. etc.

What emerged in response to this question was a degree of consensus despite the various lines of distinction referring to workers as those who are directly engaged in production. Such a definition reflects an awareness of working class identity, insofar as productive workers constitute a core of the working class. This tendency is further reinforced by the numbers referring to workers as wage labour a concept that also captures an important aspect of their constitution as a class.[9]

Conclusion

In concluding the discussion in this section it would be worth considering the relevance of our findings on class identity to the general process of working class formation. Most important was the degree of consistency characterizing the overall responses of a good percentage of the sample. On all four items eliciting workers' perceptions of class identity we found a majority using the specific

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[9]See for example, Poulantzas, N. "On Social Classes" New Left Review, 78, 1973, pp.27-50.

term "workers", identifying workers as those who were directly engaged in production. It emerged, then, that an important section of the sample held a definite idea on its collective identity as a specific class whose position in the system of social production was considered the principal criterion determining its identity and location in the class structure. The second important point was the fact that this degree of awareness and a grasp of collective identity in class terms was, with very few exceptions, not affected by the various lines of differentiation and cleavage considered. This relative degree of cohesiveness and homogeneity in attitudes and perceptions emerged as one of the main features of the workforce in the four plants investigated.

This cohesiveness was not, however, by any means total. Variables such as branch of industry, age and education had relatively clear effects in shaping attitudes relating to the determinants of class position. It would appear to follow from these results that as the composition of the working class includes an increasing percentage of the educated and qualified, they will tend to exhibit an even clearer collective perception of their class identity and the factors determining their position. Such a prediction is based on an observation of the massive spread of formal education and vocational training to an increasingly large count of the young. These developments presage a transformation in the composition of the working class, a process which has already been underway for almost a decade, but which is going to be accelerated further given the ratio of young people in the Algerian population. It is evident that a younger, better educated and qualified workforce implies a profound change in attitudes, aspirations and demands concerning the nature of work, its conditions and organization. As we have argued above the specific effect of such a development depended on a multiplicity of attendant causes and situational factors.

For example the tendencies inherent in education are possibly counterbalanced by factors linked to the technical and social organization of work strengthening the trend toward deskilling and involving the subordination of labour to rigorous forms of workplace control. Technology, the technical division of labour, work organization, and the forms of organizational rationality they presupposed are already intrusive, introduced often at the cost of

violent changes in the social structure and leading to significant disruption or contradiction between the requirements of an emergent economy based on formal rationality, and traditional spheres of the social formation which continue to be rooted in a different set of strongly entrenched norms and values. We witness here what sociologists called a cultural gap separating the social structure of the modern economy from other aspects of social life. Technology and its required work organization and disciplines are imported artifacts which did not emerge form a balanced process of social, economic and cultural change. The impact of Fordian and Taylorite systems excluded any serious possibility of integrating technical innovations, organization and expertise with the existing culture. This represents a serious threat to the emancipatory effects embodied in the spread of formal education. Should the latter tendency be subordinated to the requirements of the dominant industrial rationality, it might reduce thereby, any emergence of a cohesive class of skilled collective workers in industry.

This contradiction between the emancipatory effects of education and the requirements of an alienating work organization; points to an even more fundamental contradiction; Weber's substantive irrationality emergent in the reign of formal rationality.[10] According to Weber this latter was not the antithesis of workers emancipation alone, but of civil society in general. Unless this fundamental contradiction was resolved, either by the extension of formal rationality to all spheres of social life or by its substitution by another radically different rationality which presupposed the established hegemony of the direct producers, then the working class might have to be contented with its dependent and subordinate status vis-a-vis other dominant class(es). We must not, however, neglect the role played by workers in the various forms of resistance to the dominant rationality or in the challenge to the existing balance of power and, thereafter, to question the validity and legitimacy of the dominant system of authority and its rationality. The coming sections will show us the extent to which our respondents were prepared to engage in collective forms of resistance.

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[10]See Weber, M. The Theory of Social and Economic Organization. edited by Parsons, T. New York, Free Press, 1964.

10.2 - Societal division and antagonisms

The fact that a majority of workers expressed a sense of class identity constitutes only a first step in the development of class consciousness. Since a particular social class does not exist in a social vacuum, but only in relation to another class(es), class consciousness extends beyond the grasp of one's own class position and interests to a qualitatively higher level of consciousness in which existing societal divisions and antagonisms are conceived as expressions of class relations and class conflict.[11]

In this section we consider two particular aspects in which such concepts could be expressed by workers. The first of these deals with workers' perceptions of class division in society as a whole. The second addresses the question of the existence of antagonistic social groups whose interests may be conceived as opposed to, and in conflict with those of workers. To this end, we outline the responses to three questions. The first was formulated in a manner that allowed respondents to conceptualize, in their own terms, the specific nature of the Algerian social structure. As a result, we were able to categorize three specific models in terms of which workers conceived the class structure; a wealth-based model, a relations of production model, and an authority-based model. The second question related to the issue of whether classes were considered as comprehensive structures, in the sense that all individuals were, whether they were aware of it or not, class members. The final question was designed to elicit workers' perceptions of antagonistic groups, whose interests they conceived as opposed to their own.

The first question (Q 49) was formulated as follows: "If you think society is divided into classes, what are these classes?" It was an open question with the objective of eliciting conceptions of the class structure as well as models of societal division. The qualitative responses were coded for the purpose of computation and quantitative analysis. As a result, we identified eight classes; the rich, the poor, workers or proletariat, the bourgeoisie, the ruling

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[11] See Touraine, A. Sociologie de L'Action. op. cit. Also, Giddens, A. The Class Structure. op. cit.

class, the subordinate class, the middle class and the intelligentsia. It is interesting that no one suggested that there were no classes but as we will see later half of the sample expressed this opinion on a different question.

Table 10.9 show that a conception of class structure in terms of wealth was by far the dominant model. This suggests an embryonic class consciousness, considered by many sociologists as pre-class in nature.[12]

Table 10.9: Perception of class structure, by industry

	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=100	Steel N=140	TOTAL N=375
1-The rich	34.9	12.5	29.0	21.0	24.5
2-The poor	29.6	13.2	29.0	24.6	24.9
3-Workers, proletariat	8.3	15.3	9.8	10.6	10.7
4-Bourgeoisie	11.2	13.9	4.8	5.9	7.9
5-Ruling class	5.3	19.4	7.7	8.0	9.2
6-Subordinate class	5.9	15.3	5.2	11.8	9.5
7-Middle class	2.4	4.9	12.9	17.5	11.3
8-Intelligentsia	2.4	5.5	1.6	0.6	2.0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

The dominance of the wealth model as represented by the categories "rich" and "poor" not only comprised 50% of the overall sample, but was dominant also in each of the industry sub-samples except the chemical plant where the categories authority and relations of production models were relatively significant.

While the results in Table 10.10 suggest that the less educated have favoured a wealth-based model as compared to those with higher education who show a tendency to favour the relation of production and authority models.

Having investigated the respondents perceptions of the Algerian class structure they were asked question (Q 51) "Do you think that all Algerians belong to a social class?" This was a closed

[12] See Touraine, A. La Conscience Ouvriere. op. cit. Also, Goldthorpe, J. et al. The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure. op. cit.

Table 10.10: Perception of class structure, by education

	Illiterate N=152	Primary N=115	Secondary N=94	College N=14	TOTAL N=375
1-The rich	26.5	23.5	24.5	13.5	24.5
2-The poor	26.5	25.3	24.0	13.5	24.9
3-Workers, proletariat	9.8	9.5	12.2	19.0	10.7
4-Bourgeoisie	7.0	6.0	10.5	16.2	7.9
5-Ruling class	8.9	8.4	9.6	16.2	9.2
6-Subordinate class	8.4	10.5	9.6	10.8	9.5
7-Middle class	10.6	14.7	8.3	10.8	11.3
8-Intelligentsia	2.3	2.1	1.3	-	2.0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

question to which workers were asked to respond "yes" or "no".

The objective of this question was to discover whether the respondents saw class as an all encompassing structure. We wanted to know whether workers considered class to be the overarching structure through which all social cleavage and differentiation might be grasped, and to which all other forms of social relations could be reduced. Our results show that this was by no means the dominant conception among our sample. Overall, those who did and did not conceive of the social structure in class terms were evenly divided, suggesting that 50% of our workers believed in the continuing importance and relevance of other structures and groupings which competed for the loyalty and identity of individuals and groups.

Table 10.11: Character of class, by industry

	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=99	Steel N=138	TOTAL N=372
Classes are comprehensive	48.6	1.6	43.4	75.4	49.5
Classes are not comprehensive	51.4	98.4	56.6	24.6	50.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.31 P 0.00

In respect of this issue, however, the general cohesiveness characterizing the respondents on other issues, broke down with 98.4% of the workers in the chemical plant rejecting the notion of a comprehensive system, while three quarters of the steel workers did believe class to be the main form of social structure. In engineering and mining the division was balanced. The relationship between perceptions of the character of class and branch of industry was statistically significant (R -0.31).

Table 10.12: Character of class, by seniority

	-5 N=130	6-10 N=139	11-15 N=69	16-20 N=10	21+ N=23	TOTAL N=371
Classes are comprehensive	62.3	41.7	43.5	50.0	39.1	49.3
Classes are not comprehensive	37.7	58.3	56.5	50.0	60.9	50.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.14 P 0.00

Table 10.12 shows that less senior workers were more likely to express the view that classes were comprehensive structures than were senior workers. This was reflected in a significant degree of correlation (R 0.14).

The final question (Q 56) in this section dealing with the identification of antagonistic groups, was formulated as follows: "Which interests, do you think, are most opposed to yours?" This was a closed question suggesting seven alternative answers. The first of these identified "the wealthy" as the antagonistic group. The second identified the relatively more specific propertied class as an antagonistic group, the third singled out hierarchical authority, while the fourth and fifth opened up the possibility of interest divisions among workers, citing occupation and skill possible sources of opposed interests. The sixth statement pointed to a more diffuse group, representing the interests of all the "privileged". The aim of this question was to identify those groups considered by workers to have opposed interests while, at the same time, clarifying and checking responses to previous questions on the class structure.

Table 10.13: Identification of antagonistic groups, by industry

	Mining N=74	Chemicals N=53	Engineering N=98	Steel N=123	TOTAL N=348
The rich	28.4	5.7	63.3	30.1	35.3
Large proprietors	35.1	30.1	19.4	22.0	25.3
Executive & managers	31.1	39.6	11.2	25.2	24.7
Workers in differ. occupations	2.7	5.7	-	3.3	2.6
Workers in differ. skill categors.	2.7	15.1	3.1	12.2	8.0
The well to do	-	1.9	1.0	5.7	2.6
None	-	1.9	2.0	1.5	1.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.05			P 0.16	

Table 10.13 reveals that the respondents identified antagonistic interest groups mainly on the basis of wealth (the rich, 35.3%) and authority (24.7%). Despite some variation in this perception across the various plants there is little consistency of pattern. Nevertheless, it is worth noting the major percentages in mining (31.1%) and chemicals (39.6%) who identified opposed interests among managers. In each of these plants once we combine proprietors and managers we can identify large majorities who find the antagonistic groups in the industrial sphere. Table 10.14 again, reveals no major pattern in respect of age, but it was notable that the older were more likely than the younger to identify opposed interests in terms of wealth.

Table 10.15 suggests that the higher the education of the respondents the more likely were they to identify opposed interests specifically among managers and proprietors, while the less educated had a clear tendency to identify them in terms of the more diffuse category of "the rich". These most educated also had a tendency to identify antagonistic groups with reference to skill. Overall, there was a significant degree of correlation between identification of antagonistic groups and the level of education (R 0.15).

Table 10.14: Identification of antagonistic groups, by age

	22-30 N=95	31-40 N=134	41-50 N=71	51-62 N=47	TOTAL N=347
The rich	25.3	34.3	42.3	46.8	35.2
Large proprietors	31.6	24.6	21.1	21.3	25.4
Executives & managers	27.4	23.1	23.9	25.5	24.8
Workers in diff. occupations	4.2	3.0	1.4	-	2.6
Workers in diff. skill categories	6.3	9.0	9.9	6.4	8.1
The well to do	4.2	3.0	1.4	-	2.6
None	1.0	3.0	-	-	1.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.10 P 0.02

Table 10.15: Identification of antagonistic groups, by education

	Illiterate N=139	Primary N=109	Secondary N=87	College N=13	TOTAL N=348
The rich	42.4	35.8	27.6	7.7	35.3
Large proprietors	23.0	23.9	31.0	23.1	25.3
Executives & managers	26.6	20.2	25.4	38.5	24.7
Workers in diff. occupations	-	4.6	4.6	-	2.6
Workers in diff. skill categories	7.3	11.0	4.6	15.4	8.0
The well to do	-	2.8	3.4	15.4	2.6
None	-	1.7	3.4	-	1.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.15 P 0.00

Table 10.16 also suggests that union members were more likely to identify managers and proprietors as having opposed interests than were non-members of the unions. Such variation in workers' responses was reflected in a significant degree of correlation between these two variables (R -0.16).

Overall (table 10.17) Significant degrees of correlation were found only in the case of the second and third questions

Table 10.16: Identification of antagonistic groups, by union membership

	Members N=162	Non-members N=182	TOTAL N=344
The rich	25.9	42.9	34.9
Large proprietors	22.2	28.0	25.3
Executives & managers	35.2	15.9	25.0
Workers in diff. occupations	2.5	2.7	2.6
Workers in diff. skill categories	9.3	7.1	8.1
The well to do	3.1	2.2	2.6
None	1.8	1.2	1.5
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R -0.16		P 0.00

Synthesis Table 10.17: Correlations for the general sample

	Indus.	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union memb.
1-Percep. of class struc. (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3-Character of classes	-0.31*	-0.02	0.06	0.09	0.14*	0.01	-0.04
4-Antagonistic groups	0.05	-0.10	0.15*	0.13	0.05	0.06	-0.16*

(1) Correlations for this question were not calculated since the various classes were coded as separate items in the computation.
(*) P = 0.00

concerning the character of classes and antagonistic groups respectively. For the former workers' perceptions were affected by two general characteristics: branch of industry and seniority in the job. For the latter, the relevant general characteristics were education and union membership.

