

**Identifying the Cultural Tourism Product in Malta:
Marketing and Management Issues**

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ABSTRACT

Identifying the Cultural Tourism Product in Malta: Marketing and Management Issues

The Maltese Islands, traditionally renowned for their mild Mediterranean climate and sea, are a mass tourist destination. Recent tourism policy has increasingly aimed at promoting the extensive historical and cultural heritage of the islands as a market diversification tool; resulting in the development of cultural tourism. Literature on cultural tourism focused on its relationships to cultural tourists and the local community, and on its marketing and management. A macroscopic study on cultural tourism was conducted using a Grounded Theory approach which looked at the understanding and interactions of a number of stakeholders (MTA, tour-operators, cultural providers and the local community) as they promoted the local cultural tourism product through marketing and management practices. The research findings showed that the Maltese cultural product on offer needed consistent renewal as there was a lack of consensus amongst stakeholders, on what should be promoted as culture and consequently what were cultural tourism and the cultural product. These perspectives often resulted in stereotypical Mediterranean imagery which detracted from proactive marketing campaigns. Furthermore, the study showed that the institutional organisation of culture was fragmented, with limited collaboration amongst stakeholders, which effectively hindered a comprehensive management of cultural tourism. The study called for a comprehensive definition of Maltese culture, widely endorsed by stakeholders, reflected in an extensively diversified cultural tourism product that would introduce elements such as gastronomy and crafts to complement the already established heritage and festivals. Moreover, the fact that many aspects of the cultural product were closely identifiable with localities suggested that the eventual success of its marketing and management depended to a large extent, on getting local communities more involved and/or to claim ownership. Finally, there was a need for 'cultural intermediaries', intent on promoting a cultural product via a quality service with a solid education in cultural-related matters.

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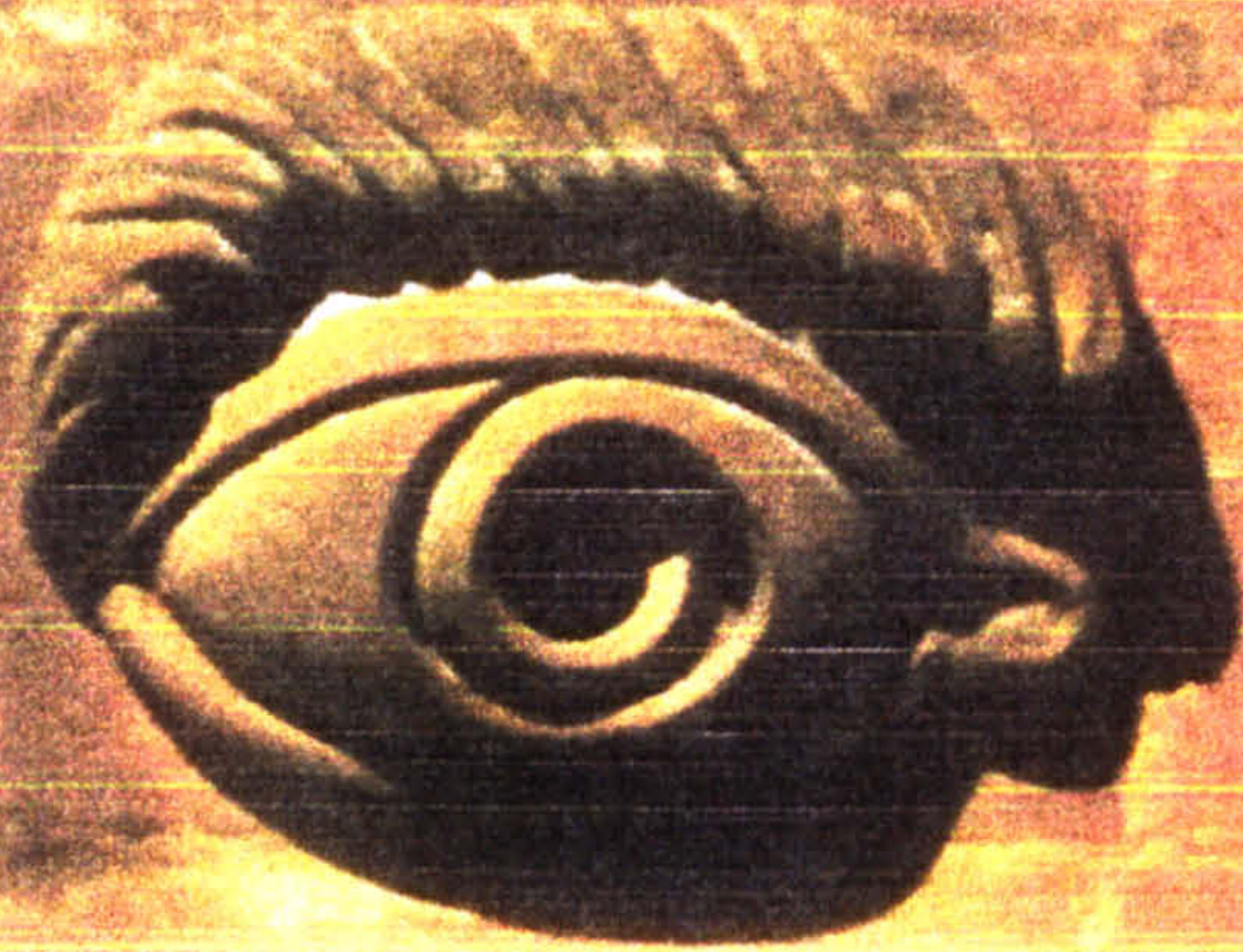
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Finally, I would like to express a personal thought and a sigh of relief - *Consummatum Est!*

*To Anthon,
my best friend and companion.*



Malta - the prehistoric "Sacred Island" of the Mediterranean; "the sea of civilisation and all history"; the "Golden Apple" in the struggles of the powers of the ancient and modern times; the haven of storm-tossed sailors; the last home of the Knights of St. John; the centre of Napoleon's shattered dream of world domination; the premier naval station in the British Empire and the hub of air traffic of the future - is undoubtedly one of the most interesting spots in the world.

Malta The Islands of Sunshine and History
MGTB (1940: 3)



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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ATLAS	European Association for Tourism and Leisure Education
DMCs	Destination Management Companies
EU	European Union
HCEB	Hotel and Catering Establishment Board
HRSS	Human Resources and Support Services Directorate
MCC	Mediterranean Conference Centre
MSU	Management Systems Unit
MTA	Malta Tourism Organisation
MTADA	Manoel Theatre Amateur Drama Association
NTOM	National Tourism Organisation
PPDD	Product Planning and Development Directorate
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WTO	World Tourism Organisation

SECTION 1:

SETTING THE SCENE

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The whole object of travel is not to set foot on foreign land. It is at last to set foot on one's own country as a foreign land.
- G.K. Chesterton *The Modern Penguin Dictionary of Humorous Quotations.*
(Metcalf, 2002)

1.1 Introduction

The focus of this thesis is the marketing and management of culture and cultural activities as part of the tourist product, using the Maltese Islands as a case study. Tourism activities “that hinge around culture” (Walle, 1998: 9) are collectively known as cultural tourism. This thesis addresses the way in which cultural tourism is marketed and managed in the process it explores the political, economic, and socio-cultural relations between the entities involved in the marketing and management of culture.

This chapter provides an overview of the parameters of the research; it is divided into five parts. Following an introductory discussion on the major issues that are facing cultural tourism, this chapter looks at the development of tourism in the Maltese Islands and the role of culture in the tourism development cycle. A discussion on the relevance of this research follows. The aims and objectives of this research are then discussed. The final section highlights the organization of this thesis.

1.2 Tourism and Culture: A Theoretical Framework

The theoretical debates surrounding cultural tourism are diverse. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) have identified cultural tourism as an area of great potential growth for this coming century (Keller, 1996a; WTO, 1998). While in Europe “cultural tourism has become recognized as an important agent of economic and social change” (Richards, 1996a: 3). The growth of cultural tourism can be attributed to two contiguous movements. The first is that motivation of tourists is shifting away from mass tourism to a combination of activities including the consumption of culture (MacCannell, 1976; Urry, 2002: 13). Secondly, cultural tourism is often seen as an alternative to mass tourism (Weiler and Hall, 1992). This type of tourism is also referred to as ‘special interest tourism’ and includes a range of activities such as sports, walking, culture and ecotourism. These types of tourism activities are often developed away from the mass ‘tourist bubble’ and often in areas that are ‘off the beaten track’. There is a general belief that cultural tourism is more sustainable since fewer numbers of tourists may be attracted to it and thus problems associated with mass tourism are reduced. However, exponents within the field have debated this view. Boissevain (1996a) (amongst others) argued that the development of cultural tourism generally occurs in areas that are not equipped for tourism development and hence can cause more harm. Therefore it is important to consider “the geographical contexts within which development (cultural tourism) is implanted” (Markwick 1999: 245). Another perspective views culture as it could be developed just for the sake of development (Brent Ritchie and Zins, 1978) and

marketed without the consensus or consultation of the locals (Boissevain 1996a; Greenwood 1989 and Odermatt 1996). Such a practice has led to conflicts between those marketing culture (state/government) and the local population (Boissevain and Sammut 1994, Robinson, 1999).

As an alternative form of tourism, cultural tourism is also seen as a market diversification tool, an additional product by means of which tourists can be enticed to visit a particular country (Richards, 1996b: 321). Furthermore, cultural tourists are believed to be more educated and better spenders (Bywater, 1993). In this light, national tourism authorities acknowledging the potential of cultural tourism are opting to promote the culture of their country as a tourist attraction, either as the main attraction or as an 'add on' attraction.

Another subject of debate is the cultural tourist him/herself. As mentioned earlier the cultural tourist is perceived as a good quality tourist. This view may be slightly changing since what needs to be understood is the motivation of travel. Richards' volume on cultural tourism in Europe (Richards 1996c) indicates that "cultural tourists do not form a uniform market segment" but motivation differs between "general and specific cultural tourists and between first-time and repeat cultural visitors" (Richards 1996b: 322).

Cultural tourism is a product (MacCannell 1976) and as such it does not exist outside the parameters of the tourist system. Although there is a demand for it, it still needs to be marketed and managed just as any other type of tourism activity, especially in an era where “the cultural tourism market ...is becoming increasingly competitive” (Richards 1996d: 20). As a tourist product, it is subject to market demands and economies of scale. Cultural tourism is also a policy for national and or regional tourism development (Richards, 1996e). Therefore in adopting cultural tourism policy, governments and tourism authorities have to consider all the other elements that make up the tourist system. This fine interplay between cultural tourism as a product and cultural tourism as an element within the tourism system has rarely been tackled in the literature, and this thesis proposes to address this issue.

As a Mediterranean archipelago the Maltese Islands (see Map 1), are known as a sun and sea destination. However the islands are endowed with an extensive historical and cultural heritage (Maps 2 and 3). For more than a decade, local tourism authorities¹ saw culture as an attribute distinguishing Malta as a tourist destination from its competitors in the Mediterranean region. Consequently, the Maltese tourism authorities adopted policies to develop the islands as a cultural tourist destination. However despite these efforts, and Malta's extensive historical and cultural resources, the image of the Maltese Islands is still perceived as a mass tourist sun and sea destination by a number of tour operators (Mallia, 2001, McCluskey and Associates, 2001a). By using qualitative

¹ This term refers to the Malta Tourism Authority (MTA), its predecessor, the National Tourism Organisation of Malta (NTOM) and the Ministry of Tourism.

research and a grounded theory approach, this thesis will try to understand why this is the case.

Before discussing the objectives of this thesis it would be useful to outline the parameters of this research by looking at the development of tourism in the Maltese Islands with particular reference to the role of culture within the overall tourism product.

1.3 Background to the Study

1.3.1 Tourism in the Maltese Islands

Malta's tourism development is a classic model of tourism development cycles (cf. Butler, 1980). After very modest beginnings tourism went through a phase of rapid growth in volume, followed by stagnation and rejuvenation.

Tourism was developed in the 1950s when Malta was still a British colony, with the first visitors being mainly friends and relatives of the British forces stationed in Malta. Since then, tourism has experienced a rapid growth with the number of visitors increasing from 12,583 in 1959 to 1.18 million in 2001 (see Appendix 1). Today, tourism is considered the backbone of the Maltese economy, with gross tourism earnings for 2000 reaching Lm 260.7 million (MTA 2001a). (See Appendix 2 for a breakdown of the main economic indicators of the Maltese Islands).

Two major factors led to Malta's initial tourism development. The first were its natural resources of abundant sunshine, mild climate and the sea. These enabled Malta to establish itself as a summer destination. The second was Malta's status as a British colony. This meant that the £50 sterling credit limit imposed on British tourists travelling overseas did not apply to Malta (Seth, 1978: 45). During the early 1960s, tourism enjoyed a positive but gradual growth. However it was not perceived as a major activity and was not actively encouraged by the government. By the mid-1960s, as the termination of the British forces presence in Malta drew nearer, the Maltese authorities saw tourism as the ideal replacement for the economic activities generated by the naval base. Consequently, during the 1970s higher target numbers of tourists were sought (Lockhart, 1997).

The limited tourist infrastructure available during the early years of tourism development (Pearce, 1955; MTA 2000a) could no longer meet the demand that the volume of tourist arrivals was creating. Additional hotels and other tourist accommodation were needed. Thus government gave incentives for the building of tourist infrastructure (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1972). Unfortunately, very little planning was carried out, tourism grew unbridled, fuelled by speculation and with the supply of accommodation being demand-led. The impacts of this 'policy' were felt during the 1980s. The growth of tourist numbers and increase in tourist accommodation had placed enormous pressures on the local infrastructure leading to water and electricity shortages and sewage overflow problems. This meant that as a destination

Malta was not attractive any longer. One has to mention that Malta was not the only destination going through such a precarious phase. Other Mediterranean destinations that had similar tourism growth patterns to Malta, particularly the Costa Brava in Spain (Curtis, 1997) and the Italian Riviera (Bywater, 1991) were going through similar fates. However, Malta's problem was compounded by the fact that it was highly dependent on a single market, the British market, which in 1980 contributed 77% of the total visitors to the Maltese Islands (Lockhart, 1997). These visitors, were generally family oriented staying in self-catering accommodation, usually spending very little and highly seasonal (Callus and Bajada, 1994). To make matters worse, Malta felt the impacts of over-reliance on this particular market when as a consequence of the European economic recession of the early 1980s, tourism to the Maltese islands experienced its largest decline in tourist arrivals of 40% between 1981 and 1984 (MTA 2000a).

In 1988 the Maltese Government appointed Horwath and Horwath (UK) international consultants who, assisted by a small group of local experts, drew up the Malta Tourism Development Plan, referred to as the Tourism Master Plan (Horwath and Horwath, 1989). The plan set out to redress the problems afflicting the Maltese tourist industry at the end of the 1980s. The Tourism Master Plan suggested seven marketing actions, through which market diversification, upgrade of product, category of tourists and lengthening the tourist season could be achieved. The development of cultural tourism was one of the strategies proposed.

In the early 1990s the National Tourism Organisation of Malta (henceforth, the NTOM) embarked on a series of initiatives to redress the problems facing the industry, and in the process putting into the objectives outlined by the Master Plan. New markets within continental Europe and beyond were targeted, leading to a 'healthier' mix of visitors (see Appendix 3). Authorities also tried to improve the quality of the visitor: first, by diversifying the product which included culture, (discussed further in the section below) and secondly, by improving the type of accommodation available. Permits for four and five-star tourist accommodation were encouraged and prioritized, whilst those for lower star accommodation were held back. Following this strategy, numbers of tourists started to grow incrementally until 1994, when a record of 1.2 million tourists visited the islands. Despite the increase of visitors, there was a decline in tourist expenditure, suggesting that tourists were not quality tourists. This insight is confirmed by a number of newspaper articles published and speeches during the period of 1994-1996. Correspondents argued that poor infrastructure, low quality service and lack of emphasis on heritage were to blame for the downturn in tourism (Borg, 1996; Grech, 1995; *Times of Malta*, 1996). They also advised that Malta should seek an alternative type of tourism such as culture. Their claim was also supported by the fact that the country's infrastructure was again becoming subject to a lot of pressure. As had happened a decade before, Malta's infrastructure was subject to tourism's added pressures. One correspondent argued:

An [hotel] occupancy level of 75 per cent seems ambitious in view of the emerging indications. ... Yet it is what well-run hotels tend to require to reach break even ... It takes few words to emphasise that arrivals would be counter-productive in that they will burden further our overstretched infrastructure making an unsatisfactory product worse. (Spiteri, 1996: 23)

However, the notion of shifting the focus from a sand, sun and sea destination to a more culturally oriented destination was questioned by other correspondents:

... what is the point of aiming at up-market tourists who will visit Malta purely for its cultural and historical heritage when the whole of Europe ... is already wallowing in culture. ... We want visitors with fat cheque books interested purely in our culture and museums because the money generated by the other happy million happens to have a foul smell. (Fenech, 1995: 9)

An advert published in the UK depicting an armoured Knight of Malta overlooking the Grand Harbour elicited a mixed reaction from the local population. Some correspondents objected to the advert and said that visitors would think that Malta is a museum while others viewed the advert favourably arguing that it would attract other tourists than the mass market (*The People*, 1997: 11). The above statements highlight two very important points, primarily that the growth in tourism was leading to an adverse impact on the country's infrastructure leading the government to suggest that Malta should opt for a higher spending tourist thus limiting the impacts on the infrastructure. At the same instance, the suggestion to reduce the numbers of visitors by attracting cultural tourists was perceived as threatening by other members of the

Maltese society, who feared the impact (mostly economic) that such a change in focus would bring about. Amid this debate, more hotels were built, further compounding the problem since the supply of bed stock superceded the demand, leading the bigger hotels to start competing on hotel prices. The tourism industry during this time was described by the current Minister for Tourism as “a run-away horse, bolted out of control” (Refalo, 2000: 3). In addition to these internal problems Malta was facing competition from other destinations.

During the 1990s the Mediterranean was facing competition from long haul destinations and moreover, there was increasingly tough competition between the various Mediterranean destinations themselves. New markets like Tunisia, Turkey and Cyprus became firmly established and offered stiff competition to the Maltese Islands. Despite the fact that Malta aimed to establish itself as a ‘high quality’ destination there were many “consumer complaints about the facility and service standards” (Cleverdon 2000: 85).

At the current time of this research, Maltese tourism is still hampered by two major problems. The first is a dependency problem. This time it was not dependent on a single market, but on a group of large multinational tour-operators. Secondly, Malta has to address the issue of carrying capacity, as it was highly unlikely that the growth rate in visitor numbers could be sustained. The Tourism Carrying Capacity Assessment for the Maltese Islands recommended that summer visitor volumes must stabilize below

saturation level, volume of hotel bed-stock would be stabilized whilst tourism contribution to the economy should be maintained by increasing foreign earnings and per capita expenditure. This was to be achieved by enhancing the current tourism offer rather than adding to the product on offer (Ministry of Tourism, 2001: 31).

In September 1999, a tourism authority (Malta Tourism Authority, henceforth MTA) was set up. The MTA took over the responsibilities of the NTOM, the Hotel and Catering Establishments Board (HCEB) and also became involved in the human resources services. The MTA is:

empowered to address the key challenges facing the Maltese Tourism industry:

- Visibility, competitiveness and attractiveness of the Malta brand in source markets.
- Product upgrading, presentation and interpretation.
- Development of core service skills to enhance visitor experience.
- The Establishment of standards and the regulation of the industry.
- The provision of relevant information for critical decision-making by MTA, Government and the industry. (MTA 2000a:15)

1.3.2 Culture, Tourism and Cultural Tourism in Malta

The Maltese Islands' culture, as a tourist attraction has over the past years gone through various phases. As outlined in the previous section, throughout the 1970s, the Maltese Islands were a sand, sun and sea destination. Material and tourist literature published at

the time show culture and history as an addition to the traditional product of sand, sun and sea (Boissevain, 1996b).

This format was retained until the beginning of the 1990s, when the first phase (1990-1994) of the Tourism Master Plan came into action. Culture and history were earmarked as factors that could be used to distinguish the Maltese Islands from the other Mediterranean destinations. The NTOM described Malta as “the island of sunshine and history”(NTOM 1989a). The reader is immediately immersed into Malta’s strategic importance and natural harbours. Brochures were addressed at:

The intelligent visitor (who) is never satisfied with skimming the surface of his holiday destination ... every square inch of its land and the temples and monuments bear witness to civilisation. (NTOM, 1989a: 3)

However, the Master Plan added that:

The market for exclusive cultural tourism in Europe is small...but the potential of combined cultural and sun holidays is large...Malta should not market just its sun...but its history, mystique and Mediterranean heritage. (Horwath and Horwath 1989: 19)

The Plan suggested that cultural tourism could be developed through better management of heritage sites, the marketing of the cultural heritage of the Knights of

Malta, the introduction of local festivals and concerts and the twinning of Maltese historical towns with European towns of similar size (ibid: 25).

Maltese authorities were of the opinion that the promotion of cultural tourism would bring about better quality tourists. Parliamentary Secretaries² responsible for tourism between 1989 and 1996 set out to market culture. They made numerous references to Malta's rich cultural and historical patrimony in their role in promoting Malta "not just as another Mediterranean resort but as a country active in various sectors with history and culture weaved [sic] into a distinct society" (*Times of Malta* 1991: 14). Attempts were also made to launch various schemes and projects such as a cultural ticket for tourists to visit museums, an archaeological park, better management of heritage sites, and the opening up of new museums. In 1993, the NTOM through its Events Directorate started to organise invented historical pageants (Hobsbawm 1983) in Mdina and later in Vittoriosa and Valletta commemorating the military order of the Knights of St. John. This culture campaign was criticized and perceived to be unsuccessful. The two subsequent governments elected in 1996 and 1998 questioned the emphasis made on culture, and shifted their policies towards a mixed product of sun sand and sea with culture as an additional bonus.

² . A Parliamentary Secretary is a designation given to members of Government responsible for secondary ministries. Throughout the period 1989-1996, tourism did not have the status of a full ministry but formed part of the Ministry for Economic Affairs.

The *Strategic Development Framework* issued by the Ministry of Tourism in 1997 during the Labour Administration (1996-1998) suggested that:

Malta is to use its size, history, culture and Conference and Incentive Travel facilities to differentiate itself in the marketplace.... NTOM's briefing to its advertising agencies overseas will therefore be opened up so as not to over-emphasise history and culture but to have segmented marketing policy. This will include promoting Malta's sun and sea to mainstream markets with culture and history being an added feature. (Ministry of Tourism 1997: 33)

This policy was again mirrored in the December 1998 during the NTOM marketing conference speech given by the newly elected (September, 1998) Nationalist government tourism minister, who in discussing the tourism plans for the forthcoming year commented:

If one were to ask me whether Malta needs and wants more cultural, niche, activity, incentive, meetings and conference tourism, the answer is yes. However, we all know that whatever the extent of increases registered in these segments they are never sufficient, albeit potentially high yield, to make up for loss of the more numerous guest night totals generated by the popular holiday traffic which keeps Malta going throughout the year. (NTOM 1998: 2)

Yet, with the establishment of the MTA there has been another twist to this development. At the end of the 1990s:

There has been growing recognition that Malta needs to lessen its dependence on the sun and beach tour operators and diversify its tourism base through segments like cultural holidays and short-breaks. (Cleverdon, 2000: 85)

In addition culture and heritage are seen as the fulcrum of the MTA's future. This is reflected in the imagery being used and statements made by the MTA in its Strategic Plan:

Malta has a world class historical and cultural heritage disproportionate to its size...(MTA 2000a: 8)

Encourage the development of new or improved recreational cultural facilities. (MTA 2000a: 17)

It was interesting to note that while this debate was taking place on the national level, there was an increase of local interest in culture and heritage. This interest was manifested in re-kindled awareness of local festivities, especially local religious festivals (Boissevain, 1996b). This increase in cultural awareness also provided a window, through which local communities could attract more visitors including tourists, to their localities. A number of Local Councils in the Maltese Islands had identified cultural niches in order to attract tourists. Localities which promoted existing events, especially religious festivities like Good Friday processions and the feasts of the patron saints were aware of their potential in attracting tourists to their villages and towns. Over the years they had modified these events in order to maintain interest and make them more attractive to visitors. Other localities resorted to historical events to inject

tourism in their localities (Brincat, 1999; Caccioto, 1996). Moreover, certain Local Councils like Rabat set up their own tourism committee to promote further their 'local' culture.

The scenario outlined above presented the researcher with a number of considerations. The first was derived from a developmental model. The Maltese Islands are small, densely populated and rely heavily on tourism. It is clear that culture was being promoted as that *factor* that would help to 'rejuvenate' the tourist product and give Malta the competitive edge that it needed. Secondly, the above observations show that tourism authorities had different views on the role of culture in the overall tourism product. In addition, the lack of coherent view of what culture and cultural tourism implied, led to confusion, an ill-defined product and perhaps a gap in what was being promoted to tourists and the actual product available.

1.4 Reasons for Choosing this Topic

1.4.1 Relationship between the Researcher and the Researched

The foundations of this research had their roots in the academic and professional development of the researcher. In 1993, after graduating in anthropology, the researcher was offered a job as a research assistant on a Med Campus project³. The task assigned was to assess the way in which the recent 'cultural tourism' events were affecting a

³ Med Campus was an initiative established by the DG XXIII of the European Commission. This initiative brought together a number of EU member countries and non-member countries from the Mediterranean region to work together on research projects. The researcher worked on a project that dealt with sustainable, cultural and ecological tourism.

particular Maltese community, the residents of Mdina. Whilst conducting the research, and during subsequent years, when the researcher was working closely with the tourism public sector, certain anomalies within the phenomenon of (Maltese) cultural tourism started to emerge. One of the most critical issues was that despite the fact that 'cultural tourism' had been assigned as the way forward for Maltese tourism in 1989, (Horwath and Horwath 1989), Malta was not perceived as a cultural tourist destination. Furthermore, as the brief overview of the role cultural tourism in the Maltese tourism product discussed in Section 1.3.2 shows, culture was a 'commodity' whose value and importance to tourism authorities depended on exigencies and fashion rather than on long term strategy. Culture was visible but not much had been done to market or promote it effectively. Besides, cultural tourism meant different things to different people. Moreover, the way tourism sector dealt with culture raised questions of a conceptual nature. Culture is a social factor; it relates to communities and their culture yet, the management approaches adopted by the tourism sector failed to take into consideration this important aspect. One example is the reaction elicited by the report based on the research conducted by the researcher and a co-worker in Mdina (Boissevain and Sammut, 1994). This study focused on local community perspectives of cultural tourism and the way in which it was effecting their lives. The report was meant by the authors as a contribution to tourism development in Malta however, it greatly annoyed the Tourism Secretariat. The reason being the report showed the negative impact that action taken by tourism authorities (in this case the organisation of the cultural festival) has had on the local community.

Thus equipped with these insights on culture, the tourism industry and cultural tourism, and the researcher's own academic and professional background the scene was set for the course of discovery.

1.4.2 What Culture?

There are various definitions of culture and various interpretations of cultural tourism. This is not only evident in the literature but also in the preliminary meetings the researcher had with tourism personnel. Cultural tourism appears in various forms, it can be manifested through visiting museums, attending concerts, visiting exhibitions, participating in local events, eating local food or even living the 'native' way of life (Brent Ritchie and Zins, 1978; Bywater, 1993; Richards, 1996d; Smith 1989). These 'types' of cultural tourism have in one way or another featured in the Maltese tourism product.

Given this broad definition and the inclination by tourism authorities and local level organisations to project Maltese culture through heritage and 'way of life', the themes of museums, traditional festivities, new invented events and food would be studied as expressions of local culture.

1.4.3 The Context of the Study - A Macro Perspective

Following preliminary research, it was concluded that the role of culture in Maltese tourism development could be better understood if studied from a macro perspective, namely by focusing on those entities providing culture, primarily the suppliers of

tourism and cultural tourism. It was also deliberated whether the tourists would be included in the study; however due to the scale of the topic and the time constraints, this component was studied indirectly and the findings are incorporated to add further insight. Thus the main focus of the study is how stakeholders market and manage culture.

Applying the definition of stakeholders as used by Hall and McArthur (1998), namely that:

Stakeholders are the individuals, groups and organisations with an interest in a common heritage management problem or issue, which are directly influenced or affected by the actions or non-actions taken by others to resolve the problem or issue (ibid.: 41),

this study focused on the following stakeholders:

- The *Tourism Public Sector*; this sector includes the Malta Tourism Authority Head Office as the main public body responsible for tourism, with particular emphasis being placed on the Product Development and Marketing Directorates. The counterparts of this office in London and Amsterdam were also studied.
- The *Tourism Private Sector*; the main component of the private sector is the tour-operator. Tour-operators selling Malta in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands were studied, as were their local representatives and local handling agents (travel agencies) in Malta.
- *Representatives of communities* in which cultural tourism activities are taking place and *cultural providers* were interviewed thus giving a more comprehensive view of

culture, its providers and users. This perspective was deemed of importance since communities are an important element in cultural tourism.

- *The Tourist.* The tourist is the end receiver of the product. No research has ever been conducted in Malta on the cultural tourist. Tourists featured in this study are whom the researcher has encountered at museums and events, and therefore it is not exhaustive. However, this study will identify how tourists come across culture and how the activities conducted by the tourism public and private sector entities reach the ultimate user.

Another facet of this study was to look at the relations (political, socio-cultural and economic) that exist between the stakeholders. In order to understand better these relationships and how culture is perceived, the author chose to focus on the UK and Dutch markets. The UK market is Malta's largest single market and is responsible for 38.3% total tourist arrivals (MTA 2001). The Dutch market is responsible for only 4.3% of total tourist arrivals (MTA 2001). Although these two countries are not perceived as countries that generate cultural tourists they were chosen because culture was identified by the Master Plan as an area of growth in both markets. Thus they provided the researcher with the necessary scenario to understand better the ways in which culture within the tourism product was offered to these markets.

Traditionally, British tourists were attracted to Malta as a summer destination, but over the years Malta became established with the British market as a winter-sun destination

attracting the elderly market. The Tourism Master Plan had also identified this market as one that was likely to be attracted to culture as the following quotation shows:

The level of recognition of Malta's historical role in the Great Siege, and ... the Second World War is very high from middle aged and more affluent British market in particular, but this has never been well exploited and translated into a direct marketing tool. (Horwath and Horwath, 1989: 19)

In the latter part of the 1990s the British market was targeted to attract other segments including Conference and Incentive Travel, culture and diving (Bryant, 1997; Greaves, 1998; NTOM, 1998).

1.5 The Objectives Outlined

In discussing the growth of cultural tourism in Europe, Richards (1996a), argued that knowledge about this market was "based more on assertion than hard information, and more on isolated observations than systematic analysis" (ibid: 4). Although this thesis is not about the growth of cultural tourism, it deals with aspects of it through the marketing and management of culture as part of the tourist product. This introduction highlighted that culture is considered an important aspect of tourism and that very little research has been conducted on this matter in Malta. Most of the research on cultural tourism had been conducted by students for their undergraduate dissertation projects and focused on aspects of heritage, and heritage management. In addition, research of an academic and theoretical nature on the impact of cultural tourism was conducted by

Boissevain (1996a), Boissevain and Sammut (1994), by Ellul (1995) who focused on heritage interpretation at the medieval town of Mdina and Markwick (1999) who discussed the development of cultural tourism in the post-Master Plan years.

This thesis will go beyond previous research on cultural tourism; by aiming at a better understanding of what is cultural tourism and the management and marketing of culture as product. It will also provide an understanding of the processes involved when a new market is being introduced into an already established tourism system. This will be achieved by studying the processes and relationships involved in the production, marketing and consumption of cultural activities using qualitative research methods and a grounded theory approach (Strauss and Corbin, 1998a). Grounded theory is defined as a “general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed” (Strauss and Corbin 1998b: 158). This type of approach is not commonly used in hospitality and tourism research but it is useful since:

the theories and ideas come from the language and ideas produced by those being studied and thus could be said to be more real and revealing (Clark et al, 1998: 108).

This methodology is appropriate to address this research since *it delves into relationships and links (in this particular study links of a political, economic and socio-cultural nature) between the various entities* in order to trace what Strauss and Corbin (1998b) define as the macro and micro relationships within the marketing and management of culture.

(Culture)is dynamic and as a result of technological and environmental changes it is bound to be transformed and take on new meanings. Despite this, attempts have been made by the tourism industry among others, to frame certain aspects of history and culture and portray them as tourist attractions. This point leads to the first sub-theme of this thesis.

Sociologists and anthropologists alike have argued that as a result of becoming a tourism product, culture is transformed, taking on a different meaning to the one it had originally in society (Greenwood, 1989). Therefore the role of culture in tourism is an important question to address. In studying cultural tourism one cannot refrain from looking at the way culture 'fits' in the general picture of the overall tourism system. From the brief overview of the role of culture in the Maltese tourism product outlined above, it transpires that culture featured in different roles and perspectives over the years. Given the fact that culture is dynamic, *has culture as a tourism product changed over time? Is culture as a tourism product a creation or a natural attribute? If it is created why was it created and by whom?*

The second sub-theme that would be explored is how do the tourism institutions, marketing specialists and local groups of a particular country, in this case Malta perceive the role of culture in tourism. The emphasis here is that the various groups could perceive culture differently and therefore the meaning of culture for marketing specialists may not be the same as its meaning for people living in that particular

society. How is this negotiated between the different parties? Are there any points of contention? Moreover, what relationships exist between the various stakeholders and cultural tourism?

Like other tourism products, culture is marketed via the various channels available for marketing of tourism products including national tourism policy, and printed literature produced both by tour operators and tourism authorities. It is assumed that the role of culture in the overall product will be reflected in the way culture is portrayed to tourists by the various agencies (such as tour operators, national tourism organisations and the local handling agents). This leads to the third objective of this study, namely to look at the way agencies market the existing 'cultural product' - museum and heritage sites, the traditional *festa*, the newly (invented) historical pageantry and food. The presentation and the consequent marketing of culture in tourism literature such as brochures, leaflets, national tourism authority promotional activities and literature would reveal the way in which these cultural items are marketed and the procedure and the techniques employed. Are these various sources of tourist imagery portraying the 'cultural products' in the same manner, or are they different?

The final objective of the thesis lies in the methodology used. Through the qualitative research approach adopted, the findings will be based on real world experiences leading to a wealth of information. This will enable any *future* considerations for the

development of cultural tourism to be grounded in the data and experiences of those involved.

In summation, this research aimed to identify the meaning of culture for the different stakeholders, to understand better the role of culture in the overall tourism product and to assess the relations between the stakeholder groups and cultural tourism. Thus it is envisaged that *in understanding the current relations between culture, tourism industry, cultural tourism and stakeholders responsible for the marketing and management of cultural tourism, the future development of cultural tourism can be charted in a better way.*

1.6 Thesis Outline

This thesis is presented into four sections: (1) Setting the Scene (Chapters 1-3); (2) Research Methodology (Chapters 4); (3) Presentation and Interpretation of Results (5-7); (4) Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations (Chapter 8).

Chapter 1 presented the background to this research. It identified the main issues facing cultural tourism. It also gave an overview of tourism development in Malta and the role of culture in the tourism product.

Chapter 2 discusses the context of cultural tourism. It looks at the: definitions of cultural tourism and the cultural tourist; cultural tourism as an aspect of tourism development

policy; the implications of cultural tourism development; and the development of cultural tourism in the Mediterranean.

Chapter 3 will first highlight the applicable and relevant theoretical issues of marketing in tourism and how these relate to cultural tourism. It will then proceed to discuss the more pertinent questions regarding the management of culture and cultural tourism.

The literature review chapters will also discuss how the literature informs the research questions addressed in this study.

In **Chapter 4** the theoretical underpinnings of the methodology used are discussed. These are followed by a discussion on the design of the research tools and criteria for fieldwork. This chapter will also discuss the data analysis procedures.

Chapter 5 discusses the meaning of culture for the stakeholders and the way they perceive the role of culture in the overall tourism product.

Chapter 6 focuses on the use of culture in the marketing of the Maltese Islands. It explores the marketing process employed by the Malta Tourism Authority in attracting tourists to Malta. This chapter also looks at the imagery of the Maltese Islands as presented by the Malta Tourism Authority and tour operators.

In Chapter 7, the discussion focuses on cultural management practices in the Maltese Islands. The discussion will first focus on the management of culture at the macro level and it will proceed to assess cultural management at the micro level using specific examples. In the process, it will highlight the specific relations between the stakeholders.

Chapter 8, the concluding chapter of this thesis, discusses the main findings and conclusions of this research. This chapter will outline this research's contribution to knowledge and the main recommendations for implementation and future research.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review Part 1: The Context of Cultural Tourism

The heritage assets of land and culture are the very foundations of our civilizations, and these assets are increasingly becoming the basis of our economic prosperity as they attract tourists.

- Marcus Fladmark, 1994: xiii

2.1 Introduction

Following the objectives outlined in the introductory chapter, this research examines the marketing and management of cultural tourism in the Maltese Islands and therefore it would be appropriate to focus on the context of cultural tourism. Hunzinker and Krapf (quoted in WTO 1985: 6) postulated that tourism would not exist without culture. In addition, Barré, (1996: 7) states that “culture is one of the principal motivations for the movement of people, and any form of tourism will provoke cultural effect, on the visitor as well as on the host”

The above observations set the scene for the first chapter of the literature review. The first part explores the definitions of cultural tourism, asks who is the cultural tourist and delves into the reasons why cultural tourism has developed. The second part focuses on cultural tourism as a development policy issue. The third part discusses the implications of cultural tourism development and in the final section, the role of culture as a tourist

attraction is addressed. The conclusion of this chapter focuses on how the literature discussed here shaped the initial research questions.

2.2 Cultural Tourism Defined

In one of the earlier papers on cultural tourism, the area was defined as:

.. a set of relationships between two highly distinct leisure phenomena; the traditionally *economic* field of tourism and the *socially oriented* domain of culture. (Brent Ritchie and Zins 1978: 253) (emphasis in the original).

This definition presents cultural tourism as a relationship between two leisure phenomena, however both culture and tourism and the combined term 'cultural tourism' have wider implications as the following discussion shows.

2.2.1 Culture

Williams (1983) maintains that culture is a very difficult term to define. In tracing the history of culture he argued that initially the term was used as a noun of process to denote the cultivation of crops, the rearing of animals and the cultivation of the mind. In the late eighteenth century, the term became a noun of configuration which informed the 'way of life' of a people (ibid.: 10). In nineteenth century comparative anthropology, this term continued to designate a whole and distinctive way of life. Tylor (1871) as quoted in Seymour-Smith (1986), defines culture as:

that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as member of society (ibid. : 65).

Williams goes on to argue that the general usage of the word culture as 'the cultivation of the mind' was developed to encompass a range of meanings. Thus the meaning of culture could range from (i) *a developed state of mind* - as in a 'person of culture' to (ii) *to the processes of this development* - as in cultural interests to (iii) *the means of these processes* as in culture 'as the arts'. The third meaning, that is culture as the means of these processes, is the most common meaning of the term 'culture'.

Thus the term culture implies both the anthropological usage to denote *culture as process* to imply a whole society or a nation, or the more current usage to denote *culture as product*. In the latter sense culture denotes the products of the cultural process to include "art but also language, religion and customs ... visible production(s) of the society's values and beliefs" (Kolb, 2000: 23). Culture as production has two meanings attached to it. It can imply 'high' culture to denote artistic products, visual and performing arts such as theatre, music, monuments and the remains of the past. This type of culture is often associated with the educated elite. The other term, 'popular' culture is very often associated with culture of the masses, and it is perceived to be less refined. The term 'popular' culture includes popular celebrations, TV programmes (Richards, 1996d) or the mass production of cultural artefacts (Kolb, 2000).

· In the field of tourism there is an element of integration of culture as process and culture as product. MacCannell (1976) argues that culture has a dual role or nature in tourism. It is both an attraction and a product. Tourists, according to MacCannell are interested in both culture as process in their quest of 'the Other' and in culture as the product of that society and/or community that they are visiting (MacCannell, 1976; Richards 1996b; Hughes, 2000; Kolb 2000). Parris (1996) neatly sums up the argument with the following observation:

Culture has two senses... first as a social paradigm of dominant beliefs, values traditions, ... second as the tangible manifestations of society's patrimony put on display as a tourist attraction. (ibid.: 48)

2.2.2 Tourism

Tourism involves the temporary movement of people outside their normal place of work and residence for leisure, business or other purposes. It also describes the activities undertaken by tourists during their period of stay. Tourism is a leisure activity enjoyed by people who have disposable income, leisure time and the right conditions for travel. An increase "in leisure, higher incomes and greatly enhanced mobility" (Mathieson and Wall 1982: 1) led to a situation where more people can participate in tourism activities. Contrary to the general belief that people in the industrialised world have more leisure time at their disposal, WTO (1999a) points out that in today's world, the people most likely to travel are 'poor in time and rich in money'. According to this report, such travellers are interested in products that offer maximum thrills in minimum time, hence

experience becomes an important element of tourism. The change in travellers' characteristics led to the rise of new products such as short breaks and weekend trips that offer the opportunity for travellers to engage in shorter but frequent holidays throughout the year. Cultural tourism is one of the activities that is increasingly promoted for such holidays especially for weekend breaks and 'city-break' holidays where tourism and urban heritage are often combined. In discussing the growth of cultural tourism in Europe, Davidson (1992) observes:

Cultural tourism of this kind (museums, monuments, art galleries, palaces and cathedrals) is the motivation behind the vast majority of visits to Europe from the less ancient continents of the 'New World', and also plays a major part in the growing trend towards the taking of short break and second holidays. (ibid.: 3)

2.2.3 Cultural Tourism

The separate definitions of culture and tourism cited above hint at the diverse nature of the combined term 'cultural tourism'. A number of arguments about this area of tourism have been put forward and are still being generated. As will be seen, the definitions of cultural tourism can be subdivided into two main lines of thought.

The first is what the European Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS) refers to as *the technical definition* of cultural tourism (Richards 1996d: 24).

This reflects the movement of people visiting heritage sites and participating in certain cultural manifestations. In a study conducted on the elements of culture and its

relationship to the overall attraction of a tourism region, Brent Ritchie and Zins (1978) argue that culture comprises 12 different elements (work, dress, architecture, handicrafts, history, language, religion, education, traditions, leisure activities art/music, gastronomy) (ibid.: 256). Similarly, the World Tourism Organisation identifies cultural tourism as:

Movements of persons for essentially cultural motivations such as study tours, performing arts, and cultural tours, travel to festivals and other cultural events, visits to sites and monuments, travel to study nature, folklore or art and pilgrimages. (WTO, 1985:6)

Studies, conducted during the time cultural tourism was being established as a field of research, focus more on the so-called 'high' visual and performing arts such as theatre, music and art (ECTRAC, 1988; Thomas, 1989a; Bywater, 1993; Prentice, 1993). However, in later studies, cultural tourism encompasses a broader view to comprise a number of diverse dimensions (Prentice, 1993: 39-40) including the "everyday' heritage of ordinary individuals" (Ashworth, 1995: 271).

Ashworth (1995) further adds that culture is capable of bearing a variety of meanings such as art tourism, heritage tourism and place-specific tourism. The former includes theatre, ballet, performances and ethnic performances; heritage tourism is defined as a mix of preserved buildings, conserved city-scapes, as well as place associations with events and personalities. Place specific tourism is "where the tourism attraction is the total sense of the place, generated by the overall culture of the place" (ibid.: 271).

However, there does not seem to be a consensus on a definition of culture (Bywater, 1993; Richards, 1996b; Boniface, 1999). A possible reason put forward by, Bywater (1993) is that defining culture depends on host and tourist perceptions:

Art, history and music are considered culture, but aspects like religion are not clearly defined as culture or heritage. So are culinary traditions - this can be a perception by both the host country as well as the visitor. (ibid.: 31)

The second meaning of cultural tourism is defined via what culture does to the participant and hence its attributes, or what ATLAS (Richards 1996d: 24) refers to as *the conceptual definition* of cultural tourism. The WTO defines this notion as 'the wide' definition of cultural tourism and it includes all movements of people since "they satisfy the human need for diversity, tending to raise the cultural level of the individual giving rise to new knowledge" (WTO, 1985: 6). The conceptual definition of cultural tourism goes beyond the cultural product *per se* and defines cultural tourism as an experience:

Cultural tourism is a genre of special interest tourism based on the search for and participation in new and deep cultural experiences, whether aesthetic, intellectual, emotional or psychological. (Reisinger, 1994: 24)

Zeppell and Hall (1992) progress down this line of thought arguing that cultural tourism is a composite of the technical and conceptual definitions. They subdivide cultural tourism into heritage tourism based on tangible remains of the past such as world

heritage sites, historical buildings and artefacts, and art tourism based on performances, and works of arts. However it is not only the object that makes cultural tourism but also the way the visitor interacts with that object.

Heritage is based on nostalgia for the past and the desire to experience diverse cultural landscapes and forms...Arts tourism is directed towards visitor experience of paintings, sculptures, theatre and other forms of human experience and endeavour. (Zeppell and Hall, 1992: 47-48)

This definition tends to suggest that cultural tourism is more than just a type of tourism but something that involves the tourist physically and mentally. This, definition clearly goes beyond the element of attraction by incorporating psychological behaviour and visitor motivation.

2.2.4 Why do Tourists Resort to Cultural Tourism?

The relationship between culture and travel can be traced back to Roman antiquity (Adams, 1994; Feifer, 1985). Much later during the era of the Grand Tour, the educated elite travelled to seek 'romantic' culture and culture became the domain of the elite few. During the latter half of the twentieth century, changes in the standard of living and in economic trends have democratized tourism bringing about changes in travel expenditure, number and type of holiday taken. The simultaneous revolution in the travel industry and the increase in income brought the onset of mass tourism and for nearly four decades tourists invaded coastal areas. Since the 1980s, there has been a

sharp increase of tourists travelling for cultural purposes. The prime reason cited for the increase in cultural interest is that posed by the theory of consumption. Urry (2002) defines tourists as:

People who for short periods of time consume goods and services - goods that are consumed because they supposedly generate pleasurable experiences which are different from those encountered in everyday life - to gaze upon a set of different scenes of landscapes or townscapes which are out of the ordinary. (ibid.: 1).

The increase in tourist consumption of culture is linked to the post-modern era, whereby modern-day man is more interested to look for diversity in order to get away from the monotonous daily life. MacCannell interprets this quest for 'the other' as:

For moderns, reality and authenticity are thought to be elsewhere: in other historical periods in other cultures, in purer simple lifestyles. (MacCannell, 1976: 3)

Yale (1997: 32) adds that the increase in cultural tourism is related to people's response to the post-modern life - "the faster modern life moves the more people want to look back and cling to their roots". Nostalgia, the quest for the past and what the past represents are two important factors in determining the motivation of visitors.

Lowenthal (1985) says:

The present alone is inadequate to our desires, not least because it is completely depleted to further enlarge the past. Disenchantment with today impels us to try to recover yesterday. That discontent takes many forms: a devotion to relics, the treasuring of antiquities and souvenirs, a tendency to value what is old simply because it is old, the rejection of change. (Lowenthal 1985: 33)

Some authors interpret this quest for the past and nostalgia as a form of escapism (Boniface and Fowler, 1993: 3; Keller, 1996a: 14-15 and Zeppel and Hall, 1992: 48-9). Moreover, Boniface and Fowler (op.cit.) and Zeppel and Hall (op.cit.) observe that individuals who engage in cultural tourism “seek to ... improve their social status and self image” (Zeppel and Hall 1992: 48-9).

Research on cultural tourists has sought to determine why tourists resort to such activities. One of the prime motivations to undertake travel for cultural purposes was to experience something different. Thomas (1989a) looks at a number of studies carried out since 1968, in the UK, to determine the reasons why people opted to visit a number of historic and heritage sites. The article shows that the major attribute is that these sites and their surroundings offer an ideal location for relaxation and the opportunity to enjoy the scenery. Thomas notes however, that there is a difference between the earlier studies and studies conducted during the late 1980s. Earlier studies show that the visitor gave more importance to recreational motives whilst later studies suggest that “interests in history and culture are important determinants of the decision to visit a historic or heritage site” (Thomas, 1989a: 90). Education was also cited as an important motivating

factor for a minority of visitors. Thomas (ibid.) also raises the issue that historical and heritage sites attract particular social and age groups. This observation is considered to be a relevant marketing point for heritage sites and culture since it is important that the right visitors are targeted (Hall and McArthur, 1998; Walle, 1998). This point will be expanded in Chapter 3.

Studies conducted amongst cultural visitors in European cities reveal that participation in cultural tourism is strongly influenced by the increase in levels of education and income (Richards 1996a). However, the possession of “cultural capital” that is, knowledge of culture (Bourdieu, 1984), plays an important in determining who is and who is not a cultural tourist. Cultural tourism activity seems to be concentrated amongst people of a ‘new middle class’ - people for whom “acquisition of high levels of cultural capital form an important source of distinction” Richards (1996f: 67).

2.2.5 Characteristics of Cultural Tourists

Another prevailing question discussed within the study of cultural tourism is: “Who is the cultural tourist?” In particular researchers tried to determine whether cultural tourists are a special type of tourists, whether cultural tourists have distinct characteristics as opposed to mass tourists and whether different types of cultural tourists exist. Keller, (1996a) suggests that “50% of tourists fall under the category of consumers of culture” (ibid.: 15). Although this figure is reputed to be too high (Boniface 1999), it is a known fact that various levels of cultural tourists exist. Speaking at an EU convention, the WTO Secretary General, Francesco Frangilli remarked that

20% of visitors visit Europe for cultural purposes while 60% cite culture as a major concern (WTO, 1999b). Cultural tourists have been defined either through market segmentation or via the reason why they visit historical sites, hence through motivation.

In his research on Manx Museum (Isle of Man), Prentice (1993) has identified that consumers of heritage products tend to be over 35 years and without children and tend to come from non-manual households (ibid.: 10-15). Cultural tourists often are higher educated tourists and this can be explained through the fact that one of the main motivations for travel is to acquire further knowledge (Richards, 1996a). However, it has been argued that cultural tourists should not only have certain socio-economic criteria but also possess other attributes “including curiosity, risk-taking, aesthetic judgement, geographical knowledge and semiotic abilities” (Urry 1994a: 94). Cultural tourism reflects the personality of the cultural tourist:

In seeking to define the characteristics of a heritage tourist a diversity of interests and enthusiasms may need to be allowed for. It is perhaps more appropriate to consider all tourists visiting heritage attractions or otherwise consuming heritage as 'heritage tourists' but of differing motivations and varying interests. (Prentice, 1993: 20)

This definition however fails to distinguish between the different levels of motivation involved in engaging in cultural tourism. Hughes (1996) suggests that terms and coverage should not be confused, he argues that the main characteristic that distinguishes cultural tourists is the initial motivation expressed to visit such sites.

Bywater (1993) argues cultural tourists can be categorised as follows: (i) culturally motivated tourist (ii) the culturally inspired tourist and (iii) the culturally attracted tourist. The 'culturally motivated' tourist forms about 5% of the total cultural tourist market (Bywater, op.cit). They are mainly high-yield middle to high-income tourists who seek specialized tours. The 'culturally inspired tourist' would visit internationally famous historic or cultural centres and are attracted to known sites and would not visit less known sites unless prompted. Bywater (ibid.) maintains that whereas the first group of cultural tourists, tend to be repeat visitors, the second category tend to visit a particular location once in their lifetime. The third type of cultural tourist, the 'culturally attracted' tourist uses culture as an add-on experience.

A similar typology is outlined by Stebbins (1996). Like Brent Ritchie and Zins (1978), Stebbins argues that cultural tourism is a leisure activity, however Stebbins adds that cultural tourism is 'serious leisure'. Serious leisure occurs "within the scope of a leisure role and its allied career as centered on the acquisition of skill, knowledge, experience or their combination" (Stebbins, 1996). He classifies cultural tourists according to their commitment or on how 'seriously' they take their leisure (cultural tourism). He argues that tourists who engage in one or two cultural tours during their visit are 'cultural dabblers' or casual leisure participants. Since their pursuit of knowledge is not systematic, nor enduring, a cultural dabbler is not a cultural tourist as such. The cultural tourist, that is, the person who takes his/her cultural hobby seriously can be of two kinds (i) the general cultural tourist and (ii) the specialized cultural tourist.

The general cultural tourist makes a hobby of visiting different geographic sites, such as countries, cities and regions sampling some of the cultural forms such as art, cuisine, language, culture and history. On the other hand, the specialized cultural tourist will focus on one or a small number of geographic sites or cultural entities. As with the culturally motivated tourist, discussed above, the specialized cultural tourist will visit a particular area more than once “in search of a broad cultural understanding of the place” (Stebbins, 1996: 950). Recent research on cultural tourism in Europe (Richards, 2001a) has re-inforced further the fact that cultural tourists are not all the same. The so-called cultural tourists show that they have different preferences for cultural products and therefore:

the culturally driven skilled consumer may not just be interested in culture, but differently interested. One of the big differences may be the level of involvement in the experience (Richards, 2001b: 7)

Richards (2001a) points out that cultural tourists are also classified through the dimension of experience and its importance when engaging in cultural tourism. McKercher (2002) in his study on tourists visiting Hong Kong, argues that cultural tourists are classified through both their levels of motivation to travel to a particular destination in order to engage in culture or to visit a cultural or heritage site and through the levels of experience sought. Ryan (1997a: 24), following Graburn (1989) argues that tourism experience is an important element of holiday as “a period of contrast with

normal life". According to Ryan (1997b) the tourism experience "engages all the senses not simply the visual" (ibid.: 25). In addressing the issue of the experiential notion of tourism and heritage parks, Prentice et al (1998) argue that understanding the experiential dimension of tourism is important for product development. Socio-demographics are not the only means of classification of visitors although these are important for marketing and promotional purposes.

2.2.6 Cultural Products and Cultural Productions - The Quest of 'Modern' Cultural Tourists

Earlier on it has been argued that the cultural product, or the physical manifestation of culture are the very objects of tourist interest. Thus apart from the built heritage, and traditional forms of art, the tourist is also attracted to other aspects of culture. The interest in cultural consumption has led to an increase in various types of cultural production, what Hewison (1987) refers to as the 'heritage industry'. This means that the 12 characteristics of culture as outlined by Brent Ritchie and Zins (1978: 256, vide also section 2.2.3) are no longer static but have been transformed, extended and turned into an entertainment industry. Richards (1996d) notes that in Europe, there has been an increase in heritage sites and museums. Yale (1997) gives an extensive overview of the extent of growth of heritage tourism in the UK which encompasses, museums, stately homes, religious heritage, transport heritage, countryside attractions, wildlife attractions and events. Nevertheless, new demands for cultural consumption have led to the creation of new attractions or the modification of 'traditional' attractions.

2.2.6.1 Museums and Heritage Centres

Museums, a phenomenon starting in the 19th century, were initially set up to showcase the achievements of a nation and to educate the population about their own country's history and their own past (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998). In such a manner museums were associated with power, grandeur and achievements and with instruction. The number of museums and related sites increased at a considerable rate over the last two decades (Hewison, 1987; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998; Lumley, 1988; Urry, 2002). Not only have museums increased in number but also the displays have become more diverse to include aspects of heritage such as the industrial heritage (Hewison 1987) and local communities and ethnic groups or cultures (Hall and McArthur, 1998; Harrison, 1997; Hart, 1996). In addition, the concept of museums changed from one of instruction and scholarly use to a place of communication (Lumley, 1988) and experience (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998, Prentice et al, 1998). Museums are no longer 'dead' but incorporate live exhibitions where the public can interact with the exhibits themselves (Urry, 2002: 119).

The function of museums and their changing nature is of particular relevance to this research. Primarily museums and heritage sites are an integral part of the tourist experience (MacCannell, 1976; Urry, 2002). Museums and heritage sites are also:

Must-sees that confirm that one has truly been there; they are key symbols which mark the achievement of the tourist. (Graburn, 1977: 16)

The second concern pertains to funding. Due to the decline in public funding of culture and the arts, museums and heritage sites had to seek alternative funding through sponsorship and commercialisation (Heilburn and Gray, 2001; Hewison 1987; Kolb, 2000). This has led to a dilemma whereby an increase in tourist numbers would mean an increase in revenue, at the same time “leading to overburden of the infrastructure” which poses a direct conflict to the museums’ role of curatorship, preservation and conservation (Harrison, 1997: 24). A commercial approach towards the management of culture raises the notion that culture can become elitist and can also bring about a decline in visitor numbers (WTO 1999b).

2.2.6.2 Festivals and Events

Two major elements in cultural tourism production are festivals and special events. Festivals have been defined as a celebration of a particular society or community and a means through which local identity is expressed. This form of popular cultural expression generates interest among visitors as it offers the visitor the opportunity to glimpse at local culture and also experience ‘the way of life’ of the locals (Boissevain, 1996b; Crystal, 1989; Roma, 1999; Getz, 1991, 1995; Greenwood, 1989; Hall, 1992). Festivals could have a diverse nature including a religious or cultural nature:

Religious events and festivals will provide a particular set of cultural expressions, (while) cultural events will demonstrate characteristics of both the sacred and the profane. (Hall, 1992: 23)

However the influence of “an increasing number of tourists are searching for authentic cultural experiences and ways to interact with their hosts” (Getz, 1995: 150) has led to modifications in events. In his account of Maltese ritual celebrations, Boissevain (1996b) notes that celebrations such as village *festas* and Good Friday processions have become more elaborate due to an increase in popularity as a result of tourism, concluding that “tourism is indirectly related to the revitalization of some Maltese celebrations” (ibid.: 114). Crystal (1989: 150) comments that Tana Toraja funerary rituals were made more dramatic and shorter to accommodate tourists. Apart from these changes, the interest in cultural tourism has brought about a new genre of events which Hobsbawm (1983) calls “invented traditions”. Invented traditions are:

... a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the (historic) past. (ibid.: 1)

These traditions, which can either be totally invented or rooted in the past, are increasingly used to attract more tourists to a particular destination or regions within that destination. Cultural and historical events that reproduce past events are called “re-enactments” (Lowenthal, 1985: 295). Re-enactments and cultural events should in principle “have cultural significance to the resident population” (Getz, 1995) and can

range from pure entertainment to actual re-enacting the historical past. Such re-enactments are valuable since they help to re-create the past and impart a sense of identity to the host population (Boissevain, 1996b; Hall, 1992; McKean 1989) but could also pose problems if they are perceived solely as a tourism product (Greenwood 1989).

The first issue that has been raised is that of authenticity (MacCannell, 1976). He argues that tourists are searching for the authentic experience in a destination. Hence events have to be historically correct. However, tourists are also prepared to accept that something is inauthentic or “staged”, provided that the fakes are aptly done. On the other hand, Lowenthal (1985) mentions that in the United States, there has been a ‘growing cult of authenticity’ which has had adverse impact on the re-enactors.

Another concern is that cultural events can become commodified (Greenwood, 1989). In his study of the Alrade in Fuenterrabia in Spain, Greenwood shows that repeated performance of a historical event for outsiders had altered the meaning of this event for the local community. However, Hall (1992) raises the point that in analysing events one has to look at who has the control of the commercial process rather than the commercial process itself. McKean (1989) shows that members of the Balinese community have found ways whereby they increased their capital from cultural production at the same time retaining the ‘ownership’ of such activities.

2.2.6.3 Local Gastronomy and Cuisine

Local cuisine is yet another way in which local culture is expressed since “eating a typical dish and drinking local wine is a way of coming into contact with the local population” (Antonioli 1995 quoted in Hjalagar and Antonioli Corigliano, 2000: 282). Moreover, “tourism has become an important factor in influencing both the consumption and production of cuisine” (Mitchell, Hall and Johnson, 2001: 75). This notion led to the developments of new trends such as agro-tourism, wine-tours, the opening of historic food factories and visitors centres, and the sale of food products as souvenirs (Hjalgar and Antonioli Corigliano 2000). As part of the destination marketing practices, tourism organisations have created brochures to market their own cuisine such as the National Tourism Organisation of Malta brochure - *'Secrets from Nanna's Hearth* (NTOM 1989b). Other examples of local cuisine promotional exercises include the “Taste of Scotland” and “Taste of Ireland” initiatives taken up by the respective national / regional tourist boards to promote local cuisine. A spin-off from this promotion encourages the use of fresh local products (*A Taste of Ulster Guide* 1999/2000). An increase in awareness of food as a cultural experience can be seen in the example of Majorca. Alcock (1995) demonstrates that Mallorcan local traditional cuisine has been revived as a result of an increase in cultural tourism and the modern quest for healthy living. Typically, a vegetable based diet; Mallorcan cuisine has made a comeback with the more affluent and health-conscious visitor. Chambers (2000) reflects that gastronomy is increasingly becoming associated with elite travel. This trend is fuelled by a number of food and wine articles published in elite travel magazines.

Despite this emerging interest there is another opinion that demands circumscription. Reynolds (1995) argues that eating habits are an intrinsic part of culture and as such should be taken into consideration when looking at the impacts of tourism. He argued that in the quest for more authentic experiences, there is the chance that food would become commercialised leading to a situation where “we see less and less tradition happening in the home and more foods labelled ‘traditional flavour’ appearing on the supermarket shelves” (Reynolds, 1994: 192-193). On a similar vein, Riley (2000) argues that prior to utilising cuisine as a destination attraction, it is important to determine the role of national cuisine in social culture.

2.3 Cultural Tourism as an Aspect of Tourism Development Policy

The Mexico declaration states that “Culture is the essential condition for genuine development” (WTO 1985: 10). Since then, various governments have adopted this declaration and incorporated cultural tourism development within the general tourism policy (Boissevain, 1997; Browne, 1994; Karpodini-Dimitriadi, 1999; Kockel, 1994; Richards 1996e).

Having explored the parameters of cultural tourism and of those who engage in it, this section will focus on the presenters (Boniface 1995) of cultural tourism, namely the society. Boniface and Fowler (1991) state that the increase in the provision of cultural tourism by presenters is due to economic gains and for status purposes. Harvey (1989 quoted in Richards 1996f: 49) observes that cultural capital is also an attribute of place.

In looking at existing literature on the development of cultural tourism policy, two strains of thought can be identified - the concept of sustainability and the concept of cultural tourism as a continuum of the product life cycle.

2.3.1 Cultural Tourism Policy, Sustainability and 'Alternative Tourism'

In their analysis of the impacts of mass tourism on Haitian society, Turner and Ash (1975) argue that the impacts of tourism development are such that they destroy the very elements that attract tourists to a particular destination, damaging local culture and its meaning for the host population. Research has shown that unplanned mass tourism has adverse impacts on the natural environment causing pollution (visual, air and water) and congestion (Romeril, 1989). These impacts of tourism lead to a decline in tourist numbers and offset the economic benefits resulting from tourism activity (Bywater, 1991). Moreover, tourism growth leaves an indelible mark on the host societies and cultures, (Crystal, 1989; de Kadt, 1979; Swinglehurst, 1994).

These natural, social and cultural realities led scholars to express concern and caution towards the impact of tourism and to propose solutions how to counteract these impacts without compromising or enhancing further the positive impacts of tourism. Thus, in the late 1980s and early 1990s alternative forms of tourism and niche markets or special interest tourism (Weiler and Hall, 1992) were identified and developed. These new forms of tourism were reputed to satisfy the criteria of sustainable development (WCED, 1987): These include activities that (i) have a minimum impact on the natural

and built environments; (ii) enhance the economic abilities of communities and (iii) have limited impact on host cultures.

Special interest tourism or alternative tourism includes eco-tourism, urban tourism, rural tourism, sports tourism and cultural tourism among other forms of tourism. Cultural tourism, is seen by international agencies such as UNESCO (1996) and WTO (1999c) and regional agencies, such as the EU and the ETC (1994) as a way in which sustainable tourism development could be developed.

One of the founding premises of sustainable development is the re-use of existing resources. In the majority of countries where cultural tourism has been developed or is being developed, such resources are abundant. In this sense culture is perceived as a natural resource (Brent Ritchie and Zins, 1978; Zeppel and Hall, 1992; Ashworth, 1995; Barré, 1996; MacNulty, 1999). Moreover, this resource, can, “be activated for commercial purposes with what appears to be potential windfall economic benefits to a local economy” (Ashworth, 1995: 256; Schouten, 1996). This fulfills another premise of sustainable tourism development whereby local communities share in the economic benefits arising out of tourism activities.

In line with the enhancement of the local community, “culture has been used as a means of boosting feelings of national identity and cohesion” (Barré, 1996; Boissevain, 1996b; Browne, 1994; McKean, 1989; Odermatt, 1996; Stebbins, 1997). This notion of identity has been repeatedly mentioned in documents written by regional and international agencies in advocating the promotion of cultural tourism (WTO, 1985; WTO, 1999c; UNESCO, 1996).

Since cultural tourism is not dependent on climatic conditions for its success, as much as the traditional ‘sand, sun and sea’ product, it is seen as a means to attract off-season visitors thus ensuring the sustainability of the overall tourism product. Agencies such as the British Tourism Authority (Richards, 1996e; Yale, 1997) and the Belgian tourism officials (Munsters, 1996) have used heritage tourism to attract off-peak tourists.

Although Europe has always been synonymous with cultural travel, the sharp increase of ‘the heritage industry’ (Hewison, 1987) in Europe since the mid-1980s, was related to the prevalent economic and social situation of the time. Griffith (1993) and Richards (1996e) point out that that European countries saw cultural tourism as a way in which to create new jobs, and to revive post-industrial cities. To a certain extent this economic revival is also advocated by reports on tourism development in the United States, where cultural tourism has encouraged direct and indirect economic benefits (Caldwell, 1996; Fraser, 1998). Hall (2000) points out that an increase in events with a historical component in a number of cities has led to an increase in hotel occupancy rates.

The development of cultural tourism has also enabled governments to inject funds and re-activate economic activity in rural areas. Barré (1996) argues that:

...tourism represents a great opportunity for developing countries, which may consider that the authenticity of their cultural landscapes and especially their cultural heritage, often better preserved than industrial countries, constitutes the basis of a resource, which could be used to promote development that would be at once economic, social and cultural (ibid.: 5)

The development of cultural tourism is encouraged in both developing and developed countries (Richards, 1996d, UNESCO, 1996; WTO, 1999). Individual governments developed cultural tourism projects such as the one initiated by the Cypriot government to restore community life in mountain villages and agro-tourism in Greece and private companies (Cyprus Agrotourism Company, n.d.). Regional agencies such as the EU have provided funds for the development of cultural tourism projects in Ireland (Browne, 1994; Kneafsey, 1994) United Kingdom (Yale, 1997) in Greece (Karpodini-Dimitriadi, 1999) and in non-EU countries via the creation of projects such as Med Campus, Med Urbs and Euromed Heritage II. These funds have benefited the 'less-developed' regions within Europe. However, such funds did not always manage to enhance the tourism product. Duffy (1994) in looking at the use of EU funds in Ireland argues that substantial EU structural funds were devoted to the creation of new heritage and tourism projects while less were devoted for restoration and conservation of existing sites. Hart (1996) in reviewing the impacts of full EU accession to the Canary

Islands observes that the government opted to use EU funding to develop rural tourism and totally disregarded cultural heritage.

2.3.2 Tourism Product Lifecycle

In his concluding chapter to the book *Cultural Tourism in Europe*, Richards (1996b: 321) says:

Cultural tourism is viewed as means of diversifying market demand, as a solution to the problems of very diverse areas in Europe, ... - the decline of major economic activity of the region requires new sources of income to be found ... In traditional manufacturing areas, cultural tourism is seen as a way of generating tourism business from scratch. For traditional tourist destinations, ... the development of cultural tourism is often a response to the problem of tourism itself.

This approach enabled countries to extend the tourism product lifecycle, create new products and thus remain viable in an increasingly competitive environment. This approach stems from Butler's theory (1980) of product lifecycle. Following a period of exponential increase, tourism growth goes through a plateau and a phase of decline or rejuvenation. During the rejuvenation phase, new products or markets are identified which can make the destination more viable. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) in her analysis of cultural production in various countries raises the point that cultural production gives a second lease of life to dying expressions of lifestyles, economies and place. Thus culture and cultural tourism are identified as potential means in which the

product on offer can be made more interesting and therefore make the host destination appear more competitive (Kalogerpoulou, 1996).

Cultural tourism is seen as a product that can augment the diversification process of a country's, region's or a locality's tourism product thus giving that country/society a competitive edge over its competitors. The European Travel Commission (ETC) (1994) argues that cultural tourism can make Europe appear exotic to visitors from other world regions. Selänniemi (2001), in addressing tourism in Crete discusses the issue of using culture to diversify the current tourist market. However he points out that the development of cultural tourism may have its difficulties for countries whose income totally depends on mass tourism. He argues that developing alternative tourism alongside mainstream mass tourism is perhaps a strategy that needed to be supported. In discussing the Mediterranean region, Vera Rebello (2001) argues that the wealth of cultural and historic features of the region should be used to promote product differentiation that focuses on enhanced quality based, sustainable management of cultural and natural resources. Moreover he remarked that:

For Mediterranean islands to be able to enhance their competitive edge vis-a-vis rival destinations there is the need to establish an appropriate combination of nature, sea, landscape, history and myth (ibid.: 62).

A change in product is usually targeted towards a specific niche market. Due to the characteristics outlined in Section 2.2.3 above, there is the common belief that cultural tourists are better quality tourists, spend more money and hence they are more desirable than other type of tourists. Richards and Bonink (1995: 175) state that:

Cultural tourism is perceived to generate the type of tourists that most destinations dream of: highly educated, wealthy, high spending visitors. By developing cultural tourism, a destination can assure itself of a higher per capita spend, and supposedly minimize damage to its precious built or natural heritage.

Moreover, Keller (1996a: 15) argues that cultural tourists can generate higher revenues than non-cultural tourists, since they are ready to pay more for their travel and accommodation. In research conducted by the Travel Association of America it was found that cultural tourists spend more on a trip when compared to all other types of US travellers (Miller 1997). The argument that cultural tourists are better tourists encouraged governments to develop cultural tourism. Karpodini-Dimitriadi (1999:117) argues that one of the main criteria for the development of cultural tourism in Greece was precisely the consideration that “‘cultural tourism’ is considered to be most effective in creating *quality* tourism with an educated profile and high economic return”. The Tunisian government for example made an effort to “attract higher spending cultural tourists” (Bleasdale and Tapsell, 1999: 197) albeit, that the number of enthusiastic cultural tourists were a very small minority.