10.2 - Societal division and antagonisms: discussion

The presented results revealed three specific models on the basis of which workers conceived existing societal divisions: a wealth-based model (49.4%), a relations of production model (18.6%),

Synthesis Table 10.18: Correlations for sub-samples

	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union
1 - Mining						
Percep. of class struc. (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Character of classes	-0.11	0.00	-	0.08	0.63**	-0.56**
Antagonistic groups	-0.10	0.08	0.14	0.14	0.49**	-0.38**
2 - Chemicals						
Percep. of class struc.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Character of classes	-0.16	0.15	-0.07	-0.17	-0.07	-0.19
Antagonistic groups	0.01	0.08	-0.03	-0.01	0.02	0.25
3 - Engineering						
Percep. of class struc.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Character of classes	0.03	0.01	-0.06	0.03	0.27**	0.46**
Antagonistic groups	-0.04	0.09	0.06	0.04	0.06	0.04
4 - Steel						
Percep. of class struc.	-	-	-	-	-	-
Character of classes	-0.03	0.10	-0.24*	0.18	-0.04	-0.01
Antagonistic groups	-0.03	0.13	0.02	0.30**	0.06	-0.23**

(1) Correlations on this question were not calculated since responses identifying individual classes were coded separately.
(*) P = 0.01
(**) P = 0.00

and an authority-based model (18.7%). In addition, (11.3%) of the sample identified a middle class, while a further (2%) identified an intelligentsia. Given these results it is clear that the perception of the class structure based on wealth constituted the predominant tendency. This, sociologists have argued,[13] is an indication of broad

[13]See Buttel, F. H. and Flinn, W. "Sources of working class
(Footnote continued)

social rather than class consciousness. Those exhibiting such a form of consciousness failed to grasp the class nature of society. While accepting the force of this argument, it should be recognized that those who perceive societal divisions in such terms may also relate such categories of unequal distribution to issues of unequal access and mobilization of resources even where reproduction is not fully grasped. It is, therefore, plausible to view such a form of consciousness as a potentially important and even necessary step or phase in the development of class consciousness. It is equally important to warn against the temptation to consider consciousness of this kind as specifically characteristic of workers in dependent social formations, for it is known to be a conception commonly held by workers in advanced formations also.[14] The significance of such a form of consciousness lies in the fact that the effects of an unequal distribution of wealth are among the most easily grasped characteristics of any society. They are also widely reproduced in both popular and official ideologies in Algeria, while other more latent structures of societal division such as property relations whose more subtle mechanisms are systematically suppressed by dominant ideologies whether in their modern nationalist or 'traditional' religious forms.

It is nonetheless significant that a proportion of the sample exhibited an unmistakable awareness of the class character of Algerian societal divisions. Such class consciousness was expressed by reference either to dominant relations of production or to relations of power and authority. It was perhaps more important to view these models of class consciousness as representing one of a number of accessible strategies through which workers were able to construct their social worlds and interpret their own positions within it. These strategies and their underlying models are undoubtedly the product of a complex interplay of a whole series of factors. In effect the perceptions of societal division expressed by workers in our sample supported the view that class consciousness was a cumulative and

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[13](continued)
consciousness" Sociological Focus, 12, No.1, 1979: 37-52. Also, Touraine, A. 'Industrialisation et conscience ouvriere a Sao Paulo', Sociologie du Travail, vol.3, no.4, 1961, pp.389-407.

[14]See, for example, Goldthorpe et al, The Affluent Worker in the Class Structure, London, Cambridge University Press, 1969.

multi-dimensional phenomenon.

When considering the various characteristics of the sample it was found that only a few seemed to affect workers' perceptions. First, in relation to branch of industry it was noted that perceptions of the class structure in terms of wealth were particularly strong among miners, engineers and, to a lesser extent, steel workers. This rather contradicts their perceptions of their own class presented above with 48.6% in mining and 45% of steel identifying themselves as working class members. Perceptions based on relations of production and authority were, on the other hand more common among chemical workers who seemed more consistent in this respect as 37.3% have identified with working class. Given differences of location and size of each of the plants; the production processes, methods of organization and management practices, it was difficult to account for the similarity of responses beyond the shared experience of all industrial work. There is certainly a need for further investigation geared to uncovering the factors which could help explain the general tendency to use a wealth-based model in the conceptualization of the class structure.

However, the reverse tendency observed among chemical workers might well indicate the significance of the composition of the workforce which, as we have already stressed was to a large extent made up of migrant labour, recruited from rural areas where the degree of social and economic differentiation was relatively undeveloped. Authority and control systems in these traditional locations had been integral to the dominant social relations with no differentiated formal structures. immigrant workers were faced by a quite different environment in the chemical plant in which social divisions were much more transparent, especially those emergent out of the production relations, and/or position in the hierarchical system of authority. The argument is that these cleavages were more immediately accessible to the migrant labourers because of their relative unfamiliarity. The shock of the new vividly experienced rather than grasped in its complexity.

Also important are differences between urban/ industrial and rural/ agricultural contexts. In the latter, there exists no clear distinction between property relations, authority and power

structures, on the one hand, and systems of kinship relations and personal dependence on the other. Here the employer was, first and foremost, viewed from the standpoint of dominant institutions and their values as a member of the family, clan or tribe. The legitimacy of his authority was to be found as much in familial relationships as in his more general economic and social status. In the urban context, social and economic differentiation led to the separation of different spheres of social relations and their specialized institutions. Migrant workers, displaced from one context to the other are perhaps more sensitive than others if only because of the contradictions they would see in the separation of statuses.

The use of a wealth model was strongly favoured by the less educated as well as the older respondents while those better educated and younger workers tended to use the alternative models, especially that based on authority. Such differences might be explained by the role of education in sharpening workers' awareness of the significance of property and authority relation, particularly in putting such relations in a national and even international context. Nationalist ideologies imparted in the educational process might also be highly critical of internationally-based property relations, thus failing to justify existing cleavages as did traditional religious ideologies.

In general, respondent characteristics such as background, seniority, skill and union membership appeared to be irrelevant to the use of specific models for the conceptualization of class structure. Such was the obvious conclusion that could be drawn from these results. Hence, the need for more investigation to determine the nature of those characteristics which could explain the predominance of specific models in workers' perceptions of existing societal divisions.

A further aspect of the perception of societal divisions investigated concerned whether class was considered comprehensive or not, in the sense that all individuals were members of a particular class. Our results revealed that the sample was split into two equal groups, one stressing the pre-eminence of class while the other took the opposing view. However, while an overwhelming majority of steel workers (75.4%) considered social class to be a comprehensive

structure, nearly all chemical workers (98.4) expressed the opposite view. This again contradicts an earlier response in which over a third (37,3%) of chemical workers saw themselves as working class members.

The major differences recorded between steel and chemical workers, especially those relating to the workforce may explain variation in workers' attitudes and inconsistencies in the responses of chemical workers. This partly relates to the fact that the majority of steel workers fell into the skilled category while those in chemicals were largely unskilled. However, the most significant difference relates to the size of the two plants and the extent of active involvement of their workforce in various forms of resistance. The steel plant was much larger and the workers had relatively a much more varied and richer experience of collective organization and struggle. The significance of the fact that chemical workers were largely migrant workers has already been alluded to.

Another variable which had some impact on workers' perceptions of the character of class was seniority. Thus, despite the absence of a consistent relationship between these two variables it was found that less senior workers expressed a clear tendency to consider classes as comprehensive structures while senior workers expressed the opposite tendency. Such variation in perceptions might be explained by the diversity and richness of experience gained through a long period of employment. As a result, less senior workers, given their lack of experience of other structures which compete for the individual's loyalty and commitment tended to consider classes as entities into which all individuals were integrated. the reverse was true in the case of senior workers who expressed a much less deterministic view, referring may be to other structures, such as family, clan, regional groups, etc.

The last aspect of societal division investigated relates to the identification of antagonistic groups. In this respect our results revealed that workers tended to identify three such antagonistic groups: the rich (35.3%), large proprietors (25.3%) and high ranking executives and managers (24.7%). It is significant to note that the basis used in the identification of such groups was the same as that informing workers' perceptions of the class structure, i.e., wealth, property relations and authority. Hence, a certain

degree of consistency in workers' responses on these questions. Such consistency extends beyond the use of categories to the actual responses, with large percentages of miners (66.2%), chemical (69.7%) and steel workers (47.2%) identifying opposed interests among managers and proprietors while engineering workers identified such interests among "the rich". It must be remembered that workers in the first group of plants had also large percentages identifying themselves as working class members, (48.6% in mining, 37.3% in chemicals and 45% in steel). Engineering workers were also consistent in this respect with 53% identifying themselves as the poor and 63.3% identifying opposed interests among the rich.

Significant variations appeared only in the case of two variables, education and union membership. in the former case the tendency to identify antagonistic groups on the basis of wealth was clearly pronounced among the less educated while the better educated tended to emphasize authority. Such differences might have been expected since the less educated were generally drawn from the more dispossessed strata of the population and as such possibly had an inclination to see themselves and others in terms of an unequal distribution of wealth. The better educated were more likely to have been influenced by the educational process which might have contributed to putting their experience into a wider national and even international context. Nationalist ideology highly critical of dominant structures at a global level relating to an unequal distribution of resources and opportunities between nations, hence its failure to justify internal cleavages and differential access to power resources.

Unionized workers expressed a strong tendency to refer to an authority model in identifying antagonistic groups. This could be taken as a direct result of the influence of the union's culture in which the relationship between workers and other groups, specifically management, was conceived in terms of their position in the hierarchical system of authority and power experienced first at the level of the workplace, but then generalized to the social system and its various spheres and institutions. By contrast non-unionized workers were more likely to identify antagonistic groups on the basis of wealth and property. It might be the case that given the implied lack of political perspective such workers tended to underestimate the

role played by authority and power, derived from sources other than the possession of wealth. Such different conceptions of antagonistic groups pointed to the importance, even if somewhat limited, of collective organizations and their political culture for the creation of class consciousness and the various forms it could take. Thus, if unionized workers tended to emphasize the relevance of authority on a basis of antagonistic relationship, they were to a large extent reflecting the influence of norms and values dominant in the union organization and its culture. This latter was to a certain degree determined by the position occupied by the union in the hierarchical structures of decision making both at the level of the workplace and within society at large.

Conclusion:

In this section we were able to show that a sample of industrial workers in Algeria exhibited various types and forms of consciousness concerning existing societal divisions. In relation to the class structure it was found that a wealth model represented the dominant image. However, that model did not entirely exclude others which pointed specifically to the importance of more subtle and latent structures represented by property and authority relations. It was also significant that the same model was used by workers to identify antagonistic groups, with the wealth model being the most widely used in this instance as well. Although these results suggest the relatively limited development of class consciousness the extent of class images based on property relations and authority was also indicative of the existence of a more developed consciousness as part of the Algerian scene.

On the whole our results underline the complex nature of existing conceptions of classes and class relations. On the basis of these results it is difficult to pass a definite judgement confirming or rejecting the existence of a crystallized class consciousness among these workers. This conclusion is in line with the proposition made at the outset of this work emphasizing that class consciousness was not an all or nothing phenomenon but a complex cumulative and multi-dimensional process. Conceptions of class structure and antagonistic interest groups were to a certain degree influenced by a specific model in which wealth and its unequal distribution

represented the cornerstone. It should not be discounted that even in terms of such a conception workers perceive themselves, first and foremost, as an underprivileged group. This form of consciousness while failing to grasp certain social and economic relations underlying societal divisions, does go beyond explanations in terms of individual attributes and qualities, or mystic and hidden forces; The forms of explanation which were noticeably and surprisingly absent from our findings.

In short, our results have, to a large extent, reflected the contradictory character of the social reality within which workers lived and toiled - the reality of a social formation in transition characterized by the coexistence of various types of social relations, institutions and value systems. The predominance of old and traditional structures was yet to be seriously and radically overturned. In this order of things the working class-in-formation had yet to prove its independence and autonomy at either the level of concrete forms of collective organization or ideological expression of identity and position within the dominant system of social relations.

10.3 - Class action

Class consciousness would be an abstract and empty category if it did not relate to concrete forms of resistance and collective struggles aimed at progressing or defending class interests. The emergence and crystallization of class consciousness is intimately related to concrete experiences of resistance and collective action. These two aspects are important elements in the process of working class formation; their reinforcing influence leading to qualitative changes in consciousness.[15]

Having already provided some evidence for the existence of class identity, an awareness of class interest as well as the social forces structuring class relations, the question now is: To what extent did such levels of consciousness contribute to generate collective forms of action and resistance. Workers were asked a series

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[15]See, Marshall, G. "Some Remarkson nthe Sudy of Working Class Consiousness". op. cit. Also, Giddens, A. The Class Structure. op. cit.

of questions relating to their views regarding the forms of action best suited to furthering their interests, an assessment of their personal contribution to collective action, the extent to which they were engaged in a specific form of resistance, namely work-to-rule, and finally their assessment of the value of strike action.

The first question (Q 63) was formulated in the following manner: "At the present time, what would be the best kind of action a worker could take in order to improve his/her working conditions?" This was a closed question with three alternative answers proposed. The first stressed "individual action" as the most efficient means of improving one's situation. The second, by contrast, pointed to "collective struggle" as the best way for workers to defend their interests, while the third statement suggested some combination of both individual and collective action as most suitable. It was clear that workers' choice of action were effectively limited. It was likely that orientations would be instrumental and pragmatic.[16] and that commitment to a particular form of action would be determined by the anticipated results based on past experience rather than commitment to individualistic or collectivist ideologies. On the other hand, the possession of specific resources, whether formally or informally recognized, could encourage some workers to adopt individualist or collectivist attitudes or committing themselves to forms of action they considered as efficient means of achieving their goals. The resources might be individual qualities or qualifications or, in their absence an awareness of the superior nature of collective forms of action. Such awareness was most likely to stem from repeated and past experience, both in the workplace and outside it.

The results in Table 10.19 show very clearly that overall commitment to individual action as an effective form of defending interests was not regarded as efficient by the great majority of workers. Across plants certain important variations emerged with a majority of chemical and engineering workers stressing the importance of collective struggle, while only little more than a quarter of the miners were entirely committed to collective action

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[16]In the case of Algerian workers, see; Chikhi, S. "Greve et Societe en Algerie" Cahiers du CREAD. op. cit. For the general argument see; Goldthorpe, et al. The Affluent Worker: industrial attitudes and behaviour. op. cit.

Table 10.19: Best form of action, by industry

	Mining N=68	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=98	Steel N=120	TOTAL N=347
Individual action	4.4	8.2	11.2	20.8	12.7
Collective struggle	27.9	67.2	58.2	33.3	45.2
Both combined	67.7	24.6	30.6	45.9	42.1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.16 P 0.00

having a tendency to stress the combination of individual and collective action as the best way of defending their interests. Such variation was reflected in a significant degree of correlation (R -0.16). Other variables were not significantly related to the perceptions of the best form of action.

Having expressed their views on the best form of action, workers were asked then to indicate whether their personal contribution to collective action was important. The question (Q 64) was formulated as follows: "Do you believe that your personal contribution to collective struggle has any bearing on improving workers' situations?" This was a closed question and respondents were asked to answer simply, "Yes" or "No". Such a question could be considered as a test of the extent to which collective struggle was regarded as the outcome of concerted efforts by all workers and their commitment to a common cause. It was, of course important if collective action were to emerge as significant aspect of industrial relations individual workers should have a belief in the efficiency of their own action. Such an attitude being a first step in the development of a spirit of community and the adoption of positive attitudes toward the various forms of collective activity. In fact, our results show that a good majority of workers had such a positive judgement of their involvement in collective action.