However, other authors have debated this position. Seläniemi (2001) in his research among Finnish tourists in Crete argues that this is hardly the case. Cultural tourists do not tend to be repeat visitors like mass tourists. This observation raises the point that in attracting cultural tourists money is constantly needed to ensure that such destination maintains a constant tourist influx. This expense could be offset through the economic benefits that quality cultural tourists may bring. However, reality does not always follow such perceptions. Boissevain (1997) in his article on globalisation and tourism in Malta points out that rather than quality cultural tourists, the Maltese Islands kept on attracting mass tourists. Conversely, Boniface (1995) argues that the cultural tourist is indeed a mass cultural tourist. These observations suggest that the quality of tourists was not forthcoming but rather there has been an increase in the consumption of cultural tourism.

2.4 The Implications of Cultural Tourism Development

In the previous section, it has been argued that the development of cultural tourism can be beneficial to countries and societies. However, Moulin (1996: 65) states that “cultural tourism is not a panacea for all problems” indeed, Swarbrooke (1999: 310-311) argues that unless adequately managed, cultural tourism can lead to the development of un-sustainable tourism, leading to problems that are usually associated with mass tourism. Shackley (1997) further adds that:

The rapid growth of interest in cultural tourism coupled with constant need of travel companies to develop innovative new products has introduced visitors to increasingly remote locations raising doubts about the sustainability of cultural tourism in such localities (Shackley, 1997: 244).

The impacts of cultural tourism development policy include characteristics such as “commercialisation, revitalization, patrimonial preservation” (Jafari, 1996: 45-46). Furthermore, the impacts of cultural tourism are the more relevant since they effect society directly.

2.4.1 Issues of Local Identity

In Section 2.2 it was argued that culture is both a process and a product and it is culture in both senses that stimulates the growth of cultural tourism. The interest shown by tourists in both cultural processes and cultural product does effect the identity of the host culture (Biossevain, 1996b). Culture is produced and promoted by local interests, very often for economic gains. Thus the study of culture in tourism has another facet, that of the locals whose culture is being packaged and portrayed and the way in which the use of culture for touristic purposes effects the community's own identity. Primarily, culture manifests itself through the arts and crafts of a community or a society. This in itself is reputed to revitalise the non-physical cultural heritage “through stimulating artistic creativity, the production of crafts and the performing arts” (Barré 1996: 8). Schouten (1996: 55) takes this further when he argues that the use of culture as a tourist attraction is not only a means to distinguish a destination from another but it is also “the rediscovery of identity”. Neither Schouten nor Barré give concrete examples of how

this can occur. However, Hart (1996) in her study of tourism in the Canary Islands suggests that revitalisation of local culture was a result of external threats that the society was experiencing through the pressures of mass tourism and the political events at local and international level. All these factors were threatening the “little collective memory that the Canary islanders possess” and in response the “general Society chose to revive local traditions and to exhibit, in chosen places, their differentiating cultural characteristics” (Hart, 1996: 164). Barré's argument although valid can be counteracted by Greenwood's thesis of commoditization, (Greenwood 1989). Greenwood argued that when culture becomes commoditized it loses its meaning for the local population. This notion is debatable since commoditization does not effect cultural identities of communities in the same manner. Poplenka and Litterel (1991) in their study on handicraft textiles argue that the role and meaning of handicrafts has been modified to accommodate tourists' tastes. Markwick (2001) in her analysis of the handicraft industry in Malta argues that tourism had different impacts on different crafts. While lace making, a traditional craft declined in its quality and authenticity as a result of increased commoditization, glass blowing, an imported craft, increased in its popularity and quality to the extent that it is showing “a patina of authenticity over time” (Markwick, 2001: 48). Identity is not only related to crafts but also related to place. Odermatt (1996) looks closely at the issue of identity when he analyses the changes in feelings towards Nuraghi prehistoric remains. The article addresses the issue of how the identity of a particular community changes when their cultural and historical background become the focus of tourist and state attention. Grima (2000) argues that the representation of one

of Malta's major archaeological sites - Hal-Saflieni Hypogeum “on postage stamps, and eventually on the one pound note, expressed and reinforced the singling out of the Hypogeum as a potent national symbol” (Grima 2000: 41).

2.4.2 Authenticity

Throughout this discussion reference has been made to authenticity in the tourism product. This is one of the major debates surrounding culture and tourism. The argument was first discussed by MacCannell (1976) who, following Goffman's theory of front and back stage reality (ibid, 1959) argued that tourist settings could give rise to situations where staged authenticity is prevalent. This, situation according to MacCannell arises due to the fact that “touristic consciousness is motivated by its desire for authentic experiences” (ibid.: 101). The quest for “the other” has become increasingly prevalent in cultural and heritage tourism where getting back to basics forms an important element of travel. This quest for the past and traditional life urges societies to re-create the past or scenarios that can provide the required setting. Authenticity has various ramifications. On the one hand it can mean the authentic experience of “the back to basics approach” discussed by Abram (1996) where tourists visit Cantal to sample the “old-fashioned ... but wholesome country living” (Abram 1996: 181). Conversely, at times events and settings are altered to accommodate tourists as cited by McKean (1989). Stanton observed that these alterations could be institutionalised deliberate choices to accommodate the:

Tourists (who) are on vacation - they are seeking a change from the routine or the ordinary and want to experience the unusual. However they lack the time and the depth of experience to understand the more complex and intricate aspects of Polynesian culture. (Stanton, 1989: 251)

Visitors are given a glimpse of the various elements of Polynesian culture, which the visitor may know is “fake culture”, but is ready to accept it as long as it satisfies this quest. However, MacCannell (1976) points out that care should be taken when presenting staged authenticity since a:

false back is more insidious and dangerous than a false front or inauthentic demystification of social life is not merely a lie but a superlie. (MacCannell, 1976: 103)

MacCannell's argument is based more on the tourist getting to know about the fake product. Yet, authors such as Boniface (1995) and Walle (1998) have argued that a good quality and authentic product would:

Maintain the good reputation of the culture and its traditions.... This can lead to long-term demand and non-price competition. (Walle, 1998: 188)

2.4.3 The Economic Impacts of Culture and the Economics of Culture

Culture is central to tourism, it is seen both as a tourism resource and a commercial resource especially, “culture which is considered as unique or unusual” (Burns, 1999: 58). Indeed, one of the implications related to the development of cultural tourism is the economic contribution that cultural tourism could make to the community in which it is

developed (Atkinson Wells, 1996; Corner and Harvey, 1991a; Myerscough, 1988; Peacock, 1998). The major premise provided by these sources argues that the development of cultural tourism brings about economic development and subsequently, community development. However, the relationship between culture, economics and development is not a simple one. In his analysis of the economics of art and culture in Britain, Myerscough (1988) argues that although direct income generated from culture and the arts is substantial and can be quantifiable, the indirect economic contribution (a pre requisite for community development) is a difficult factor to measure. For example in assessing the impact of festival tourism (an aspect of cultural tourism), Getz (1991) and Hall (1992) argue that the economic benefits of these events are indirect benefits felt after the events have occurred. These observation beg the further exploration of the economic role of culture in communities

Biachini and Schwengel (1991) observe that developments conducted in the Docklands area in London during the 1980s were aimed to regenerate the old industrial cities through re-development of heritage areas. This led to the external investments, demand for development expansion in tourism and the improvement of general perceptions of the area. However, this type of development was limited in its scope since it ignored the socio-economic needs of the community living in the inner city areas. Alternatively, they argue for a model of development that strengthens indigenous productive capacity and reduces reliance on variables outside the city's control (ibid: 227) Caldwell (1996) in her analysis of the Tennessee Overhill project, reiterates the efficacy of this model.

Tennessee Overhills area was chosen by the Historic Preservation's Heritage Tourism Initiative for a pilot study in 1990. This area, a previous centre in trade was at the time subject to severe out migration, resulting in economic and human resource depletion of the area. The project aimed to re-introduce economic activity in the area through the promotion of cultural tourism. The project proved successful and Caldwell points out that the success was based on five principles of focusing on authenticity and quality of the product, the preservation and the protection of the resources, animation of the sites, the fit between community and tourism and collaboration between the various parties involved. These two examples highlight the fact that the economic impact of culture needs to address primarily the interests of the community and not only those of the investor (often an external agency) and is community-led. (Vukonic, 1996). Indeed Walle (1998) argues that:

When investors seek to bring cultural tourism to a region ... Where schemes of economic development showcase host cultures, the needs and vulnerabilities of all stakeholders must be weighed and accommodated (Walle 1998: 105)

The point illustrated by Caldwell (1996) requires special attention, since the project aimed to create interest from within the community, leading to the community taking the lead in tourism development. The economic impact of activities generated through culture or related activities, would ideally produce maximum economic benefits for the community yet at the same time limit exploitation of the local population. Exploitation of the host population through commoditization of its culture has to be minimized and

therefore promotes the notion that “tourism is of economic and social benefit to residents” (Caldwell, 1996: 129). In addition, Hall and McArthur (1998) argue that the needs of the community as well as those of other stakeholders could be ensured if tourism authorities treated host communities in equitable manner through involvement and consultation.

Another issue related to the economic impact of culture is the issue of funding. During the 1980s, support of the arts and culture through taxation started to decline in most Western European countries thus cultural organisations. Thus cultural providers had to resort to alternative sources for funding (Corner and Harvey 1991b; Heilburn and Gray, 2001, Kolb, 2000; Richards, 1996d; Walle, 1998). Funding culture and the arts through private funding is not a straightforward issue since:

... art and culture are a national heritage and therefore logically deserve to be supported by the nation acting collectively (Heilburn and Gray, 2001: 270)

Government subsidies are available through alternative measures such as indirect taxation. For example in the UK the arts are subsidised through the National Lottery (Gratton and Richards 1996). Cultural organisations and private business partnerships promoted the merchandising of culture (Kolb 2000) shifting the latter towards a “market-oriented” (Urry, 2002: 120) mentality. Sponsorship, by private organisations, of culture and the arts is another area of alternative funding.

2.5 Cultural Tourism Development in the Mediterranean

The Mediterranean region is adorned with a number of natural and cultural attractions that make this region a prime destination, attracting over 40 percent of all international tourist arrivals. Apostolopoulos, Loukissas and Leontidou (2001) describe the Mediterranean as “the largest, oldest and most developed touristic region in the world” (ibid.: 10). However this region in recent years was subject to growing competition from the newly emerging markets of the Caribbean and Asian-Pacific region (Apostolopoulos, Loukissas and Leontidou, 2001; Brackenbury, 1996; Frochet, 1998).

Two concurrent movements shaped tourism in the Mediterranean. First, European-based tour-operators, who through the creation of significant economies of scale managed to reduce the cost of travel, making the region one of the most popular (Ioannides, 1998; Sastre and Benito, 2001). In the process they also created a homogenised ‘Mediterranean’ product of sand, sun and sea. Through their influence, tour-operators were responsible for the creation of dependency in the Mediterranean region, by determining tourist flows (Aguilo and Payeras 1997 quoted in Sastre and Benito, 2001: 77). Countries like, Portugal, Malta, Cyprus, and Greece portray such a situation (Fitch, 1987) where tourism becomes subject to marketing tourism (tour-operators) rather than by the countries themselves. This state of affairs is not always beneficial to a country especially those countries that want to diversify their product, and making their destination a destination of choice rather than one where competitiveness is based on the price of the package holiday (Brigulio and Vella, 1995;

Vera Rebello, 2001). Secondly, tourism was also shaped by the local players. Vera Rebello (2001: 50) argues that the respective policies of the regions' countries such as the devaluation of currencies were responsible for the increase in demand for certain destinations. Selwyn (2001) raises yet another point that other local players such as private developers, returned migrants and local agencies were also responsible for the development of Mediterranean tourism.

The above two movements led to a situation where the region started to suffer the effects of unplanned tourism development, old resorts and a product that was no longer appealing (Brackenbury, 1996; Bywater, 1991; Curtis, 1997; Grenon and Batisse, 1989). However, despite this grim picture, Apostolopoulos, Loukissas and Leontidou (2001), in their introductory chapter to *Tourism in the Mediterranean* state that:

Mediterranean tourism holds immense potential for further growth and development. The promotion of natural, cultural and historical resources as well as of alternative forms of tourism, which can take advantage of regional peculiarities, can undoubtedly contribute toward this direction (ibid.: 10).

The Mediterranean region in general and countries in particular are facing challenging times. Throughout this chapter it has been demonstrated that a number of countries bordering the Mediterranean are resorting to culture as a means to diversify their product. One of the main problems to achieve this is the image that the region projects; Vera Rebello (2001: 55) mentions that tour operators represent the Mediterranean

region as a “trivialized product” of sea and sun. Brackenbury (1996) and Frochet (1997) comment that change could occur but the image of the region should be tackled first. However, changing the image of the region is dependent upon the individual country's image as well as tourism policies. In addition, Seläniemi (2001) argues that changing the image to attract a totally different type of tourism may be an idealistic rather than a realistic option.

2.6 The Role of Culture in Tourism

After having explored the meaning of cultural tourism and its implications, this last section will address the role of culture in tourism in view of the objectives of this research. This chapter has demonstrated that culture is one of the prime attractions. Indeed, Brent Ritchie and Zins (1978) have argued that culture enhances the attractiveness of a particular tourist region. The literature discussed in this chapter shows that there has been an increase in demand for cultural tourism by tourists however, the role of the producers of cultural heritage (Richards 1996f) or cultural heritage presenters (Boniface, 1995; Boniface and Fowler, 1993) in the ‘creation’ of cultural tourism requires particular attention. This observation is made since more and more destinations are resorting to culture to give that 'added' note of distinction. The questions concerning cultural tourism as posed by Ashworth, 1995 are still valid:

What are the implications for culture of its additional use as a tourism resource? What role does culture play in places in general and more particularly what are the impacts, economic and otherwise, on places of the use of local cultures by tourists? (ibid.: 268)

Research in tourism, especially research conducted in the social studies framework such as, the edited works of de Kadt (1979), Smith (1989b), Boissevain (1996c) and Selwyn (1996a) and Selwyn (2001) show that in order to understand the full implications of tourism on societies, both the host and the tourist have to be studied (Selwyn, 1996b: 9). This approach further emphasizes the notion that tourism does not occur within a vacuum but is subject to internal and external factors that effect the very nature of tourism. This approach also holds true for the study of cultural tourism. In fact Swarbrooke (1999: 306) identifies a cultural tourism system where both the tourists and the intermediaries (destination marketing agencies, tour operators, retail and travel outlets and media) have an important role to play. However this system is not perfect and it requires further investigation. As Ashworth (1995), points out there is a paradox:

an increasing realization that a diversified tourism product line, the economic well-being of places and the maintenance of local cultures can all be related in joint policies profitable to all three groups of actors. The idea that there exists an automatic and universal harmonious symbiosis between all three parties is assumed rather than explained. (Ashworth 1995: 268)

Culture has been described as being an attraction; something worth travelling for. Attractions, “those features that cause a tourist to visit” (Hughes, 2000: 125) are considered to be the main components of a holiday. Middleton (1994a: 246) further argues that tourist attractions are “any designated permanent resource which is controlled and managed for the enjoyment, entertainment and education of the visiting public”. Attractions can be natural such as sun, beaches, forests or mountains, or else man made such as theme parks, shopping areas, museums and heritage sites.

The multiple role of culture as a tourism attraction can be enhanced by the comment made by Prentice (1993) when he argues that:

Heritage Tourism should be regarded as a series of overlapping and somewhat ill defined market places, in which potential consumers seek to benefit internally through the beneficial feelings of 'consuming' heritage, and, producers present products for consumption as attractions. As a 'product', heritage is experienced by consumers as *feelings of benefit*, it is also produced through implicit or explicit *presentation* by producers who see demand for such products. (ibid.: 222)

In view of all the above, it is being argued here, that producers of culture are the key players in dictating what type of culture is promoted and encouraged.

Richards, (2001a: 4) argues that:

the growth in supply of cultural attractions has in fact been growing faster than the number of visits over the past decade, and this accentuated by the growing number of

localities anxious to market their unique culture to tourists. Cultural tourism, it seems, adds to the status not only of the consumer but also of the producer.

Odermatt (1996), argues that the role of the producer (national and the political) of the cultural item and the manner in which it is (re) presented are important considerations of culture as a tourist product. The literature does not address this point adequately and although authors like Lowenthal (1985) refer to the fact that culture may at times be negotiated, the actual role of producers or presenters of culture has not been addressed. Odermatt (op.cit.) refers to the (re) presentation of culture and the concerns that this raises for those who have the 'political' ability to market this cultural heritage and those who perceive the heritage as theirs, namely the local population. What is of interest here is that the concept of producers or presenters is rather wide and it will be the role of the following chapter to address this issue.

Finally, what role does culture have as a tourist attraction? There are perhaps some issues that have to be outlined at the outset. Primarily, culture is an attraction and as such it will help to attract tourists. Secondly, there are various levels of culture that is actually portraying the local community and that which is created for the tourists, although in some cases the demarcation between the two types of culture is not clearly marked. The tourist him/herself has his/her own agenda for engaging in tourist activity. However the extent to which he /she is involved in cultural activity depends on the level of motivation that one has to engage in the particular types of cultural activities. Finally, culture is an attraction, and it is increasingly becoming a product that is marketed and

consumed. Those marketing and producing culture are ultimately the entities whose actions are creating and providing demand.

2.7 The Role of Literature in Shaping the Initial Research Questions

This section will explore how the themes discussed in this chapter have shaped and informed the initial research questions. The first point that emerges from the literature is the variety of meanings attached to culture and the cultural tourist. The literature highlights that there are various forms of culture and that over time the distinctions between “high” and “low” culture are becoming less distinct. In addition to this, more tourists are keen to experience different cultures. This raises the second point of interest - the motivation of the cultural tourists. The literature argues that motivation varies and there are different levels of experiences sought at the destination, shifting the focus from the “tourist gaze” of objects to the experiential notion of culture. Although the focus of the study was not the cultural tourists per se, these observations have helped in shaping the question of what do stakeholders understand by culture and how do they perceive the cultural product and the cultural tourist. Initial research questions raised through the literature are: What is considered as culture? Is there a distinction between the various levels of culture? And, who is considered a cultural tourist? Although recognising the fact that there are various levels of motivation hence different cultural tourists, it was felt that narrowing the definition of cultural tourism to specific terms (eg - high culture - performing arts) would limit the scope of this research. A better expression of ideas could be obtained if cultural tourism is given a precise and restricted

definition. *Thus for this research, cultural tourism implies those tourist activities related to culture.*

The second major issue discussed in this chapter has been the role of culture in the tourism product. The text discussed in this chapter argues that the development of cultural tourism has various implications. It was seen that the development of cultural tourism very often occurs for economic reasons, to introduce a better quality tourist or as a means to change tourism policy. As stated in Section 1.3.2, these reflected the aspirations of the Maltese tourism authorities for the past decade. However, it can be appreciated that a study on cultural tourism still has to address issues of how do tourism authorities perceive the role of culture in the overall tourism product as there is no coherent defined policy on the matter.

The use of culture as a tourism policy has various implications on the type of tourism developed, the local community and the very culture of the local community. Issues of local identity, authenticity of the cultural product are an indirect interest of this research. Central questions raised though the literature were: the role of culture in the Maltese tourism product; the role that culture plays and how has this changed over the years, and finally the implications of the introduction of cultural tourism on the local communities and the role, if any of the local community in tourism development.

The literature covered on cultural tourism does not address the perception of all those entities that are providing culture. Literature tended very often to focus on the tourist, the local population and on the craft producer or the artisans. It is being argued in this research that the perception of culture of those entities that control the use of culture such as tourism authorities and tour-operators and handling agents is just as important, as all stakeholders form part of a continuum.

CHAPTER 3

Literature Review Part 2: Marketing in Tourism, Marketing and Management of Culture in Tourism

Among cities with no particular recreational appeal those that have preserved their past continue to enjoy tourism. Those that haven't, receive almost no tourism at all. Tourism simply doesn't go to a city that has lost its soul. How can a community attract tourism without losing its soul? First the community, leaders must recognise that the place itself not its trappings around it is the reason tourists come to visit. Second, they must understand that sustaining tourism requires long-term strategy.

- Arthur Frommer. Travel Writer quoted by Leaf (1997)

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the concepts of marketing and managing of culture for tourism purposes. The idea of this chapter stems from three main considerations. First marketing and management are considered to be aspects of the same discipline. Secondly, the marketing of culture shares some theoretical issues with general marketing theory and therefore the similarities and the differences in marketing theory will be explored. The third reason lies in the scope of this research. Culture and cultural aspects are utilized by local tourism entities to market Malta abroad. The literature review will highlight theoretical issues that will be explored further in the analysis chapters. In turn this chapter will outline how relevant theoretical issues of marketing in tourism will then be applied to cultural tourism. Finally, it will address some of the more pertinent questions regarding the management of culture and its use in marketing of destinations.

3.2 Marketing in Tourism

General marketing theory focuses on demand and supply of goods and services.

Primarily:

Marketing is about anticipating demand, recognizing it, stimulating it and finally satisfying it, it is understanding what can be sold, to whom, where and in what quantities. (Holloway and Plant, 1992: 4)

Tourism is considered to be unique since it is a combination of services, physical facilities and products (Christie Mill and Morrison, 1998; Holloway and Plant 1992). Thus tourism marketing exhibits the general characteristics of marketing of services in addition to its own particular characteristics. Literature discussing the marketing of tourism has established that tourism products are intangible, heterogeneous, perishable, and inseparable (Christie Mill and Morrison, 1998; Holloway and Plant 1992; Middleton, 1994a). In addition, tourism is characterised by seasonality, high fixed costs and interdependence (Middleton and Clarke, 2001). Marketing in tourism focuses on several characteristics including: the characteristics of consumer demand, characteristics of supply, products and prices which match supply and demand, characteristics of promotion to influence demand, and characteristics of distribution used to facilitate purchase (Middleton and Clarke, 2001: 49).

One of the main elements of marketing policy is the tourism product. Holloway and Plant (1992) and MacNulty (1999) argue that marketing begins with the product and without a good product, which the customer wants, the best marketing in the world will

not bring tourists. This observation however does not take into consideration that visitors may not know the product before hand; that is, although they can judge the value of a particular product (destination / resort) through “comparison” with others (Dann 1988: 70), they are not able to actually gauge its value. Tourism marketing is increasingly becoming a skill in:

Creating the perceived value of the product in packaging it and in promoting the experience in a way which gives the product a competitive edge. (Morgan and Pritchard 1998: 45)

Morgan and Pritchard (1998) draw attention to the role of marketing in promoting not only the product but also another important element of the proposed holiday - the ‘anticipated’ tourism experience and its role in creating a competitive edge, to the destination and the particular product promoted by that destination. Marketing in tourism relies on other factors as well. Primarily, for tourism marketing to be effective a continuous communication with existing and potential customers has to be established. This is conducted through a marketing mix based on product, price, promotion and place. A range of marketing tools of public relations, advertising and tourist literature supplements the marketing mix. In addition, tourism providers (host regions or product) need to know their clients in order to use the right communication channels. For this aim providers rely on market segmentation, namely the “process through which people with similar needs, wants and characteristics are grouped together so that a tourism organisation can use greater precision in serving and communicating with these people”

(Christie Mill and Morrison, 1998: 310), and positioning, that is, the creation of perception or image in the targeted visitor's mind (ibid.: 314). In discussing market segmentation, Goodall (1990: 268) argues that "place products need to be matched to holiday makers". However, tourism marketing has to demonstrate social responsibility. If destination areas adapt their resources only to satisfy the visitors' needs without taking into consideration the long-term effects of particular marketing strategies on their own community, then they may lose the very thing that made them attractive in the first place.

Since this research focuses on the destination (Malta) and the product (cultural attractions), the rest of the discussion will focus on marketing of tourism destination, followed by marketing of culture and heritage.

3.3 Marketing Tourism Destinations

Marketing of tourist destinations should be related to planning and implementation of policies previously set out by tourism authorities:

The role of political decision-makers at local and national levels and various actors have the possibility to choose what type of tourism they want for their country. (Barré 1996: 8)

However, this line of thought is counteracted by the acknowledgement that very often small states are at the mercy of external operators and influences as the tourism policy

identified by local stakeholders may not always be in line with external operators' perceptions on the country. A case in point are the countries of the Mediterranean region, in which, as described in Section 2.5, the role of operators has overshadowed the role of the tourism authorities of host countries. Nevertheless, in recent years, tourism authorities within the region are taking more active control of tourism policy development by promoting sustainable development. In the process they bring about improved quality which enhances competitiveness. Studies from the Balearic Islands (Bardolet, 2001) and Greek Islands (Buhalis and Diamantis, 2001) suggest that sound marketing and management policies are crucial for the sustainable development of small islands. In addition, Apostolopoulos and Sonmez (2001: 287) argue that the "Mediterranean product will need to be re-evaluated in terms of price competitiveness, destination image, market position, added value and product quality".

Apostolopoulos and Sonmez (2001) are referring to a more composite approach to marketing highlighting that a good product on its own will not suffice. This also holds true for the individual destinations. Authors have argued that the success of destinations as tourist attractions is dependent upon the success of the marketing campaigns adopted to market destinations (Ashworth and Voogd, 1994; Goodall, 1990). Destination marketing is a concept of the destination as a whole in that:

There is no one product over which the producer has total control; rather the product is made up of a combination of government businesses, large and small and the natural environment (Bennett, 1999: 48)

Destination marketing regards that tourism destinations as place product which have to be sold like any other product to the potential customer (Goodall, 1990: 259). However it is dependent upon the establishment of successful links and collaboration between the various providers (government, private, NGOs, local community) of the 'destination product'. The marketing of destination also requires that countries address some fundamental issues. Leaf (1997) in addressing the WTO General Assembly on Tourism Promotion in Foreign Markets, pointed out that in order to be successful tourism destinations have to: initially have long-term and realistic strategies, conduct research to determine the potential customers, select the right advertising and public relations firms, co-ordinate promotional efforts, be aware of own political situations and the limitations these may impose on tourism development and finally, to have a crisis management programme (ibid.:2-4). Two major players could be involved in destination marketing - tourism organisations which, could be government controlled or run by private entities or non-governmental organisations. In addition tour operators are to a certain extent also responsible for marketing destinations.

3.3.1 The Role of Tourism Organisations in Destination Marketing

Burkart and Medlik (1980) have defined tourism organisations as bodies that have a particular interest in a geographical area as a tourist destination, which may be a country, region or an individual town. Traditionally, tourism organisations had a product development role, (Burkart and Medlik, 1980: 258), a promotion function and a facilitation role (Middleton, 1994a). NTOs conduct market facilitation through the

formulation of 'marketing bridges' with other operators in the travel and tourism industry, such as, tour operators, travel agencies, service providers and the tourists via promotion and advertising (Middleton 1994a). Depending on the size of the country and government, NTOs may have different degrees of involvement in the responsibility for the design, development and implementation of tourism policy within a particular country (Christie Mill and Morrison, 1998).

Tourism Organisations and their ascribed roles evolve over time. The nature of these organisations depends on the political and economic system, the importance of tourism in the national economy and the stage of tourism development in a particular country (Burkart and Medlik, 1980: 256-257). As tourism develops there is a tendency that there is increasing devolution of (responsibility) to other bodies such as regional bodies, local level bodies and the private sector. In the Mediterranean region, tourism organisations were centralised within a central ministry responsible for tourism policy. In recent years a number of changes have occurred within tourism organisations; structures started to develop from merely marketing organisations to organisations which also manage tourism in an attempt to:

counterbalance external effects and to offer services which would not have been offered due to economic criteria alone. (Pechlaner, 2000: 411)

In addition, there has also been an increased formation of partnerships between the public and private sectors (Apostolopoulos, Loukissas and Leontidou 2001: 9). It is

argued that these changes in tourism organisations would bring about a better product, since there is more involvement of 'indigenous' organisations in the design of tourism policy. However other authors have argued that the impact of these developments would be limited since the extent of external control of tourism activities makes it difficult for some Mediterranean communities to position themselves differently (Vera Rebello, 2001; Selänniemi, 2001).

The ever-increasing competition within the tourism sector led NTOs to adopt another role, namely that of the creation of the destination image through the branding of the destination. Branding, is a concept that has been used for a number of years however its application to tourism is rather new (Gilmore, 2002). Destination branding is reputed to provide an added competitive advantage through the creation of 'unique destination proposition' (Morgan, Pritchard and Price, 2002). Gilmore (2002: 60) argues that uniqueness in destination marketing comes from two sources the culture of the destination which is normally unique or based on a combination of cultures, and secondly from the combination of other benefits emerging from the physical characteristics of the destination itself. This observation is relevant to this research since it combines the role of culture and the destination image.

3.3.2 The Role of Tour Operators in Destination Marketing

Tour operators are organisations responsible for selling travel services usually through the combination of particular destination activities, transportation and the provision of accommodation. Through their activities, tour operators also try to create a demand for

particular tourist services. Tour operators aim to reach a large market of potential clients through the grouping of these services within a package tour, offering a range of holiday products based on different market segments (Yale, 1995). The prime motivation of the tour operator is "to attract customers to their holiday product and therefore are less concerned about selling any particular destination" (Laws, 1997: 77-78). Despite this observation there is evidence to suggest that by associating types of holidays to particular destinations, tour operators categorise destinations according to their type of holiday, leading to homogenised destinations (Santos, 1998; Selwyn, 1993). As has been mentioned in section 3.3.1, this image created by tour operators may not be always in line with what the destination authorities may wish to portray.

By way of concluding this section on destination marketing it is important to note that the destination should have a congruent image. Ashworth and Voogd (1994) and Kotler et al (1993), argue that a successful destination depends on consistent and coherent images provided by all the agencies marketing that destination. Furthermore, the imagery and words used have to reflect the reality of the promoted environment:

If marketing 'a destination of smiles' ensure that the immigration officers do smile ...If you are tempted to use words like 'dreams' or 'paradise' think about whether the product you are offering reflects your customers' ideas of paradise. (Bennett 1999: 54)

3.4 The Role of Imagery

The traditional approach to tourism marketing argues that prospective tourists cannot sample the product prior to buying it. This is where advertising and promotion take a central role in tourism marketing. Promotion in tourism is primarily conducted through advertising, public relations and production of material. Traditionally, tourism promotion and advertising were conducted through the use of printed material. However technological changes led to changes in the area and increasingly the use of information technology, the internet and videos are a means via which the prospective tourist can through the use of visuals, virtual reality and audio-visual technology sample the destination (Bennett, 1997; Bennett, 1999). Images have been described as “core of tourism promotion” (Dann, 1988: 44). Crick (1989) reinforced the notion that tourism is mediated through images (myths) and language. The following section will explore the role of imagery and associated discourse in tourism marketing.

Imagery has an important bearing on the research of destination marketing since “the first contact visitors have with a sight (destination) is not with the sight itself but with the representation thereof” (MacCannell 1976: 110). Images have been defined as:

the organised representation of an object, a person, or a place in an individual's cognitive system and embraces both a definition of that object, person or place and recognition of their attributes. (Morgan and Pritchard 1998: 30)

The role of imagery in tourism is considered important since tourism “is a product which is purchased in advance of its consumption and must be *described* rather than *demonstrated* to customers”. (Holloway and Plant, 1992: 8, emphasis in the original). In addition, imagery is considered to be a “critical factor in directing tourist flows” (Wing 1995: 99) and to change “people’s perceptions of a country” (Bojanic, 1991: 354). Description of the product or destination occurs through word-of-mouth, personal experiences, documentaries, advertising brochures, guidebooks, travel writing (Santos, 1998; Wilson, 1996), and in more recent times, through electronic media (Bennett 1999, Palmer 2002). Most of these tourism promotion strategies use images and language to a greater or lesser degree in order to depict destinations and products and entice prospective tourists. Tourism operates through a concept of the packaging and selling of dreams (Dann 1988) and hence the role of image and words is extremely important especially in an ever-competitive market. Today’s tourist population reflects a highly sophisticated market and tourism imagery has a key role in the promotional campaigns (Morgan and Pritchard 1998: 3). Through the projection of images, tour operators and tourist bodies whet the appetites of visitors and at the same time portray particular destinations.

Research in the area of tourist imagery is based within the social parameter and tourism marketing perspectives. Literature of a social science nature (Dann, 1988 and 1996; Selwyn 1993; Santos 1998) focus primarily on how local communities are represented by external agencies; Crick (1989) and Dann (1997) focus on the semiotics used in

tourism literature. Morgan and Pritchard (1998) address the issue of power in the creation of image and identities. From a tourism marketing perspective, Kotler *et al.* (1993) identify the way in which destination images can be corrected through the appropriate use of imagery and words. Zhou (1997) addresses the issue of brochure effectiveness in influencing tourists to visit a destination, extend their visit and spend more money at that destination.

A substantial amount of work was conducted on ways in which tour operators create destination images (Crick, 1989; Dann, 1988; Dann, 1996; Goodall and Bergsma 1990, Morgan and Pritchard, 1998; Santos, 1998; Selwyn, 1993). This research takes into consideration the influence that tour operators have on the particular destination and their 'gatekeeping' role (Ioannides, 1998). However, literature also seems to suggest that tour operators are not the only agencies to create destination images. Although very little research has been conducted on how NTOs construct and design the image of their own destinations, the latter's visions of destinations are also important. NTOs are dynamic and change over years since competition within the tourism sector causes destination marketers to refine and re-define their products. This product redefinition through changing imagery was shown by Boissevain (1996b, 1997) who argues that the use of imagery and words reflected the type of market and tourism policies advocated at the time. Furthermore Dann (1997) makes reference to language used by national tourism agencies and other marketing agencies to portray eco-tourism.

The issue of imagery is more complex than just the establishment of a destination image; it also involves the commencement of the process of cultural interaction between the prospective buyer and the host society. Images are more than just representations since they are based on:

a complex amalgam of its people, the ethnic mix that is contributing or has contributed to its character, its architecture, its overall aesthetic appeal, climate and industry. It is also governed by geography and the setting of an area amongst its neighbours and the images they in turn emanate. (Fisher, 1994: 147)

An interesting aspect of tourism imagery is how much do the images portrayed by NTOs, tour operators and other agencies truly reflect the destination, its people and its culture. Dann (1988), Jenkins (1997) argue that rarely do these entities have the same image of the destination. Crick (1989) goes as far as to state that “the places in the glossy brochures of the travel industry do not exist; the destinations are not real places, and the people pictured are false” (ibid.: 329). Goodall and Bergsma (1990) in their analysis of ski resorts argue that destination attributes are not represented accurately and like Selwyn (1993) and Dann (1988) pose the question of whether destination images as presented by tour operators meet the approval of destination tourism agencies. Indeed Dann (1988: 70) argues that image is presented as “competing levels of the tourist, the operator and the host”. It is debated whether such a situation results because the host population adopts a passive role in determining its own image. Recent studies on the

role of community involvement in tourism development provide potential avenues how host communities (receiving) countries can adopt a more proactive approach (Atkinson Wells, 1996; Boissévain, 1996c; Hall and McArthur, 1998). In addition, Dann (1988) argues that the first step that should be taken by local communities is to be aware of their own image transmitted abroad. Palmer (2002) points out that the use of information technology can be of benefit to tourist destinations:

By developing a coherent position in the marketplace, increasing their market share by getting closer to customers (actual and potential) and subsequently, by ensuring delivery of high levels of customer satisfaction. (ibid.: 190)

Furthermore, tourism authorities or agencies at the destination need to forge links and develop relationships with local stakeholders and tour operators in order to be able to transmit their message (Bennett, 1999; Goodall and Bergsma, 1990; Leaf, 1997; Palmer 2002).