Table 10.20 reveals that a clear majority of the overall sample considered their contribution to the collective struggle as important. When it came to the individual plants the positive assessment of personal contribution was most pronounced in chemical and engineering plants. But, overall there was no significant

Table 10.20: Bearing of own contribution, by industry

	Mining N=25	Chemicals N=32	Engineering N=78	Steel N=114	TOTAL N=249
Important	68.0	81.3	79.5	68.4	73.5
Unimportant	32.0	18.7	20.5	31.6	26.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.05				P 0.21

correlation (R 0.05).

Table 10.21: Bearing of own contribution, by skill

	Unskilled N=46	Semi-skilled N=101	Skilled N=102	TOTAL N=249
Important	63.0	74.3	77.5	73.5
Unimportant	37.0	25.7	22.5	26.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
	R -0.11			P 0.04

Table 10.21 also reveals that a positive assessment of personal contribution was related to skill with workers in the higher skill categories being more inclined to consider their contribution to be important. But again, the majority in all skill categories shared this view and the variation in attitudes was not pronounced leading to lack of significant correlation between these two variables (R -0.11). Table 10.22 indicates as one would expect that unionized workers were much more likely to have a positive response to their collective contributions than were the non-unionized. This was reflected in a significant degree of correlation (R 0.14). Other selected variables had no significant effect (See appendix).

Our third question (Q 24) in this series was concerned with the involvement of workers in a specific form of action, i.e. work-to-rule practices. The question was: "Have workers here ever engaged in work to rule?" It was a pre-coded question with three alternative answers. The first two categories pointed to the absence

Table 10.22: Bearing of own contribution to union membership

	Members N=116	Non-members N=132	TOTAL N=248
Important	80.2	67.4	73.4
Unimportant	19.8	32.6	26.6
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R 0.14		P 0.01

of work to rule. However, the first statement referred to the existence of constraints and obstacles which ruled out such possibility. This means that respondents were not engaged in such practice not so much because rejecting it, but given obstacles and constraints. The second referred to the fact that workers objected to these practices, while the third acknowledged the existence of such practices among workers. The question was aimed at revealing the extent to which a specific form of resistance was common among workers. Its importance lay not specifically in revealing that some workers had resorted to such practices, but the extent of principled objection, and the level of experienced obstacles which have made it quite impossible for others.

Table 10.23: Work-to-rule, by industry

	Mining N=52	Chemicals N=60	Engineering N=90	Steel N=129	TOTAL N=331
Not possible	57.7	51.7	40.0	46.5	47.4
Objected to	9.6	23.3	6.7	0.8	7.9
Practised	32.7	25.0	53.3	52.7	44.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.14				P 0.00

The results in Table 10.23 may seem surprising given the level of disagreement that exists in each of the plants regarding the existence of the practice of work to rule. However, this should not be so for a number of reasons. First, respondents were drawn from different workshops and departments with varying working conditions,

levels of mechanization and methods of control. Second, work to rule is not an openly acknowledged and coordinated action leading to varying levels of involvement of small work groups. Third, it might be the case that many would not acknowledge being engaged and found a possible escape in referring to various obstacles ruling out such action.

Nevertheless, it is significant that a good percentage engaged in this practice (44.7%). An equally high percentage referred to constraints which ruled out this possibility (47.4%), while principled objection was limited (7.9%). As might be expected the plants with hard working conditions had higher percentages of workers engaged in this action. The degree of correlation was significant (R 0.14).

Table 10.24: Work-to-rule, by age

	22-30 N=96	31-40 N=124	41-50 N=68	51-62 N=42	TOTAL N=330
Not possible	38.5	38.7	64.7	66.7	47.6
Objected to	9.4	8.1	2.9	11.9	7.9
Practised	52.1	53.2	32.4	21.4	44.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.23				P 0.00

Table 10.24 shows that older workers were more likely to report existing difficulties and constraints which inhibit them from engaging in work-to-rule practices, while the younger workers had a higher percentage engaged in this form of action. The degree of correlation between the two variables was significant (R -0.23). A similar pattern was found in relation to education, with the illiterate workers referring to obstacles while a higher percentage of the better educated being engaged as well as being more likely to object. The degree of correlation was (R 0.18).

the same self pattern was found in Table 10.26 with the most senior workers not engaged in work to rule given constraints and obstacles, while the less senior workers had clearly a higher

Table 10.25: Work-to-rule, by education

	Illiterate N=129	Primary N=103	Secondary N=86	College N=13	TOTAL N=331
Not possible	59.7	39.8	39.5	38.5	47.4
Objected to	9.3	5.8	7.0	15.4	7.9
Practised	31.0	54.4	53.5	46.1	44.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.18				P 0.00

percentage (56.9%) of those engaged in this action. The degree of correlation was significant (R -0.22). Other selected variables had no significant effect.

Table 10.26: Work-to-rule, by seniority

	-5 N=116	6-10 N=133	11-15 N=57	16-20 N=6	21+ N=19	TOTAL N=47.4
Not possible	35.3	51.1	50.9	66.7	78.9	47.4
Objected to	7.8	7.5	8.8	16.7	5.3	7.9
Practised	56.9	41.4	40.3	16.6	15.8	44.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.22					P 0.00

The second question relating to forms of worker resistance was concerned with strike action. This was expressed in question (Q 75): "What is your attitude to strikes?" This was a closed question offering three possible answers. The first statement stressed the necessity of strike in defending workers' interest. The second statement expressed qualified support, indicating the damage caused by strikes to both workers and the plant. The third provided an unequivocal rejection of strike action on the same grounds. The question took this form in order to reflect the degrees of commitment to radical action which might exist among workers.

It represented an attempt to test whether the level of consciousness expressed by an important section of the sample was matched by a serious predisposition to engage in concrete forms of

resistance, having a definite class character.

Table 10.27: Attitudes to strikes, by industry

	Mining N=73	Chemicals N=61	Engineering N=100	Steel N=137	TOTAL N=371
Necessary	26.0	18.0	28.0	15.3	21.3
Necessary but damaging	28.8	14.8	43.0	14.6	25.1
Damaging and rejected	45.2	67.2	29.0	70.1	53.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.12				P 0.01

Table 10.27 reveals that nearly four fifths of all workers considered strikes to be damaging; the minority (25.1%) damaging but necessary, the majority (53.6%) entirely unacceptable. In terms of individual plants the view rejecting strikes was strongly expressed by chemical and steel workers, while strikes were supported by a majority of miners and engineers, especially the latter. the degree of correlation was significant (R 0.12).

Table 10.28: Attitudes to strikes, by union membership

	Members N=178	Non-members N=189	TOTAL N=367
Necessary means	18.5	22.8	20.7
Necessary but damaging	21.9	28.6	25.3
Damaging and rejected	59.6	48.6	54.0
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R -0.10		P 0.03

Although Table 10.28 Shows no consistent pattern unionized workers had a tendency to reject strike action on the grounds that it was more damaging than profitable to their demands. The degree of correlation was not significant (R -0.10). The same was true of all other variables (See Appendix).

The final question in this series was directed at workers' assessment of the results of strikes (Q 74): "How would you judge the results of strikes ? This again was a closed question with possible answers. The first suggested that strikes generally achieved their objectives. The alternative expressed the negative judgement; pointing not only to the failure of strikes to achieve their objectives, but also to their damaging consequences. The third statement suggested that strikes had both positive and negative consequences with no outright winners or losers. Perhaps the most important result of strikes, from our point of view was that through such radical forms of collective action workers learned their strengths and weaknesses.

Table 10.29: Assessing strike results, by industry

	Mining N=73	Chemicals N=60	Engineering N=100	Steel N=115	TOTAL N=348
Positive	13.7	10.0	42.0	14.8	21.6
Negative	41.1	68.3	29.0	53.0	46.3
Both	45.2	21.7	29.0	32.2	32.1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.09				P 0.06

Again as Table 10.29 reveals only one fifth of our overall sample had a positive view of strikes, although almost one-third judged them as having both positive and negative implications. Looking at individual sub-samples it emerges that only engineering workers had a high percentage (42%) who judged strikes in a positive way while those in chemical and steel plants had clearly negative views. The miners tended to acknowledge both the positive and negative consequences of strikes. The degree of correlation was not significant (R -0.09).

Table 10.30 shows that whereas union members had a high percentage with a negative view of strikes, non-union members although shared the same view were more likely to consider that strikes had both positive and negative consequences. The degree of correlation was significant (0.15). Other selected variables had no significant effect.

Table 10.30: Assessing strike results, by union membership

	Members N=163	Non-members N=181	TOTAL N=344
Positive	25.2	18.8	21.8
Negative	51.5	42.5	46.8
Both	23.3	38.7	31.4
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R 0.15		P 0.00

Table 10.31: Correlations for the general sample

	Indus.	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union memb.
Best form of action	-0.16**	0.00	-0.05	-0.04	0.03	-0.07	0.06**
Bearing of own contrib.	0.05	-0.07	0.10	0.00	-0.01	-0.11	0.14**
Work-to-rule practice	0.14**	-0.23	0.18**	-0.05	-0.22**	-0.04	0.09
Attitudes to strikes	0.12*	-0.04	-0.06	0.01	0.01	0.02	-0.10
Assessing strike res.	-0.09	-0.05	0.10	0.03	0.02	-0.08	0.15**

(*) P = 0.01
(**) P = 0.00

Correlations presented in Table 10.31 reveal that workers' responses were relatively homogeneous with a limited degree of differentiation only in relation to one particular item. This was the practice of work-to-rule on which a high level of disagreement among respondents was revealed. Responses diverged according to branch of industry, age, education and seniority. It was also notable that selected variables lacked consistency in their effects on the various issues considered in this section except for branch of industry which was significantly related to responses on three items, namely, the most suitable action, work to rule and attitudes to strikes.

10.3 - Class action: discussion

Synthesis table - 10.32: Correlations for sub-samples

	Age	Educ.	Backg.	Sen'ty	Skill	Union me.
1 - Mining						
Best form of action	-0.13**	-0.04	-0.19	0.03	0.23	-0.35**
Bearing of own contrib.	-0.24	0.25	-0.58	0.02	-0.15	0.65**
Work-to-rule practice	-0.36**	0.42**	0.00	-0.27	0.19	0.09
Attitudes to strikes	-0.04	-0.09	-0.16	-0.02	0.07	-0.26*
Assessing strike res.	-0.04	-0.02	-0.39	-0.06	-0.42**	0.25
2 - Chemicals						
Best form of action	-0.10	-0.16	-0.16	-0.10	-0.11	0.12
Bearing of own contrib.	0.10	0.22	-0.03	-0.15	-0.05	-0.04
Work-to-rule practice	-0.22	-0.00	-0.14	-0.04	-0.02	-0.05
Attitudes to strikes	0.05	-0.08	-0.04	0.15	-0.08	0.12
Assessing strike res.	0.01	0.13	-0.03	-0.02	0.12	-0.07
3 - Engineering						
Best form of action	-0.04	0.06	-0.06	-0.06	-0.06	0.07
Bearing of own contrib.	0.06	-0.11	0.27	-0.06	-0.02	0.23
Work-to-rule practice	-0.19	0.24*	0.13	0.13	-0.06	-0.18
Attitudes to strikes	-0.08	0.02	0.05	0.04	0.23*	0.01
Assessing strike res.	0.10	-0.02	-0.03	0.16	0.05	0.15
Steel						
Best form of action	0.01	-0.06	0.03	-0.18	-0.08	0.15
Bearing of own contrib.	-0.07	0.12	-0.16	0.09	-0.21*	0.03
Work-to-rule practice	-0.21*	0.17	-0.03	-0.40**	-0.34**	0.25**
Attitudes to strikes	0.13	-0.19*	-0.11	0.26**	-0.05	-0.06
Assessing strike res.	-0.27**	0.26**	0.14	-0.09	0.14	0.25**

(*) P = 0.01
(**) P = 0.00

In the preceding sections we were able to show that workers exhibited a degree of consciousness of their identity and interests as a specific group as well as some awareness of fundamental class division structuring society. The task now is to show whether this level of class consciousness was reflected in attitudes concerning the value and importance of class action; how far workers both accepted and were prepared and willing to adopt specific forms of resistance, so crystallizing their embryonic class consciousness.

We first attempted to discover what form of action workers considered as best suited to improve their situation. The results suggested that workers had little faith in individual action as a means of improvement since only a minority (12.7%) considered such form as best suited to their objectives. By contrast collective action was valued by a much larger percentage of the sample (45.2%) as was the case for a combination of both individual and collective actions (42.1%). These results went some way toward confirming the general trend revealed in previous sections, suggesting the existence among a good proportion of the workers of a sense of collective identity.

These results, then would be said to have established a minimum degree of compatibility between the measured level of class consciousness, on the one hand, and the relevance of collective forms of action, on the other. However, these results fell well short of indicating a total commitment of workers to collective action, since an important section of the sample stressed the need to combine individual action with collective action. This might reflect a situation in which workers were not yet convinced of the effectiveness of collective action. But it could also reflect a situation in which certain interests and demands were best met when articulated as individual grievances.

The tendency to favour this combination of individual and collective actions was relatively pronounced among steel workers and miners, especially the latter. In the case of steel such a tendency might be associated with the proliferation of specific demands and grievances arising out of the complexity and diversity of the work sites and situations characteristic of this plant. Among miners we must take into account the important role played by

traditional and informal networks of social relations based on various types of client-patron relations which were strong.

The second variable introducing some variation in respondents' assessments of the best form of action to follow, was level of education. It was noted that whereas the less educated were split into two equal groups favouring collective action (42.1%) and a combination of both individual and collective (43.6%) forms of action, the better educated workers rather favoured collective forms of action (53.8%). However, it was also true that, comparatively, this group expressed a stronger tendency to favour individual action (23.1%). These results once again reaffirmed the dual role played by education, and its contradictory effects in tending to reinforce a sense of collective identity while, at the same time, emphasizing individual orientation. The paradoxes do not stop here, however, insofar as the less educated workers who were expected to adopt a collective orientation given their lack of specific individual resources tended to be less predisposed to adopt such a strategy. By contrast, the better qualified in possession of a valuable asset which could be used for individual ends were less prepared to do so and were more likely to consider collective action the best way of improving their situation. This in fact confirmed the proposition that the possession of a specific resource was not sufficient in itself to generate individualistic attitudes. It is also important to recognize the possible effects of traditional norms and values on the less educated.

Apart, then, from a degree of differentiation based on branch of industry and, to a lesser extent, level of education the results revealed little variation in workers' assessments of the best form of action, when related to the various selected variables. Consequently, there is evidence to suggest that workers in general express a fairly strong commitment to collective forms of action in the pursuit of their interests. However, before reaching such conclusion we must consider further our related evidence.

The second issue involved our respondents' assessment of the significance of their own contributions to the collective struggle. Again results reveal that a large majority held a positive judgement of their personal contribution (73.5%), a confirmation of the tendency expressed by workers' responses on the previous item.

In looking at selected variables workers' responses were found to be significantly affected by three variables: the level of education, skill and union membership. In the first instance it was noted that the less educated were more likely to express a positive judgement of their personal contributions than were the better educated who tended to have mixed opinions on this issue. This last group was dismissive of the relevance of their personal contributions on the grounds that the important decisions were taken in the absence of workers. In adopting such an attitude they expressed a deep sense of frustration at the workers' inability to challenge the existing situation. Such opinions pointed to the contribution of education in enriching the vision and perspective of workers in grasping the complexity of the structure and relations dominating the workplace. The view expressed by the less educated, on the other hand, seemed to contain an over-optimistic expression of their capacity to influence the course of events.

The second variable affecting workers' judgement of their personal contributions was skill. In this case it was noted that skilled workers were more inclined to judge their contribution to collective struggle in positive terms, a tendency that might be explained by skilled workers possession of valuable qualifications, that is, they were aware of the worth of their own contribution. This suggests that any assessment of the significance of one's personal contribution to collective struggle was, to some extent, determined by a subjective judgement of the worth of one's own resources in comparison to others. Hence, such judgements were not absolute but relative, taking into account the position and status of the individual worker in the context of the group.

The evaluation of individual contributions to the collective struggle was also affected by union membership. Unionized workers, it was revealed, had a larger percentage of those who expressing a positive evaluation of their contribution, and while such a view was also common among non-unionized workers it was less so. This more pronounced tendency among unionized workers might be explained as an aspect of their membership of an official organization which valued, at least in principle, the contribution of every member. Moreover, union strength was measured by the extent to which it could encourage members to participate in its activities.[17] However, in

concrete cases it depended on whether or not workers considered their union organization to be an effective agency of collective struggle. According to our findings, Algerian industrial workers did not hold such an attitude. Hence, the influence of union membership on workers' judgement of their contribution must have been very limited indeed. Consequently, other possible intervening factors could be important in shaping such an opinion. Their nature and impact remain to be determined.

The third item in this section deals with one form of worker resistance, namely, work-to-rule practices. Judging by workers' responses this form of action was quite common in the four plants (44.7%). However, it must be noted that a majority of the sample were not engaged in such action (47.4%) apparently not because they rejected it , but because of various constraints and obstacles making it a near impossibility. Whether such opinions expressed the reality or were merely a justification and a disguised rejection is another matter. More importantly, only a limited number of cases explicitly rejected these practices (7.9%).

Work to rule practice varied according to branch of industry, age, education and seniority. In the first instance it was noted that engineers and steel workers were more likely to engage in this practice than were miners and chemical workers. One plausible explanation for such responses might be found in the nature of the production process and its organization. Whereas in the first two plants the degree of mechanization was relatively high leading to high division of work and task fragmentation generating reflexes of disaffection which materialized in the spread of such practices of resistance in the light of relative relaxation of direct supervision. Such conditions characterizing branches of industry with a labour process dominated by intensive specialization and task fragmentation were noted for their negative effects on workers' attitudes and behaviour, including a sense of alienation and reactions such as work to rule, high levels of labour turnover and absenteeism.[18] The low

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[17] See Hemingway, J. Conflict and Democracy: studies in trade union government. op. cit.

[18] See among others the classical study by Blauner, R. Alienation and Freedom: the factory worker and his industry. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964.

level of mechanization in mining and chemicals had the reverse consequences: less division of labour and task fragmentation and more direct supervision. Hence job discretion was relatively more important. However, even when disaffection was felt the system of direct supervision was more difficult to deceive than was the case with technical control.

Work to rule practices were also related to age with older workers (40 years plus) reporting its absence because of obstacles while younger workers (22-40 years) had a higher percentage engaged in such practices. In addition to age work-to-rule was related to education and seniority. Given the link in the sample between these three variables it emerged that those who were most engaged in such form of resistance were young, better educated and less senior. The explanation suggests itself; the young generally possessing higher levels of education would have had higher job expectations, but given the dominant pattern of division of labour and job fragmentation such expectations would be unsatisfied. This situation with all the pressure it generated was further reinforced by the short experience of industrial work. Contact with industrial work and its reality would have contributed to shatter those images and engendered defensive reactions represented mainly by an opposition to the integration into the dominant system of norms and values. On the other hand older workers seemed to have come to terms with such reality given the effect of time and lack of viable alternatives to the existing situation.

The final area of questioning in this section related to workers' attitudes to strikes. Most crucially our results revealed the predominance of an opposition to strikes (53.6%). Also, while only one fifth of the sample were unequivocally in favour of strike action, a further 25% accepted that strikes, while damaging, might be necessary in the defence of workers interests in the last resort. The clear acceptance of the damaging consequences of strike action as well as straight forward objection to this form of resistance, suggests that for whatever reason- and one must take into account the various forms of harassment, sanctions and reprisals inflicted on workers by management and state agencies directly or indirectly involved in the regulation of industrial relations-[19] strike action was an unpopular form of action.

The influence of official ideology in shaping workers' opposition to strike action should not be underestimated. This ideology emphasized national unity and social peace as necessary conditions for the battle against underdevelopment. It has, therefore, exhorted workers to show allegiance to existing norms and dominant values in order to preserve peace and stability at the workplace realizing the all important slogan of "winning the battle of productivity". All this in the context of a "hostile" World Order and in the aftermath of colonization.

Considering the relationship between the selected variables and attitudes to strikes our results revealed that despite certain variations there was no consistent pattern of relationships linking workers' expressed views to any of those variables. The one exception was branch of industry where it was noted that engineering workers had a clear majority in favour of strike action (71%), as compared to a simple majority among miners (54.8%). In contrast, chemical and steel workers had a much more pronounced tendency to oppose strike action (67.2% and 70.1% respectively).

Explanations for the support or opposition of strike action in these plants must be sought in various factors, including workers' previous experiences of strikes, the diversity characterizing the workforce across plants, the role of union branches and management strategies in dealing with situations of conflict. In the engineering plant, for example, workers had little experience of strikes and their consequences. Workers in this plant experienced a high degree of cohesion with little differentiation based on skill, occupational background and regional affinities. To these must be added the homogenizing effects of a production process characterized by routine operations and lack of job discretion. The union branch in this plant was relatively weak and failed to play any significant role in defending workers' interests through existing structures of representation and joint regulation of conflicts. Furthermore, a wide

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[19]These results were significant given the official ban on strikes in the public sector and severe sanctions for active elements. See, for example; Hatmi, M. "Une Approche Theorique et Pratique de la Greve en Algerie: Temoignage sur le conflit du complexe de Vehicules Industriels de Rouiba"; Annuaire de L'Afrique du Nord, Vol. 21, 1982, pp.155-177.

gap separated workers from management and supervisory staff. All these elements have contributed, in our view, to the emergence of a militant stand among engineering workers reinforced by the failure of official and formal channels of communication.

In comparison, miners expressed more mixed attitudes and had different experiences of strike action. Although many factors related both to the nature of work and its organization as well as to the actual social environment seemed to favour certain cohesion among them, this was not achieved, given the cleavages based on regionalism and patron-client relations. In fact, many workers referred to the failure of a recent strike (which occurred only a few months before our survey) as resulting from the split loyalties of worker-clients. Both union officials and management were involved in a combined effort to divide workers and undermine their cohesion.

As far as chemical workers were concerned the opposition to strike action was undoubtedly associated with the unstable migrant character of a sizeable proportion of the workforce, and the more positive role played by the union branch in negotiating solutions to workers' problems. These latter contributed to a containment of workers' discontents which were rarely crystallized in the first place.

As for steel workers the unpopularity of strike action may well have been associated with the very diversity of claims and grievances which tended to undermine collective action. The large size of the plant and the diverse nature of organization of the production process was particularly important. In addition, the continuous nature of production necessitated work organization on a three-shift basis. All this made coordinated action among workers very difficult to realize. Also, previous unfavourable experiences of strike action, were expressed by workers who had been subjected to various forms of pressure and disciplinary measures as a result of their participation. It was also the case that previous strikes were lacking in organization, and support from both workers and the local union branch. Such experiences profoundly affected workers' attitudes and were a strong deterrent to strike action. Regarding the level of instability referred to above, this plant had a very high rate in national as well as regional terms.[20] This obviously hindered the

development of stable, cohesive work-groups enhancing the awareness of common interests.

Turning to our respondents' assessments of the results of strikes, these figures tend to confirm the line of argument developed in preceding paragraphs. For example, it was significant that only one-fifth of workers answering this question considered the consequences of strike action in a positive manner. By contrast, almost half of them (46.3%) considered such outcomes as negative, in the sense that strikes not only failed to realize their objectives, but also led to undesired consequences. In addition, one-third of the respondents considered strikes a double-edged weapon, realizing both negative and positive results.

Looking at the relevance of the selected variables to workers' evaluations of the results of strikes it was noted that a significant pattern emerged only in relation to union membership. In this case, a positive evaluation of strikes was more pronounced among the unionized. However, this group also had a higher percentage of those who evaluated strikes negatively. As for non-unionized workers, they were split between one group considering strike results as negative and another considering them as having both positive and negative results. What these differences seem to point to is the development or not of clear and definite attitudes among workers according to whether they were union members or not. The crystallization of opinion was then to some extent determined by the existence or absence of a formal system of reference against which the results of strikes were evaluated. Whereas unionized workers had such a system, however rudimentary and contested, non-unionized workers clearly lacked it. Hence their tendency to express more than others a mixed view in relation to the evaluation of the results of strikes.

Overall, the results revealed that despite certain variations in workers' attitudes when related to specific variables these latter failed to produce any consistent trend. Consequently, it was difficult to suggest acceptable and adequate explanations either

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[20] Official estimates put the rate of labour turnover in the ealy 1980's between 15% to 25%. See SNS, Le Siderurgiste, No.5, 1982. Also, El-Kenz, A. et al. Industrie et Societe: le cas de la SNS. op. cit.

for the support, even when qualified, or for the rejection of strikes on the basis of the results they achieved. On this basis it might be worthwhile looking for other explanatory factors beyond the general characteristics represented by these variables.

When considering sub-samples representing particular plants it emerged that whereas chemical and engineering workers and, to some extent, miners reflected the dominant picture in the general sample, that is, lack of any relevance to selected variables. The case of the steel plant was different with workers' evaluations of strike results clearly differentiated on the basis of age, education and union membership. The first two seemed to combine making the younger, better educated workers express a generally negative evaluation of strike results. The older, less educated had a mixed view in which strikes had both negative and positive results.

Conclusion:

The discussion in this section has revealed a number of important points which might be summarized as follows. First, the majority of workers have clearly indicated that collective forms of action were best suited and more efficient in defending their interests. However, this attitude was more important and common in certain specific industrial environments than others. Second, such orientation among the majority of workers was further confirmed by their expressed opinion that their personal contribution had an important bearing on collective struggle. This indicated a positive judgement of their individual abilities and resources grasping thereby the relevance of their role to the success of collective action in pursuit of common interests. Third, workers' involvement in specific forms of resistance such as work-to-rule practices confirmed the general trend expressed in relation to previous items. In this respect, a good percentage of the sample declared its involvement in this particular form of worker resistance. More importantly, explicit objection to this form of resistance was restricted to a small minority of workers, although a higher percentage was not engaged as a result of constraints. It also emerged that the propensity to adopt such practices was more pronounced in specific industrial environments, namely, those where a high degree of mechanization and intensive division of labour were predominant characteristics. It was

also more common among particular groups of workers, namely, the younger, better educated with a relatively short experience in their present jobs.

Fourth, the results revealed that only a small section of the sample held a positive attitude to strikes as a radical form of collective action. These results pointed to the existence of a relatively strong opposition to strikes on the basis of their damaging effects both for workers and enterprises. These opinions reflected, it is suggested, the impact of dominant nationalist ideology which tended to justify the banning of strikes in state-controlled enterprises on the grounds of the prejudice they caused to the national economy and the fact that they compromised efforts deployed by the state to combat underdevelopment.[21] On the other hand, such opposition was justified by workers in the light of the experience of previous strikes which were, in most cases unofficial and therefore lacked support and exposed those taking part in them to pressure and sanctions from many sides including the union organisation. The negative results of strikes were clearly stressed by an important proportion of workers regardless of various characteristics differentiating them, although such a judgement was much more pronounced among unionized workers.

Overall, while it might be forcefully argued that such expressed attitudes are not good predictors of action as they may operate in the context of a variety of other situational determinants, such as leadership, the general state of the economy, etc., it remains true that the way people perceive their world is one of the fundamental elements determining their action upon it. In this respect, it was significant that a relatively large group of workers expressed a disposition to act upon their social world rather than passively endure it.

To conclude, basing ourselves on the discussion in these sections it would appear that the process of working class formation in Algeria is subject to contradictory tendencies. While a sense of

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[21] State and party bureaucracies and, to some extent, that of the union justified the ban on strikes in the public sector on grounds that workers could not take such action against their own interests given their status as associates in the management of public enterprises.

class identity and class interests exists, at least, for an important section of workers in our sample, and there also exists a predisposition to adopt certain forms of collective action, commitment to forms of resistance was still rather limited, involving a minority of workers.

In other words, Algerian workers although showing a significant level of subjective awareness of their identity and the existence of antagonistic groups, were yet to put their predisposition into practice and confirm their awareness by concrete forms of collective resistance. In a sense, it could be said, with some risk of over-simplification, that the Algerian working class was emerging as "a class in itself."

However, there were various complex reasons inhibiting the process of class formation at this stage. Most important among them was the historical domination of the petite bourgeoisie both politically and ideologically in the struggle for national liberation. The dominant political culture since that period was characterized by the emphasis of a homogeneous national identity to the exclusion of all cleavages and antagonisms.

Although this tendency was historically justified in the light of a colonial strategy of integration based on the negation of the Algerian identity, such a scheme was reinforced even when that threat was objectively surpassed by accession to political independence and nationhood. The dominant trend since has been suppression of the aspirations to develop autonomous and authentic working class organizations. This reflected at the ideological level the negation of the objective class division and antagonisms by the action of a political regime which has relatively succeeded in elaborating a nationalist ideology which incorporates both traditional religious values and modern scientific principles.

The legacy of this long process of subordination is still evident today in the subservient role designed for the union organization, whose structures and leadership were mostly out of touch with demands and aspirations expressed by rank and file workers.