3.5 Marketing of Cultural Tourism

An overview of the literature on marketing of culture and cultural tourism reflects the notion that marketing of heritage and culture is an aspect of heritage management since “it involves the effective management of a heritage site’s resources in a manner that it is of mutual benefit to both the site and the visitor” (Hall and McArthur 1998: 140). In

addition marketing of culture and cultural tourism can occur at two levels - a general and a more specific level.

The general level of marketing culture is characterised by the utilisation of culture as a marketing tool. Ashworth and Voogd (1994) discuss the role of historical buildings in Amsterdam for promotional purposes. Munsters (1996) argues that the Belgian tourist authorities utilise culture and heritage to visually distinguish Belgium from its competitors and to influence tourist destination choice. Promotional literature of Belgium often uses folklore, art, cities, and gastronomy as a subject or background in promotional photos. Keller (1996b) commends this approach and defines people and planners who take into consideration culture in existing tourism policy as “far sighted people” (ibid.: 61). These include a “*cultural dimension*” (emphasis in the original) in marketing and communication. Johnson and Barry (1995) argue that such utilisation of culture highlights the issue of “property rights in heritage” (ibid.: 182); in particular that heritage that belongs to all community (such as a locality). On the other hand, Prentice (1993) expresses caution for this approach since he comments that such exposure and utilisation of resources may lead to exploitation. Boissevain and Sammut (1994) illustrate that increased exposure of the Maltese medieval town of Mdina, as a tourism attraction and a locus of events led residents to question how much local tourism authorities really value their town for its unique attributes. These observations seem to suggest that the effectiveness of marketing campaigns using the cultural themes have to be assessed and not assumed. Marketing of a destination through culture needs careful

planning, the use of cultural expertise, and the involvement of stakeholders, notably the local community (Cogswell, 1996; Hall and McArthur, 1998; Walle, 1998). Literature suggests that the use of images is subjective and thus cultural tourism in this context (culture) is subjective, imbued with meaning and can be manipulated in promoting particular messages. In their work on tourist images and power, Morgan and Pritchard (1998) argue that images and therefore what is being marketed is related to the politics of representation. Richter (1999) demonstrates that increasingly heritage development looks at the marginalised population within particular countries. This introduced a political dimension within heritage. Indeed, it is argued that marketing together with mythology, politics and national pride transforms history into heritage (Schouten, 1995 in Aitchison, MacLeod and Shaw 2000). This is sometimes done at the expense of some popular heritage (Prentice, 1993).

On a more specific level the marketing of cultural tourism occurs in the marketing of particular cultural and heritage sites and the use of marketing procedures to attract an audience to these sites. In a changing environment where there is increased cultural consumption and cultural production:

...marketing techniques are emerging at the best way to develop and sustain satisfying products, create value for money, influence the volume and seasonality patterns of site visits, and generate sufficient revenue to cover the costs of operation and maintenance of the resource base. Middleton (1994a: 245)

However, the various aspects of the components of the cultural product have to be distinguished. The cultural product includes 'cultural organisations' (Kolb 2000) such as museums, art centres and theatre and heritage. Although the ultimate aim in marketing of cultural organisations and heritage is to attract audiences to a particular product - 'culture' - the very nature of culture makes marketing of heritage and culture distinct from the marketing of any other product. The basic elements of marketing that is - market research, product development, promotion and the provision of the product marketed (Beattie McCarthy, 1992: 68) all apply in the marketing of culture but with the provision of other considerations. Since cultural tourism also involves the community, its artifacts, traditions and products it needs to focus not only on the consumer (traditional marketing theory) but also on elements such as impact assessment of marketing campaigns on the larger environment. This refers to macro-marketing (Walle, 1998). As discussed in Chapter 2, the development of cultural tourism has a wide-ranging impact on local communities and therefore these have to be incorporated within the marketing strategies. A final note on the above discussion is that cultural products are a diverse heterogeneous set of products with an equally heterogeneous set of meanings (Stevens, 1995). Based on the above considerations this discussion will proceed on to analyse the specificity of marketing of cultural tourism.

3.5.1 Market Research

Attracting the right audience and providing the right product is an essential aspect of marketing a product. Thus it is imperative to have a clear understanding of what aspects of culture are to be marketed and to whom. The first step in market research is to

understand the potential of the cultural product. Furthermore, cultural tourists (foreign or local) attracted to culture have different motivations and therefore market research needs to take these distinctions into consideration. In assessing the way cultural tourism is marketed, Boniface (1995) observes that marketing agencies do not discriminate between the various types of cultural tourists, and the past is used in an unsophisticated way. The basic form of market research is through “audience research”; namely to assess the nature, composition and preferences of current and potential audience (Kolb 2000). However, market research can also include research on motivation, customer satisfaction, pricing research, product research, competitor research, policy research and promotional research (ibid.: 159).

3.5.2 The Cultural Tourism ‘Product’

In Section 2.2 it was argued that cultural processes transform culture into cultural products that are consumed. This point of view is an important element since in cultural tourism cultural or heritage assets (raw and uncommodified) are transformed to become cultural products specifically processed and commodified for tourism consumption (McKercher and du Cross, 2002: 8; Stevens, 1995: 191). However, it is argued that:

not every cultural product, and certainly not every museum or historic site, is willing or capable of being a significant tourist attraction, nor need they be. (Silberberg, 1995: 362)

However those sites that acquire a 'cultural product status' have to be of a good quality (Boniface, 1995; Hall and McArthur, 1998; Harrison, 1994). If sites are not of a high calibre and:

If tourists are not better catered for at sites, if *they* do not have quality time they will react against the experience of visiting those sites and decide to stay away ... (Boniface, 1995: 112 emphasis in the original).

In addition to quality, Silberberg (1995) states that cultural products also should be sustainable have a degree of uniqueness or speciality, have community support and involvement and that there is management capability. Thus a cultural product involves a much wider view than providing the right product to the right audience. A wider view of the concept needs to be adopted.

When it comes to marketing cultural products, the customers' desires are only part of the picture. The producers' point of view and the integrity of the product itself are the essence of what the arts have to offer and what people looking for quality and individuality want. (Beattie McCarthy, 1992: 68)

Similar to effective tourism marketing, cultural tourism marketing can be achieved through the adoption of quality programmes and long-term strategies that interpret and present local culture well (Cogswell, 1996). This activity needs to be complemented with effective management of the presence of tourists in a community.

3.5.3 The Promotion of Cultural Tourism

Attraction of tourists to particular heritage or cultural products is abetted by promotion since the latter creates awareness. MacCannell (1976) argued that sights will only be of relevance to tourists if they are marked or identified as tourist attractions; therefore they require 'marking'. Various stages are marking, naming, authentication, framing and enshrinement. The final stage of "sight sacrilization" is reached when mechanical (prints, cards) and social reproductions occur so that "groups, cities and regions begin to name themselves after famous attractions" (MacCannell, 1976: 44-45). This process is an integral part of the promotional aspects of culture and cultural sites since they create awareness and provide the framework within which the tourist can interact with the attraction.

Kolb (2000) in discussing marketing practices of cultural organisations argues that prior to making decision about the consumption of culture (theatre, dance, museums, operas), prospective visitors have to be knowledgeable about the cultural product. Level of awareness and knowledge depend upon the individual visitors and the appropriate provision of information to stimulate the need for the cultural product prior to the visit. Thus the appropriate use of communication strategies need to be employed. Promotional techniques in the marketing of culture and heritage include advertising, direct marketing, sales promotion, public relations and word of mouth (Hall and McArthur, 1998: 153-158). In assessing the importance of media in attracting visitors to particular heritage sites, Prentice (1993) and Thomas (1989b) highlight the importance of formal media such as brochures to give information about attractions in a particular

area. In addition to these traditional forms of promotion culture and cultural tourism can be promoted through other means.

In the previous section it has been argued that tourism entities (national tourism organisations and tour operators) use culture for competitive advantage. This to a certain extent helps in creating awareness of 'the other' way of life, food and traditions. Boniface (1995) and Bywater (1993) suggest that certain sites, activities or actual artists have the 'power' to attract visitors if well known. In addition the use of events and themes are also useful in promoting culture (Bywater, 1993; Getz, 1991; Hall 1992), in the process themselves becoming cultural products.

Awareness created prior to the visit needs to be complemented by additional marketing strategies at the destination. In discussing the attraction of certain heritage sites, Prentice (1993) argues that when visitors make a decision to visit a particular area, authorities need to guide visitors to that area by providing literature to attract visitors to particular sites. This is an important observation regarding the marketing and management of heritage. In addition appropriate signage (marking) is crucial for heritage and cultural interpretation (Boniface 1995, Bywater, 1993; Fladmark, 1994; MacCannell, 1999; Shackley, 1998).

One of the main issues of cultural tourism debate is the issue of the cost of culture on the one hand and the subsidisation of culture on the other. There is a popular belief that

culture and the arts are considered costly and therefore not self-sustaining. In fact culture and the arts receive government support through subsidies. There are a number of reasons for this; one of them is the predominant view that culture should be accessible to all and possibly free of charge. In a market economy this clearly causes problems of sustainability and culture is being presented as an arena where the private and public sector can be involved. Increasingly culture and heritage are presented as domains where this relationship is vital for the future of cultural tourism (Walle, 1998).

The view on this is not unanimous as the following quote indicates:

Historic monuments, sites and other material manifestations of culture should be considered as assets in a country's books, not burdens for which the government has to look for financial resources before they can be restored, preserved and showcased to domestic and foreign tourists. (Former PM of Thailand, Anand Panyarachun in Lim, 1996: 64)

Nonetheless, it is justified to claim a reality that culture needs to be sustained (Ashworth, 1993) and that sponsors and partners need to be attracted. For this aim a good product that is well subscribed, and a good marketing campaign are useful for the attraction of cultural sponsors (Silberberg, 1995).

3.5.4 Working Together - Collaboration

The above discussion raises an important point namely that marketing of culture goes beyond the provision of a particular product to an audience. Marketing goes beyond selling of products but involves “communicating effectively with other stakeholders”

(Hall and McArthur, 1998: 164). In particular successful heritage and cultural marketing is based on the premise that the various stakeholders involved with the cultural item are involved in the planning of the marketing campaign, the development of the cultural product and its promotion. In addition, a policy of joint partnerships, culture - tourism partnerships, (Silberberg, 1995: 364) is useful in attaining successful marketing campaigns where all stakeholders, including local communities stand to benefit.

3.6 Management of Cultural Tourism

The final part of the literature review will focus on the management of cultural tourism. This discussion has been left to this stage since it is being argued that this theme is central to this research. It will also bring to a full circle the discussion of cultural tourism from a definition of culture and the cultural tourist, to the use of culture as an aspect of tourism development through to its management.

Heritage management refers to:

the conscious process by which decisions concerning heritage policy and practice are made and the manner in which heritage resources are developed (Hall and McArthur 1998: 6)

Heritage management highlights two main issues: policy and the development of heritage resource. The concept and focus of heritage and cultural management has

changed over time. In 1970s, the focus of heritage management was conservation of the resource and thus controlling visitors and establishing visitor numbers was imperative. During the 1980s with the decline of government funding, visitors were seen as a means through which heritage and culture could be sustained via entry fees. The history/heritage paradigm also developed and shifted from “preserving the past” to managing heritage (Ashworth, 1993). Thus in the 1990s the focus of attention became the human resources and it was argued that physical management of heritage has to take into consideration those people who are ‘owners’ of heritage as well as those who have come to experience it (Hall and McArthur, 1998: 5). Recent literature discussing cultural and heritage tourism management argues that management as explained above is crucial for the development of such tourism activity (Boniface, 1995; Hall and McArthur, 1998; Harrison, 1994; Keller, 1996b and Walle, 1998). Thus in discussing the management of heritage and culture one has to take into consideration the stakeholders (those people directly effected) and the needs of the heritage item or cultural item have to be taken into consideration.

3.6.1 The Stakeholders

Traditionally the management of culture was left to the individual organisations and site owners. However this had a major drawback since some of the cultural providers did not consider themselves as being part of an industry in which the management practices developed in business and commerce readily applied (Middleton 1994b). This view is echoed by Walle (1998) who argues that increasingly “business thinkers” are becoming interested in (cultural) tourism activities leading at times to an “unhealthy situation”

(ibid.: 1). The cultural provider and the business entrepreneur are but two of the number of stakeholders that should be involved in the management of culture. Boniface (1995) argued that one of the major stakeholder, is the direct presenter of a cultural site namely:

the person or persons immediately involved in making a cultural provision for the visitor. The presenter in wider sense is the community which is serving as host to the visitor. (ibid.: 28)

This is understandable when referring to individual cultural sites (Boniface, 1995) or to single communities (Cogswell, 1996). Therefore such an approach is applicable at a micro-level. The management of culture has also another dimension- that of the macro-level. This refers to the broader political, social, economic and technological trends which will affect the development and management of heritage and culture. With this in mind, then it can be argued that heritage management at a macro-level is conducted by entities that are responsible for setting national policies that will impinge on culture and heritage.

3.6.2 The Need to Manage Culture

Management of culture and heritage is characterised by the debates of conservation and preservation on the one hand and the utilisation of heritage for commercial ends on the other (Boniface, 1995; McKercher and du Cros, 2002; Harrison, 1994 and Walle, 1998). Croft (1994) and Johnson and Thomas (1995) observe that heritage managers do not see themselves in the 'heritage business'. However, literature suggests that if cultural

entities are to be sustainable, then management of heritage has to incorporate both elements of conservation and preservation as well as economic factors. In their study on heritage managers in the UK Garrod and Fyall (2000) found that in the managers' opinion heritage attractions have a number of roles. Primarily they have to safeguard heritage, be accessible, educate the users, have relevance to a wide audience, offer entertainment, be financially sound, work in harmony with the local community and offer a high quality service to the visitors. These observations succinctly represent the reasons for the need of cultural management. In order to achieve all this it is argued that short and long term planning based on policy formulation, (Ashworth 1993, Griffith, 1993, Hall and McArthur), marketing strategy (Middleton 1994a and 1994b), and product formulation (Beattie McCarthy, 1992) is necessary.

3.6.2 How to Manage Culture

What has been discussed so far pertains to the general management of culture. This part will focus on practical aspect of managing heritage and culture. Middleton (1994b) contends that there are three different contexts of heritage management. The first is *managing the resource* through knowledge and skills, this is the premise of trustees and owners and volunteers. Secondly, *managing access* that is, protecting the site from misuse and overuse through the implementation of strategic and operational techniques, and thirdly, *managing organisations*. The latter implies the application of “professionalism to planning, organising and controlling the institutions and resources involved” (ibid.: 5). Although related, these are distinct forms of management that require different forms of management techniques.

One of the major notions postulated in the literature is that the management of cultural tourism should adopt a sustainability approach focusing on the management of the cultural resource (Vera Rebollo 2001: 48). A sustainable cultural approach will include partnership and integrated policy (Fladmark, 1994; Hall and McArthur, 1998; Walle, 1998). Moreover Barré, (1996: 8) argues such a management approach will help local people promote their own culture, earn an income and revitalize 'non physical cultural heritage' through stimulation of artistic creativity. Schouten (1996) commented that the actual development of cultural tourism (based on local 'low' culture) can also promote sustainability.

Boniface (1995) refers to the management of cultural tourism as an art and she outlines six points by which cultural tourism can be managed. These include the awareness that tourism does not operate in vacuum and that cultural tourism is a major player in the contemporary world scene. Boniface remarks that one of the more important points in cultural tourism management is quality management. This can be achieved through understanding the needs of the visitor, the presenter, and the heritage item itself. In addition, ways have to be formulated that will address them all simultaneously and appropriately (Boniface 1995: 10). It is argued that for appropriate cultural management training and education are important at all levels - from young local users (Lim, 1996; McKercher and du Cross, 2002) to adult training (Loizides, 1995) in order to foster national pride.

The appropriate management of visitors at the actual sites is also relevant to the management of cultural tourism. Shackley (1998) identifies a number of points that need to be considered when managing visitors. Although primarily addressed at visitors to World Heritage Sites, these ideas can be applied to any cultural tourist destination or site since they are often fragile and have non-renewable resources. Shackley (ibid.) argues that visitor management limits pressure on the actual site through visitor-education policies and provides adequate and appropriate interpretative signage.

Finally, cultural tourism management should follow an integrated management approach primarily by looking at a site and evaluating its needs (Boniface 1995). Moreover “for culture to play its full part in tourism, a high priority must be given to partnership and integrated policy across sectors; a continuum between high and low culture, paying more attention to the latter” (Fladmark, 1994: xx).

3.7 The Role of the Literature in Shaping the Initial Research Questions

This chapter has looked at four major considerations. It commenced with the analysis of marketing of tourism destinations taking into consideration the role of tourism authorities and tour operators. This section has raised questions related to the operations of the MTA in marketing Malta as a tourism destination. These questions have practical relevance, since in marketing destinations, entities are also creating their own destination image. Looking at tour-operators’ practices is also relevant to this study

since most of Malta's tourism business is placed with tour operators. The initial questions formulated at this stage reflect the processes that the MTA and tour operators adopt to market Malta. The other questions posed were on what type of links/relationships exist between the MTA and tour operators and how do these entities influence prospective tourists. Imagery was identified through the literature as an important channel of communication between the destination and prospective tourists. Initial questions on imagery were: how is Malta presented, in tourist literature and what aspects of culture are portrayed. In addition, does the tourist imagery presented by tour-operators reflect that of the MTA?

The third theme discussed in this chapter is the marketing of culture and cultural tourism. It has been argued that marketing of culture raises issues of ownership, strategies and a guarantee of visitors. In addition, culture requires "marking". Questions that emerged from this theme were how is culture marketed? Who markets culture? What procedures are adopted? What type of culture is marketed? How is the extensive cultural heritage of the Maltese Islands "marked", if at all?

The fourth and final theme has discussed the management of culture. This theme has shown that the management of culture has moved from preservation of particular sites to a more comprehensive approach incorporating a number of stakeholders including local communities. In addition the site is no longer an object of the tourist gaze but is a locus of interaction. Thus in considering this literature, a number of questions arise.

Taking into consideration that Malta has various elements that are termed 'cultural' what role does the MTA play in the management of culture? What policies exist that govern heritage and culture? What links and or relationships exist between the various entities? Are locals involved in the way in which culture is managed? What are the major issues problems facing the management of culture?

The literature presented in the two chapters is complementary, however it tackles different facets of the research problem. It is felt that the research problem could only be appropriately addressed if the issues raised in these two chapters are considered holistically. This approach could be provided by the methodology used: the subject of the following chapter.

SECTION 2
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 4

THE RESEARCH APPROACH

The outcome of serious research can only be to make two questions grow where only one grew before.

Thorstein Bunde Veblen in The Place of Science in Modern Civilization. (Bloomsbury, 1991: 397)

*The aim as far as I can see is the same in all sciences. Put simply and cursorily, the aim is to make known something previously unknown to human beings. It is to advance human knowledge, to make it more certain or better fitting ... The aim is discovery. -
Elias, N. 1986:20*

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the research approach adopted to answer the questions posed at the beginning of this thesis. In the process it will show how the various parts of the research process fit with one another. The research framework consists of a series of processes that enable the researcher to transform a research idea into a researchable topic. This chapter will therefore discuss the way in which the thought process unfolded highlighting the theoretical framework that informed the original idea, the appropriateness of methodological approach adopted and methods used.

This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part will highlight the overall theoretical framework that guided the reasoning behind this research, explains the choice of the research approach adopted to acquire a better understanding of the

problems identified, the methods employed to collect the data required and the process used for data analysis. The second part looks at the fieldwork conducted.

4.2 Epistemological Issues

One of the aims of a doctoral thesis is to explain and portray a thoughtful position on the way in which the researcher has reached an understanding of the phenomenon studied and to give a credible account of it. The main focus of this study is the cultural tourism product. Behind the choice of such a focus lie various decisions based on the kind of knowledge and the characteristics underpinning the research process.

Culture can be understood as a socially constructed phenomenon as it pertains to a mode of life as well as products created by individuals as members of a particular society. In tourism, culture is considered to be both an attraction and a product (MacCannell, 1976). The literature review offered the possibility to understand the meaning of culture and cultural tourism as well as it provided an insight into how culture and cultural tourism are managed and marketed by different stakeholder groups. These views raised the point that in order to understand what is cultural tourism and how it is managed one has to appreciate what are the perceptions of those involved with its production, marketing and management.

However, at this stage it is important to assess how and in what way knowledge is acquired and how it is constructed. The way in which knowledge is obtained, that is, “how we know what we know” is referred to as epistemology. Epistemology refers to

“where does our knowledge come from and how reliable it is?” (Williams and May 1996: 5). Thus the question of knowledge also raises the issue of “finding secure foundations of knowledge and to distinguish such well-grounded knowledge from mere prejudice, belief or opinion” (Marshall, 1998: 198).

There are three main assumptions in epistemology, each with long-standing traditions although the latest stance, subjectivism (incorporating structuralist, post-structuralist and post-modernist forms of thought) have been developed more fully this century. The other two approaches, positivism and constructivism, reflect fundamentally two different schools of thought. The former, adopts the approach of natural science and “sees people as phenomena to be studied from outside” (Veal, 1997: 31). On the other hand the constructivist (interpretative) approach seeks to “understand the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it” Schwandt, (1998: 221). These two research approaches are identified with types of research referred to as quantitative (positivist) and qualitative research (constructivist / interpretative approach).

The issues raised by the literature chapters made interesting readings however, they could only become researchable if the issue of knowledge and how to arrive at a version of 'reality' was addressed. The orientation adopted is subjective in nature. Culture does not exist as a separate entity; it is not a natural phenomenon that manifests itself outside the meaning assigned to it by human societies. Culture is dynamic and thus is modified by time. This observation suggests that the *meaning of*

the cultural tourism product is constructed by the realities of people who are engaged in its creation, marketing and management. Furthermore, such a perspective allows people to construct meaning in different ways, even of the same phenomenon. Thus given this assumption this research adopted a constructivist model through which the research idea could be framed.

In this section the research approach and the acquisition of knowledge and their application to the study were briefly discussed. In the process a relationship between the research focus and epistemological issues were formulated. The discussion will now move on to the theoretical perspective.

4.3 Theoretical Perspectives

In section 4.1 there was mention of the fit between the different parts of the research approach. A fit is achieved when a plausible relationship is produced among these various parts (Strauss and Corbin, 1998b). This relationship highlights the second element of the research approach - the theoretical perspective.

The main focus of this thesis is cultural tourism. As mentioned in section 4.2, this focus is based on a series of assumptions about reality that permeate this study. The nature of this study together with experience gained as an anthropologist within the field of tourism raised a number of questions that pointed this researcher to focus on the processes involved in the management of culture as an aspect of the tourism product.

Literature notably that on management and marketing of cultural tourism, illustrated various practices that ought to be followed in order to achieve good management practices of cultural tourism. In a sense these readings provided 'a manual' of what could be done in order to achieve a quality cultural product. In addition they presented a one-dimensional process namely that that exists between entities that manage culture (tourism public and private sector, cultural providers) and culture as a manageable product. However, this was only one facet of the research as there was another dimension. Culture is dynamic, it is the result of a series of process that occur within a particular society and therefore a description of the marketing and management practices that a number of stakeholders adopt would have not been enough. Primarily the research approach adopted (interpretativism) urged the researcher to reflect more on the meaning of culture. Thus, the question was not only how to manage culture but what aspects of culture do entities that manage and market culture consider as significant to market and manage. In brief, these questions begged that the meaning of culture for entities dealing with culture as a tourism product be addressed. Furthermore, through the tourism system (Christie Mill and Morrison, 1998) entities involved with the management and marketing of tourism are not isolated from one another, but rather linked together via a set of political, economic and socio-cultural processes that are the basis of the tourism activity. Hence, the interaction and processes that exist between the different stakeholders on the one hand and the meaning that each of these stakeholders give to culture on the other hand were the very basis of this research.

Again, description of these processes was not deemed enough, especially since “research is part of a dynamic, reflexive engagement with social and cultural worlds” (Seale, 1998:1). In addition, Locke (2001:ix) observes that it is “impossible to comprehend fully a phenomenon without understanding the context in which it is expressed”. Thus in order to satisfy the needs of research, and to do justice to the study at hand, first an accurate description of the phenomena outlined in the previous paragraph had to be achieved. This could only be accomplished if due attention was given to detail. In turn this meant that a process of interpretation had to take place to provide an understanding of cultural tourism. At this stage a contextual framework had to be chosen. The research focus and the initial research questions seemed to point towards the meaning of culture, the nature of the cultural tourism product and an understanding of the processes that link the various stakeholders, as a prerequisite for the understanding of management and marketing of cultural tourism.

These considerations indicated that the theoretical framework within which this research was embedded in, had to look at the narratives of those involved within cultural tourism. These narratives that are based on

... persons' lives, lived experiences, behaviors, emotions and feelings as well as ... organizational functioning, social movements, cultural phenomena, and interactions between nations. (Strauss and Corbin 1998a:11)

This type of inquiry is based intellectually on what is termed ‘interpretivism’, the notion that knowledge of people consists of “meaning and action” (Marshall,

1998:326). In addition, it also introduces the idea that the researcher is not divorced from the phenomenon under study. This notion has been addressed by a number of authors dealing with constructivist/interpretive research approach including Silverman (2000), Strauss and Corbin (1998a) and Wolcott (1992). Strauss and Corbin (1998b: 42) argue that by the end of the inquiry the researcher is shaped by data just as the data is shaped by the researcher.

Within the theoretical perspective of interpretivism lie various orientations such as symbolic interactionism. In turn, this orientation has multiple theoretical varieties such as dramaturgical (Goffman, 1959) interpretive (Denzin, 1989) and methodological varieties, such as ethnography and grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Symbolic interactionism is defined as “a down-to-earth approach to the scientific study of human group life and conduct” (Blumer, 1969: 47). Initiated by Mead (1934) who saw the self as a social rather than a psychological phenomenon and developed further by Blumer, symbolic interactionism “perceives society to be something that is lived here and now, in the face-to-face and mediated interactions that connect persons to one another” (Denzin 1992: 22). Thus symbolic-interactionism explains how individuals attempt to fit their lines of action to those of others, take account of each others' acts, interpret them and re-organise their own behaviour.. Symbolic interactionism has three key foci (Locke 2001 :22-23) . The first is that people interpret the meaning of objects and then act upon those interpretations, that is,

meanings inform guide to action. Second, meaning arises from social interaction. In other words there is communication between and among individuals. Thirdly, meaning is handled in and modified through an ongoing interpretative process. Meaning is not fixed but it is always in process.

Considering the research focus this approach had relevance since it focused on meanings and interactions, interpreted through behaviours and in relation to actions of the other members of that social group. Thus the research orientation could be well addressed through the theoretical framework of symbolic interactionism. Locke (2001: 24) argues that “symbolic interactionism's most important methodological premise is that all social inquiry must be grounded in the particular empirical world studied”. Thus the next step was to locate a methodology that fitted in with this premise. Ethnography and grounded theory were identified as possible areas.

4.4 Methodological Considerations

The research questions and the choice of theoretical concept presented the researcher with two major methodological approaches ethnography and grounded theory. As will be discussed in the following section, the two are not mutually exclusive, rather they are related through concepts, however the research questions posed precipitated the research methodology towards grounded theory. This section will first discuss ethnography and would argue why this methodological approach was not chosen and then, it will proceed to discuss grounded theory methodology.

Used predominantly by anthropologists and sociologists, (Marshall, 1998), ethnography refers to both the research approach as well as the research product - the written document describing the society studied (Locke, 2001; Marshall, 1998; Seymour-Smith, 1986). Ethnography is characterised by “the first-hand study of a small community” (Seymour-Smith, 1986: 99). It emphasises the detailed examination of the nature of a particular social phenomena (Locke, 2001) and is used to describe a unique way of life, documenting the meanings attached to events and showing how the parts fit together into an integrated whole (Jacob, 1987). This research approach has been used in various areas including those of organisational studies (Locke, 2001; Wright, 1994). Through the research technique and interest the ethnographic approach could be used to assess the way in which various organisations deal with one another and transmit the idea of culture from one to another.

The people looked at in this study are all concerned with tourism however they are a heterogeneous group. This excluded the possibility of the use of ethnography as a possible research tool since ethnography is more appropriate in the study of a single group or community. Ethnography was not appropriate in this case since the present research was concerned with studying of a group of people that do not share a common identity but whose links were dependent upon culture and cultural tourism. Furthermore, ethnography was rejected on the basis that it looks at groups from a purely cultural perspective (Locke, 2001). The current research focuses mainly on the way in which stakeholders perceive, market and manage culture therefore the focus was on the links and relationships that stakeholders have with one another and their

views on culture as a tourism product. From the outset of the study it was clear that the research was a multifaceted one. Thus an approach that would capture the processes, intentions and actions of various stakeholders was required. In addition the research questions posed were of a practical nature seeking to understand better the workings of stakeholders thus a methodology that would help stakeholders gain a better perspective of their own workings would be much more valid. Following the above reasoning it was thought that grounded theory would be the best methodological approach to address the current research.

Grounded Theory was first used in 1960s by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, two sociologists, to research health professionals' interaction with dying patients. Initially this research approach was used in the health and nursing disciplines (Holloway and Wheeler 1996) but has since "traveled extensively to psychology, to information technology ... and of, course to management and organisation studies" (Locke 2001:1). This approach is a rather recent approach to be adopted in the field of tourism studies but one which is destined to grow (Clark et al 1998).

Grounded theory emerged as alternative approach to the hypothetico-deductive, speculative theory-building and its associated research practices that characterised sociological inquiry during the 1960s. Glaser and Strauss sought to focus researchers' attention on the importance of grounding theories in systematic analysis of data (Strauss and Corbin 1998b) and encouraged researchers to:

use their intellectual imagination and creativity to develop theories relating to their areas of inquiry; to suggest methods for doing so; to offer criteria to evaluate the worth of discovered theory; and to propose an alternative rhetoric, that of generation, to balance out the rhetoric of justification featured in journal articles and monographs. (Locke, 2001: 33)

Thus grounded theory approach gives the researcher the chance to approach the data and subject matter afresh without being influenced by present knowledge about certain phenomena. This position gives the researcher the possibility to view phenomena from a new perspective but does not mean that the researcher enters the field without any theoretical orientation. Rather, Glaser and Strauss argued that researchers “should hold in abeyance existing ways of thinking about the substantive area they are investigating so as to preclude their prematurely giving form to the data” (Locke 2001: 46). Hence it has been argued that grounded theory approach is both deductive as well as inductive (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1998b; Locke 2001). Moreover, Glaser and Strauss (1967) emphasised the interplay of data and the researcher's interpretation of meaning - the interpretations being the researcher's abstractions of what is in the data.

Grounded theory looks at the social interactions, behaviours, and experiences (Strauss and Corbin 1998a). The focus is on the process of interaction between people exploring human behaviour and social roles. Grounded theory stems from the symbolic-interactionism, which focuses on theoretical perspectives of actions and perceptions of individuals and their ideas and intentions. It is used therefore well

suiting to investigate social as well as individual interactions, behaviours and experiences.

4.4.1 Grounded Theory: The research product

Grounded Theory as intended by its original proponents seeks to develop empirically grounded theory, at the same time this theory is based upon the interplay of the researcher, her existing knowledge and empirical data resulting in “emergent knowledge” (Locke 2001:34).

Knowledge is composed by researchers in the context of investigative practices that afford them intimate contact with the subjects and phenomena under study. (ibid:34)

The theory built through using this methodology is substantive in nature, that is, theory embedded in concrete social situations (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Bacharach (1989) argues that theories can be conceived as a linguistic mechanism or language term composed by researchers that organises and describes an empirical world through a constructed set of interrelated propositions that enables researchers to make sense out of observed events. This mechanism organises the world through a set of concepts that forms a conceptual scheme (Denzin 1989).

In grounded theory concepts are paramount since they formulate the building blocks of theory. Concepts compose and bring into focus the patterns of actions and interactions that ensue within the particular phenomenon studied. Concepts can be either descriptive that is, they show what theory is about, or relational, that is, they

specify observable relationships, and the relationship between concepts are described through propositions or hypothesis. Moreover the specification of relationships between concepts is critical to the ability of theory to offer an account of how things happen. In contrast to the hypothetico-deductive model, grounded theory investigation moves from empirical observation to the definition of concepts. As the research unfolds the set of practices synonymous with this research approach enable the researcher to move from empirical observation to composing conceptual categories and to delineate ways in which the categories relate to each other.

Reflecting on the research questions tackled in the current research, it became clearer that the management of culture entailed both the process of what is marketed and how it is managed. Moreover, it was important that the research would focus upon people in action whilst doing the above actions, their relationships between one another and their own individual perception of what is culture and how could cultural tourism be taken forward.

4.5 Methodical Considerations: Tools for Grounded Theory Research

Having expounded the theoretical concepts of grounded theory and the conceptual framework adopted for the current research, this section looks at the research practices advocated by grounded theory.

Grounded theory is based on two main operations. The first is the “assignment of meaning through the activities of naming and comparing” (Locke 2001: 44) and

theoretical sampling. These two operations form the bases for sampling issues that generate data gathering and grounded theory analytical model than the actual methods of data collection procedures. Locke (2001) points out that as grounded theory evolved, “the mechanisms of gathering data observations and composing data documents that become the raw material for analysis are largely ignored” (ibid.: 44). Strauss and Corbin (1998a) and Locke (2001) argue that this lack of guidance results from the fact that the emphasis of this methodology is on the analysis of data rather than the actual methods of data collection.

As mentioned in Section 4.4 Glaser's and Strauss' background was in symbolic-interactionism and methods used in this field of inquiry were adopted for grounded theory. The bulk of data is gathered by using participant observation, interviews and text and the related process of transforming and translating data (Locke 2001: 45). Writing of field notes is an important aspect of grounded theory approach since here the researcher is also analysing and interpreting the data, leading the researcher to collect subsequent data.

Since grounded theory approach had its basis in the social science domain, the methods used were already advocated by researchers conducting qualitative research as well as tourism research (Oppermann, 2000). Thus although Glaser and Strauss (1967), did not propose any particular form of method, they do suggest the practice “of gathering slices of data” (ibid.: 65). This process is called triangulation and involves the collection of data from multiple sources “since different data sources

provide vantage points from which to study a potential conceptual category” (Locke, 2001:45). The use of multiple methods in qualitative research enables a deep understanding of the phenomenon being studied adding “rigor, breadth and depth to any investigation” (Denzin and Lincoln 1998:4). Miles and Huberman, add, “triangulation is supposed to support a finding showing that independent measures of it agree with it or at least do not contradict it” (Miles and Huberman, 1994: 266). Silverman (2000) further contends that triangulation should make analytical sense. Fielding and Fielding (1986) advocated that the use triangulation should operate according to the following ground rules:

- Always begin from a theoretical perspective (interactionism)
- Choose methods and data, which will give you an account of structure and meaning from within that perspective (e.g. by showing the structural contexts of the interactions studied).

Regarding methods and data that can be used in triangulation, Miles and Huberman (1994: 267) following Denzin (1978) identify five types of triangulation. Triangulation can be by data source (which includes persons, times), by type of methods used for data collection, by the use of a number of researchers to collect the same type of data, by using different theories and by data type, that is, by the different types of data used such as quantitative and qualitative data. The theoretical discussion regarding each of the methods used in the current research are discussed in sub-sections that follow.

4.5.1 In-depth Semi-structured Interviews

The methodology to be used relies on gathering empirical data that is grounded. One way of achieving this is through the use of questions via in-depth interviews. A basic tool in qualitative research, the interview is described as “a conversation with a purpose” (Berg, 1995:29). Kvale (1996) interprets the interview as a professional communication based on conversations of daily life. The nature of the interview can vary, depending on the nature of the research questions. In this research the semi-structured interview was used as a data collection method. Kvale defined this type of interview as:

an interview whose purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena (Kvale 1996:5-6)

Following the considerations for the design of semi-structured interviews as outlined by Berg (1995), the semi-structured interview schedule to be used in this research was based on three main areas on which a number of questions were developed. Informants were first asked to *explain the role* of the entity that they represented and to discuss its functions. Thus if the entity in question specialised in marketing or tour-operation, informants were asked to elaborate on the function and operation of the entity. In elaborating on the functions of their organisation / entity informants were also constructing the realities of their organisational context (for example a guide's view of a tour was seen differently from a tour organiser point of view or the MTA). These questions were asked at the beginning of the interview to set the scene, to

acquire background information and establish a rapport with the informants. Informants were then asked questions about *culture*, the meaning of culture and its role in the overall tourism product. Responses on the meaning of culture, its role in tourism in Malta and the informant's view on the current and future scenarios of culture and tourism in Malta were attained. Finally informants were asked questions about the *links and relationships* they have with other entities involved in this research. Since various stakeholders were interviewed, the nature and order of the question had to be adjusted to address the particular informant's background. However it was ensured that the same topics were covered with all informants. (A sample of interview schedules used can be located in Appendix 4). The flexible nature of the interviews made it possible to ask additional questions and elaborate on emerging aspects. Informants who were considered information rich were re-visited over the course of the fieldwork study in order to trace and follow through any developments in the field.

4.5.2 Participant Observation

Observation of situations and interactions between stakeholders is another method used in Grounded Theory, in particular, there is an attempt through the analysis of the data to develop a theoretical interpretation of what is seen and heard.(Strauss and Corbin, 1998b) . Malinowski (1922) was one of the first researchers to use this method in the field of anthropology. Malinowski advocated extended periods of fieldwork in which the anthropologist should attempt to immerse herself in the daily lives of the people studied. Participant observation continues to be the basic element in modern

anthropological research and is also used in studying the tourism phenomenon (Veal, 1997; Clark et al, 1998).

In this current research, participant observation provided further data generation through mainly observing what informants (stakeholders) *were doing* in addition to obtaining their descriptive accounts. This data collection method yielded a number of insights about the stakeholders that were generally difficult to gather using the other types of data collection methods.

Participant observation was conducted at museums (July - August 2000, March-April 2001) during at the Valletta and Mdina Festivals (April and October 2000), In Guardia Military Parades, Good Friday Processions at Rabat (Malta) (April 2000, 2001) and Easter Sunday Processions at Rabat (2000) and Cottonera (2001). These field visits provided a basis via which the researcher could observe and experience first hand the interactions between the tourist - and the cultural provider. These visits proved useful as the researcher had the opportunity to interact with tourists and gain valuable insights of the cultural product from the tourists' and the providers' perspective. Participant observation sessions at heritage sites and events focused on group and individual visitor movement at the site, interpretation given by the tourist guides; whether individual visitors were making use of interpretative material, merchandising, general surroundings. The focus of attention during festivals was based on the visitor population (local vs. foreign), their preference (if any) to specific activities and questions asked at the tourist information stands set up for the event.

Furthermore, the researcher participated on a day tour around the Maltese Islands, posing as a daughter of a returned migrant so the researcher could observe at first hand the way in which tourists experience facets of the Maltese cultural product. This gave the researcher 'access' to the domain of the providers, museums' personnel and the tour guides. Permission was given to attend a series of Events Committee meetings organised by the MTA in preparation of two MTA festivals and a stakeholders seminar held at the MTA office in Amsterdam. These meetings gave the researcher the opportunity to follow the interactions between various stakeholders such as links and processes between the MTA, localities and other stakeholders. In the course of this research, the researcher was involved in a guides' teaching course organised by the Ministry of Tourism, which provided more opportunities of interacting further with the guides and to explore certain themes. Following each of these sessions, notes were kept to record actions. Data generated was then analysed for the emergent themes; questions arising from the data were followed through. This process helped to add more depth to data generated from interviews and text data.

4.5.3 Text

The third method of data collection procedure was the analysis of text. In anthropology and cultural studies, text is defined as "any sample of speech or written document that is taken as an object of study or analysis" (Seymour-Smith, 1986:277).

In tourism research, text is:

not only written texts but also maps, landscapes, paintings, films, townscapes, TV programmes, brochures, and so on... Thus, social research significantly consists of interpreting texts, through various mainly qualitative techniques, to identify discursive structures which give rise to an sustain, albeit temporarily, a given tourist site. (Urry, 1994b: 238-9).

Following the symbolic-interactionist origins of grounded theory, it follows that text is a means of symbolic communication that transmits and passes information between one entity and another. By focusing on humans as symbol-manipulating animals (Marshall, 1998), symbolic-interactionism is related to semiology, that is the study of signs and how they mean (Manning and Callum-Swan 1998). However, interactionism is concerned more with “the way in which meanings is always emergent, fluid, ambiguous and contextually bound” (Marshall, 1998: 658) rather than structures of language. Thus looking at text (images, written policy documents, MTA annual conference reports and statistics) provided additional insight into what the entities understand by cultural tourism. Four types of text were analysed for this research.

The first type of text analysed were *policy documents*, MTA annual reports, laws and reports related to culture, tourism and cultural tourism. Some of the documents were consulted upon suggestions made by informants. The second category of text analysed was *tourist literature*. This entailed guidebooks in English, located in UK travel bookshops and through second hand bookshops in Malta and the National Library (for older guidebooks). In addition a number of brochures produced by major and specialist operators (seasons 1999-2001) that featured the Maltese Islands in the UK

and Dutch markets were analysed. Collection of brochures was conducted through the following procedures. A letter was sent to all operators within the UK and Dutch markets and a tour operator brochure was requested. The majority of the operators responded by sending a copy of their brochures. A sample based on multi-national, special interest niche and Malta specialist, operators was selected and analysed. In addition, literature (brochures and posters) produced by the MTA was analysed so that the emerging interpretations could be compared. The text generated via tourist literature was analysed through brochure analysis. This form of analysis can be conducted on three levels of image, word and price. All three factors are important in portraying a destination, however since this research dealt with culture and its representation, emphasis was made on the image and word descriptions rather than pricing.

The third type of textual documentation analysis used, were official statistics generated by the MTA, Museums Department and the Church. Silverman (1993) observes that statistics are often treated as more or less accurate representations of stable reality. This was important not only in giving an indication of what was occurring in the field but furthermore it helped raise a number of questions about “the process in which it is produced” (Silverman 1993: 67).

The fourth type of text analysis emerged from another research tool used, the semi-structured interview (see section 4.5.1). In this section it was explained that one of the areas looked at in the semi-structured interviews was what did the informants

understand by culture (that is, Maltese culture). Since this question was central to the research, the replies obtained were mapped out using what Bushell and Jafari (1996) refer to as a culture map (see Diagram 5.1). The authors argue that cultural mapping helps “identify cultural assets that are most likely to be attractive to the development of regional identity within the local tourism product” (ibid: 954). This form of textual analysis helped to elaborate further on the data collected and to further establish the fit between the data collection and data analysis processes as advocated by a grounded theory approach.

Thus in summing up the data collection methods used helped in creating a composite picture of what was occurring in several aspects of cultural tourism during the period of study. In-depth interviews provided the information needed to build the necessary descriptions, exploration of the research questions and the basis for analysis. Participant observation added depth to the data generated via the semi-structured interviews and also provided the context within which to test the concepts. Analysis of text further added to the data obtained via the two other methods of semi-structured interviews and participant observation.

4.6 Analysing Grounded Theory: A Continuous Process

Grounded theory's emphasis on data analysis procedures begs to be discussed at some length since data analysis is the main focus of this approach. Qualitative research does not proceed in linear fashion, that is, from the formulation of the research question to the final written document, rather there is a close link between data collection and data

analysis (Berg 1995). Wolcott, in his introductory pages of *Transforming Qualitative Data*, remarks that “the real mystique of qualitative inquiry lies in the process of *using* data rather than the process of *gathering* data” (1994:1) (emphasis in the original). This approach is more pronounced in grounded theory where “data collection and analysis occur in alternating sequence” (Strauss and Corbin 1989b: 42). Briefly data analysis in grounded theory is based on concepts that emerge from the data. These concepts are compared to one another leading to a form of data analysis procedure referred to as the “constant comparative method”. This section will discuss the way that data collected through this research was analysed and hence transformed into a holistic portrayal of the Maltese cultural tourism through the management and marketing of a cultural product.

Glaser (1978) and later Strauss and Corbin (1998b) have identified seven main aspects for grounded theory analytic procedures. These are theoretical sensitivity, theoretical sampling, coding and categorising, constant comparison, the use of literature as data, integration of theory and writing theoretical memos and field notes. The following discussion illustrates the analytical procedures adopted in this research, highlighting again the fit that exists between the research approach, methodology and methods used.

4.6.1 The Initial Stages of Research and Sampling

Grounded theory analysis starts from the very first instances of research process. Indeed, Strauss and Corbin (1998b) argue that researchers conducting grounded theory have to be theoretically sensitive that is, they have to have insight, the ability to give meaning to the data and the capacity to understand. This sensitivity is enhanced over

time. The professional experience of the researcher (in both anthropology and tourism) and the literature were additional source of awareness, making the researcher more sensitive to the data she collected and the concepts that started to emerge from the data.

One of the main differences between sampling in a grounded theory approach and other sampling techniques is that sampling is guided by ideas which have significance for emerging theory and goes on throughout the study. This type of sampling approach is referred to as “theoretical sampling” (Silverman, 2000; Stauss and Corbin, 1998b). Theoretical sampling implies constructing a sample which is meaningful theoretically, because it builds in certain characteristics or criteria which help to develop and test the theory and explanation (Mason, 1996).

Thus the first step in this research was to observe what was happening within the cultural context. In so the major players (stakeholders) were identified. It is important to point out that this identification procedure was not borne out of naïve observations since the researcher's background had already highlighted possible stakeholders. Thus some entities were identified at the outset of the study whilst some others were included as the research unfolded. Initially, the sample consisted of MTA offices in Malta, Amsterdam and London, tour-operators, local handling agents, local councils (representing local population) and restaurant owners. The settings were then widened to include other cultural providers such as museums, theatres, craft workers, re-enactors and guides. Moreover as the research developed and data was gathered and

analysed, the researcher became more sensitive towards the role of the local population as a key stakeholder in the whole process.

Research did not only focus on stakeholder groups but also focused on how individuals within these stakeholder groups relate to culture. Informants were chosen according to their roles within the institution chosen; that is individuals who occupied positions related to marketing or management of culture. The conceptual question that drove the choice of informants was based on the human action taking place and not on the typicality of the institution. In this manner the selection of participants, settings, events or text is a function of developing theories and as Strauss and Corbin (1998a: 94) reiterate, grounded theory “is interested in not how many individuals exhibit this concept but rather how often this concept emerges and what it looks like (i.e. properties) under varying conditions”.

4.6.2 Description

The next step in data analysis was to describe the facts and events as presented by ‘subjects’ in the study. Thus this initial phase draws on “ordinary vocabulary to convey ideas about things, people and places” (Strauss and Corbin 1998a:16). Description is used in narrative to tell stories, describe actions and events. Description conveys what is going on, what the setting looks like, and what the people involved are doing. However, basic description involves a purpose, an audience, and the selective eye of the viewer (Wolcott, 1994). In this type of research, description is the basis for more abstract interpretations of data and theory development. Empirical observation will lead to two related issues - a new way of perceiving the world as well

as it shows some aspects of the world in existence. These insights provided the basic description from where initial steps towards theorising were formulated.

Thus description was based on narratives created by informants through the semi-structured interviews, participant observation field notes and text (tourist literature, images and further data analysis). Questions were posed as the data it was being transcribed and hence transformed (Silverman, 1993). During the transcription of the data questions such as who is involved? When? Why? Where? What? How? How much? With what result? Were posed and the reflections and answers emanating from this data helped the researcher to reflect on the data collected, and also were crucial for the following step in data analysis - the categorisation of data and formulation of concepts.

4.6.3 Formulation of Concepts

Following the descriptions derived from empirical data the researcher set out to organise data categories. The first step was to read the interview transcripts, the notes taken during participant observation sessions, the descriptions provided through tourist literature, statistics, and documents. Through this process the researcher could identify those words and phrases that were analytically significant. This is called 'naming' (Locke, 2001:47) or 'coding' (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The text generated resulted in phrases such as "culture" and its derivatives (see Section 5.2, for example) "future developments of cultural tourism" (see Sections 5.4, and 6.5) "collaboration" and "problems" (see Section 7.2 and 7.4). Since this research was also looking at relationships, links between the various stakeholders and their nature were also

identified in a separate category (see Sections 6.3 and 7.2). A list of possible meanings of the word was then made and the data was then analysed to find words or phrases pointing to that meaning. Thus a number of concepts were built. The concepts were then checked for relationships between them, resulting in the data presented in Chapters 5-7.

Strauss and Corbin (1998a) describe three types of concepts. The first are those concepts that are built upon descriptions. The second type of conceptual ordering is used in describing and subsequently explaining what “drives the central or organising process, that is, the conditions that explain how, when, where and why persons and organizations proceed from one step to another” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998a: 21). The third type of ordering organises material according to different types of actors or actions. Following this procedure, the analysis results in well-ordered and developed concepts. This leads to the third and final step in grounded theory development - a theoretical scheme that explains why these types and not others evolved and their relationship to the larger phenomenon under investigation.

Three major concepts emerged from this research and these were the ideas around which the data analysis chapters were constructed. The first was “mapping culture”; informants did not just speak about culture but identified areas that they considered culture (see Chapter 5). Culture is used in the marketing of the Maltese Islands by both public and private tourism entities. Besides a marketing tool culture is also used an influence in determining political and economic relations between the with the public

and private tourism sector. Hence Chapter 6 looks at culture as a concept used by MTA to “negotiate” a new image of Maltese Islands. The data generated in these two chapters pointed towards the understanding of “management of culture” which is discussed in Chapter 7. These ideas and the workings of the analysis are illustrated in Appendix 5 which shows the formulation of the data trail adopted to analyse the data generated.

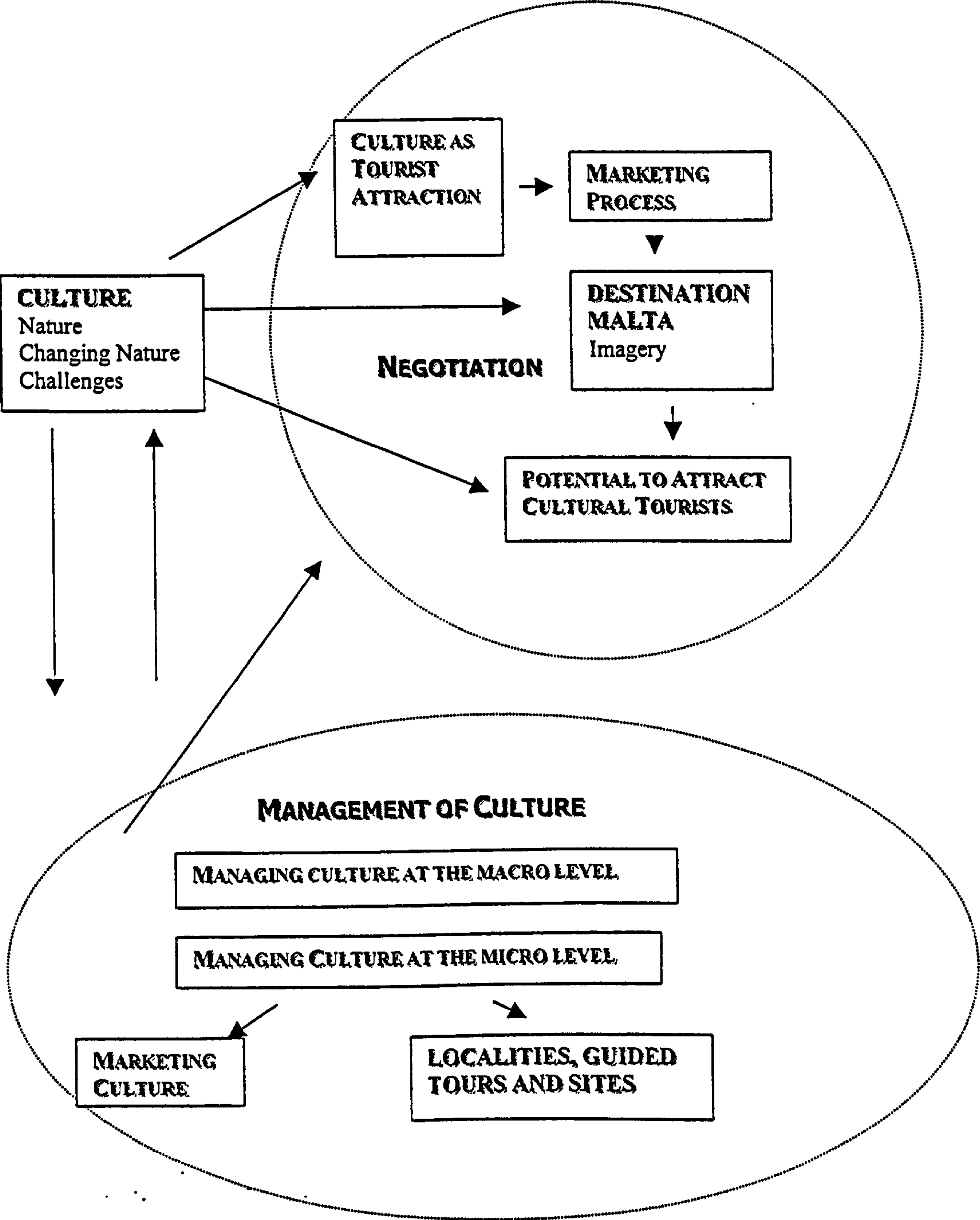
4.6.4 Building Substantial Theory

The third and final step of Grounded Theory methodology involves the formulation of ideas into a logical, systematic, and explanatory scheme. Theory, in grounded theory methodology is defined as:

... a set of well developed categories (e.g., themes, concepts that are systematically interrelated through **statements of relationship** to form a theoretical framework that **explains** some relevant social, psychological, educational, nursing or other phenomenon. The statements of relationship explain who, what, when, where, why, how and with what consequences an **event occurs**. (Strauss and Corbin, 1998a:22) (This author's emphasis)

The relationship between the various concepts studied in this research is explained in Diagram 4.1 below. As mentioned in section 4.6.3 this scheme was used to build the data analysis chapters.

Diagram 4.1 Marketing and Managing Culture: Mapping, Negotiating and Managing Culture



4.7 Fieldwork and Data Collection

Strauss and Corbin (1998) advocate an interactive approach to data collection. This implies a continual interplay among conceptualisation, field studies, analyses and new contacts in the field. Since data was analysed during the data collection periods the analysis was raising new questions which were followed by additional data collection. This process went on until no new data related to the research questions posed was generated, that is theoretical saturation was reached (Strauss and Corbin 1998a).

Fieldwork sessions were held in Malta, UK and Holland. The main period of data collection (interviews, participant observation and text analysis) was spread over the period November 1999 to June 2001. However since new developments were occurring in the field the researcher had to conduct fresh consultations and meetings during the period August 2001-April 2002 with key informants. This ensured that all significant developments related to this research were covered until the final drafts of this thesis were being formulated. Diagram 4.2 outlines the activities conducted during the data collection period.

A total of 44 interviews with the various stakeholders were conducted over this period. The interviews typically lasted between one hour to one hour and a half. Most of the interviews were audio-taped and transcribed following the interviews. Four informants refused to be taped and so notes were taken down during the sessions and transcribed immediately afterwards.

At the outset of this thesis, 1998, preliminary interviews were held with MTA (then) NTOM personnel to identify key areas of focus. Proper fieldwork sessions commenced in November 1999 with the first interviews being held with MTA personnel and UK tour operators. Fieldwork sessions were then developed from that point onwards. Since the study was conducted on part-time basis, data collection periods were fitted in several segments over the two years.

4.7.1 Gaining Access

Prior to the onset of this research, the researcher had has previous professional contact with the Maltese Tourism Authorities through work-related and other research matters. Thus gaining access to the people at the MTA Head Office in Malta did not prove difficult. MTA officials in Amsterdam and UK were contacted via email and then followed by phone calls to establish rapport in preparation for subsequent fieldwork sessions. Other informants, such as cultural providers and local representatives were contacted by phone and the scope of the research was explained. Most of the contacted individuals were receptive and collaborated fully to the research project.

The only sector in which initial difficulties were encountered was the tourism private sector. Possible informants were approached but not all accepted the invitation to participate in the research. Some informants refused outright commenting that they did not deal with cultural tourism, others kept procrastinating from giving the researcher a

Diagram 4.2 Fieldwork and Data Collection Chart

Period	Activity Conducted
November - December 1999	Interview with MTA official Fieldwork in the UK - Interviews with Tour Operators Attended the World Travel Market (London) where the researcher had the opportunity to visit the Malta stand. This had no bearing on the research but helped to get a feel for Malta's representation abroad.
January - March 2000	Interviews in Malta with MTA Officials Attendance at MTA-Events committee meetings for the Valletta 2000 Historical Pageant
April 2000	Field Research at Valletta Festival Field Research at In Guardia Field Research at Good Friday Procession and Easter Sunday Procession Guides' Training Course Continuation of interviews in Malta
July-October 2000	Continuation of Interviews in Malta Field Research at museums and heritage sites Field Research - Tour Field Research at Mdina Festival Writing up of resume of Data Analysis
December 2000	Fieldwork in the UK; Interviews with Tour-operators and MTA
January -May 2001	Attended Gastronomy Seminar Continuation of Interviews in Malta Field Research at Museums and Heritage Sites Field Research in Malta at Good Friday Procession and Easter Festival Analysis of Text brochures and commencement of guide-book collection and analysis
June 2001	Fieldwork in Holland, meetings with MTA officials Participation in Meetings Interviews with Dutch Tour-Operators Writing up of resume of Data Analysis
August 2001 - April 2002	Participation at MTA Annual Conference Consultations with Key Informants and checking up on emerging data and new developments (including Malta Night meal) Structure of thesis finalised Commencement of writing up of formal chapters

appointment. These were approached a second time and after further explanation, accepted to participate. Strauss and Corbin (1998) attest that sampling in qualitative research is not dependent on the number of individuals as is the practice in quantitative research, but rather emphasis is on the concept and its properties. Thus the final sample of tour operators included a selection of large and small operators who deemed the topic relevant. The deviant cases were noted to illustrate that there are operators who have a set vision of Malta as a destination.

4.7.2 The role of the researcher as a research instrument

In qualitative research the researcher is intricately involved with the data she is collecting. Reference to this has been made through the above discussion notably, in the choice of the theoretical framework adopted (Section 4.3) and then in the data analysis procedure (Section 4.6). This was much more pronounced in this current research since the researcher knew beforehand some of the informants, has in the past conducted work for them, and on a certain extent she was their collaborator. Thus presented the researcher with two main issues. First, those pertaining to ethical issues and the other related, to a different matter - conceptual defence.

4.7.2.1. Ethical Considerations

The nature of the research and the background of the researcher presented the researcher with tensions relating to social and personal politics of the researcher as a research instrument. These tensions had to be dealt with prior to the onset of research. The first concern was how to maintain the anonymity of some of the informants who,

for a number of years were collaborators of the researcher. Another issue was how to maintain the anonymity of informants who live in a particular social context. Given the small geographical area and intense network that characterises the social context of the Maltese Islands people are well known; thus increasing the chances that the identity of the informants could be revealed.

In order to maintain anonymity, informants were assured that their confidentiality would be maintained when discussing and presenting the data. For this purpose each transcribed interview corresponding to the informant was given a code and this code was used for the data analysis. Thus informants' views are referred to in the data analysis chapters as (I-1) to (I-44), where 'I' denotes 'informant' and the number denotes the interviewee number. In order to protect further the identity of the informants, the number sequence adopted does not correspond to the sequence of the interviews conducted.

The data represented in the data analysis chapters that follow (Chapters 5-7) is intricately related to the analytical procedure adopted. A prerequisite of data analysis is to meet of the objectives of this research. Hence this researcher thought that in order to explore better the relations that exist between the various stakeholders and to give the readers a better account of the events, the data emerging from informants' views and perspectives would be categorised according to the various stakeholder groups. Thus quotations taken from interviews are represented with a code denoting each stakeholder group:

- TS** denotes **tourism public sector** (MTA offices in Malta, London and Amsterdam, and the Ministry of Tourism)
- TPS** denotes **tourism private sector** (tour operators and handling agents)
- CP** denotes **cultural providers** (museums, guides, re-enactors, craft workers) and restaurant owners
- L** denotes **local community representatives**

4.7.2.2 Conceptual self defence

One of the criteria of research is that it verifies knowledge. One question that kept on re-surfacing and which required a response was the following: given the close proximity with the research topic and the informants how could the researcher present a concrete portrayal of reality? This could be achieved if the research was deemed reliable, valid and generalizable.

Qualitative researchers have different notions toward questions of validity, reliability, and generalizability. Some authors like Kvale (1996) see them as oppressive positivist concepts that inhibit a creative qualitative research. Others like Wolcott (1995: 167-174) use ordinary language terms to discuss the truth of their value of their findings, and uses concepts such as trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, and confirmability. Postmodernist approach of qualitative inquiry rejects the notion of universal truth but accepts the position that there are forms of truth with a focus on narratives (Denzin and Lincoln 1998).

Reliability is “the extent to which research findings would be the same if research were to be repeated at a later date or with a different sample” (Veal, 1997: 35-6). Wolcott (1995:168) argued that: “the strain of identifying consistency in findings yeilds to establishing consistency through procedures”. This observation raised the point that rigour had to be employed to both the results and the process throughout the thesis. Thus in conducting the interviews leading questions were avoided, and only questions related to the research focus were asked. In data analysis reliability was sought through the coding process (see Section 4.6 and Appendix 5).

Validity is the “extent to which the information collected by the researcher truly reflects the phenomenon being studied” (Veal, 1997: 35). Thus in this research there had to be a correspondence between the findings and what was happening in the domain of cultural tourism. The first step towards achieving reliability was that the researcher was conducting all the data collection and data analysis herself, this permitted the researcher to sample and experience the different positions presented by the informants. Later on during the research, findings were discussed with key informants to check whether the interpretation reflected the world of informants. Moreover, the constant comparative method used in this research, whereby data analysed was continuously compared to other emergent data, helped to construct a valid research.

The final step was to ensure that this research had generalizability, in other words, the researcher had to see that whether the conclusions of the study had any larger import (Miles and Huberman, 1995: 279). Grounded theory results in theory building. Thus research in a grounded theory approach has more explanatory power than generalizability. Thus:

... in writing the theoretical formulations that evolved from our study, we specify the conditions, that gave rise to certain phenomena - problems issues and the use of strategies or actions /interactions to manage these problems or issues- and explain what consequences occur as a result of those actions/interactions. (Strauss and Corbin, 1998a: 267)

4.8 Appropriateness of Grounded Theory to the Current Research

As mentioned in Section 1.3.2 culture has featured in the Maltese tourism product since the inception of tourism in Malta. However culture was not used systematically to enhance cultural tourism. The use of a grounded theory approach helped to provide a basis for a better understanding of the way in which various stakeholders perceive, interpret and manage culture. The research approach adopted provided the researcher with the necessary tools to conduct a comparative analysis of the actions and perceptions adopted by the stakeholders studied. according to the various entities and the current views of cultural tourism and put into perspective any problems that the various stakeholders may encounter in the management and marketing of culture and tourism.

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the reasoning behind the choice of a grounded theory approach as the most appropriate methodology to study the research problem outlined in the previous chapters. The discussion then shifted onto the data analysis procedure. Explanation was given why the methods of semi-structured interviews, participant observation and the analysis of text produced were chosen as data collection tools. Finally, this chapter discussed the fieldwork procedures. The data analysis chapters are presented in the following section of the thesis.

SECTION III

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTEPRETATION OF RESULTS

CHAPTER 5

Mapping Maltese Culture and Assessing the Cultural Product

I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all the lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any.

- Mahatma Gandhi

(www.creativequotations.com)

5.1 Introduction

The first chapter of the analysis will focus on the meaning of culture for the stakeholders and the way this definition is related to the overall cultural tourism product. In mapping the meaning of culture, informants are also linking their own (micro) perspectives to the macro conditions affecting culture. This discussion also raises a number of issues related to the overall nature of culture and the role of culture in tourism.

This chapter is divided into five main sections. The first section explores the nature of Maltese culture as defined by the informants. The second part looks at culture and its role in tourism. Informants have argued that culture for tourism cannot be separated from the culture of the local population and that the perception of the local population towards culture may have a bearing on the state of culture within the tourism product.

The third part of this chapter addresses the nature of the cultural tourist. In the final part the main findings of this chapter are discussed.

As mentioned in Section 1.4.3 this study looks at stakeholders and the relations between them therefore data presented in the following chapters will explore and discuss these relations. Hence the presentation and analysis of data in the following three chapters is categorised according to the stakeholder and the informant. Thus the following categories are used to distinguish the informants: Tourism Sector (TS); Tourism Private Sector (TPS); Cultural Providers (CP) and Local (L)

5.2 The Nature of Maltese Culture

Talking about culture elicited a mixture of responses. These were not only related to what culture signifies or what it represents, but informants also reflected on the state of culture arguing that although Maltese culture and heritage are rich, they are also undervalued.

Malta's rich historical and cultural background was described as “overwhelming” (TS I-28). Informants argued that Maltese culture has “a visible face” (TS I-3), it can be “tangible” (TS I-1) as well as “intangible” (TS I-1, I-3, I-7, I-8). The “visible face of culture” according to the informants is composed of “the oldest free standing buildings” (TS I-9, CP I-11), “a fascinating history” (TS I-28) that is “overlapping and complex” (TS I-30) and “unique, with a - 7000 year legacy” (TS I-7). Culture was also defined

through simple terms such as unique archaeological heritage (CP I-12), “temples” (CP I-13 and TPS I -18, I-21), “history” (TS I-2, CP I-12, I-15, I-16, I-17, and TPS I-19) “museums” (TS I-6 and CP I-13, I-22), architectural heritage (TS I-1 and CP I-25, I-38 I-44). Expressive means of culture like “art” (CP I-23, I-34), including sacred (TS I-3, CP I-35) and contemporary art (TS I-3 and CP I-25, I-32), “theatre” (TS I-8 and CP I-32, I -33, I-41), concerts (CP I-44) and “festivals” (TS I-3, I-6, I-10 and CP I-15, I-16, I-17, I -21, I-23, I-31, I-32, I-33, I-40) were also included. The widest category of culture was the latter. Informants used the term festivals in its widest sense and included specific music and art festivals such as the Opera Festivals, the Jazz festival, the MaltaFest (no longer held) and the Choir Festival. For some informants festivals also meant historical pageantry and the traditional village *festi*, the latter are actively promoted by DMCs and feature prominently in guide books (Gaul, 1993; Gaul 1998, Wilson, 2000). Festivals in Malta are subdivided into religious (patron saint *festi*, Christmas, and Easter), folk festivals, (*Imnarja* a mid-summer festival, Carnival), music festivals (*ghana*¹, Baroque, Choir Festival, Jazz Festival) and historical ‘invented’ pageantry.

Although generally there was consensus on what culture consisted of, there were also elements on which there was divergence of opinion. Some elements of culture such as historical pageantry and gastronomy were not classified automatically as “culture”.

1. Traditional Maltese folk singing and music.

5.2.1 Historical Pageants and Gastronomy: The Less Visible Face of Culture?

Informants considered historical pageantry (invented historical re-enactments) as a mere “add on” (TS I-1), distinct from other elements of culture; historical pageants were not perceived as “truly cultural or historical” (TPS I-18 and L I-44). Moreover historical pageantry was not perceived as a primary motivation for visiting Malta, as one informant argued that “I am not aware of any tourists coming specifically for these (historic) events” (TS I-2). However other informants (TPS I-17, I-18) also made this observation with reference to village *festi*. Although recognising the fact that cultural pageantry may not constitute a motivation to visit Malta, even if this was the reason why such pageantry was initiated (TS I-3, I-26), this meant that there could be other reasons why pageantry was not considered a cultural item. One informant argued that events are “too expensive to produce and you have a changing market each time” (TS I-5) thus difficult to market and attract an audience. In addition these festivals were deemed as a marketing response arising out of a competitive need rather than heritage - thus they did not reflect local culture (TPS I-18, and L I-44). Informants from the tourism sector and cultural providers argued that events could be successful and will attract tourists if developed further and had more substance (TS I-10, CP I-14) and had more substance (TS I-7).

From the above comments it can be concluded that historical festivals are not thought highly of. Primarily they are not considered a motivation for travel and that they do not attract a specific market, thus in the opinion of informants coming from the tourism

sector, these events are not a cultural attraction per se. Another objection was the fact that these festivals are not of a high standard. Thus it seems that the main objection to the festivals is not to the festival itself, but the quality and the type of product that is produced. These observations are relevant when considering two main factors. Primarily, festivals and events are considered an important element of the overall tourism product. As one informant from the tourism public sector stated:

We know that when people are considering a holiday to Malta, they look for events. They want to know what is going on. (TS I-3)

This observation was based in the number of hits made on the events calendar section at the MTA website (www.vistmalta.com/events) (TS I-3). In addition, another informant from the same sector argued that historical pageantry is a “crowd puller and offers a feast to the eye” (TS I-6). This was confirmed by visitors at these festivals who identified costumes as one of the best features of the festival (Valletta 2000, field report). Secondly, a substantial part of the MTA’s cultural provision is based on festivals and invented pageantry thus these comments have an important bearing on the quality of product as well as for future product development.