The subordination of the union organization was not

evidently synonymous with the subordination of the working class in general. For although this has deprived workers of an effective means of struggle and a possibility to develop a political culture it did not result in their subordination. Large sections of the working class were still resisting this attempt by the bureaucracy, but this resistance was not organized; it was a passive resistance. Hence, despite repeated and various attempts to enlist support from workers for such slogans as "combating underdevelopment", "winning the battle of production and productivity", the state bureaucracy was instead faced with silent apathy from the workers. In this respect our results revealed that a predisposition to adopt collective forms of resistance was strongest in the less complex industrial plants, relatively small in size and in which the production process was relatively integrated, reducing the degree of atomization in the workplace.

In our survey, the engineering plant seemed to fit this model quite well. The findings, to some extent, confirmed the widely held thesis[22] that large and complex plants are difficult to organize, characterized by a degree of atomization, diversity of interests and objective constraints on effective communication between various groups in different departments. However, the results also contradicted some well established ideas, namely, that large plants represented a more suitable ground for the emergence of collective identity and the development of radical forms of resistance. Our findings reflect only expressed attitudes and predispositions. When it came to practical and concrete forms of resistance the record refuted claims made by workers in the small, less complex plants. Indeed, worker resistance in its various forms such as absenteeism, labour turnover, work-to-rule and even strikes was much more common in the larger, more complex plants such as the steel industry in the case of this study.[23]

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[22]See, Nichols, T. & Armstrong, P. Workers Divided. Glasgow: Collins, 1976. Also, Touraine, A. La Conscience Ouvriere. op. cit.

[23]Most of the major and important strikes in industry were carried out in the large plants such as the complex plant of the National enterprise for Industrial Vehicles (SNVI). Situated near Algiers, or that of mechanical industries, it specialized in the production of tractors situated near Constantine and the National enterprise for Steel with its major and complex plant near Annaba (SNS). In 1988 strikes in the SNVI plant and SNS El-Hadjar threatened to take an

(Footnote continued)

The greater militancy of workers in the larger, more complex plants seemed to have been grasped by the state bureaucracy and constituted, among others, one of the reasons for the economic reforms based on restructuring state controlled enterprises began since 1980.[24] The main objective of these reforms was to break down large enterprises into smaller more manageable units with separate and autonomous management. One of the hoped for consequences of the policy was to contain the potential for industrial unrest which represented an obstacle to the endeavours of the State bureaucracy to establish its hegemony. Such unrest represented a real threat not only for the development policy implemented by the bureaucracy, but questioned the legitimacy of the bureaucracy itself. Given the close links between the economic and political spheres, both dominated by the same class grouping, every economic dispute threatened to turn into a political challenge to the State and of course the class grouping which dominated its various apparatuses.

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[23](continued)
unprecedented turn as they were followed by strikes and lockouts in many plants all over the country. Industrial unrest was to some extent behind the explosion of the 5th October, 1988 leading to a state of siege and confrontation between protesters and the army.

[24]These reforms were adopted at the FLN's extra ordinary Congress of 1980. They followed from a rigorous critique of the development policy generally and that of industrialization in particular which was implemented between 1970 and 1979. Although many of the arguments favouring such reforms were technically justifiable, they were nonetheless politically motivated. They were interpreted by many in the FLN itself as well as outside it as representing an offensive against the public sector and behind it the whole slogan of socialist development in Algeria. Resistance to these reforms led to a stalemate and it was acknowledged at the highest level of political authority (the clear example was the president's address for the nation's executives on the 19th September, 1988).

CHAPTER ELEVEN

CONCLUSION

In reviewing the literature on stratification in Dependent Social Formations (See Ch 01) two major approaches were identified: the elite-mass approach and a class approach. Exponents of the first perspective questioned the existence of social classes and therefore the adequacy of class analysis. Their position was justified by four main factors. First, lack of economic development, low level of industrialization and urbanization leading to the absence of socio-economic differentiation. Second, the persistence of traditional structures and social relations based on kinship, tribe and clan. Third, and partly as a consequence of the preceding factors, the high degree of ambiguity characterizing the positions and rôles of various social groups- including workers- caught between different and contradictory structures. Finally, the absence of specific and coherent value systems clearly expressing class interests and aspirations.

Using selected material relating to Algeria we were able to reveal the various limitations of this approach. It was possible to point to the existence of social conditions conducive to the emergence and development of social classes, including relatively significant degrees of industrialization and urbanization, as well as the rôle of private property in the means of production. Furthermore, it was suggested that wage labour occupied a crucial position in the emergent social structure of modern Algeria.

The major limitations of this first approach were two-fold. On the one hand, existing arguments were often based on unproven claims and sweeping generalizations, with little consideration given to the important differences characterizing the social structures of developing societies. On the other hand, we noted a striking theoretical poverty associated with an over concern with such 'empirical facts' as wages, occupation, background, and

ethnicity. Consequently, fundamental concepts such as class and class consciousness received little attention and were often considered unproblematic. Our main response to this first perspective was to argue that although certain traditional structures and values may have survived the long process of change, under the conditions of the modern world they assumed new functions and meanings; determined by their incorporation within and subordination to new social and economic structures.

The second approach, recognizing the existence of social classes and the adequacy of class analysis comprised two tendencies. Whereas the first treated classes as entities located in dependent social formations and expressing relationships between groups within such social structures, the second recognized classes as entities whose identities were determined by relationships within a world system. In the first tendency a further two positions were distinguished: one conceived class as a relation of power expressing possession, or lack of it, of control over political organizations, especially the state and its various apparatuses. In the second position, class was seen as an expression of economic relations, but those pertaining to distribution and exchange rather than production. In this instance, the decisive factor in class formation was control rather than ownership. In both cases the preeminence given to the political over the economic, and within this to control over ownership, was justified by the absence of private property and the dominant position of foreign capital in dependent formations.

Taking the example of Algeria, we tried to show the limitations of these arguments by pointing to the crucial rôle and position of private property and minor rôle played by foreign capital. For these reasons it was argued that the emergent social classes were not only reflected in power relations in terms of control over political institutions, and channels of distribution and exchange, but could be said to have a basis in the dominant relations of production. Both ownership (in the private sector) and control (in the public sector) were important elements in the process of class formation in general and that of a working class in particular.

The second tendency in the class approach viewed classes as relations of power and exploitation determined at the level of the

global system and not at the level of a single nation-state. In this perspective class relations were subordinated to the relations between two groups of nations, one constituting the core, the other the periphery of a world capitalist system. Despite its important contribution to the debate, this perspective left too many questions unanswered. Most importantly those dealing with the status of internal economic and political structures of domination and the exploitation within states and their consequences for group formation.

Some of the major limitations of this approach (such as reductionism, and failure to adequately analyse and explain such phenomena as class consciousness, nationalism and anti-imperialism) were considered. We concluded that such a conception failed to grasp the objective and subjective conditions of social classes as expressions of contradictory relations within relatively autonomous units whose reality is more than a mere reflection of a dichotomous division between a rich centre and a poor periphery.

The class structure of contemporary Algeria has roots stretching back to the colonial period. It was under colonial rule that capitalist penetration and expansion led to profound social and economic transformation. This centred mainly on a long and complex process of expropriation of land and crafts resulting in widespread destruction of traditional structures. It was the process that uprooted thousands of families from their villages and hamlets and threw successive waves of expropriated peasants and craftsmen onto the labour market. It was also a process of pauperization and proletarianization which led progressively to the formation of a working class in both the colonial farms and the industrial and commercial enterprises. These were very specific circumstances, characterized not only by widespread economic exploitation, but also by political and cultural oppression and racial discrimination. Societal divisions based on racial and religious factors were reproduced within the embryonic working class. While the largest section composed of indigenous workers emerged effectively as an under-class; under- and unemployed, less skilled and paid less, the smaller group of workers of European origin, emerged as a true labour aristocracy.

Some of the arguments advanced by advocates of the

elite-mass approach seemed relevant to the description of Algerian social structure during the period of colonial domination. Differentiation on the basis of ethnicity, religion and other factors overshadowed that based on social and economic position. The same cleavages and divisions were to a certain extent, reflected in the union movement. From the beginning trades unions exhibited the imprints of the colonial order. They were a simple extension of labour confederations based in France and were, for some time, restricted to European workers. As such they failed to grasp or to represent the conditions prevailing in the Algerian colony. Their origin, legal status, ideology and political orientation rendered them alien institutions and restricted their impact to a limited section of workers, particularly sectors with a relatively large, permanent and stable workforce. The large majority of workers was not unionized for it was dispersed in smaller units of industry, crafts and farms. Even unionized workers were divided between competing unions with different and opposed ideologies and political orientations. These included the Christian Labour Confederation (C.F.T.C), the Social Democrat, Force Ouvriere (F.O.) and the communist-oriented C.G.T. It was from the latter that an independent federation of Algerian unions (U.G.S.A.) emerged in 1954.

The limited success of the unions as a form of class organisation was not only due to their ethno- and Euro-centrism, but was also due to objective conditions. First, a hostile context specific to a colonial capitalist system based on extreme economic, political and cultural oppression and racial discrimination existed. Second, the economic structure was extremely fragile and backward with agriculture, services and craft industry representing dominant activities. Third, under- and unemployment were widespread and represented a fundamental characteristic of the colonial system. Finally, their failures were inherent in the nature of the trade unions themselves, both as a alien organizations and as a reflection of the contradictory colonial capitalist system. Despite all this the union movement presented sections of workers with some sort of leadership in their struggles. This was particularly the case of the C.G.T., then the U.G.S.A., outlawed in 1956 and the U.G.T.A. pushed into exile shortly after its birth.

The relationship which linked the U.G.T.A. and the

F.L.N., leading ultimately to the political subordination of the union organisation, stretched far back to the 1940's. This was reflected in the interest shown by the leadership of the Nationalist Party Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertes Democratiques (M.T.L.D.), in establishing an independent union organisation, that is, outside the influence of the metropolitan labour organizations, especially the C.G.T. During the years of exile (1957-62) the subordination of the union movement to the F.L.N was completed and institutionalised. This led to important consequences. Most significant among them were: a rupture between the union leadership and membership and the U.G.T.A.'s increasing involvement in political and diplomatic activities at the expense of other social and professional activities and interests. Among the consequences of The U.G.T.A.'s subordination was a deepening process of class domination. The subordination of the U.G.T.A happened at a time when the petite-bourgeois leadership of the F.L.N was entering into alliance with representatives of the local bourgeoisie. Beyond all tactical considerations imposed by the war which was at its height, the alliance was aimed at securing control of the emergent working class, denying it any possibility of a future autonomous development.

This subordination was facilitated by the similarity between the U.G.T.A. and F.L.N. on a number of issues, including the prevalence within both of nationalist and populist ideologies. The problem faced by the union movement was not that it lacked a revolutionary ideology and programme for the future. What it lacked was a base among workers who would contribute to, elaborate such a programme, and eventually defend it. At the beginning, the U.G.T.A. seemed more like a head without a body, but later on it became more like a body without a head.

In the early years of independence two important processes marked the development of the embryonic working class: state building and economic development. They represented two different yet related arenas of class struggle in which the working class was actively involved. The main issues which fuelled the struggle centred round who should control state power and what rôle should the national state assume in a newly independent society. Equally important was the question, what orientation should be given to economic development.

In the aftermath of independence social and economic differentiation was limited to levels achieved during the colonial period. The process of class formation was, for a time, held back by the degradation of the economy, political confusion and lack of a clear ideological orientation. This was true of all social groups and classes-in-formation, whatever their objective position and subjective aspiration. The local bourgeoisie, small in size, its formation hindered by colonial capitalism, and involved in a last-minute and aborted alliance with the metropolitan bourgeoisie. The petite bourgeoisie emerged as a leading candidate for state power. This was made possible by three factors: first, its leading rôle in the liberation war through the F.L.N. and the army. Second, its strategic place within the colonial state apparatuses. third, the consolidation of its control over much of the sensitive economic activities left behind by the settlers. It was these resources of power which were further expanded by the development of an economic policy in which a leading rôle was assumed by the state.

At this stage, the working class-in-formation exhibited a number of important characteristics. Its size did not immediately increase beyond the level achieved at the end of the colonial period. Its composition underwent significant changes as a result of European workers leaving the country. Consequently, social cleavages based on racial and religious grounds lost much of their significance while increasing non-ethnic heterogeneity of the workforce. Independence revealed the internal and latent contradictions of Algerian society. For example, the fundamental opposition between capital and labour was no longer subordinated to considerations of national liberation. It was at this time that workers showed an impressive degree of militancy and determination to preserve their jobs and defend their interests against attacks from various groups and quarters.

A significant example of such worker militancy was the degree of consciousness they exhibited during the movement for self-management. There was an expression of grass-root interest concerns; a sudden, unexpected and desperate action which for a moment revealed workers' grasp of class relations and their position within the system. Our discussion of the experiment of self-management has shown the crucial rôle played by collective organisation and the consequences of this for the process of class formation.

Both in its successes and failures self-management revealed what a difference the absence of a strong and independent union movement made to workers' resistance and struggle. It also highlighted the fact that class struggle was not limited to, and could not be resolved at the level of economic relations, especially when changes were limited to juridical categories leaving concrete structures of power and authority untouched. The self-management movement showed that class conflict and struggle was ultimately about power. To be precise, the seizure of state power was the supreme guarantee of economic domination and exploitation. The failure of self-management was an unmistakable sign of the structural and organisational weaknesses of the working class-in-formation. Lack of experience, organisation and leadership were all characteristics which had their roots in the historical conditions under which the working class had first emerged and developed.

The subordination of the working class in the early years of independence was only a fore-warning of the potentialities for class domination contained in, and expressed by, a particular type of economic policy. This was confirmed and further consolidated by many of the other tendencies emerging in the period following independence. One of these tendencies relates to the installation of the petite-bourgeoisie in the increasingly dominant state bureaucracy. This phenomenon had its roots in class relations already emergent in the colonial and post-colonial periods. The entrenchment of the petite-bourgeoisie in the state was also linked to a series of tactical alliances between the state bureaucracy, a rising stratum of technocrats, and elements of the working class represented by the leadership of the U.G.T.A.

The rapid and intensive transformation of Algerian society (industrialisation, agrarian reform, expansion of education and health care, etc.) was carried out under the control of an emergent state apparatus largely and increasingly dominated by a bureaucratic stratum emerging out of the petite-bourgeoisie.

The complex process of societal change, and particularly that of industrialisation had profound consequences for the process of working class formation. First, industrialisation led to a rapid expansion in the size of the working class during a relatively short

period of time. Second, important changes occurred in the composition of this class, with urban and industrial workers (including construction and public works) making up a significant proportion.