Gastronomy elicited the same type of mixed reaction. One informant dismissed it outright stating that:

Food is not our unique selling proposition. However, admittedly, if we have some more gastronomy, our offer will improve. Even though, in our restaurants you will get more international cuisine than local [cuisine]. Our restaurants are not prepared to go through the hassle to prepare local food ... To prepare Maltese food you need a lot of time ... It is different when you fry an egg and meat, it is far more easy than preparing *imbuljuta*². (TS I-1)

Some of the informants argued that Malta's past as a colonised island could be one of the reasons why Maltese cuisine was not visible:

We do not have much of a local cuisine - we have had so many influences that we did not have enough time to develop any cuisine at all, what have we got? Beef olives, steamed beef, and, perhaps rabbit? (TS I-5).

Tourism, was another reason identified (TS I-36, MTA 2001 Gastronomy Seminar³). Since for more than 30 years the British tourist was the predominant visitor to the islands 'a tourist cuisine' was developed by the tourism industry. Maltese cuisine on the other hand remained hidden away from the tourist resorts - to be enjoyed by the Maltese in their own homes (CP I-24) or at the tiny tea shops (*hanut tat-te*, or *kazin* the British equivalent of a pub). These 'pubs' normally located around the main village square were venues of local level village politics and informal meeting places. Usually, the village men folk congregated during the day to discuss matters and to while time away; however these venues also served as informal eating places. Local house wine, tea (in glasses), snacks of *pastizzi* (pockets of pastry filled with rikotta cheese or a paste made

². *Imbuljuta* is a soup-like dish prepared from chestnuts, drinking chocolate and spices. It is usually prepared during winter-time and for special occasions.

³. The researcher was a participant at this seminar see Chapter 4, fieldwork section.

of peas), *gbejniet* (goats' cheese), *hobz tal-Malti* (local bread) and at times a meal of rabbit (*fenek*) or other local dishes were served (CP I-42). These 'village' places are increasingly included in the local food sections of guidebooks (Boulton, 2002; Wilson, 2000) as well as becoming more and more of a tourist attraction.

Some practising chefs did not consider Maltese cuisine as a separate genre of cuisine. (MTA Gastronomy Seminar, 2001). This idea was also propagated by the educational institutions. The tourism institute (Institute of Tourism Studies, ITS) did not include Maltese Gastronomy as part of its curriculum as "our exams are based on the UK system of City and Guilds exams" (TS I-36). However, local dishes were then used in international competitions, where the students competed with a 'national' dish. According to I-36 preparations for competitions were a medium through which students could learn cuisine; however the informant expressed the view that the Institute could "do more" to enhance the education of local gastronomy.

Not all the informants were of the opinion that Maltese cuisine is not a cultural expression. An informant from the tourism private sector (TPS) adopted a middle of the road approach stating that: "Gastronomy would make an interesting part of it [overall product] but it is hard to come by" (I-18). Others hailing from the cultural sector (CS I-13, I-24) and the tourism sector (TS I-28, I-30 I-36) commented that Malta has a distinct cuisine; however people locally are not aware of its potential and do not know much about it (CS I-24, TS I-28). One guide (CP I-13) argued that she encourages

visitors to drink the locally manufactured soft drink, Kinnie, and to buy local snacks and delicacies. It is worth mentioning that within the tourism sector there was a divergence in opinion. Some informants coming from this sector were of the opinion that local cuisine is not a cultural attraction, yet, local cuisine is used by MTA as part of its public relations exercise (TS I -2, I-28, I -30). Some aspects of local cuisine featured in the MTA brochures and publications of PR companies responsible for the MTA's campaigns abroad (Leads PR 2001a, McCluskey and Associates 2001a). Moreover local cuisine was something tourists looked for (CS I-24, Micallef- Leyson, 2001: 87) while guidebooks like Gaul (1998) included food under culture. This particular author gives the recipe for the local speciality of the rabbit stew (ibid.:93) and the *lampuka* pie (ibid.: 85). The latter is a fish pie made using of fish, the *mahi mahi* which is caught in local waters and considered by food historians as a typical Maltese dish (Wright, 1999: 503-505). Other authors like Lawson and Fenech (2002) and Boulton (2002) give explanations of some of the most typical local dishes.

5.2.2 Intangible Culture

Informants argued that culture includes also other aspects primarily the “less tangible” (TS I-1) aspects of culture:

Small island, not a paradise island but an urban island, which continental tourists find exotic; language, and the actual cultural mix - Latin with all it entails - language, religion and mannerisms, British, language and law and Arabic influence in our language. All these three very different [characteristics] are exquisitely inter-linked together. (TS I-1)

This less tangible approach was defined by some of the informants as an aspect of the way of life - more like an all-embracing umbrella that covers and encapsulates the very nature of Maltese Islands (TPS I-19). The 'way of life' category, incorporates "the general atmosphere" (TS I-3); it is wider in concept was considered more encapsulating and as one of the informants mentioned culture means: "people, stone, habit" (TS I-5).

Another informant argued that:

the whole context of Malta is culture, the Maltese themselves, their hospitality, their roots (TS I-3).

Furthermore, culture was interpreted as a notion that goes beyond the built environment:

Cultural tourism is not just museums, sites and tours but it includes streets, piazzas that need to be promoted (CP I-22).

This observation indicates that there is a shift from the more traditional notion of culture (tangible notions) to a more contemporary notion. It introduced the concept of cultural landscapes suggesting that culture could be expressed through the landscape of the islands. These observations also signify that for the some of the informants, culture permeates all aspects of life. An informant referred to the wider aspect of culture as 'the experiential role' of culture:

I think that if one had to take the different aspects of culture and integrate them, one would find that the unique selling proposition of this country, will include the people and the country as a whole, it is the experience, culture is an integral part of this experience. (TS I-3)

Other informants, notably cultural providers, such as tourist guides and restaurateurs who perhaps had the most direct contact with tourists, also made reference to 'culture as an experience'. The cultural experience was defined as those instances in which the visitor could interact with culture through the use of his/her senses. This included instances where the visitor experienced actual participation in local life such as: visiting and participating in village markets, visiting bakeries and eating local delicacies, and looking at and renting of converted farmhouses in the local villages. Experience also meant "imagining" (CP I -13) how people lived in the past and trying to visualise as well as understand the meaning of certain practices. Informant (CP I - 15) who is a re-enactor and works as a volunteer at one of the local parish churches argued that tourists are more interested in getting to know about the role of religion in Maltese society rather than historical facts and dates. Moreover, cultural experience was also described as an affective experience - where visitors "fall in love with our history and culture" (CP I-11).

Culture was also referred to as a historical narrative that gave informants a sense of identity. Informants spoke of the unique historic eras of "the Baroque" (TS I-1, CP I-33), "the Knights" (TS I-1, CP I-13, I-16) and "the pre-historic or megalithic era" (I-6,

I-11, I -13). An informant argued that it is precisely this mixture that makes Maltese culture:

The unique history - a lot of eras, a lot influences have influenced and are still influencing our life, art, sacred art, heritage, cultural heritage (TS I-2).⁴

In addition, informants argued that history and culture besides making the Maltese population unique due to its complexity and nature - they also give it a regional dimension - "a rich mosaic of Mediterranean culture" (TS I-5). Thus, local culture although unique does not isolate the local population but defines it through its geographical identity.

Malta's culture is not only Malta's. But our history and culture were influenced by foreign cultures, Malta has a unique history of man in the Mediterranean (TS I -10).

Some informants went beyond the Mediterranean context and drew an analogy between the Knights of Malta and the European Union. During the Knights of St. John's era eight European 'nations' were united "under one roof, at St. John's Co-Cathedral" (CP I-11, I-32). Both informants argued that this cultural dimension has never been used and if utilised could give Malta's history an added value. This observation is rather interesting especially since at the time of research Malta was preparing for a referendum on the EU, and on which there was not yet a consensus. Apart from further highlighting the fact that culture has a variety of meanings, this observation indicates that the

⁴ This comment contrasts slightly with what informant TS I-5 mentioned when discussing gastronomy.

meaning of culture can be adapted and adjusted, even to reflect particular eras or contexts as the comments made by the above informants show.

As discussed in Section 4.6, one way of understanding what stakeholders meant by culture was through mapping out their answers to the question regarding their perception of Maltese culture. The stakeholders' answers were mapped on a 'culture map' (Bushell and Jafari 1996) and these are represented in Diagram 5.1. This "culture map" shows Maltese culture can be sub-divided into three broad categories -

- (1) *history* (including historic eras, and the archaeological heritage - monuments, buildings, temples and museums),
- (2) *visual art, expressive art and theatre* and,
- (3) *local character* (this was the most complex category and included sub-categories of language, cultural landscapes, festivals, and 'the whole experience').

It was interesting to note that with the exception of two UK-based informants, history did not encapsulate the British period. This exclusion is worth exploring since primarily Malta's traditional and main tourist market is the British market. This has left an indelible mark on tourism practices. One such element is gastronomy, where certain elements of British cuisine have infiltrated Maltese gastronomy - such as serving of chips together with local dishes (see section 5.2.1 and Appendix 8). In addition there is

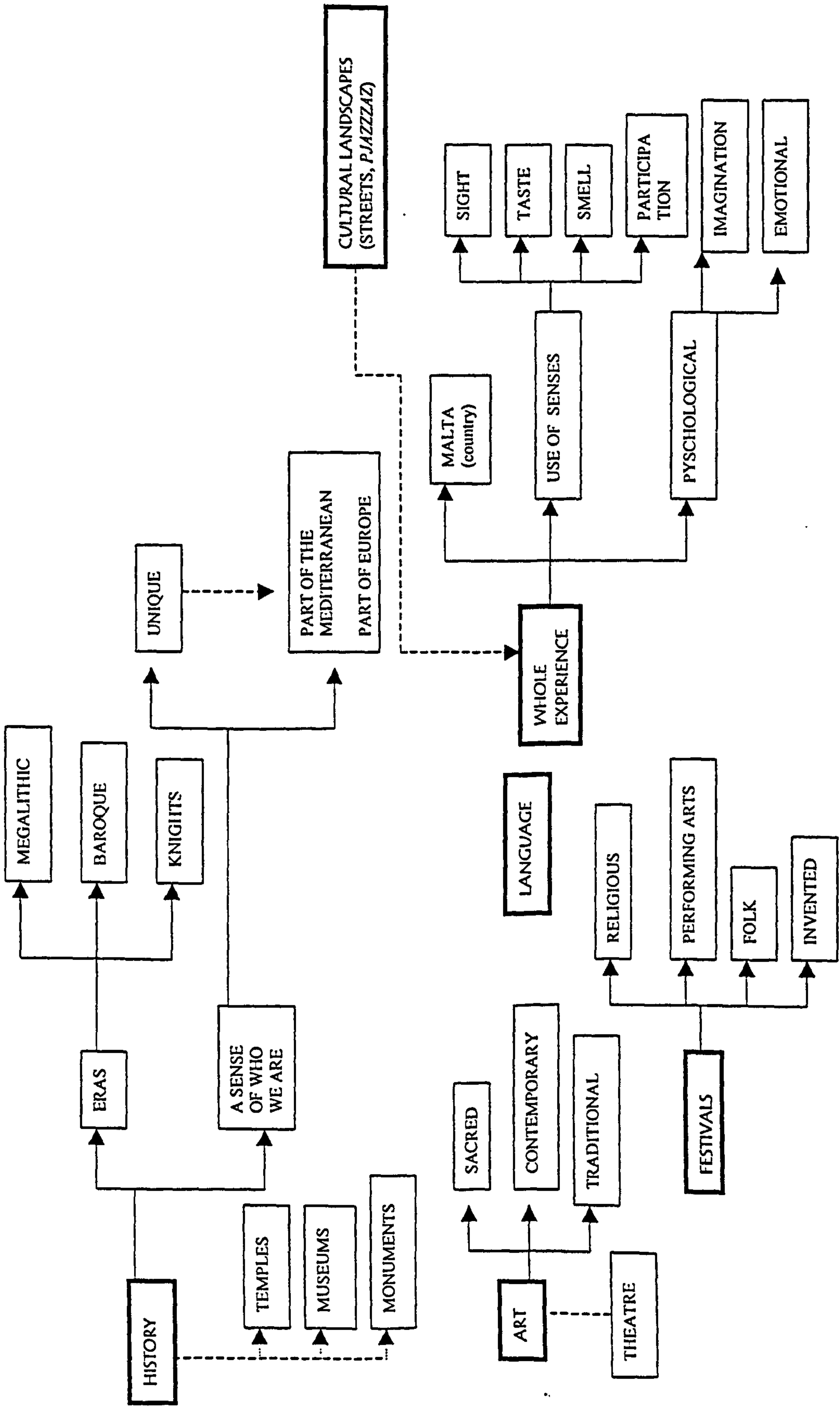


Diagram 5.1 Culture Map

the belief that there is an affinity between the two nations which is used in tourist literature, (refer to Chapter 6, Section 6.4.2). The omission of the British period and its influence on Maltese culture in informants' oral references shows that they do not associate culture with such a period. There is yet another historic period which was absent from the informants' culture map. This is the Muslim/Arab period (870- 1090 AD). Much longer than the British period the Arab invasion of the Maltese islands had a marked impact on Maltese customs and language, however none of the informants associated Maltese culture with this period. Rather, informants identified three other periods - the megalithic (neolithic) era, the Baroque era and the Knights of St. John period. Another interesting point was that the experiential notion of culture was expressed and expanded upon to the extent that the use of the senses were used to describe culture - thus culture was not seen as something static but rather it is something with which informants could *interact* with. Informants argued that cultural tourism could develop along these lines.

Having defined culture, replies were then checked for stakeholder preference to verify whether there were any differences between the stakeholder groups. In general responses were dispersed all over the 'culture map' nevertheless there was clustering as well. Tourism stakeholders (public and private) tended to define culture through its visible attributes of 'history' and *festi*. These are the predominant cultural images used by operators and the MTA to promote Malta (vide Chapter 6); this also suggests that not only do these stakeholders promote Malta in such a manner but they also perceive these

cultural expression to be Malta's culture. The other informants such as cultural providers (CP) and the local population (L) identified the broader elements of culture.

5.3 The Changing Nature of the Cultural Tourism Product

Most of the cultural aspects mentioned in the previous section, have over the years been used in one form or another as a tourist attraction. The earliest documentation resembling an official guidebook located was a non-dated publication by the Ministry of the Industry and Commerce published just before WWII⁵. The Malta Government Tourist Bureau (1940) sometime later published the same publication. This publication highlights the megalithic temples, Valletta, Notabile (Mdina) and the 'countryside' as Malta's main attractions. The latter was not described but visitors were informed that the MGTB could arrange a "delightful excursion to include sunshine or combine historical and archaeological interest" (MGTB,1940: 10). Pearce (1955) identified Malta as 'historical' giving the visitor an extensive description of major and minor historical places and areas. Other aspects of culture such as religion, the Maltese, farmhouses and the local mode of transport (at the time) - the donkey cart, *il-karettun* were part of the general landscape and were discussed briefly in the introduction of the guide book. During the 1970s the MGTB (Malta Government Tourist Board) presented *festas* (the

⁵ . The publication is not dated however the images shown indicate places like the Opera House, which was destroyed during the War. The guidebook also mentioned that the Opera House had a full calendar of activities between October and March. A second publication (dated 1940) still makes reference to pre-War buildings and shows images of people wearing clothing typical of the 1920s-1930s. In addition the book refers to leisure activities such as swimming, polo and horse racing: engagement in such activities during wartime (1940s) is highly improbable.

local village feast to celebrate the patron saint) as an additional activity during the summer months (Boissevain 1996b). Other aspects of local culture emerged at this time as well. The national airline in-flight gazette featured articles on local crafts as well as “the local village” which was presented to “the seasoned traveller keen on visiting places that are not on the beaten track” and “who require special treatment. A couple of visits to Malta's picturesque villages should provide it for them”. (*Malta This Month*, 1978: 20). The Knights' period, the megalithic temples and gastronomy were promoted by the National Tourism Organisation of Malta (NTOM) as aspects of local culture for more than a decade (NTOM 1989b).

5.3.1 The Cultural Tourism Product

The current cultural product on offer is vast and eclectic and reflects the extensive heritage of the Maltese Islands. It includes a total of 43 museums subdivided as follows: 22, national, seven private and 14 Church museums (NSO, 2001). The Maltese islands also have a number of heritage sites including three World Heritage sites⁶. The performing arts sector is geared towards a national and international audience. The national theatre organises an average of 108 performances per year (CP I-32, Manoel Theatre Performance Diary) including a contemporary music festival (held in November) and an opera festival (held in March). Both these festivals are marketed abroad to attract cultural tourists. One of these festivals is the basis for which one of the niche market tours from Holland and other countries are organised:

⁶ . The Maltese Islands have three World Heritage Sites. These are the city of Valletta, the medieval city of Cittadella in Gozo and the (7) megalithic temples of Malta.

A musical trip to sunny Malta with two musical evenings and an extensive introduction to the rich cultural history of this island. (*Malta Opera Festival* -Hannick Reizen)

Every two years the National Theatre organises a Baroque Festival, which includes a symposium and musical concerts held in churches, themselves examples fine examples of Baroque architecture. Apart from the National Theatre there are three other venues, one in Valletta (the Mediterranean Conference Centre) and two in Gozo that host artistic festivals including operas and ballets. The cultural repertoire offered at these theatres is extensive but it is not always suitable for a foreign audience, since most performances are in Maltese. All the previously mentioned theatres and a number of other small theatres scattered around the Maltese Islands host local theatre productions in their majority addressed at a local audience and are held in Maltese. The cultural product also entails a number of festivals. Festivals in Malta are subdivided into religious festivals organised on a local level. These festivals include the annual village patron saint celebrations (*festa*), Good Friday procession, Easter procession and the less marketed Christmas celebrations. In 1993 historical (invented) pageantry commemorating the Knights of St. John was introduced in the calendar of events. The Malta Tourism Authority organises two historical pageants per year (one in Valletta and alternatively in Mdina or Birgu) and every other Sunday it organises a military re-enactment at Fort St. Elmo in Valletta. Re-enactments commemorating the French and British military life in Malta are also organised. In addition to the above, there are other folk festivals (*ghana*, Carnival and *Imnarja* the latter being a summer harvest festival)

and musical festivals (Jazz and Choir Festivals) (for a summary of tourism - related cultural events see Appendix 6). Throughout the year a number of artistic exhibitions are held in museums, art centres and private venues. The extent in which the above are seen as 'cultural tourism products' varies, according to the different stakeholder. Thus although *festi* are endemic cultural events they are seen by the tourism sector as an "add on" to the summer product (I-3, I-6), since the majority of these events are held in summer. On the other hand the private tourism sector markets these as 'cultural events' (I-21) - an opportunity "to meet" (*SMS Tours*) and "mingle" (*Oasis*) with the locals. Other events like Good Friday and Easter and Carnival are seen by the MTA as more "cultural" - since they are "an integral part" of the winter season offer (TS I-1, I-3). The Jazz and Choir festivals, which are 'imported' cultural festivals and therefore do not represent local culture are seen as purely cultural events by the MTA since "they attract cultural tourists" (TS I-1, I-3, I-6). The Choir Festival is a competition for international choirs and the Malta Jazz Festival has a predominance of foreign musicians. These two festivals are actively promoted by the MTA but hardly feature in the other tourist literature reviewed (see Section 6.4.2). A tourism sector informant argued that Malta's cultural heritage is so extensive that:

Malta can offer diverse cultural experiences and hence can attract the specific cultural traveller and the peripheral cultural tourist. (TS I-10)

However despite this, informants argued that Malta's abundant and rich heritage had remained untapped. Informants pinpointed that were a number of outstanding issues that unless addressed, Malta's cultural potential will not be developed fully. One issue raised was one of handling of culture and the standard of the cultural product:

Our problem is that our cultural offer is not what it should be for what we have... It is tragic that such a USP (unique selling proposition) is not handled correctly... (TS I-1)

Another informant from the same stakeholder group added:

We should not market what we do not have. We have a lot to offer but it is not of a good standard. Certain sites do not have the ability to sell; they fail because they are not presented well. (TS I-10)

Informants opined that the cultural offer within the tourism sphere lacked ideas, was static and not yet fully formed (TPS I-17) - indicating a culture that was still in its "raw stage". The Tourism Master Plan for the Maltese Islands had in its proposals identified areas for the improvement of the cultural offer, since at the time:

We did not have a theatre culture. There was the Manoel Theatre, which hosted plays in Maltese but not necessarily concerts. So there was no choice of performances, it was not enough to have just one. The historical places we had, unless they were embellished they were not going to attract people. (TS I-26)

Informants from the tourism sector argued that following the Tourism Master Plan, there has been an increase in the type of product on offer (TS I-10 and I-26) and that more tourists were attracted by the new offer (TS I-4). Moreover some heritage sites were restored, however the general *quality* of the product did not improve. Quality of the cultural product was defined through the general characteristics of the cultural product (“creativity”, “choice and variety”, “presentation” and “authenticity”). Informants added that certain events especially the In Guardia events and MTA festivals have lost their novelty and thus did not appeal to the visitors (TS I- 6, CP I-14). This opinion was also expressed by one of the visitors to the In Guardia who argued that:

The show is too long and very repetitive. Besides there was nothing much to do at the Fort, after the parade was over.
(Scottish tourist, April 2001)

One other factor that informants mentioned was that cultural product did not allow for the imagination of the visitor to roam:

Culture needs to be made user friendly, more alive; culture has to be a learning experience. Festivals should not be just costumes and events - symposia should also be introduced to start people thinking (TS I-10).

In addition, quality also meant the variety of the product on offer. One informant commented that Malta should move away from a general cultural product (festivals and museums) towards a more core cultural offer namely the performing arts (TS I-8).

The above observations indicate that informants notably the tourism sector stakeholders were dissatisfied with the general quality of the cultural product. In addition, tourism sector stakeholders and cultural providers argued that Malta may need to identify new ways of expressing its culture (TS I-8, I-14 and CP I-32, I-33). Informants added that new cultural expressions would not only provide enjoyment but, in addition, would give added value to the destination. In addition culture was perceived as a resource, however a badly managed resource which is “not being exploited well” (TS I-1). This was a cause of concern for some informants:

Our product is authentic. Our monuments are the oldest-free standing buildings. And what do we do about them? Our cultural product is like a sleeping giant and we are not making use of it (TS I-10).

Following the above discussion, a question still remained to be answered. Why was it that despite the suggestions made by the Master Plan and the increase in the cultural offer, informants were of the opinion that the cultural offer was not of a good standard? Informants argued that “lack of knowledge and expertise” (TS I-10, CP I-24), “lack of vision” (TS I-10, CPI-14), “lack of interest and initiative” (CP I-13, I-14) and “lack of funding” (TS I-10 and CP I-14, I-22, I-34) were some of the reasons why the Maltese cultural product had not developed. These arguments are discussed in more detail in Section 7.2 since they relate to the concept of management of culture.

5.3.2 Culture and the Maltese Population

The points raised on the quality of culture were not isolated to the tourism sphere. Informants argued that the state of culture in the tourism reflected the status quo of the general culture. Cultural providers reiterated that despite being surrounded by culture, the Maltese society does not appreciate its own culture (CP I-22, I-34, I-35). These observations were based on museum users, whom in the opinion of the above informants tend to be more foreigners than locals.

(based on observation), 95% of our visitors are tourists and 5% Maltese, who in their majority come to visit temporary exhibitions. (CP I-34)

Cultural providers went on to argue that the public is “misinformed (CP I-22) about the role of culture and generally “school children no longer frequent museums as they used to do in the past” (CP I-34). However (CP I-35) commented that school children are regular visitors to the site the informant was responsible for. These views were verified with the Education Department. The Education Department representative argued that all schools have as part of their curriculum appreciation of history and art and they do take students out to visits. Yet, recent curricular changes in primary education in the Maltese Islands could have led to the above observations. The Department of Education representative added that the increase of in the number of museums and heritage sites including private ones has broadened the choice. Moreover the decentralisation of education meant that schools were at liberty to choose whichever site or museum for

cultural and historical appreciation. In addition, data previously kept by the Department could only be located at the individual schools. (Personal Communication June, 2002)

Cultural providers described the Maltese population as a society riddled by consumerism (CP I-33), and interested in popular culture, namely that type which does not “offer a challenge” to the mind (CP I-34), such as popular theatre (*tejatin*), and song festivals (CP I-41). These observations were generated by informants involved in high culture (theatre, art, museums) thus these comments led to the conclusion that the local population may not be artistically inclined. Nevertheless one informant went on to argue that this situation could have arisen due to the type of culture available, a culture which did not offer enough stimulus to engage the interest of the local population (CP I-33, Bartolo, 2001).

Nevertheless, this study shows that although the local population may not be interested in art, museums or operas it expresses interest in other cultural aspects. The cultural tours organised by the Department of Culture are each year over-subscribed (CP I-23). Each year there are 1,600 season tickets available however the demand is much higher. One of the informants who has been on these tours argued:

These tours are a very good way of understanding our history, I enjoy it and so do our children. I have learnt new things about Malta and I have gained a deeper insight into our history ... (CP I-16)

Research conducted by the researcher at the Valletta and Mdina festivals organised by the MTA revealed that in general the Maltese population is enthusiastic about these events. Festivals are perceived as entertaining as well as educational:

It is an easy way to learn about our past. Unfortunately we do not know much about our past and this is a good way how our children can learn about their past; how people used to live back then. (Maltese lady with two young children)

The researcher also came across a lady who was asking for brochures on *ghana* for her son's school project. These observations showed that the festivals could be a potential tool; besides "providing entertainment" (TS I-6), festivals could have a wider scope - as a learning tool. They could provide a means through which the local population could learn more about its history and identity as well as present foreigners with a more interactive insight to Malta's historical past, consequently adding to visitor satisfaction. The above points also raised another issue, that of the teaching of history and culture appreciation in schools. Cultural providers' comments led to the conclusion that schools are failing to imbue children with the necessary appreciation for their own heritage (CP I-11, I-34). Another cultural provider added that this lack of interest is not only prevalent in primary and secondary schools but extends up to the University (CP I-33). The Education Department spokesperson referred to earlier indirectly reinforced these observations. He mentioned that primary school children have an obligatory curriculum in history and culture up to age 10. However due to fact that education has become

oriented towards differentiated learning with an emphasis on literacy, the attention dedicated to history and culture at primary levels declined.

The local population was also enthusiastic about its local culture especially its religious festivities (L I-25, I-40). Religious rituals in Malta include the major calendrical rituals of Christmas, Good Friday and Easter festivities as well as the annual village *fešta*. The village *fešta* in which the patron saint of the village or town is celebrated is an important social event in the Maltese Islands. It goes beyond purely religious celebrations as it also a means by which inhabitants reinforce their identity (Boissevain 1991, Boissevain 1996b). Religious celebrations are organised by locals for the locals; they serve to reinforce community spirit and re-affirm Catholic beliefs.

Despite comments made by cultural providers, this research has shown that the Maltese population has regard for its heritage This can be inferred from the enthusiasm when some of the informants spoke about this topic as well as from other incidents recorded in the national press. Monuments have been subject to vandalism on a number of occasions, hitting at the public as well as at the government, the latest incidents occurring in April 2001. During the night between Maundy Thursday and Good Friday (12-13th April), vandals attacked and damaged the World Heritage Site of Mnajdra Temples. The press and the public were up in arms against this act of vandalism. A money collection campaign was launched by one of the national newspapers. The sum

collected went towards the production of a teaching video called "Heritage in Peril" copies of which were donated to a number of primary schools (Galea Debono, 2002).

In discussing the role of culture and local population cultural providers argued that local culture was stale (CP I-33, I-34) and that it had become too politicized and elitist (CP I-32). This may have led to further reinforcement of the divide between high and popular (low) culture. Besides "bridging this gap" (CP I-32), Malta needed to make cultural events and venues "fashionable" (CP I-33) again. Informants were of the opinion that this could be achieved through releasing the potential of culture. In addition, since culture is by its very nature dynamic, provisions should be made for culture to evolve and develop through the encouragement of creativity and animation (CP I-32, I-33).

One cultural provider reiterated that:

Culture is not an impermeable niche. It is creativity ... artistic expression and theatrical animation. We have to enhance the cultural product - culture has to evolve. We have to find new expression for old traditions and cultural expressions. I do not think that we want to sell Malta as a relic that is why we have to allow culture to evolve... (CP I-32)

The discussion of culture and cultural products led to the conclusion that, for culture to remain viable it needs to be regenerated. Informants argued that the regeneration of culture would occur through the creation of 'new cultural' expressions as well as the extension of existing ones. However, creativity was deemed limited. An informant, TS

I-26, argued that one of the main problems facing cultural tourism is that the general provider is short of ideas. However, once someone has an idea this is immediately copied by others.

What happens in reality? You have two forts Tigne' and Manoel Island, OK you restore them but then you have a dilemma, what utility will they have, how many souvenir shops can they take? We are now also looking at war shelters. Mosta Council is opening one, Cospicua is doing the same, so are tourists now just going to see shelters? (TS I-26)

Nevertheless, those bold enough to do so and create a new item are met with incredulity:

When I decided to open up the restaurant, someone asked me "What type of restaurant are you going to set up?" And I replied, "Maltese" (*mhux Malti?*). He said "How come?" That's it. Aren't we in Malta? In Italy, someone opening a restaurant in Rome will serve Italian food. It is as if it is a strange thing to open a Maltese restaurant! (CP I-24)

These observations illustrate that interest to provide alternative products is present, however, there are diverse views as to what a creative cultural product entails. The former, reflects on providing a cultural product based on good planning, the other reflects views on innovative cultural ideas and their acceptance among the wider society.

The notion of regenerating culture raises a number of issues for discussion, these are addressed in the following sections.

5.4 Challenges

In Section 5.2.2, reference was made to the fact that culture is expressed through a community's way of life. Yet, it was also pointed out that culture needed to be developed. However for this to occur, the local community has to primarily express an interest in its own culture and secondly express pride in its identity and culture. Cultural providers argued that the local population is not proud of its own culture (CP I-11, I-33). Pride in one's culture would also lead to the availability of the product. As one informant from the tourism private sector commented:

The move has to start from the destination itself. Unless there is a demand (for the product) from locals and that demand is fulfilled and this product is marketed we cannot market it. (TPS I-18)

Furthermore, the cultural product on offer will only develop if the local community is convinced of its cultural product and idiom; informants argued that such a circumstance was not present:

We need to convince people of what we have, but first we have to pull our act together (TS I- 5).

This is a challenge that Maltese culture is facing and one way of tackling the issue is to start moving away from what cultural providers referred to as “imitation culture” (CP I-32, I-33). This culture which is prevalent in various aspects of culture “theatre, music arts and crafts” (CP I-33), is leading to the production of a product which imitates other cultures rather than develops the local culture:

If we want to attract the intelligent visitor we have to have an intelligent product. The current product does not have any relevance to the visitor. Take carnival for example. We would like to see it as a major tourist attraction, but does it have any relevance to the visitor or is it a remake of what the visitor sees elsewhere - fluorescent colours and Walt Disney characters? We have to re-vitalise our carnival, re-create what we had. (CP I-32)

This observation by the cultural provider is a call for the Maltese population to reflect on its current cultural product, which according to this informant is imitating other cultural product rather than promoting its own expression of culture, in this case Carnival. Moreover, this quote suggests that the community needs ‘to own again’ and identify once more with its own culture. Once ownership of culture is re-established it will automatically re-kindle the interest of the visitor in Maltese culture.

5.4.1 The Use of Culture as a Tourism Attraction

Although informants perceived culture as a major attraction for tourists, they argued that culture still belongs and represents the local population. In addition, they mentioned that in creating cultural products, something alien to the Maltese culture could be created unless discretion is applied. A tourism sector informant commented:

What is culture? We have to be careful how to define cultural tourism and how to package it. You cannot dissociate culture from a particular country, from its people... A person will visit a cultural place like Florence not only to see the monuments but also to get a feel for the city. (TS I-3)

In addition, other informants argued that certain aspects of culture mean different things for the tourists and the local population. The chances being that certain cultural traits are adapted and modified to suit tourists' tastes. Another tourism sector informant pointed out that:

Culture is not what people want but what it is... Take for example *ghana*, it may not be attractive to the visitor but it is authentic, it is something that reflects our culture (TS I-10).

The debate of what should and should not be considered culture has bearing on the type of cultural product offered. Informants have alluded to the issue that in trying to popularise culture and make it more accessible there is the danger that culture becomes diluted:

a mere attraction with no relevance at all to the culture of the country - there is a limit to how much we can dilute culture. (TS I-4)

These comments show that there is an inherent tension between authentic culture like *ghana* which may not be palatable for the contemporary tourists and the re-packaging

and hence commoditization of culture in order to make it more 'acceptable' for tourists.

This tension begs to be explored further.

5.4.2 (Lack of) Authenticity, Cultural Commoditization and Cultural Revival

The above arguments led to the concepts of authenticity and cultural commoditization. Although culture (history, monuments, buildings) was deemed authentic and unique, elements of the cultural product were seen as inauthentic and tourism sector personnel and some cultural providers expressed concern on the levels authenticity of certain cultural products on offer (TS I-7, CP I-14, I-15, I-16). The following discussion will highlight the extent of lack of authenticity with regards to the cultural product namely invented pageantry, food and crafts.

The military parades organised by the MTA were created to complement the authentic, indigenous cultural activities, *festas*, already available. The events are based on historic happenings and therefore, one could argue that they are historically correct. However, despite this measure informants argued that historical pageantry organised by the MTA did not reflect the 'authentic' past. In a discussion the researcher had with a theatre expert, it was pointed that most of the costumes used by the re-enactors (See Appendix 7) are contrived and were never worn by members of the Maltese society (Personal Communication, April 2002). The expert contended that if Malta wants to develop historical pageantry as a 'cultural product', costumes have to reflect Maltese society at the time represented by the re-enacted event. The use of such costumes may deter the expert visitor but has, so far had limited effect on the non-visitors, who perceive

costumes as a means through which one “has a glimpse of Malta's past” (Dutch visitor, Mdina Fest 2000). Yet, performances by the re-enactors give rise to what MacCannell (1976) refers to as false fronts. Instances included re-enactors wearing wristwatches (comment by an Austrian tourist - Valletta Fest 2000), re-enactors chewing gum (Valletta Fest 2000). In this respect, the representation of the re-enacted past could have a damaging impact on the effectiveness of the festival, especially since re-enactors have a central role in historical pageantry. Re-enactors are employed everyday in a walkabout where they walk around the main streets for three hours per day - their costumes eliciting curiosity and interest.(see Appendix 7). This scenario presents a challenge namely the representation of a historical event, which visitors interpret as live history and, therefore a means through which they can learn about Malta's past, and the way in which it is represented, which as illustrated here, needs rectification.

Informants argued that lack of authenticity is also seen in other aspects of the Maltese product including gastronomy. The following excerpt is taken from the researcher's field notes and reflection based on the Malta Tour⁷. A 'typical Maltese lunch' was included on this tour, however as the notes demonstrate the lunch offered was far from what was promised on the brochure.

We arrived at the restaurant ... The restaurant is a beautiful old house whose original owner was a local benefactor... None of his was divulged to us. A short guide to the place would again have enriched our visit. ... On the table, we had a small carafe of white wine and a plate with slices of

⁷ For the whole tour see Appendix 8.

Maltese bread. ... It consisted of a salad (tomatoes, onions, olives and French beans) smothered in a mayonnaise-based sauce. I thought that this was not a good start as there was nothing typically Maltese in this salad. A Maltese salad would to my imagination consist of *bigilla*, (a pate made of dried *ful mudammes*), broad beans, goats cheese, fresh tomatoes and caponata. I was bracing myself for the main dish when a plate was placed in front of me. Horror of horrors the Maltese main dish was a slice of beef smothered in gravy, cabbage with bacon and chips! I could not help it but I looked at the fellow group members and asked them, whether I had read correctly. The tour specifically mentioned a "typical Maltese lunch". Where was it? It definitely was not on my plate. The lady from Hong Kong then hit the nail home, she asked me what is Maltese food? Yes, I thought what is Maltese food? Is it available at all? What image are we giving if on a tour entitled specifically Malta Tour we are giving our visitors a medley of the Best British Cuisine!. ... Our desert consisted of a chocolate ice-cream sandwiched in a chocolate sponge cake. A version of a *qasatella siciliana* but very remote from a Maltese sweet. Typically, Maltese sweets are not that abundant as traditionally sweets are prepared to commemorate religious feasts (Sammut 2000), however, fruit and peanuts could have very well served the purpose of a 'Maltese desert'.

Such instances very often leave a negative impact on the person participating in the activity. A tourism private sector informant, commented:

One thing that I can't stand is going to a restaurant in Malta and being served up a wonderful fresh Mediterranean fish, which at times are rare to come across, covered in some stupid Hollandaise sauce, served with Brussels sprouts and other vegetables which are not native of Malta.... (TPS I-18)

This is a common occurrence especially on tourist menus, which claim to be "typically Maltese" (TPS I-21) and yet "are far cry from reality" (CP I-24). A common activity

during the summer months is a folk event of Malta Night, which is organised by hotels and restaurants. This event which includes folk dancing was defined as “inauthentic” by some of the informants coming from the tourism sector (I-10) cultural providers (I-16) and the tourism private sector (I-21). In order to assess these claims, the researcher attended a ‘Malta Night’ in one of the local restaurants, which also describes itself as a Maltese Restaurant. The main dish consisted of rabbit with chips, a very common way of presenting rabbit, although traditionalists would argue that chips should not be included. The folk entertainment consisted of singers posing as *ghannejja* (local folk singers) going round patrons singing folk rhymes (including children’s rhymes, in Maltese) which are very different from *ghana* (traditional folk music and song). However the establishment presented folk rhymes as traditional folk song. A guide described this type of ‘entertainment’ which cannot be considered cultural, as “too expensive and non-recreational”: an event that she never recommends to tourists (Dutch participant at guides’ lecture, April 2000). Guidebooks published during the course of this research have also issued warnings to visitors to be watchful of staged authentic cultural products.

On Folklore...

There is no such thing as a true living Maltese folklore. However, because many tourists coming to a Mediterranean country expect to see lively folkloristic dances and original music they are offered it. What you get is usually a group of Maltese dressed in fanciful costumes dancing to well known Anglo-Saxon tunes. In short a kind of invented ballet. It could be amusing but could hardly be called folklore by any stretch of imagination. (Bötig, 2000:98)

Crafts, notably lace, was also described as inauthentic by one cultural provider (CP I-43) as well as in guidebooks:

On lace...

Most of the authentic handmade items you will see are made in Gozo. Beware however of imitation lace. (Boulton, 2002:151)

These comments and observations beg a pause for reflection. Although tourist settings can allow for instances where myths (Selwyn, 1996b) or staged authenticity (MacCannell, 1976) thrive, there are instances where this can become problematic. The examples cited above suggest that the Maltese cultural product is facing such a situation. Food, lace, and events are being used and at times created to meet the expected demands of tourists for a Maltese cultural product. However, the items created do not reflect the authentic (faithful representation) of culture. The comments in the guide books serve as an 'eye opener' to the prospective visitor; forewarning her that aspects of the Maltese cultural product are inauthentic. This will in turn influence the way the tourists, who are interested in experiencing 'the Other' perceive such products. Informants quoted above have expressed their concern on the matter and if as illustrated in the previous section, there is enough interest in culture, then the position could be rectified.

There were very few measures in place that could guarantee authenticity of the product. Although pageants are military correct, the re-enactors are not given any courses or instructions on how to act. Re-enactors are informed of the military parade and code of behaviour during a briefing session just days prior to the beginning of the festival. In 1997 the NTOM published a manual on re-enactments (NTOM 1997) in which, informants were advised on their appropriate behaviour before, during and after the festival. This manual states:

The behaviour of each re-enactor should follow strict discipline when he/she puts on the costume. When a member puts on the costume, he/she should be aware that he /she has become a new character. ... All modern items are prohibited. Watches, glasses, chewing gum and smoking are not allowed. This applies also before and after the re-enactment. (NTOM, 1997: 3)

However, the use or distribution of this manual was not referred to by any of the re-enactors; they are not aware of it. Another measure used is a wardrobe mistress whose role is to ensure that the re-enactors are wearing the appropriate costume. However, the incidents cited above indicate that this measure does not ensure that re-enactors adhere to their 'roles' and 'era'. In addition, as stated Section 5.2.1, education in the gastronomy sector is limited thus encouraging further inauthentic food products.

As discussed in Section 2.4, interest in local culture could also lead to a degree of cultural commoditization. The following incidents show that there are different types of cultural commoditization. In discussing the way in which Good Friday processions have

changed if at all, in one of the localities, CP I-40 argued that over the years there have been changes and modifications to the procession however they are not entirely related to tourism. CP I-40 argued that localities compete amongst themselves not only for tourists but also for the local visitor, since people want variety.

Events such as our procession have become competitive not because of pique but rather because of necessity, we need to expand, we have to change our activities otherwise we will not attract visitors. (CP I-40)

Thus the locality has modified its Good Friday celebrations by extending the Last Supper and the Good Friday procession costume exhibitions from two days to a whole week. Another change occurring in the procession was brought about by “modernity”. The informant argued that young children are nowadays enrolling in boy scouts and girl guides groups. Therefore young children prefer to participate in the procession with the boy scouts and girl guides rather than to dress up as characters for the procession and this has led to changes, at times it was difficult to find young participants. However, the informant did mention that due to more tourist presence during the Good Friday procession, the organising committee did change some of the band marches played during the procession to “accommodate the international visitors”, thus they have introduced marches and music pieces by foreign composers. Field visits to the area during Good Friday in 2000 and in 2001 showed that were a number of tourists accompanied by tour guides during the event. It is customary for the local population to watch these processions standing up along the route of the procession. However, guided

tourist groups had chairs located at vantage points booked for them in advance through their touring companies (see Appendix 7). Chairs are booked from band clubs or churches within the village. This practice has elicited a mixed response from locals. Some objected to it since they had to give up the best places to the tourists. Yet, there were others who have adopted this practice, and rather than stand in front of their door to watch the procession they now sit and watch. These changes highlight the fact that local culture and its expressions have to be monitored in order to maintain their authenticity.

In a recent conference organised by the MTA, on arts and culture (April 2002) one participant suggested that tourists could be more involved in local culture. The participant suggested that tourists could be asked to participate in the local *festa* by carrying the statue of the patron saint (Hansen, 2002). Such a suggestion falls within the parameters of dilution of culture and commoditization of culture. If adopted this will alter the meaning of the village *festa* completely. In certain localities in Malta, custom and tradition dictate who will carry the statute of the patron saint and who participates in religious events⁸. Although such a proposal has to be assessed, given the nature of events and the importance locals attach to them, such a suggestion would alter

⁸ Participants in religious festivities of Good Friday and Easter are in their majority male and young children. There are instances where a personage is inherited within families (Rabat, Malta), or for young males who have made vows to participate in such festivities (Mosta) wearing a particular costume and carrying heavy chains and crosses. In Imgarr (Malta), prospective statue bearers “bid” to carry the statue on the very day of the feast. The highest bidders will carry the statue.

the meaning of these religious events. Nevertheless, in some cases excessive commoditization of the local *festa* has led the community to re-assess the value of these events. In Haz-Zebbug, a town in the central part of Malta, hamburger and chip stalls were no longer given permits to operate within the village square this has led to the space being taken up by the more traditional stalls selling nougat (CP I-24).

The notion of authenticity becomes a more important issue in the case of the Maltese Islands since informants had referred to the need of cultural revival, especially the revival of certain ethnic festivities. In reviving events there is always a danger that the meaning of such events may be altered. However, one cultural provider (I-32) argued that:

If a revival is giving an extended value, if it is creative you cannot limit it, we cannot just reproduce we have to let it grow, culture is dynamic after all ... (CP I-32)

On the other hand non-revival can lead to extinction. Informants have argued that unless there are revival elements, Maltese culture will become extinct. Informants argued that research has enabled a local group of musicians called *Etnika* to revive traditional musical instruments and adapt traditional music to modern instruments thus enabling traditional music and instruments to be played again (CP I-32). This particular music group is indeed a major attraction. The Mdina Fest 2000 programme included a performance by this group on Saturday afternoon, in the courtyard of Vilhena Palace. The crowd attending for this performance was a predominantly tourist audience and was

the second largest apart from Sunday's Parade. An 18-year old Dutch tourist commented that this was an opportunity to listen to Maltese music. The setting up of certain museums and the production of new cultural products such as theatre souvenirs has enabled certain institutions to "maintain the memories of people who have contributed to the Maltese society" (CP I-33). In addition, the re-introduction of new lace teaching techniques has encouraged an interest in lace and the setting up of a lace co-operative in Gozo (CP I-43).

5.4 Understanding the Nature of the Cultural Tourist

It was evident during this research that apart from mapping culture there was another aspect that required a definition and on whom there were a number of misconceptions, namely the cultural tourist. As stated in Section 1.4.3 the scope of this thesis was not to study the cultural tourist. However, during the interviews it had become clear that the cultural tourists visiting Malta are very much ill-defined as much as the cultural product. One cultural provider commented: "I am afraid that the tourism authority does not know who the cultural tourist is" (CP I-32). The following discussion will highlight the extent of the debate. It will also try to define what type of cultural tourist Malta is aiming for.

5.5.1 Who is the Cultural Tourist?

The concept of cultural tourism in Malta was developed as a result of the Mater Plan. However, very little research has been conducted on the cultural tourist *per se*⁹. Data on the cultural tourist is hardly available and conclusions are inferred from secondary data analysis of exit surveys conducted by the MTA and data obtained through cultural and heritage sites. An informant observed that although “data is indicative it cannot be considered conclusive” (TS I-9). The MTA exit survey collects data pertaining to visitor characteristics, expenditure, levels of satisfaction and visitor motivation (this category includes history and culture as one of the motivations, as well as climate, recommendations, and new place to visit). The latter two sections (visitor satisfaction and visitor motivation) could provide some data on cultural visitors. Another indication of cultural tourists can be obtained through visitors to museum and heritage sites. Data from other cultural and heritage sites is very limited. Data provided by the Museums Department is rather limited in its scope: it registers only paying and non-paying visitors, group and individual visitors. Data registered for some of the years in particular pre- 1994 is also unreliable since there were incidents of museum personnel fiddling with entry monies and hence effecting the data of museum visitor numbers (*Times of Malta*, 1998: 15).

⁹ The only research that could be located on cultural tourists was an informal study conducted by the National Theatre. This study was aimed at assessing the quality of the cultural programme rather than the socio-economic background of the visitor. The National Office of Statistics has published data on visitors to museums; again, data is quantitative indicating only visitor numbers.

Although tourism authorities have promoted cultural tourism as an activity that could be enjoyed by tourists (TS I-4) a motivation to visit Malta for 'history and culture' (one of the categories indicated in the MTA survey) was not considered a reason to categorise that particular visitor a cultural tourist. This is a mistake on the part of the tourism authorities. Field research has shown that visitors to cultural sites and monuments as well as historical and religious events, have chosen the Maltese Islands for their history and culture. Given the wide range of cultural heritage, Malta could attract cultural visitors with various levels of motivations (McKercher, 2002) or interests (Stebbins 1996) however some of the informants tended to have a very narrow definition of the cultural tourist. Primarily, this is a result of the current procedures used to collect data on the cultural visitor. A tourism sector informant commented that "the data collection procedure does not allow us to differentiate between the different motivations of visitors" (TS I-9). Thus according some MTA informants, "cultural tourists" are those visitors who visit Malta for "niche cultural tourism" (TS I-2, I-3, I-6) or "the special interest tourists" (CP I-13). Niche cultural tourists are those visitors who visit Malta specifically for cultural events such as the Choir Festival and the Malta Jazz Festival. The members of the competing choirs and their relatives are all considered cultural tourists (TS I-6), while the Malta Jazz Festival is marketed to attract specialist (jazz enthusiasts) tourists. Very often cultural tourists were defined according to the informant's background. Thus for tourism sector informants "cultural tourists" are those visitors who come specifically "to engage in archaeological visits or religious tours" (TS I-1, I-3, I-6). A cultural provider defined cultural tourists as those visitors who

come specifically for the opera festivals or attend to such activities whilst on the islands (CP I-33). Another cultural provider argued that cruise liner passengers tend to be more “culturally oriented” (CP I-13). Such categorizations exclude all those other cultural visitors whose motivations for culture may not be the highest of priorities - the incidental cultural or the non-cultural specific tourists. One example is that of a British lady met at the Palace Armoury in Valletta who commented “I did not expect such a small island to have such history and culture ... it's amazing”, nonetheless visitors like this tourist will engage in culture and cultural experiences. Another example of diverse cultural motivations is offered by the analysis of visitors attending the historical pageants organised by the MTA. Visitors participating at the musical concerts were fewer in numbers and more dedicated to follow the cultural programme; whereas the other activities of a more popular nature (folk dancers, displays) attracted larger crowds who have expressed interest in “the colourful history” of Malta. This observation was also confirmed through MTA non-documented sources (TS I-3).

Given such a mix of motivations, the views expressed by tourism sector informants and cultural providers limit the possibilities of further development of cultural tourism since the audience is still not yet defined. .

5.5.2 Nation-Specific

Some informants were of the opinion that cultural tourists tend to be nation-specific (TS I-1, TPS I-21). Hence German and French tourists are considered cultural whilst the others are less so (TS I-1). The least culturally oriented visitor is perceived to be the

British (TPS I-21). However, other informants argued that it is not that the British visitors lack cultural interest but “we are not doing enough to attract the cultural visitor” (TPS I-19). Data published by the MTA shows that although certain markets are more inclined to culture (higher percentages); all visitors including the British list down as one of their motivations for visiting Malta ‘History and Culture’. This is rather confusing in terms of policy. One of the objectives of the MTA Marketing Directorate is to “retain current positioning as a cultural and historical destination” in the German and French markets (MTA 2000: 45) but culture is not mentioned in any of the other markets. However, this research has established that UK and Dutch MTA offices are promoting culture (McCluskey, 2001b and Leads PR/PRP, 2001b) and believe that culture is one element that these markets seek (TS I-7, I-28, I-30).

Informants coming from the tourism sector, tourism private sector and cultural providers argued against the notion that cultural tourists are nation-specific. They opined that given the right product which is marketed well, culture would be successful in all markets (TS I-7, I-8, I-10, TPS I-17, I-18, I-20 and CP I-32, I-33). This observation indicates that culture is not nation-specific. The insistence by the Marketing and Promotion directorates of the MTA that culture is nation specific, may have an impact on the way Malta is marketed abroad: leading to further mis-conceptions about the cultural visitor.

5.5.3 Seasonality

MTA officials and tour operators argued that cultural tourism in the Maltese Islands is that it is a seasonal product (TS I-1, TPS I-17). Yet, cultural tourism is an all year round activity especially promoted during the low volume seasons of winter (December-February) and off peak season (March -May and September-November) to fill hotel vacancies. Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix 9 indicate that over the past decade there has been an increase in the percentage of Dutch and UK visitors who claimed that they chose Malta for history and culture during the off-peak/winter months. However this motivation is still prevalent during high season (summer). This observation tends to highlight the non-seasonality of cultural tourism, maintained primarily by MTA and tour-operators. Despite being considered a seasonal activity, informants from the tourism sector and the tourism private sector argued that more cultural events are needed to boost further cultural visitors during the low season (TS I-7, TPS I-18).

Another issue related to seasonality and motivation of the cultural visitor, is the mixed perception on whether the winter visitor is purely a cultural visitor or whether he/she will engage in culture since he/she will not be engaging in beach-related activities. A tourism sector official commented that:

A tourist is going to choose Malta not because he is a cultural tourist, but because he (sic) is coming for a weekend break or a winter break and therefore he will concentrate (*jenfasizza*) on history and culture. (TS I-3)

Cultural tourism in this quotation acquires a specific meaning which is related to season and holiday activity rather than actual motivation.

5.5.4 Economic Expenditure and Cultural Tourists

There are two schools of thought regarding the economic power of the cultural tourist.

The National Policy for Culture and the Arts states that:

Such a programme (cultural tourism) will be a source of accelerated employment in the cultural industries (Ministry of Education, 2001: 31)

On the other hand negative signs of cultural tourism are that it can be very costly and that cultural tourists tend to be among the lowest spenders (Ministry of Education, 2001: 33)

These two statements regarding the economic impacts of cultural tourism are ambivalent and appear to be contradictory further highlighting the fact that the area of cultural tourism is not well understood by Maltese tourism authorities and cultural providers. The first statement suggests that cultural tourism will boost the economy since it will result in employment of people in the cultural industry, such as crafts and other related areas. The second statement highlights the point that cultural tourists are upmarket tourists (cf. Ioannides and Holcomb, 2001 and Richards and Bonik, 1995) who require up-market accommodation and additional infrastructural investment. This observation is somewhat contradictory especially since bed stock in Malta is already abundant (TPS I-18). Moreover, traditional forms of accommodation such as boutique hotels (TS I-30), and farmhouses could be utilised for such a purpose, especially on the

island of Gozo (Theuma, 1997). In addition, utilisation of old houses in village cores (L I-25) could stimulate local economic activity, offer the visitor a unique experience and in addition limit the infrastructural expense that the second statement is alluding to.

Informants also had a mixed view of the economic contribution of cultural tourists. A cultural provider defined cultural tourists as “people who do not make a living out of culture but will live for culture” (CP I-32) these include the artists themselves. Another provider argued that cultural tourists are often “high spenders” and those who experience Malta “could stimulate the local economic activity by bringing forth investment to the Maltese Islands” (CP I-41). These two opposing views show the two ends of the cultural tourist spectrum, again indicating that the Islands attract a variety of cultural visitors whose needs are various, but for whom Malta could offer a product that satisfies the various needs.

Another indication of the economic contribution of cultural visitors could be inferred from the Tourism Economic Impact Study (Vella and Mangion 1999). This study reported that 88.7% of tourists visiting Malta during 1998 spent a total of Lm 19.54 million on recreation. The prevailing type of expenditure was channelled to cultural activities with 69.6% of the visitors spending time and money on cultural entertainment. This translates into Lm 8.89 million, a per capita expenditure of Lm 10.80. The pattern of expenditure on a nationality basis shows that the Germans are the highest spenders with 9.5% of their holiday budget spent on culture, followed by the Dutch 8.6%, the

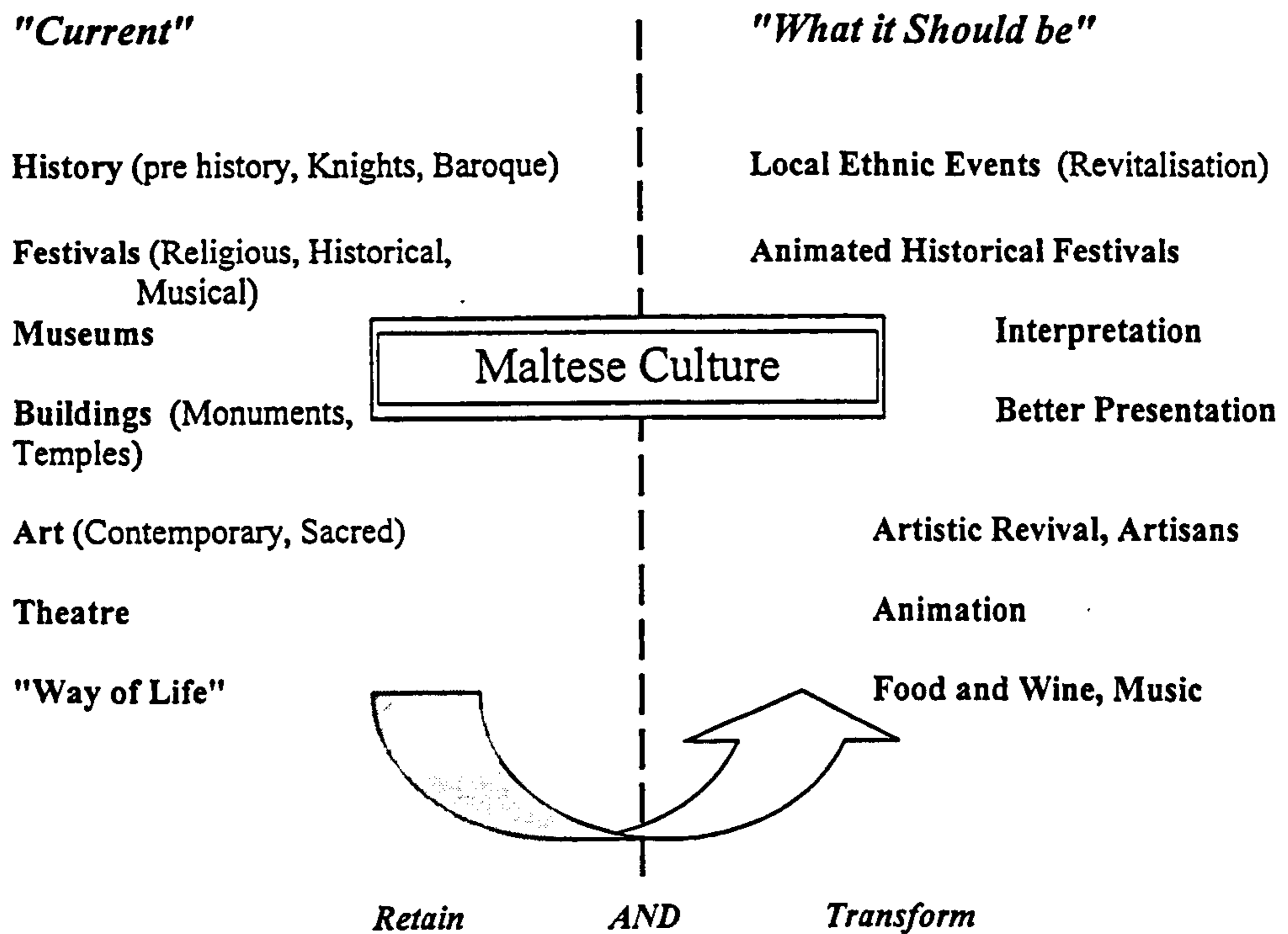
French 7.3%, the British 5.9% and the Italians with 3.7% of their budget spent on cultural activities. In winter 76% of French and Dutch visitors spent money on cultural attractions and events followed by 70% of British and German, whereas only 61.8% of the Italians made such an expenditure. These findings then indicate that the Dutch and the British spend money on cultural events - in comparable amounts to the German and the French indicating that culture is equally important for these four markets. The study revealed that for 1998 the British spent most on shopping, with an average of Lm 22.13 spent on souvenirs, gifts and duty free items. These findings tend to reflect the observation made in the first statement, namely that cultural tourism can boost the economy. This gives wider scope for cultural production - such as further enhancement of the craft industry as well as through the use of local agricultural produce in the development of Maltese gastronomy. There is plenty of scope for the enhancement of culture and its economic contribution as was highlighted in the Malta Tour quoted in Section 5.4.2 and in Appendix 8.

5.5 Discussion and Chapter Summary

This chapter has explored the views of culture and cultural product according to the participants of this research. Informants' views on culture are diverse and reflect the extent of the cultural product of the Maltese Islands. The above discussion has raised a number of points.

The first observation that emerges is that what constitutes culture and cultural tourism is highly contentious. Although aspects such as history and monuments were not issues of debate, other aspects traditionally considered non-cultural, such as gastronomy and historical pageantry were. This raises an interesting point since what might be considered, as “culture” has a “past”; however new elements of culture such as gastronomy and (invented) festivals do not have a past. Yet, there are exceptions. Events that do not have a “past” like the Choir Festival and the Jazz Festival are seen as cultural, due to the type of audience they attract. Culture for the informants also had a depth and breath of meaning. This is not entirely new since this observation was also raised in the literature chapters. However, the discussion revealed that the term culture is not only related to the item *per se*, that is food or the pageant, but to the way these are presented. Thus, leading to the conclusion that culture is not only something *that is* but it is also *an attribute that is bestowed* upon certain items. This also shows that certain items produced by a society can with modifications become *cultural*. Discussions on the cultural product indicated that there were different perceptions of the product and most importantly that informants discern a difference between the resource (culture) and the resulting end product (cultural product). The cultural product currently available is perceived as static, and needs revitalisation so that it could be more viable and more attractive. Diagram 5.2 represents such discourse.

Diagram 5.2 Transforming Culture



Moreover, informants stressed the importance of cultural experience that does not require specific merchandising or packaging, yet it has various implications on the development of cultural tourism. Authentic cultural experiences like the village *festa* add to the value of the product and that is why such events and procession appeal to the visitor. Visitors to historical pageantry argued that historical events are a venue for learning about one's past and history and therefore, authenticity in these is of utmost importance. The relevance of authenticity cannot be underestimated especially in elements with which the tourist is going to have direct contact and which are easily

detected. The reports appearing in guidebooks are also worrying as the maxim of tourism states that word of mouth is best form of advertisement, it can also be the most damning. An authentic product and non-contrived expression will also add to visitor experience. A more important reason for taking into consideration authenticity is that if culture will be used as an educational tool, as suggested by informants, then whoever is organising the event or activity has the responsibility to disseminate the right information and to present elements in their proper context. Authenticity is not only important for the preservation of culture but it is important for culture's proper evolvment. Thus when discussing cultural revitalisation it is important that experts in the field are involved. In addition other cultural elements identified in the above discussion, which are presently not perceived as highly cultural such as food, production of local crafts and participation in historical pageantry if augmented could enhance visitor experience.

The discussion on cultural tourists showed that the tourism sector adopts a narrow definition of "cultural tourists". This discussion has also indicated that the highly motivated cultural tourists are few and would not sustain the current tourism system. However, it has also been demonstrated that there are other visitors who are interested in cultural tourism, even though their prime motivation may not be pure culture. The prevalent "narrow definition" of cultural tourists limits the possibilities for further cultural tourism development since cultural tourists were categorised without considering the possibility that diverse categories of cultural tourists may exist. The fact

that this view was prevalent amongst MTA informants is rather worrying. The MTA has never conducted any research on cultural tourism, or assessed the impact of culture on tourism and vice-versa. The data generated by the MTA itself is not utilised for policy formulation and elements within MTA have definite ideas on cultural tourism. In addition, policies on cultural tourism have been designed using a top-down approach and are unconnected with what cultural tourists like. Clearly if Malta wants to develop this sector, the definition of cultural tourists has to be wider to include the various levels of cultural motivation. Furthermore, additional work needs to be conducted on the cultural product (sites, festivals, gastronomy and crafts) to provide high quality products that would enhance visitor experience, encourage expenditure and hence economic viability. The final point that emerges from this discussion is that culture as a tourism product cannot be dissociated or separated from the other elements such as the local perception of culture and the local providers: it is interconnected to the whole.

CHAPTER 6

Negotiating the Destination Image: Marketing Malta through Culture

After climbing nearly every hill top, visiting every ravine, sailing under the magnificent sea cliffs and enjoying the splendid climate of Malta and Gozo, one is inclined to share the enthusiasm of the inhabitants. The Maltese Islands are possessed of much natural beauty and are full of interest for the geologist, naturalist, archaeologist, philologist, historian, economist and politician
- Sir John Murray of the Challenger Expedition, MGTB (1940) cover page

It was clear that some destinations have aspirational value. ... Fiji..., for many residents in Britain it was a desirable tropical island destination, but for many Australians it was like Malta for the British, close to home, speak the same language, nothing exotic.
- Oliver Bennet, (1999:51)

6.1 Introduction

This chapter as the above two quotations indicate, focuses on the image of Malta, its marketing as a tourist destination and the role of culture in the image of Malta. The focused nature of this chapter looks at two principal stakeholders the tourism sector in particular the MTA and the tourism private sector, in particular the tour operators. Research conducted for this thesis has highlighted the existence of a very intricate relationship between culture as a product and the destination. Conversations with informants revealed that a study on cultural tourism also entailed the analysis of the “marketing of Malta as a destination” (TS I-4). As has been discussed in the previous chapter, culture is considered as a tourist attraction, used by the tourism entities (private and public) to attract prospective visitors to the Maltese Islands. This chapter will thus

discuss the ways in which Malta is trying to carve a niche for itself through the use of culture. It will also explore the extent of the role of culture in the creation of the destination image. In so doing it will analyse the mechanisms involved in the marketing processes of the Maltese Islands abroad based on procedures employed by tourism entities and through the analysis of the tourism literature used by the MTA and the tour operators.

The chapter is divided into five main sections. The first section will discuss the marketing of Malta as a destination where the views of the public tourism sector and private tourism sector stakeholders on the destination Malta are explored. The second part looks closely at the marketing process adopted by the MTA. It is argued that through the adoption of the marketing procedure described in this chapter, the MTA is also negotiating a new image and place in the international arena. Imagery and the role of culture are discussed in the third section. The fourth section explores Malta's potential as a cultural tourism destination and, the final section highlights the main points of this discussion.

6.2 Marketing Malta as a Destination

Culture in recent years started to have more visibility to the extent that aspects of culture such as heritage were not just an attraction but authorities like the MTA claimed: “[the] MTA recognises the key contribution which Malta's cultural heritage

makes to the unique value proposition” (MTA 2000:22). In addition to heritage, MTA's cultural offer included also:

... gastronomy, language, who are the Maltese, their religion, their everyday life, that is all culture. (I-3)

Culture is not considered a valuable tourism asset by tourism entities only. The policy document for the National Centre for Culture and the Arts states that not only culture will add to the attractiveness of the Maltese Islands but it will also have economic benefits (Ministry of Education, 2001: 31).

For a number of years, Malta as tourist destination was differentiated from its competitors through the price factor. The MTA's objective was to move away from this position through new marketing activities (TS I-1, I-3, I-10, I-30) and in so doing package Malta differently:

...in a way that Malta's potential as a more complete destination, is appreciated by tour operators so that they find it easier to sell themselves to their clients (TS I-3).

MTA based its new packaging of the destination upon the non-price factors of quality (I-3, I-5, I-7, I-10, I-28, I-30), service (I-1, I-13) and product (I-3, I-6).

6.2.1 Quality

The concept of quality and the marketing of Malta as a quality destination have already been mentioned in Section 1.3. It has been argued that previous attempts adopted by the Maltese tourism authorities to move towards this type of market were met with protests, anger and contempt (Boissevain and Theuma, 1998, Ioannides and Holcomb 2001). Quality in the early 1990s meant up-market accommodation, and the building of 4 and 5 star accommodation, as well as aiming for a higher spending tourist.

One of the MTA's objectives was to establish Malta as a destination of choice rather than a destination competing on price. At the time of research, the markets studied were still very much divided on this matter. The tourism private sector stakeholder group was of the opinion that despite a change in focus Malta, would still continue to compete on price (I-17, I-18, I-20, I-27, I-29). However, tour-operators also expressed optimism that the new MTA structure will bring about change (I-17, I-18, I-19) since "all aspects of the product would be under one umbrella" (I-18) and:

... because personnel are changing, people in key positions are changing, so obviously there will be a new way of thinking. (I-19)

The MTA representative offices were engaged in transforming Malta's image by upgrading the image of the destination as well as the quality of the visitor. In one of the markets studied, the objective was to upgrade the quality by moving away from the "cheap, low-budget, mass market accommodation to the more up-market type of accommodation and a tourist who was more niche market-oriented" (TS I-30). The

marketing campaign adopted in this market was addressed to the “cash - rich, time - poor 25 to 35 year age bracket” (TS I-30) and with an emphasis for relaxation and leisure. In addition the emphasis would be on:

The short break themes of diving and culture, with the addition of strong emphases on the arts, architecture and heritage, food, wine and general lifestyle and activity elements of the Maltese Islands. (TS I-30)

In the second market, quality was not judged by the type of the accommodation chosen since “the visitor will rather save money on the accommodation and spend money at the destination” (TS I- 7). The second market was described as a price sensitive market, yet a market where quality was highly required by the visitor (TPS I-27). Thus, the type of quality aimed for in the second market was synonymous with “an early booking tourist” (TS I-7), who was “keen on activities”, and one “willing to experience the destination” (TS I-28). Moreover, a quality tourist was also defined as a tourist who would visit a destination for short-break holidays (TPS I-27). Nevertheless, there was divergence in opinion. A tourism private sector informant, from in the second market, argued that quality was related to the type of accommodation no matter how late a booking was made (I-29)¹. According to tourism sector informants the aim of the second market was to embark on a policy of sustained quality growth (I-7, I-30) through the promotion of activities and niche markets. The activities included mainly diving; however, history

¹ Late bookings were a policy used by some operators. They would give their clients high-star accommodation at a much -reduced price. This policy could be possible because of the large availability of four and five star hotel accommodation in Malta, led to a knock-on effect on lower star-accommodation.

and culture were also identified as popular activities in which the tourist originating from the second market engaged in (TS I-7).

The above comments show that at the time of study markets were seeking to promote Malta as a quality destination albeit quality meant different things. Nonetheless, both policies were meant to transform Malta's image in their respective markets. The 'new' concept of quality adopted was not entirely bound to high star accommodation but also included the type of activities that the tourist could engage in; with culture and or aspects of culture as a prominent component. From this then it could be concluded that culture was being seen as a quality marker.

6.2.2 Service

Service was seen as an important aspect of the general quality of the product by informants and by the MTA policy. In fact the MTA set up a Human Resource whose aim was the:

Setting of human service standards for core services within the industry ... To instill a service culture within all sectors of the tourism industry. (MTA 2000: 24, 57).

Tourism private sector informants argued that MTA's action to address human resources within the tourism sector was timely since the service culture in Malta was not uniform throughout the sector. Informants referred to the level and type of service in restaurants,

which at times was not up to standard, (TPS I-18, I-19) and tourist support infrastructure such as bus drivers and ferry services (CP I-13).

6.2.3 The Malta Product

The MTA strategic plan defined product as “the environment, national and tourism infrastructure and cultural heritage” (MTA 2000: 11). However the informants’ view on product was more related to the actual tourist offer than the holistic vision suggested by the MTA. Informants opined that the Malta product was “very fragmented” (TS I-4). Tourism sector and tourism private sector stakeholders shared this view. An informant described Malta's image as “all over the place” (TPS I -18) since Maltese tourism authorities were selling Malta as a sun and sea destination, cultural destination as well as an activity destination; one informant added that, “there was no unified position” (TS I-7). This overall fragmentation of the product was a cause of concern, and as another informant pointed out:

Malta needs to identify the ‘good’ - it needs to identify those characteristics that make us a different destination we need to identify those characteristics that distinguish us from others and start marketing those (TS I-10).