The successful implementation of economic policy needed, at times, the consent and cooperation of workers, a fact which led to many tactical alliances between workers and the state bureaucrats. However, in order to establish its hegemony the state bureaucracy required more than consent and compromise. It sought and partially achieved, effective control over large parts of society. In achieving this objective, the working class was denied the right to autonomous organisation and effective defence of its interests. The reign of the state bureaucrats was legitimized in terms of nationalist and populist ideology.

To be sure, industrialisation and its ideology did not lead only to subordination and control of the working class. The contradictions of the development policy and the fragile alliances on which it stood provided workers with constant occasions to contest not only their disadvantageous position, gradually worsening with time, but to question the very legitimacy of political authority as exercised by the state bureaucracy.

The rapid expansion of a working class, in the absence of effective trade union organisation, led to serious internal cleavages which undermined the formation of a cohesive, integrated social class, with a crystallized sense of identity. Although workers often showed determination in opposing encroachments on their interests, the absence of a strong union organization rendered such resistance scattered and uncoordinated. Despite the increase in the number of strikes at the peak of industrialisation, lack of organisation and support from the unions together with harsh measures taken by the authorities represented a strong deterrent to such forms of class action.

At the end of the 1980's the composition of the working class was undergoing yet another major change; a change which could prove decisive in the future. Up until the end of the 1970's working class expansion was concentrated in industry; particularly in manufacturing and construction, and mainly in the public rather than

in the private sector. More recently, however, there has been a clear trend toward the creation of more jobs in the non-industrial branches; in services, trade and transport, etc. Also, the private sector was becoming economically more competitive and politically aggressive. These trends are likely to have profound consequences for the organisation and structure of the working class. These sectors have been known for their unfavourable conditions of work such as security of employment, wage rates and career prospects. The expansion of such labour conditions could make industrial relations more explosive in the future. On the other hand, they have also the capacity to weaken workers' resistance, given the obstacles they put in the way of the development of viable forms of organisation and solidarity.

The recent economic reforms in Algeria were designed to liberalize the economy by decentralizing state control over a wide range of activities and branches of the economy, and by giving greater impetus to the development of the private sector. Labour legislation is being reviewed in order to bring industrial relations in line with the liberal orientation of the economy. The aim is to institutionalize free collective bargaining ending more than two decades of state corporatism. However, the past and present conditions under which the working class has developed indicate that such reforms may well prove unfavourable for workers. They, generally, lack necessary information about their plants as well as a much needed skill and experience to carry through such negotiation and bargaining with management. Furthermore, most state companies and their units are unprofitable and the economy has a poor performance, making it extremely difficult for workers to adopt radical positions. Even their right to strike, constitutionally recognized only recently (1989), is coming under attack from the mass media, especially during the year 1990, following a wave of strikes in the public sector.

Such propositions based on the scrutiny of the historical development of the working class were largely corroborated by the findings of our survey in four major industrial plants. Our results tended to confirm some fundamental tendencies of industrial work organized on the basis of Taylorite and Fordist principles. These included most specifically, lack of job discretion, deskilling tendencies related to high levels of technical division of labour, job fragmentation and routine tasks. Although some differences were found

among workers and specific industries these characteristics were dominant. Consequently, we found that the process of formation of a homogeneous "collective worker" in industry was an increasing potentiality of the Algerian situation, but a potentiality which was undermined by other social, economic and political conditions.

Nevertheless, our survey showed that workers did not seem to have developed clear and definite views about how technology might affect their working and living conditions. Mechanization seemed to have enhanced homogeneity among workers through the degradation of skills, work fragmentation and task specialisation. Technology and mechanisation were, however, a focus for contradictory and conflicting views. They were admired as a progressive step from old ways of work, but at the same time despised as a source of deskilling and alienation. Pragmatic judgements were clearly expressed concerning the effects of technology on working conditions. However, technology was generally seen in favourable terms given workers' recent experience of industrial work and relative advantages associated with it as well as the impact of official and popular ideologies associating it with rationality, progress and modernity.

A dominant ethos in the workplace was solidarity among workers, although this varied according to location of industry, size of plant and the degree of homogeneity of the workforce. Authority relations in the workplace seemed to be associated with how workers viewed their supervisors, while these views were themselves determined by the characteristics of the labour process such as length of span of control, rigidity or flexibility of supervision and affiliation to unions, since many of the supervisory staff were also sitting on workers' committees as elected delegates. Workplace relations were clearly marked by the distance, both physical and symbolic, separating workers from senior staff. Management was viewed with suspicion and severely criticized as a privileged and inefficient group. In general, workers' perceptions of workplace relations, albeit exhibiting some confusion, certainly indicated a grasp of the contradictions and cleavages existing between various groups with different positions in the hierarchical organisation characterising industry. Finally, there seemed to be a strong link between the way in which workers experienced their work and their perceptions of workplace relations.

Some of the interesting findings of our survey related to the objective attributes of the workers in our sample. An overwhelming majority were the sole bread winners for their families, relying entirely on their wages as a source of income. Most significantly, workers were acutely aware of the specific conditions separating them from other groups. Of particular interest were the differences between the young, better educated and recently employed and the older, less educated, long-serving workers. Differences in the experience of these two groups, pointed to a more general cleavage between two generations of the working class. Such cleavage, with all the characteristics associated with it, might well be count as a serious obstacle to the development of a community of interest, leading to strengthened class identity and collective forms of action.

That cleavage becomes even more important when linked to the issue of social mobility prospects and associated orientations. Although only a small minority of our sample was seriously preparing for mobility, the expressed desire for it was quite common among workers. The young, better educated and skilled workers did not only exhibit more often a desire for mobility but expressed a preference for long-range mobility; that is, changing occupation and industry. This was particularly significant insofar as this group is becoming the majority in the Algerian working class. We can surmise, then, that many of those who are able to exert pressure on management and have resources to do so are considering individual solutions rather than forms of collective action. On the other hand, there are structural limits to such individual escape routes which may in turn mean that mounting dissatisfaction among these workers could only find its solution in the adoption of collective forms of resistance, a fact which these workers would not miss for long, particularly, in the light of the present economic difficulties. These constitute only a minority, but whether through loyalty or realism, many such workers recognized that they had little choice but to stick to what they have in their hands while not excluding a better future.

Such aspirations for a better future were also clearly reflected in the hopes of all workers for their children's education and careers. Most believed their children had an equal opportunity in education, but in this case, the younger were more sceptical. They all held the hope that their children could make it to higher education,

but such a "dream" was often shattered by the recognition of the hard reality that only a few of them would achieve given a lack of financial support. Nevertheless, the majority chose careers for their children with a close link to shop-floor activity. This might be a measure of the degree of high esteem in which these particular workers held their jobs and position and the position of productive labour, despite, the unfavourable conditions associated with it.

We found this tendency confirmed when workers identified their reference groups and located them in terms of dominant socio-economic differences characteristic of specific class positions. There was, for example, a dominant tendency to perceive barriers in social interaction and to associate these with an underlying structure. It appeared that the location of plants and their size had an influence on shaping workers' views on these issues. In general, a sense of solidarity seemed to have been experienced by most workers, although others did not share such experience. there are various conditions which seem to inhibit the development of significant forms of solidarity, including forms of work organization (work shifts), competition for bonuses based on individual performances, client relations, etc. On the other hand, informal structures and preestablished networks based on regional affinities seemed to enhance solidarity among certain groups of workers . However, many informal networks based on regional, tribal and client relations may in the long run inhibit the development of class solidarity. The significance which non-class relations continued to have might be related to the character and speed of social change in Algeria, being neither gradual nor deep-rooted, but abrupt, sudden and often directed from above.

The observed failure of solidarity among a section of our sample was linked to an absence of agreement about particular issues, and importantly, about the measures and forms of action that should be taken. There was also an absence of strong autonomous union organisations. Solidarity and awareness of class identity were not separated from daily struggles and resistance, but forged within them. An objective basis for identification of interests and reference group awareness in class terms did exist, but did not seem to go beyond mere economism. There appeared to be two fundamental reasons for this. First was the fragmented nature of the workers' experience reinforced by the institutional separation of different spheres; that is

workplace and the external environment. Second were the limits set by the authoritarian political regime on autonomous worker organisation.

The absence of participation in union affairs was a general phenomenon characterising workers' positions. In much of the literature this is interpreted as a sign of conservatism and lack of adaptation to the conditions of industrial life. In this case, however, given the clearly subordinate character of union organisation and absence of democratic accountability, such a position should be considered a sign of class consciousness, or at least rational adaptation to the conditions. For in rejecting and abandoning union apparatuses workers reaffirmed their independence. If such an orientation did not lead workers to develop alternative unions, this was, among other things, conditioned by the monolithic character of the state. It was also due, in part, to the absence of a motivated and experienced leadership among workers themselves. The absence of democracy within unions and their effective subordination and control by the state militated against the emergence of such leadership. This also put limits on the possibilities of developing collective forms of resistance, encouraged sporadic and isolated acts of resistance in the absence of more efficient alternatives. The absence of independent unions was also clearly linked to the level of apathy and resignation among workers. There is also the possibility that it has contributed to developing individualist and instrumentalist attitudes referred to above which have facilitated the integration of workers within dominant networks of patron-client relations. It was in this context also that workers defined their ideal union as one with independence from state control, and greater militancy and aggressiveness in defending their moral and material interests.

Such contradictory tendencies were clearly reflected in the consciousness revealed by workers in our ample. An important element among the sample held a clear idea of its identity as a specific class with a particular position and interests. Others expressed more diffuse and indefinite views, but these differences did not seem to have been the product of social characteristics usually identified as determining such differences. The factors which seemed to have important effects on respondents' values and perceptions were such variables as branch of industry, level of education and age. It might be argued, therefore, that further developments in the process

of working class formation, particularly those associated with changes in consciousness might be affected by factors such as education. There were counterbalancing tendencies, however, limiting the impact of these factors. Education, despite its expansion, had limited consequences for the new generation of working class children. The spread of advanced technology and mechanisation has led to forms of work organisation and job specification which increasingly require qualifications and job discretion. Also, structural changes in the economy have limited the expansion of technically advanced industries, so resulting in concentration of labour and capital in less mechanised branches (services, construction, trade and transport). In short, it may well be that the process of industrialisation, as it is occurring in Algeria, may effectively exclude those emancipatory tendencies associated with the expansion of education and technical training.

However, factors such as age and education will probably continue to contribute to, and shape attitudes and aspirations. But given the alienating character of present social relations both in the workplace and outside it these aspirations may well come into conflict with the dominant values and norms.

Following such lines of argument, then, we might well expect workers' dissatisfaction and resistance to become more frequent and open in the future. Such speculation is not based only on the levels of consciousness exhibited by our workers in relation to identity, position and interests, but also on their conception of existing societal divisions and antagonisms.

Various models of social cleavage and differentiation, including wealth, authority and property relations, were used by workers. The predominance of a wealth model in the perception of social cleavage and group struggle, while indicating a low level of "class" consciousness should not lead us to underestimate the importance of the other forms of perception exhibited. Wealth-based perceptions of class may, in this case, indicate a first step in a process in which more subtle relations, based on authority and property relations are the outcome. However, there was a tendency for all three perceptual dimensions to coexist, making working class consciousness a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon.

In fact, class relations were experienced in three different yet related ways, each of them reflecting a particular dimension. The wealth model, as it was expressed, seemed to be grounded in everyday experience, reflecting those aspects of "division" and "differentiation" given to common sense knowledge, which concentrated more on the effects rather than causes and mechanisms. Perception of the hidden mechanisms of class was reflected more in their concepts of authority and/or property relations, structured in a general system of economic and political domination. Such consciousness did not follow automatically from objective class position, but arose out of activity in a long process of socialisation by specific class agencies such as trade unions and political parties. However, in this particular case and given the specific character of the Algerian social formation in which old and new structures of domination and differentiation were articulated consciousness can only reflect such complex reality.

Class consciousness is not limited to perceptions of one's position and interests in terms of the dominant system of social production, but is determined also by the extent to which collective forms of action are considered necessary in order to defend those interests. Although limited to the level of expressed attitudes, our results indicate that collective forms of action were highly valued by most workers. It was a clear expression of their ability to make a link between their specific position and interest and the most adequate and efficient ways of achieving them. Such predisposition was even transcended by those workers who were actively engaged in resisting work organisation and discipline through work to rule practices. Although this was not an expressly negotiated form of collective action it necessitated at least tacit agreement and adherence from those involved.

One of the most significant characteristics of working class action was workers' commitment to silent and passive forms of resistance rather than overt ones such as strikes. However, this should not lead us into believing that Algerian plants were strike-free. On the contrary, and despite many deterrents including the banning of strikes in the public sector, hostility and opposition of official union leadership, workers' inexperience, and the sanctions inflicted on strikers, strikes were a common feature of industrial

relations. Given these unfavourable conditions, workers resorted more often to passive forms of resistance, causing severe problems for management and damage to industry. They included work to rule practices, absenteeism, various acts of sabotage, careless use of materials and machines, open defiance of work discipline and challenges of supervisors and foremen.

Attitudes to strikes were mixed and if an important section of workers rejected this form of resistance it was not only due to fear of reprisal and lack of support from unions, but also resulted from the influence exerted by official ideology, stressing that strikes were damaging to the national interest, so compromising state efforts to improve workers' situations. this, however, did not deter all workers, especially those in large manufacturing plants. Although strikes have always been a part of Algerian industrial relations, the end of the 1980s witnessed an important escalation in this form of resistance. The most plausible explanation is that as unfavourable conditions referred to above have changed workers reticence withered. This suggests that most of those who expressed their rejection of strikers did so under the specific situational conditions prevailing at that time.

The most important conclusions we may draw as a result of this study are: It is true that our findings might not dissipate all doubts about a number of issues treated in the thesis. However, this is perhaps to be expected not only because of problems associated with the method, but also as result of the nature of the investigated subject itself. Attitudes, perceptions and forms of action intertwine in a complex way to generate and express class identity. These "social facts" are dynamic processes reflecting changes, ambiguities and contradictions inherent in the relationships between normative expression and its context. Even when norms or values remain relatively stable over time situations of their expression do not so, leading to radical changes in the relation between them. Also, how can we expect workers to crystallize unequivocal perceptions of reality when this reality is dynamic, changing and even contradictory.

Our results highlighted the importance of situational factors. These help to explain the variations in attitudes, opinions and perceptions of events among workers. Thus, the rejection or

acceptance of forms of action, and their positive or negative evaluations cannot be understood without reference to the specific situations in which they occurred. Such evaluations do not express abstract preferences or positions but are contingent and situationally emergent.

If attitudes and actions are the products of situations bearing their imprints, it follows that a variety of possible developments relating to different issues may be expected. It is this aspect of our results which emerged as the most important. The results provided sufficient indications that under the "right" conditions class consciousness and action would develop further becoming dominant features in the political culture and life of the Algerian workers. Most important among such indications is a strong tendency among workers to perceive themselves as a class with particular interests as well as the positive evaluation of collective action as a means of defending their interests. These attitudes are going to be even more crucial for the future development of the Algerian working class given the recent economic and political reforms (restructuring of large state companies, liberalization and political pluralism).

These reforms will pose new challenges which workers must face and deal with, including free collective bargaining, labour collective agreements and new legislation including complicated legal procedures regulating strikes and union activities generally. These new conditions could have contradictory effects on the working class. On the one hand, they have within them the seeds of a possible bureaucratization given the need for a more able and qualified leadership. On the other, they will favour the crystallization of consciousness and improvement in the organization among workers.

Workers are now facing harsh economic conditions with management determined to rationalize the economy and make profits. They also face the blind action of the market economy based on sever competition, even among workers and trade unions. Such objective conditions despite their possible negative effects will, in the long run, enhance the emergence of a more coherent class strategy.

We have argued that given the right conditions Algerian workers will develop further their class identity and organization.

This is happening now after the collapse of the one-party state. New trade unions are emerging in various sectors and the old ones are being forced to change. The U.G.T.A, despite a last desperate attempt by the old guard, has developed a more militant and aggressive stand under the growing pressure from the membership. Successive governments after the events of October 1988, were forced to negotiate agreements with a new and militant union leadership.

The strength and credibility of the new leadership and its militant positions found echo among the overwhelming majority of workers. Thus on the 12th and 13th March 1991 a general strike called by the U.G.T.A leadership was followed in all sectors and branches. Another important indication of the unity of the working class and its autonomy was provided by the boycott of the political strike called in June 1991 by the Islamic Party (the Islamic Salvation Front). It is noteworthy to stress the failure of the Islamic movement to get a foot hold in the working class despite its apparent success elsewhere (largely based among students and the unemployed youth). Even its attempt to launch an Islamic Trade Union (Labour Islamic Union) has failed despite the complicity of the Local authorities and management in some state companies.

Finally, if this study is to claim any merit it will be that of having for the first time provided evidence of the existence of an emergent working class in Algeria. Certainly, a working class in the process of formation and with many specific characteristics distinguishing it from the model many have in mind when rejecting its existence, i.e., the European working classes. Nevertheless, This class has developed a particular identity and is aware of its position and its interests, and when convenient circumstances permitted revealed its potentiality to be a force to contend with. This is something most students of dependent social formations generally, and Algeria particularly, have long rejected and some continue to reject today.

ANNEXED TABLES

Table : Career aspiration by background

	Casual labour N=3	Self-empl. N=18	Agric. N=37	Serv's N=18	Constr. N=57	Indus. N=106	TOTAL N=239
Realized	33.3	38.9	37.8	22.2	28.0	41.5	36.0
Failed	33.3	44.4	24.3	44.4	31.6	22.6	28.5
No aspiration	33.3	16.7	37.9	33.4	40.4	35.9	35.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.01 P 0.42

Table: career aspiration by skill

	Unskilled N=82	Semi-skilled N=141	Skilled N=151	TOTAL N=374
Realized	23.2	34.0	32.5	31.0
Failed	29.3	25.5	28.5	27.5
No aspiration	47.5	40.5	39.0	41.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

R -0.07 P 0.08

Table : Mobility orientation by education

	Illiterate N=112	Primary N=91	Secondary N=75	College N=11	TOTAL N=289
Department	52.7	46.2	38.7	45.5	46.7
Factory	10.7	14.3	6.7	18.2	11.1
Enterprise	17.9	24.2	25.3	9.1	21.5
Occupation	18.7	15.3	29.3	27.2	20.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.12 P 0.02

Table : Orientation to mobility by background

	Casual labour N=2	Self- N=14	Agric. N=23	Serv's N=15	Constr. N=41	Industry N=83	TOTAL N=178
Dpartment	50.0	42.9	39.1	26.7	61.0	32.5	40.4
Factory	-	14.3	4.3	6.7	4.9	18.1	11.8
Enterprise	50.0	7.1	17.4	26.6	19.5	27.7	23.0
Occupation	-	35.7	39.1	40.0	14.6	21.7	24.8
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.04 P 0.31

Table : Orientation of mobility by union membership

	Members N=132	Non-members N=153	TOTAL N=285
Department	47.7	44.4	46.0
Factory	6.8	15.0	11.2
Enterprise	22.7	20.9	21.8
Occupation	22.8	19.7	21.0
TOTAL	100	100	100

R -0.02 P 0.37

Table : Mobility preparation by background

	Casual labour N=3	Self- N=17	Agric. N=37	Serv's N=18	Constr. N=56	Industry N=105	TOTAL N=236
Prepared	-	5.9	2.7	16.7	7.1	10.5	8.5
Not prepared	100.0	94.1	97.3	83.3	92.9	89.5	91.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.08 P 0.11

Table : Mobility preparation by seniority

	-5 N=129	6-10 N=139	11-15 N=70	16-20 N=10	21+ N=23	TOTAL N=371
Prepared	7.8	5.8	11.4	10.0	-	7.3
Not prepared	92.2	94.2	88.6	90.0	100	92.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.02				P 0.34	

Table : Mobility preparation by union membership

	Members N=177	Non-members N=191	TOTAL N=368
Prepared	8.5	6.3	7.3
Not prepared	91.5	93.7	92.7
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R 0.04		P 0.21

Table: Self-identification, by age

	22-30 N=103	31-40 N=138	41-50 N=77	51-62 N=50	TOTAL N=368
Occupation	37.9	36.2	33.8	42.0	37.0
Industry	31.1	31.9	20.8	30.0	29.1
Skill	5.8	5.1	6.4	12.0	6.5
All	25.2	26.8	39.0	16.0	27.4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.01				P 0.43

Table : Solidarity, by age group

Solidarity	22-30 N=99	31-40 N=129	41-50 N=69	51-62 N=47	TOTAL N=344
Very frequent	34.3	38.0	31.9	23.4	33.7
Sometimes	31.4	26.4	29.0	27.7	28.5
Never	34.3	35.6	39.1	48.9	37.8
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.09				P 0.04

Table : Solidarity, by level of education

Solidarity	Illiterate N=139	Primary N=105	Secondary N=89	College N=12	TOTAL N=345
Very frequent	33.8	39.0	28.0	25.0	33.6
Sometimes	26.6	26.7	36.0	16.7	28.7
Never	39.6	34.3	36.0	58.3	37.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.03 P 0.28

Table: Solidarity, by background

Solidarity	Cas. lab. N=3	Self-em. N=18	Agric. N=36	Servs. N=18	Constr. N=56	Indus. N=100	TOTAL N=231
V. frequent	66.7	27.8	33.3	33.3	35.7	41.0	37.2
Sometimes	-	38.9	27.8	22.2	28.6	27.0	27.7
Never	33.3	33.3	38.9	44.5	35.7	32.0	35.1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.05 P. 0.22

Table: Solidarity, by seniority

Solidarity	1-5 N=123	6-10 N=136	11-15 N=61	16-20 N=8	21+ N=16	TOTAL N=344
Very frequent	35.8	31.6	39.3	50.0	6.2	33.7
Sometimes	35.8	26.5	16.4	25.0	43.8	28.8
Never	28.4	41.9	44.3	25.0	50.0	37.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.10 P 0.03

Table : Solidarity, by skill

Solidarity	Unskilled N=74	Semi-skilled N=126	Skilled N=145	TOTAL N=345
Very frequent	44.6	30.2	31.0	33.6
Sometimes	21.6	34.1	27.6	28.7
Never	33.8	35.7	41.4	37.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

R 0.09 P 0.05

Table : Forms of solidarity, by age

	22-30 N=68	31-40 N=82	41-50 N=32	51-62 N=20	TOTAL N=202
Collective action	19.1	22.0	31.2	25.0	22.8
Moral assistance	13.2	7.3	3.1	-	7.9
Community assist.	17.6	18.3	15.6	25.0	18.3
Help at work	47.1	51.2	46.9	50.0	49.0
Commitment to general interest	3.0	1.2	3.1	-	2.0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

Table : Forms of solidarity, by education

	Illiterate N=67	Primary N=65	Secondary N=68	College N=3	TOTAL N=203
Collective action	29.8	18.5	22.1	-	23.1
Moral assistance	6.0	4.6	11.7	33.3	7.9
Community assist.	16.4	23.1	16.2	-	18.2
Help at work	47.8	50.8	47.1	66.7	48.8
Commitment to general interest	-	3.0	2.9	-	2.0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

Table: Forms of solidarity, by background

	Casual labour N=2	Self-empl. N=12	Agric. N=16	Servs. N=9	Constr. N=38	Indus. N=78	TOTAL N=155
Collective action	50.0	33.3	18.8	33.3	29.0	15.4	21.9
Moral assistance	-	-	6.2	-	5.3	10.2	7.1
Community assist.	-	25.0	18.8	11.1	21.0	16.7	18.1
Help at work	50.0	41.7	56.2	44.5	42.1	56.4	51.0
Commitment to general interest	-	-	-	11.1	2.6	1.3	1.9
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table : Forms of solidarity, by seniority

	1-5 N=94	6-10 N=67	11-15 N=32	16-20 N=4	21+ N=6	TOTAL N=203
Collective action	24.5	23.9	15.6	-	50.0	23.1
Moral assistance	8.5	8.9	6.3	-	-	7.9
Community assist.	17.0	21.0	12.5	50.0	16.7	18.2
Help at work	47.9	43.2	65.6	50.0	33.3	48.8
Commitment to general interest	2.1	3.0	-	-	-	2.0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table : Forms of solidarity, by union membership

	Union members N=106	Non-members N=96	TOTAL N=202
Collective action	17.9	28.1	22.8
Moral assistance	10.4	5.2	7.9
Community assist.	20.8	15.6	18.3
Help at work	50.0	48.0	49.0
Commitment to general interest	0.9	3.1	2.0
TOTAL	100	100	100

Table : Breakdown of solidarity, by education

	Illiterate N=62	Primary N=46	Secondary N=44	College N=9	TOTAL N=161
Lack of consensus	30.6	21.7	34.1	55.6	30.4
Prominence of individualism	33.9	41.3	31.8	22.2	34.8
Opposition to collective decision	11.3	4.3	2.3	-	6.2
Clientele divisions	16.1	11.0	27.3	22.2	18.0
Mistrust among workers	8.1	21.7	4.5	-	10.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

Table : Breakdown of solidarity, by background

	Casual labour N=2	Self-empl. N=8	Agric. N=16	Servs. N=6	Constr. N=28	Indus. N=53	TOTAL N=113
Lack of consensus	50.0	62.5	56.2	33.3	28.6	24.5	33.6
Prominence of indiv.	50.0	25.0	31.3	66.7	32.1	45.3	39.8
Oppos. to coll. dec.	-	-	12.5	-	-	1.9	1.0
Clientele divisions	-	-	-	-	21.4	17.0	15.0
Mistrust among wks.	-	12.5	-	-	17.9	11.3	10.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table : Breakdown of solidarity, by seniority

	1-5 N=50	6-10 N=69	11-15 N=35	16-20 N=00	21+ N=6	TOTAL N=160
Lack of consensus	36.0	23.2	42.9	-	-	30.6
Prominence of individualism	44.0	36.2	25.7	-	-	35.0
Opposition to collective decisions	4.0	5.8	5.7	-	16.7	5.6
Clientele divisions	10.0	17.4	20.0	-	83.3	18.1
Mistrust among workers	6.0	17.4	5.7	-	-	10.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	-	100	100

Table : Breakdown of solidarity, by skill

	Unskilled N=33	Semi-skilled N=67	Skilled N=61	TOTAL N=161
Lack of consensus	18.2	26.9	41.0	30.4
Prominence of individualism	42.4	37.3	27.9	34.8
Opposition to collective decisions	18.2	6.0	-	6.2
Clientele divisions	9.1	17.9	22.9	18.0
Mistrust among workers	12.1	11.9	8.2	10.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

Table : Perception of class structure, by age

	22-30 N=105	31-40 N=140	41-50 N=78	51-62 N=51	TOTAL N=374
1-The rich	26.3	23.8	18.9	31.0	24.4
2-The poor	25.5	25.0	20.5	30.2	24.9
3-Workers, proletariat	8.8	11.1	19.1	6.9	10.7
4-Bourgeoisie	9.2	8.1	6.5	6.9	7.9
5-Ruling class	7.6	9.9	13.5	4.3	9.3
6-Subordinate class	11.9	8.7	8.7	7.8	9.5
7-Middle class	9.9	12.2	11.9	10.3	11.3
8-Intelligentsia	0.8	1.2	4.9	2.6	2.0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

Table: Best form of action, by age

	22-30 N=97	31-40 N=130	41-50 N=72	51-62 N=47	TOTAL N=346
Individual action	13.4	12.3	9.8	17.0	12.7
Collective struggle	45.4	49.2	33.3	51.1	45.1
Both combined	41.2	38.5	56.9	31.9	42.2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.00 P 0.48

Table: Best form of action, by education

	Illiterate N=140	Primary N=110	Secondary N=84	College N=13	TOTAL N=347
Individual action	14.3	10.0	11.9	23.1	12.7
Collective struggle	42.1	43.6	51.2	53.8	45.2
Both combined	43.6	46.4	36.9	23.1	42.1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.05 P 0.16

Table : Best form of action, by background

	Casual labour N=3	Self-empl. N=15	Agric. N=33	Servs. N=16	Constr. N=55	Indus. N=97	TOTAL N=219
Individual action	-	6.7	3.0	12.5	9.1	11.4	9.1
Collective struggle	-	53.3	54.5	81.3	52.7	44.3	50.7
Both combined	100	40.0	42.5	6.2	38.2	44.3	40.2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

R -0.04 P 0.25

Table : Best form of action, by seniority

	-5 N=124	6-10 N=128	11-15 N=66	16-20 N=7	21+ N=21	TOTAL N=346
Individual action	21.2	11.7	19.7	14.3	-	12.7
Collective struggle	39.5	54.7	40.9	42.9	33.3	45.1
Both combined	48.4	33.6	39.4	42.8	66.7	42.2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.03 P 0.27

Table : Best form of action, by skill

	Unskilled N=79	Semi-skilled N=138	Skilled N=130	TOTAL N=347
Individual action	12.7	8.7	16.9	12.7
Collective struggle	49.3	39.9	48.5	45.2
Both combined	38.0	51.4	34.6	42.1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

R -0.07 P 0.11

Table : Best form of action, by union membership

	Members N=161	Non-members N=182	TOTAL N=343
Individual action	15.5	10.4	12.8
Collection struggle	44.1	46.2	45.2
Both combined	40.4	43.4	42.0
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R 0.06		P 0.13

Table: Bearing of own contribution, by age

	22-30 N=69	31-40 N=102	41-50 N=51	51-62 N=26	TOTAL N=248
Important	66.7	73.5	86.3	65.4	73.4
Unimportant	33.3	26.5	13.7	34.6	26.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.07				R 0.14

Table: Bearing of own contribution, by education

	Illiterate N=96	Primary N=89	Secondary N=58	College N=6	TOTAL N=249
Important	77.1	74.2	69.0	50.0	73.5
Unimportant	22.9	25.8	31.0	50.0	26.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.10				P 0.06

Table : Bearing of own contribution, by background

	Casual N=2	Self- N=9	Agric. N=23	Servs. N=13	Constr. N=43	Indus. N=74	TOTAL N=168 **(164??)**
Important	100.0	77.8	77.8	84.6	76.7	81.1	79.8
Unimportant	-	22.2	22.2	15.4	23.3	18.9	20.2
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.00						P 0.50

Table : Bearing of own contribution, by seniority

	-5 N=97	6-10 N=96	11-15 N=47	16-20 N=3	21+ N=6	TOTAL N=249
Important	71.1	76.0	74.5	66.7	66.7	73.5
Unimportant	28.9	24.0	25.5	33.3	33.3	26.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.01					P 0.43

Table : Work-to-rule, by background

	Casual labour N=3	Self-empl. N=17	Agric. N=31	Servs. N=17	Constr. N=51	Indus. N=97	TOTAL N=216
Not possible	33.3	35.3	54.8	35.3	45.1	47.4	45.8
Objected to	33.3	-	3.3	5.9	9.8	9.3	7.9
Practised	33.3	64.7	41.9	58.8	45.1	43.3	46.3
TOTAL	99.9	100	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.05						P 0.24

Table : Work-to-rule, by skill

	Unskilled N=68	Semi-skilled N=124	Skilled N=139	TOTAL N=331
Not possible	48.6	37.1	56.1	47.4
Objected to	17.6	7.3	3.6	7.9
Practised	33.8	55.6	40.3	44.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
	R -0.04			P 0.22

Table : Work-to-rule, by union membership

	Members N=167	Non-memners N=161	TOTAL N=328
Not possible	52.7	42.9	47.6
Objected to	7.2	8.1	7.6
Practised	40.7	49.0	44.8
TOTAL	100	100	100
	R 0.09		P 0.05

Table : Attitudes to strikes, by age

	22-30 N=103	31-40 N=139	41-50 N=77	51-62 N=51	TOTAL N=370
Necessary means	25.2	17.3	15.6	33.3	21.4
Necessary but damaging	26.2	21.6	27.3	29.4	25.1
Damaging and rejected	48.6	61.1	57.1	37.3	53.5
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.04				P 0.21

Table : Attitudes to strikes, by education

	Illiterate N=152	Primary N=111	Secondary N=94	College N=14	TOTAL N=371
Necessary means	19.7	18.9	25.5	28.6	21.3
Necessary but damaging	24.4	28.8	21.3	28.6	25.1
Damaging and rejected	55.9	52.3	53.2	42.8	53.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.06				P 0.14

Table : Attitudes to strikes, by background

	Casual labour N=3	Self-empl. N=18	Agric. N=36	Servs. N=18	Constr. N=56	Indus. N=106	TOTAL N=237
Necessary means	33.3	16.7	19.4	33.3	21.4	17.9	20.3
Necessary but damaging	-	27.8	22.2	16.7	32.1	25.5	25.7
Damaging and rejected	66.7	55.5	58.4	50.0	46.5	56.6	54.0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.01						P 0.46

Table: Attitudes to strikes, by seniority

	-5 N=129	6-10 N=139	11-15 N=69	16-20 N=10	21+ N=23	TOTAL N=370
Necessary means	24.0	22.3	14.5	40.0	13.0	21.4
Necessary but damaging	17.1	29.5	29.0	-	39.1	24.9
Damaging and rejected	58.9	48.2	56.5	60.0	47.9	53.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100
	R 0.01					P 0.44

Table : Attitudes to strikes, by skill

	Unskilled N=82	Semi-skilled N=141	Skilled N=148	TOTAL N=371
Necessary means	23.2	21.3	20.3	21.3
Necessary but damaging	24.4	25.5	25.0	25.1
Damaging and rejected	52.4	53.2	54.7	53.6
TOTAL	100	100	100	100
	R 0.02			P 0.32

Table: Assessing strike results, by age

	22-30 N=97	31-40 N=127	41-50 N=74	51-62 N=49	TOTAL N=347
Positive	21.6	18.9	18.9	32.7	21.6
Negative	39.2	54.3	50.0	32.7	46.1
Both	39.2	26.8	31.1	34.6	32.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100
	R -0.05				P 0.15

Table : Assessing strike results, by education

	Illiterate N=145	Primary N=104	Secondary N=88	College N=11	TOTAL N=348
Positive	24.1	20.2	20.5	9.1	21.6
Negative	49.0	44.2	46.6	27.3	46.3
Both	26.9	35.6	33.0	63.6	32.1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.10 P 0.03

Table : Assessing strike results, by background

	Casual labour	Self-empl.	Agric.	Servs.	Constr.	Indus.	TOTAL
Positive	-	12.5	27.8	35.3	29.6	18.1	22.9
Negative	66.7	43.8	58.3	35.3	48.1	49.5	49.4
Both	33.3	43.7	13.9	29.4	22.3	32.4	27.7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.03 P 0.30

Table : Assessing strike results, by seniority

	-5 N=118	6-10 N=134	11-15 N=63	16-20 N=9	21+ N=23	TOTAL N=347
Positive	18.6	26.9	20.6	11.2	13.0	21.6
Negative	44.1	46.2	49.2	44.4	47.8	46.1
Both	37.3	26.9	30.2	44.4	39.2	32.3
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100

R 0.02 P 0.38

Table: Assessing strike results, by skill

	Unskilled N=76	Semi-skilled N=140	Skilled N=132	TOTAL N=348
Positive	15.8	25.0	21.2	21.6
Negative	44.7	42.9	50.8	46.3
Both	39.5	32.1	28.0	32.1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

R -0.08 P 0.07

THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1- Socio-demographic Data.

01- Branch of industry :

1- Mining.
2- Chemicals.
3- Engineering.
4- Steel.

02- Age...../__/__/

03- Level of education.

1- Illiterate.
2- Primary.
3- Secondary.
4- College.

04- Marital status.

1- Single.
2- Married.
3- Divorced.
4- Widow.

05- Is your spouse employed?

1- Yes.
2- No.

06- Number of children..... /__/__/

07- Number of persons under charge.. /__/__/

2- Perceptions of Work and Technology.

08- Which of the following does your task work demand?

1- Great physical effort.
2- Great mental effort.
3- Both of them.

09- If asked to comment on your job, how would you characterize it?

1- Important and satisfying.
2- Tiring and risky.
3- Monotonous and boring.
4- A series of meaningless operations.

10- Do you enjoy any freedom in organising and carrying out your job?

1- Never.
2- Rarely.
3- Sometimes.
4- Frequently.

11- How have your abilities and skill developed since you took up this job?

1- Lost what you had before.
2- Realised your skill.
3- Improving it.

12- Does your job involve varied activities or tasks?

1- The same task all the time.
2- A variety of tasks now and then.
3- A variety of tasks all the time.

13- Do you think that with evolution from manual tools and craft to machinery and mechanical tools man has lost his creative role?

1- Yes.
2- No.

14- How does mechanization affect wages?

1- Has no effects.
2- Positively.
3- Negatively.
4- Not in workers interests.

015- How would you describe the effects of mechanization on your reaction to work?

1- No effects.
2- Positive.
3- Negative.

16- How does mechanization affect working conditions?

1- Neutral.
2- Positive.
3- Negative.
4- Not in workers interests.

17- How many persons contributed to the household income?

1- Just you.
2- Two.
3- Three.
4- Four or more.

18- What proportion is your wage to the total family income?

1- 100%
2- 50%
3- 25%

19- In your view what is the necessary monthly income of a family of (07) persons? /__/__/__/__/__/ AD.

20- If you have any other source of income, state its nature:
.....
.....

21- Do you have any debts at the moment?

1- Yes.
2- No.

3- Attitudes to Work and Labour Relations.

22- In your view, who is most affected by job and income insecurity?

1- Workers.
2- Others than workers.
3- Do not know.

23- What is the reason for this? .....
.....

24- Have workers here ever engaged in work to rule practices?

1- It is not possible.
2- Against it.
3- Yes, they do.

25- How would you describe the dominant ethos in your workplace?

1- A sense of solidarity.
2- A sense of individualism.
3- Regionalism and clientage.

26- In your view, on whose side do supervisors tend to stand?

1- With workers.
2- Autonomous group.
3- With management.

27- How would you describe supervisors attitudes to workers in general?

1- Respectful.
2- Helpful.
3- Unfair.
4- Formal and authoritarian.

28- What do you think of senior staff members?

1- Sympathetic in general.
2- Monopolise all privileges.
3- Fail to play their role.
4- Have no contact with them.

29- Which of the following is most important to you:

1- Work itself.
2- Atmosphere at work.
3- Life at home.
4- Leisure activities.

30- To which of the following you have a strong feeling of commitment and belonging?

1- A particular occupation.
2- A branch of industry.
3- A skill category.
4- All three.

4- Social and Occupational Mobility.

31- What was the last branch of activity in which you have been employed? .....

32- Does your job correspond to what you wanted to do when you applied for it?

1- Occupational aspiration realized.
2- Failure to realize aspiration.
3- Had no definite aspiration.

33- If failed in your aspiration, what did you want to do?
.....

34- What were the reasons for your failure? .....
.....

35- How long have you been in this factory : /__/__/ years.

36- What was your skill category upon your recruitment to this factory?

1- Unskilled.
2- Semi-skilled.
3- Skilled.

37- What is your skill category now?

1- Unskilled.
2- Semi-skilled.
3- Skilled.

38- Which of the following you would really like to change?

1- The department.
2- The factory.
3- The enterprise.
4- The occupation.

39- Are you taking any courses or training to realize your ambition?

1- Yes.
2- No.

40- If you have a real desire to change what is the main reason?

1- Wages and other fringe benefits.
2- Working conditions.
3- Social relations and atmosphere.
4- Lack of job satisfaction.
5- Lack of promotion.

41- Do you think all people enjoyed equal chances of access to education?

1- Yes.
2- No.

42- In your opinion what type of education best suits working class children?

1- Vocational training after secondary school.
2- Continue their education to higher levels.

43- There are relatively few working class children in colleges and universities, in your view what is the principal reason for this?

1- Economic conditions (resources).
2- Social conditions (large families).
3- Cultural conditions (illiteracy).
4- Others.

44- If you had the possibility to choose your children's career what would you like them to be?

1- Workers like yourself.
2- Technicians & engineers.
3- White collar employees.
4- Liberal professions.

5- Perception of societal division.

45- With whom do you feel really relaxed and at your ease?

1- Workers in general.
2- Workers in the same occupation.
3- People with certain characteristics.
4- Those in similar socio-economic position.
5- Others.

46- Could you tell us what do your best friends do for a living?

1- Workers in the same factory.
2- Workers in similar occupations.
3- Workers in different occupations.
4- Employees of other sectors.
5- Others.

47- Do you think there is anything that could stop two persons who appreciate each other from being friends?

1- Nothing at all.
2- Individual characteristics.
3- Socio-economic position.

48- Do you think there is anything that could stop two persons in love from marrying?

1- Nothing at all.
2- Individual differences.
3- Socio-economic position.

49- If you think society is divided into classes, what are these classes?

1- .....
2- .....
3- .....
4- .....

50- On what basis would you say that an individual or a group belongs to a particular class?

1- Occupation.
2- Socio-economic position.
3- Cultural aspects (life-style).

51- Do you think all Algerians belong to a social class?

1- Yes.
2- No.

52- In your view, to which social class do you belong?

.....
.....

53- Can you name other groups belonging to the same class as you?

1-.....
2- .....
3- .....

54- Who do you think are the people with the same or similar interests to your own?

1- All workers.
2- Workers in similar occupations.
3- Popular masses.
4- All patriots.
5- Others.

55- What is the nature of these shared interests?

1- Economic.
2- Occupational.
3- Socio-cultural.
4- Political.
5- Others.

56- Which interests, do you think, are most opposed to yours?

1- The rich.
2- Large proprietors and traders.
3- Senior officials and managers.
4- Workers in other occupations.
5- Workers in different kill categories.
6- Those with high living standards.
7- Others.

57- In your view, what is the principal determinant of the class position of workers?

1- The nature of occupation.
2- Low economic standards.
3- Material hardship.
4- Socio-cultural backwardness.
5- Dependence on wages.

58- How do you assess changes in the workers' situation and conditions during the last ten years?

1- Better than before.
2- The same as before.
3- Worse than before.

59- In any case, why? .....
.....

6- Solidarity and Class Action.

60- During the period you have been working here, have you experienced any form of solidarity among workers?

1- Yes, very frequently.
2- Yes, sometimes.
3- No, never.
4- Don't know.

61- Can you give examples of workers' solidarity?

1- .....
2- .....
3- .....

62- Can you give examples of the absence of solidarity?

1- .....
2- .....
3- .....

63- At the present time, what would be the best kind of action a worker could take in order to improve his/ her working conditions?

1- Individual attempts.
2- Collective struggles.
3- Both, individual and collective.

64- Do you believe that your personal contribution to collective struggle has any bearing on improving workers' situations?

1- Yes.
2- No.

65- Are you a member of the union branch in this factory?

1- Yes.
2- No.

66- How many branch meetings have you attended last year?

1- Yes, once.
2- Yes, twice or more.
3- Not at all.

67- Have you ever been a candidature for union office or the workers' council?

1- Yes, once.
2- Yes, twice or more.
3- No, never.

68- In any case, why? .....
.....

69- What do you think of workers' representatives in the union branch and workers' council?

1- Do their best.
2- Side with management.
3- Side with workers.
4- Look after their own interests.
5- Others.

70- In your view, what is the principal mission of the union?

1- Improve wages and work conditions.
2- Mobilize and unite workers.
3- Defend workers' interests in society.

71- Workers is a very current and widely used term, what does it mean to you?

1- Manual workers.
2- Productive workers.
3- All wage earners.

72- Were there any strikes in this factory since you started working here?

1- Yes.
2- No.

73- What do you think are the main reasons for strikes whether here or in other factories?

1- .....
2- .....
3- .....

74- How would you judge the results of strikes?

1- Positive.
2- Negative.
3- Both, positive and negative.

75- What is your attitude to strikes?

1- Legitimate means to press demands.
2- Damaging but necessary means.
3- Damaging and rejected means.

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