It seems that despite the effort to create a different image and position, this was still elusive. Looking at the interview data and assessing the way informants perceived the overall product some interesting points emerged.

6.2.3.1 Incongruency

Fragmentation partly results from discordant views that exist between the various stakeholders. In a communication issued by the MTA office in Amsterdam (Mallia 2001) in preparation for a marketing seminar it was mentioned that the Benelux and Nordic market should stress quality rather than growth in numbers. However, during a speech given at the seminar held at the MTA office in Amsterdam, an MTA official from Head Office in Malta argued that this market should go for a much bigger growth. Looking at the figures suggested this was a substantial growth, and given the airline capacities available for the market at the time this was highly improbable² (TS I-7, I-31). These two messages are in their very nature conflicting. Conflicting and incongruent views very often lead to a situation where it is difficult to identify future strategy. Although MTA documentation pinpoints to a new approach and direction (see Section 6.4), backed up by initiatives taken by the MTA, tourism sector informants argued that within the organisation itself (MTA) more groundwork was needed to primarily identify the product Malta would project:

We are still in the process of learning, as yet we do not know what our product should be; internally we do not know that as yet (TS I-8).

And to prioritise a course of action in certain markets:

² . The researcher was present at this seminar.

Culture is a good selling point but it is a specialist market first we need to attract core market (short break holidays, golf, sport) and *then* shift on to culture (TS I-5)

6.2.3.2 Positioning

An important element in marketing is the actual positioning of the Maltese Islands vis-à-vis the other destinations. The MTA has argued that a different positioning has to be adopted with “Malta becoming a destination of choice” (MTA 2000: 40). However, interviews revealed that there was a divergence among the informants of what Malta's position should be:

We position Malta as a fun, sun, sea ... and ... cultural destination (TS I-1).

There are a lot of misconceptions of what Malta is and what it has to offer, Malta is pigeonholed as a versatile destination, summer, beach; Gozo was more up-market, more sophisticated (TPS I-18).

Informants opined that Malta was perceived differently by different markets. A tourism sector informant described the different perceptions as a spectrum ranging from the perception of “a cheap mass market to a cultural destination with a range of other perceptions in between” (TS I-1). This was a rather an intriguing position as it further reinforces the view that Malta means different things to different markets and having a “fragmented approach” (TS I-4) referred to earlier, at the same time leading to the reinforcement of certain beliefs, where markets are categorised:

Over the past ten years Malta has developed the incentive market, diving and conferences, packed with events and cultural activities and pageantry for the European market *but not the British* (TSI-5).

Moreover, the fragmented approach was further reinforced by the practice that each MTA representative office abroad has its own separate marketing and advertising campaigns, thus imparting a mixed image of the islands. According to tourism sector informants this approach leads to the creation of conflicting signals:

Our advertising campaign should be unified each office should be giving out the same message. Before we even start to market Malta, we have to have a clear position imprinted in our own minds. Unfortunately we do not have that clarity as yet. We also need an image, a symbol that when you see it, wherever you see it you'd immediately say, "Malta". (TS I-7)

Informants argued that different markets should have a degree of freedom to adapt and change images according to the market. However, the brand image and logo of *Malta: More than meets the eye* and the colour scheme adopted by the MTA would serve to standardise the MTA image (TS I-2) (see Appendix 10). However, a clearer and more recognizable image, would imply a stronger leverage when trying to get the message across on the international arena. This observation was based on the argument that as a small island Malta has a limited advertising budget (TS I-1, I-4) and thus:

The windows of opportunity at our disposal are very, very, limited. We have a lot of competitors, and a lot of noise. Thus we have to use the space at our disposal very effectively by mentioning the more salient points of our destination. Our promotion has to be concise but effective.
(TS I-3)

In addition, tourism sector informants were of the opinion that the competition that an island like Malta faces was very stiff, so one of the main advantages would be “to sell the same story” (TS I-28). Yet, the image portrayed abroad was according to the informants not congruent. Thus as mentioned in Section 3.3.1, a unified and congruent image is essential for a successful destination. The above discussion indicates that this is not the case with the Maltese Islands' image abroad. Tourism sector and tourism private sector stakeholders have expressed concern that such a fragmented image may be detrimental to the success of the ‘Malta destination’. Before analysing the image of Malta in more depth the discussion will first proceed to assess the way in which the Malta’s image is transmitted abroad. As this may shed light on the creation of such image. The next part of this chapter will explore the processes employed by the MTA to market Malta and its products.

6.3 The Marketing Process and The Art of Negotiation

As discussed in Section 3.2, marketing is defined as selling and advertising and this is an integral part of this process; in addition, marketing techniques help to convince and persuade prospective buyers. Part of the marketing campaign of the MTA is initiated

from Malta and a substantial part of the marketing activity is conducted via activities abroad. This discussion will outline these main activities.

6.3.1 MTA Head Offices-Overseas (Marketing activities originating from Malta)

The marketing campaign is mainly carried out by the Marketing and Promotion Directorate of the MTA whose responsibility is to “market Malta abroad as a tourist destination” (MTA, 2000: 40). This is conducted via “an international network, advertising and promotional campaign; tactical and strategic support to tour operators, development of niche markets and the development of new markets” (MTA 2000: 24). The campaigns include: consumer advertising, public relations, newsletters, regular press releases publications for the local trade in Malta as well as foreign markets, and the internet. In addition, the MTA through its Marketing and Promotion Directorate participates in an average of 70 fairs per year (TS I-1, I-3, I-4). In recent years, the MTA started to complement the above activities through the use its website (www.visitmalta.com), The site (which is interactive) has direct links to activities, events, specific and general information about the Maltese Islands. Tourism sector informants defined the website as a medium that has given the MTA more opportunity “to update and change items, as well as it allowed for more information to be placed” (TS I-3) and so it can “reach better the consumer through direct marketing” (TS I-2). However informants argued that this means had two drawbacks. First not all prospective buyers had access to the internet (TS I-3) secondly it is not a public way of advertising the destination. The other traditional forms of marketing (advertising and

public relations) were still considered important since “they give the signal that we (Malta) are still out there” (TS I-2).

The MTA was therefore the channel through which the destination and the tourist are brought together with the marketing linkages campaigns serving to “capture” (TS I-2) the tourist. A closer look into the workings of the MTA has identified some potential problems that may have an incidence on the marketing of Malta. While the Marketing and Promotion Directorate markets Malta, this division does not market any of the events. This was conducted through the Product Planning and Development Directorate (TS I-6) and then through communications division of the MTA (TS I-3). Thus while the Marketing Directorate was responsible for marketing of islands, including their cultural make up (through the product) it was not responsible for the marketing of events, or for the manning of the website. This might lead to a situation where there is a ‘division of labour’ that is not synchronised; which over a period of time could have adverse impacts on the way the product is marketed. This relationship may need to be addressed. In addition, there was a discrepancy in views of the Marketing Directorate and the individual offices abroad indicating that they do not communicate with one another. Informants also commented on the use and circulation of research generated by the MTA Head office. The research division of the MTA is responsible for research and the analysis of visitor exist surveys. However the use of these statistics is not uniform throughout with “entities within (MTA) who do not bother to use them” (TS I-9). One particular informant even went further to suggest that this data was not used for policy

making. In addition the “timeliness” of this research is not adequate for the markets abroad - “we need to get this data fast, we need it for our marketing plans, but it takes time to get to us” (TS I-7). These elements have to be redressed, if the MTA is to ensure a more proactive marketing stance and to create a more comprehensive image.

The MTA also conducts its marketing campaign via offices in the core markets located in London, Paris, Amsterdam, Milan, Frankfurt and Moscow and via representative offices located in other cities³. The MTA core offices abroad have their own PR companies that organise marketing and PR campaigns in the respective regions. The main role of these PR companies is to create the Malta image abroad. Although different markets have distinct marketing mix, the major marketing links are forged with the public and the tour operators. This extensive network of publicity is coordinated by Head Office in Malta. However it is the representative tourist offices that are responsible for the marketing of Malta in these countries.

6.3.2 Malta Tourism Head Office and the Malta Tourism Authority Representative Offices

Tourism policies designed in Malta are relayed to the MTA representative offices via the node of the Marketing and Promotion Directorate. Although there is this link with Malta these offices work on their own with “no Head Office brief. I had to make my own brief” (TS I-7). The fact that each market functions on its own suggests that most

³ The MTA has other representative offices in Austria, Czech Republic, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Sweden, Sicily, North America, Poland and Switzerland.

offices have the ability to function without the need of centralised action, often associated with unnecessary bureaucracy. However independence from Head Office could also lead to “fiefdoms” where each office works on its own and where there was no co-ordination between Head Office and the various markets and between the various markets themselves. Just to take a simple example. An analysis of NTOM (NTOM 1998) and MTA marketing plans (Mallia, 2001; MTA, 2002a) revealed that each office as its own way of presenting its marketing plans for the coming year (See Appendix 11). This implies that there is no uniformity and comparability of data between the various markets. In addition such a set up does not provide a conducive environment for collaboration. Moreover, informants have argued that very few of them were involved in the actual design of the strategic development plan for the MTA. An annual conference is held in Malta to discuss marketing actions and plans for the coming year. Again informants commented that during such meetings there was very little time available for discussion.

6.3.3 Malta Tourism Authority Representative Offices and the Market

The primary aim of the MTA representative office is to “reach out to the consumer first” (TS I-5) and to “change the picture in people’s mind” (TS I-28) thus, “creating demand” (I-2, I-3, I-5, I-7). The secondary aim was to work with the operators so that they “are convinced” (TS I-5) to sell a different image of Malta. The MTA representative offices are of the belief that unless there is collaboration between the interested parties, the destination-Malta would suffer.

6.3.3.1 "Reaching the Ultimate Consumer": Public Relations

Besides the website, each MTA office abroad has appointed a public relations company and an advertising company to handle the marketing campaigns in the respective markets. Through research and work conducted in the respective regions PR companies have designed advertising campaigns whereby the image of Malta could be promoted in the respective markets. The aim of the PR companies is to reach "the ultimate consumer - the tourist" (TS I-2). This is achieved through advertising campaigns and the organisation of familiarization trips for around 600 journalists and travel writers, who in return will write up articles on the destination, reflecting the a pre-chosen theme.

Tourism sector informants argued that these trips have three main purposes. Primarily they serve to "educate the press" (TS I-28), secondly, evoke the imagination of the readers (TS I-2, I-30) through the topic, the choice of words and images and thirdly, since they "are published in journals or newspapers are cost effective" (TS I-2, I-6). Thus the PR companies were encouraging journalists to write about chosen themes, at the same time, encouraged journalists to approach the themes through a different angle by highlighting the unusual and areas that are the 'off beaten track'

We invite journalists to visit the small village groceries, the bakeries as well as invite them to have a meal with local families. (TS I-28)

We have taken journalists and experts in interior design to write about palaces and boutique hotels like NN...(TS I-30)

Journal and newspaper articles are aimed to target a relatively affluent market and have so far included features on diving, farmhouses, history interior design, food and wine. Apart from national and regional newspaper articles, magazines targeted in the UK during 2001-2002 include "*Harper's and Queen*" and "*Food and Travel Magazine*" and they have published features on Malta, its food, culture and history (TS I-30). These articles are also serving as a bridge between the entities since all articles include the name of the operators selling the type of activity/holiday described, hotels in Malta and the contact address of the MTA office in London.

6.3.3.2 "Building Trust": The Tour Operator

According to estimates provided by the Ministry of Tourism the Maltese Islands get 85% of their tourists through tour operator business. This heavy dependency tends to suggest that the local tourism industry was very much subject to what the operators intend to sell (Sastre and Benito, 2000).

There were a total of 84 operators selling Malta in the United Kingdom and Ireland (McCluskey and Associates, 2001b) and 14 operators from Holland (Mallia, 2001). MTA market segmentation data for the UK market in 2001 (Table 1 Appendix 11) shows that tour operator business accounted for 96.9% of the total number of arrivals, with the remainder falling into the category of Special Interest Tourism, Conference and Incentive Travel and Visiting Friends and Relatives (MTA 2002). The market segmentation for the Dutch markets indicated that there were 87.7% of tourists using tour operators while 12.3% were classified as direct tourists (Table 2 Appendix 11).

Although there was a large discrepancy between tour-operator visitors and direct business, there was a comparable distribution among the various market segments. Operators selling Malta are in their majority large multi-national tour operators, yet there was also a percentage albeit a small percentage of small, niche and specialist operators. Traditionally the large tour-operators sold Malta as a typical Mediterranean destination whilst the niche markets pushed Malta for diving, archaeology and activity holidays. Since 1985 through to the 1990s, UK tour operators were given advertising assistance and a preferential rate of exchange to sell the Maltese islands in their brochures. Some of the informants argued that although it had helped small operators, it was a “waste of money” since very little preferential treatment was given to Malta vis-à-vis other destinations, and money was just going to line the pockets of the operators. This campaign was abolished in November 2000 (Richards, 2000) and this led the MTA to adopt a more proactive role in its dealings with tour-operators. The new role was described as one in which the large tour-operators will be convinced to sell Malta differently.

The MTA Strategic Plan is aimed towards creating a new image, a new way of packaging Malta (TS I-3).

Tour-operators described their relations with MTA as ranging from “pretty good” (TPS I-17) to “very supportive” (TPS I-27). Tourism authorities “were always there when needed” (TPS I-17, I-19) but meetings were more “of informal rather than of a formal nature” (TPS I-19). MTA representative office set out to redress this relationship and to

re-define the role of the MTA apart from an institution that was contacted for tour-operator support through advertising assistance (TSI-1 and TPS I-17, I-18) or when the tour-operator encountered problems (TPS I-29). Tourism sector informants argued that this 'new' relationship was based on the "re-establishment of dialogue" (TS I-5) and aimed "to re-build the trust" (TPS I-30) of the operators. Joint advertising campaigns with tour-operators (TS I-5) and other partners such as Air Malta (TS I-7) were also employed. Another technique employed was of consultation and the involvement of the various stakeholders such as the national carrier, Air Malta, PR companies, advertising agencies and MTA officials.

The Dutch MTA representative office has gone beyond consultation and has in June 2001 held a meeting with representatives of stakeholders. Each stakeholder presented its own vision for the market and the current constraints. This meeting was defined as a strategic meeting and a first of its kind. Such venues could be of immense importance and can act as vehicles for the marketing of the image and policy. This point will be referred to again when discussing the marketing of culture (Chapter 7).

The discourse used by informants in describing the process adopted by the MTA to reach its target audience was one that reflects human interaction "tourism is a human industry" (TS I-5). Yet, at the same time the MTA was adopting a role of the instructor who *educates, reaches out* and *convinces* the target audience and the operator to perceive Malta differently. This approach was aimed at counteracting the pressures

brought about by large tour-operators that very often dictate the manner in which to sell and market particular countries. Informants coming from the tour-operators sector indicated that the approach adopted by the MTA was new and they welcomed the initiative. However some of them did show concern for its continuity over time (TPS I-17, I-18, I-19) and its timeliness arguing that it was too late for Malta to re-direct its course (TPS I-29, I-31, I-39).

The above sections have described the marketing processes adopted by the MTA. The MTA was going through a period of 'metamorphosis' this provided the avenue to redress some of the past practices adopted by the NTOM. The approach described above is more proactive and focuses on the direct consumer and the operator. In addition the tour-operators and the other stakeholders such as the airline industry are seen as "partners" with whom joint business is conducted. Stakeholders have welcomed this initiative and argued that "despite the fact that each entity has its own goals and targets, we depend on one another for our success" (TS I-31). However the MTA still needs to redress its functioning at the local level. In particular there should be more co-ordination between the Head Office and the Overseas offices to ensure that the same policy is adopted, in addition the use of research has to be more widespread and made more accessible to overseas offices. Having analysed the marketing process the discussion will proceed to assess the image of Malta portrayed abroad via MTA and tour-operators brochures.

6.4 Imagery

An issue related to the development of cultural tourism was the current and prevalent image of the Maltese Islands that the various entities have. As has been argued previously the MTA was determined to transform and adjust this image to one which was more competitive and culture oriented. In fact the challenges presented by the change in image perception was perceived as one of the major hurdles that needed to be overcome.

Image has two fronts, the image that the local population (destination) gives of itself and that which was formulated by the operators. The role of imagery used in tourist literature will primarily indicate the way in which the Maltese Islands are portrayed and secondly, the cultural elements that feature in such literature. Such analysis has particular relevance since most of the tourism business is generated by tour-operators. At the time of research, the prevalent role of culture in tourism imagery was perhaps stronger than ever. However the tourism sector and the tourism private sector had divergent views on the role of culture in tourism. The tourism private sector (tour-operators) argued that Malta's culture is a marketing asset used in promotional literature:

Culture is one of Malta's most important assets. Culture is a big part of our marketing; use of imagery in sales material for brochure and websites... (TPS I-17)

Thus adding more interest and variety to the tour-operator product (TPS I-17, I-18, I-27). Yet, tourism sector informants viewed culture more than just a marketing asset but defined it as “that thing” (*dik il-haga*) which will distinguish Malta from the other Mediterranean countries (I-1, I-2, I-3, I-10). The use of culture-related images does not always imply that the operators were selling culture but more likely that they using culture as a marketing tool:

We use culture to attract the grey market in the winter season; we use the image of the Grand Harbour, or the watch-tower or Maltese scenery on the front cover of our brochure. If we are selling summer we are aiming at a younger market, at a family... then put an image of people having fun on the beach and leave culture behind. (TPS I-17)

Having set the background for the discussion on culture and its role in imagery, the discussion will proceed to look in more detail at the imagery used in MTA and tour-operator literature.

6.4.1 “Malta: More than Meets the Eye” - A New Destination Image

To complement its new image the MTA, launched a set of new brochures in 2000; two A4 sized brochures one on Malta and one on Gozo and five smaller brochures focusing on diving, prehistory, history (including monuments and high culture) leisure and sports, and learning English.

The Malta and Gozo A4 sized- brochures are entitled “Malta: The Island at the Heart of the Mediterranean” and “Gozo: The Island of Love and Honey”, respectively. The reasoning behind the choice of logos was described as follows. ‘Islands’ denote the geographical location; ‘heart’ signifies warmth and hospitality of its people, honey a local produce associated with one of Gozo’s agricultural products⁴ and love refers to the myth of Calypso who was believed to have kept Ulysses prisoner for seven years in a cave overlooking Ramla Bay (See Map 3). Both captions were designed “to capture the imagination of the potential traveller” (I-3). The images used on the brochures are well-known tourist landmarks. The Malta brochure depicts the lower parts of Valletta, the bastions and St. Paul’s Anglican Cathedral, overlooking the Grand Harbour and at the foreground of the page a girl and her mother preparing the tackle for fishing. The Gozo brochure depicts the Azure Window in Dwejra Bay and a small *luzzu* (traditional fishing boat).

The new MTA literature was more image-based in contrast to previous brochures (published by NTOM) which were more word-based (TS I-1, I-3). Informants argued the new approach would have a “wider (popular) appeal” (TS I-1) and “would reach a bigger audience” (TS I-2). Another informant added:

It is a standard practice to base tourism communication on visuals. Nothing can replace a good photo. (TS I-3)

⁴ . This is not entirely correct, as it is the name of Malta and not Gozo that originates from the word *melith* meaning honey.

The new image campaign was based on:

Expertise collected by the MTA offices abroad, visitors responses, tour operator feedback and content research of other countries' advertising campaigns ... (and in response to the researcher's questions) primarily, our competitors (Cyprus, Turkey, Spain). (TS I-4)

Brochures have one central image spread on two adjacent pages with much smaller pictures aligned along the perimeter of the pages. Each set of pages described a theme related to the islands. The first two themes reflect the natural and physical environment of water, (*Malta: Water and Light*) and climate (*Malta: Explore its Intensity*). The next four themes are related to heritage and culture. They are dedicated to history (*Malta: a Treasure Island*); buildings, (*Malta: Step into its Golden Palaces*); hospitality, (*Malta: When Hospitality becomes Legendary*) and feasts (*Malta: Join in the Festive Spirit*).

The islands are depicted as idyllic islands with honey-coloured stone buildings, at sunrise, harbours and fishing villages. In these sections the islands were presented and described, as a "tranquil celebration of sea and sun" inhabited by a population who was "lively, warm-hearted, typically Mediterranean". The Maltese nation was described as a population with "a unique sense of welcome" whose hospitality extends back to mythological times, with well known figures such as St. Paul's and the Knights of St. John benefiting from Maltese hospitality. For the first time ever the MTA refers to

Malta's historical past as "7000 years of history" in its literature and uses this reference in all of its brochures:

Widely known as a sun-drenched land of mystery, Malta was much more than a bridge between sea and sky. It was an image of its past: **7000 years of history** which, from the megalithic temples built at the dawn of humanity to the grandiose saga of the Knights of St. John, have endowed Malta with extraordinary heritage. (MTA 2000c: 7) (Emphasis in original)

Informants quoted in Chapter 5 had argued that Malta does not make enough claims on its historical background, the 7000 years-of-history referred to in this quotation, and this factor was according to the informants an element that Malta should stress more.

Finally, the MTA makes it a point to remind the visitor that although the islands are historic they offer the visitor a number of activities including water and land sports and entertainment - thus reminding the visitor that the islands are also modern. The visitor was also invited to "*Live to the Rhythm of your Dreams*" and then to do as the locals do after dancing the night away to head for a well-known local tea-shop to eat *pastizzi* in early hours of the day. Parts of the text accompanying each theme are written in bold, thus standing out of the page. The highlighted text referred to heritage, for example "megalithic temples"; historic figures, for example, "St. Paul"; and historical facts and information for example, "in 1530, when the Knights of St. John settled in Malta...". In this manner the bold text acts as a 'marker' (cf. MacCannell, 1976) for history, thus identifying those aspects that according to the MTA are worth visiting. At the same

time the MTA is acting as an instructor to the visitor - 'this is what you should look out for'. This treatment is also adopted for leisure activities thus the diver is told that he/she is "at the heart of an underwater garden". The superlative language usually associated with tourist brochures is also used in the MTA brochures:

Life here follows an *easy rhythm* punctuated by feasts and celebrations during which Malta *sparkles and crackles*.
(MTA 2000e: 11) (This author's emphasis)

The language used gave the islands a mythological image with a hint of mystery. This is elicited from references made to the painted eye of Osiris on the local fishing boat, *il-luzzu* and the myth of Calypso's cave reputed to be located on the island of Gozo. The historical and the mythological are intertwined in the brochure dedicated to prehistory:

You can't possibly escape the spell of a land so profoundly rooted in the origins of mankind. As the sun sets over the omnipresent blue of the Mediterranean, 7000 years of history become an unforgettable image. Here, stones have a soul. Standing close to them draws you into the mystery and makes you tremble at the hidden faith of the early inhabitants. Malta is among those rare places in the world which provide a change of scene that can take you back in time so, that for a while at least, the present fades away.
(MTA 2000d: end page)

However, even amid myth and prehistory the modern visitor was not that far away as this description accompanies the image of Mnajdra Temples and a young couple facing the rising sun, with their backs to the reader - giving a sense of looking into the future.

6.4.1.1 Images of Malta - The MTA's Perspective

The 157 images in these brochures emphasise heritage (prehistory, Knights of St. John and other eras) with 22.9% (n=36), water sports and activities with 22.3% (n=35) and art and architecture with 13.4% (n=21). However they also hint at the local characteristics with images of local crafts the local 'pub' *hanut tat-te*, the *luzzu*, and other local characteristics represented in 8.3 % of the images (n=13), towns and villages including Valletta 7.0% (n =11) and *festas*, invented and religious pageantry with 5.7% (n=9) and (See Table 1 Appendix 12). With the exception of two images which represent a village *festa*, and a secondary shopping street in Valletta, the pictures are rather devoid of humans, giving the impression of a sparsely populated island with few people on beaches or at other tourist sites. The image transmitted was one of tranquillity hiding the fact the islands are the most densely populated in Europe. This image could have a negative impact on visitors who when they arrive in Malta will realise that the Maltese islands are heavily built, with roads at times congested as well as the fact that people lead hectic lives. One tourist who was interviewed at one of the museums commented "I never knew Malta was so built-up" (German male tourist).

The treatment of people in brochures was an important element especially, locals, since:

Tourism is a people's industry, therefore visitors are looking for a human experience; they want to see people not just buildings and sea. (TS I-3)

There are 20 images depicting the local population (12.7% of the total), most of these images depict the Maltese during festive celebrations) 35% (n=7) (religious or otherwise). The other images depicted people at leisure in particular traditional leisure, (children at play, people talking, fishermen mending nets or engaging in fishing or lace-making) (Table 2, Appendix 12). These images tend to suggest that the local population is laid back. Tourists on the other hand were depicted as young couples, but childless. This indicates that the MTA is trying to construct a different image for Malta by moving away from the family destination image popular with UK to Malta during the 1980s (Callus and Bajada 1994).

In assessing the sites singled out for tourist attention, MTA's imagery does not focus on the actual sites (i.e. localities) but focuses more on the 'object' - a palace, or a building, which could be anywhere on the islands. This approach dissociates the object from its context but highlights the actual attraction. An analysis of the localities depicted show that there are no images of the major tourist resorts; again reinforcing the idea that Malta was a quiet and tranquil destination (see Table 3 Appendix 12). This table also indicates that churches are the most significant markers of the localities since there have the highest frequency of occurrence in the MTA literature.

Apart from these brochures, the MTA uses coloured posters that reflect the campaign of the MTA in that particular country. These are used in newspapers, and billboards. As mentioned earlier, in section 6.2.3.2, each destination has its own imagery. A selection

of adverts, which have been used in Holland and UK during-2000 - 2002, can be seen in Appendix 13.

Dutch MTA adverts combine history or culture and activities such as sailing, diving and walking. The composite image of each advert was based on two pictures - an activity-based image and a history/culture related image. Each has a caption that highlights the two activities represented in the image, for example "*Sail into 7,000 years of history and culture*". The accompanying text suggests to the reader that history was far reaching - if they sail or dive, it was there:

You can feel Malta's strong historical and cultural heritage even out on the seas around Malta's Islands.
(Verkeerbureau Malta, 2001)

Local people are presented as friendly, warm as well as festive - again reflecting MTA's image of the leisurely laid back population. The visitor is informed that he/ she can get away from it all by visiting one of the quiet villages (certain villages like Haz-Zebbug, Qormi and Siggiewi are increasingly becoming an attraction and although quiet may not be so "off the beaten track") or a secluded bay.

The emphasis of the UK campaigns focuses more on the water element, tranquillity and quietness where the visitor can get away from it all. Images used by the MTA office in London are less coherent in their message. The images used include the water element - an empty pool with the exception of the visitor, a couple standing in front of an empty

beach and diving. These images do not fit in within the 'cultural image' but emphasise relaxation. One advert used that had 'cultural' theme was of an old Malta bus driving along one of the country roads with two farmers and some goats blocking the way (see Appendix 13b). Using bus times (19.57 and 20.00), this image gives the impression that Malta has stopped in time (1957) at a gentler age yet it is also modern (2000) since a number of amenities (bars and restaurants) are available for the visitor. The themes explored by these images are contrasted in text. Whilst the image was one of tranquillity the accompanying word descriptions inform the visitor that s/he could engage in all sorts of activities - history, culture, *festa* (described as party) or even join the locals in their evening walk

6.4.2 Destination Malta through the Tour Operators' Eyes

The brochure analysis conducted included a range of operators from multinational operators to Malta specialists and cultural niche markets. Special and niche markets do not use a lot of imagery, with more emphasis being placed on the actual tour and the itinerary rather than the accommodation, which would be chosen for the visitor prior to the purchase of the holiday. The multi-national tour-operator companies have more images with the majority dedicated to the resort and the hotels. A tourist sector informant argued that Malta's image in the tour-operator brochures was rather standardised and does not reflect Malta:

What do you see in brochures? Concrete buildings, sea and pools. How can they be convinced of presenting a better image? (TS I-5)

On the other hand, a tour operator argued that:

Technically speaking our position is to fulfill whatever destination advertising the tourist office does. (TPS I-18)

These two quotations show that destination images emanate from and are created by both the tour operators and the tourism authorities. Moreover, they further reinforce the argument that assessing Malta's image was important and policy would be reflected in such imagery. It also emphasises that the link between the tour-operator and the MTA be sustained.

Tour-operator brochures gave extensive description of the islands in words but did not complement this with the corresponding imagery. The image was thus formulated very often by the caption accompanying the description of the destination and the picture on the first page. The tour-operator brochures studied represent the Maltese Islands through the water element and the *luzzu*, the Maltese traditional fishing boat. These were presented against a backdrop of either one of the still remaining fishing ports (now also major tourist areas, see Map 2) or fortifications (built by the Knights of St. John and reinforced by the British) surrounding the Grand Harbour. The general description of the Maltese Islands was of "sunny climes", "friendly locals" and a "history worth discovering". The location of the islands "mid-Med Island" was also highlighted with a

range of descriptors ranging from simple phrases such as “sunny destination” to others that combine a series of metaphors:

Malta is the old man of the Mediterranean. At the crossroads of cultures from all points of the compass, a halfway house between Europe and Africa, gateway and staging post to both East and West. (*Panorama*, UK Brochure)

The physical environment of the islands was described as “rough coastline”, “turquoise seas”, “rolling hills” and “picturesque villages” (*OAD Travel*, Dutch Brochure). Brochures tend to make more emphasis on Gozo - “Malta's sister island” which was described as “an island of sleepy charm”, “quieter”, “greener” than Malta and hence an “ideal destination for a relaxing holiday”. Gozo's charms are also described in one of the brochures in the following manner:

Without hesitation we can easily say that Gozo is one of the remaining unspoilt islands in the Mediterranean that has stayed out of the clutches of mass tourism. (*Connexion*, Dutch brochure)

The history of the Islands was mentioned in nearly all of the brochures and was described in a number of superlative terms “fascinating history”, “colourful”, “rich” and “often turbulent history”. The discourse used suggests that the islands are ‘branded’ by history. Phrases such as “steeped in history” and rulers have “left their stamp” on the islands were used to describe the islands. History in brochures was either “unique” or there was so much that the islands are considered “littered”.

Unique among the Mediterranean islands, Malta combines influences left by Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, all overlaid by an unmistakably British veneer. (*Sovereign*, UK brochure)

One of the brochures argues further that:

So littered is Malta with history that within a square mile you can tour the old capital (a medieval fortress built by the Knights) a Roman Villa, a Neolithic temple, a town of baroque churches and town houses, rustic farmhouses and fine specimen of late -Victorian architecture (*Chevron*, UK brochure)

The UK and the Dutch brochure adopt a similar tone when describing history. Malta's extensive historic past was described and reference was made to the architectural remains left by the various conquerors of the Maltese Islands. References range from the mythological caves of Calypso, to the bravery of the Maltese during the Second World War that earned the Maltese population the George Cross. Some brochures drew an analogy between past and the present visitors. Past visitors (that is, how the brochures referred to the occupiers of the Maltese Islands) were 'unwelcome' or 'unfriendly'. Perhaps this was mentioned to bring out the contrast that that today's visitors (tourists) are welcome; further reinforcing the image of the friendly locals and hospitable population.

Unlike history, culture was treated in a very simplistic and touristy manner. Maltese culture was reduced to a “goldmine of culture”, “traditional coloured boats painted with effigies to ward off evil spirits” “jostling in jolly harbour fronts”, “pretty villages”, “traditional fishing villages”, “honey coloured buildings”, “megalithic temples and splendid churches”. Malta's link with the sea was emphasized by making emphasis on the traditional boats and by inviting the visitor to watch local fishermen at St. Paul's Bay and St. Julian's, two areas where fishermen may still be visible.

Few of the brochures make reference to local cultural manifestations. Two of the brochures mention markets while a Malta Specialist brochure makes reference to the Maltese language and its uniqueness “the only Semitic one written in Latin characters”. One of these brochures refers to *festas*, traditional festivities celebrating village patron saints in the following manner:

For traditional entertainment join in with the local '*festas*' - a lively affair with fireworks and feasting. (*Thompson Summer Sun*)

A small number of brochures made reference to religious and folk festivals and gave a list of these including the dates when they are celebrated, however none mentioned the historical pageantry organised by the MTA. It was interesting to note that one of the UK brochures, a winter brochure addressed to the 50+ age group includes the International Choir festival (organised by the Malta Tourism Authority) in its list of events. One of

the niche market Dutch brochures was organised around the opera festival organised by the Manoel Theatre while another Dutch brochure includes images of the historical pageantry organised by the MTA but does not refer to them or include them in the list of activities. Another festivity that was given some importance was Carnival and winter visitors again the 50+ age group are invited to “join in the fun at the annual Carnival in Valletta, which takes place during the week before Ash Wednesday”. The religious heritage was referred to fleetingly by the mentioning of the Baroque churches, and the religious shrine of Ta' Pinu in Gozo.

UK brochures also referred to the island's British connection. The visitor was reassured of the familiarity of the destination - the familiar as opposed to the exotic as discussed in the previous two categories. The historical links and British influence on Malta are emphasized in the majority of brochures. Elements that are singled out include: red pillar boxes, blue lamps (police stations), British-made vehicles, watching football in pubs and the fact that Maltese still call their currency Malta pound⁵. The visitor is told that “the Maltese drive on the left” implying that driving in Malta is easy, since in Malta, like Britain, people drive on the same side of the road. And the visitor was reassured that s/he can be easily understood since “most of the locals speak English”. Only one of the brochures mentions that despite these similarities, “Malta is not a home from home” since its turbulent history and past make it quite different.

⁵. The official name for the Maltese currency is Maltese Lira, one may find that in colloquial jargon some people still refer to the Maltese currency as the Malta Pound, hence the reference in the brochures.

Brochures attempt to define the Maltese food (not known to the prospective visitor) through a context that is familiar to the visitor - namely the “Mediterranean” cuisine. Thus “Maltese cooking has a strong Italian (exotic, yet known to the visitor) and British (familiar) influence”. However, some brochures do attempt to go beyond the simple description and give a list of local dishes in Maltese and an explanation, though not before asserting the visitors that this food was familiar to them, thus:

Malta has enjoyed a long association with the British... You'll be likely to find traditional afternoon tea and a Sunday roast, as you will local delicacies. Being so close to Sicily, Maltese cuisine has a strong Italian influence and includes specialities such as timpana (a filling pasta pastry), bragjoli, (stuffed beef olives).... (*Panorama*, UK Brochure)

The Dutch brochures give Maltese gastronomy a more authentic feel:

Agriculture and fisheries dictate the cuisine. Rabbit (*fenek*)⁶, besides fish is one of the most popular meals in all its varieties. Deserts consist mainly of ice cream, fruit with sometime wild strawberries, cakes and goats cheese. (*OAD Travel*, Dutch Brochure)

Brochures also make reference to local beers and local wines. The UK brochures apart from giving a list of dishes they reassure the visitor that pizza, fish 'n' chip shops, “meat and two veg [sic] ” and pubs are also available.

Arts and crafts are classified under the collective category of “shopping”. They include elements such as lace and silver filigrèe which are traditional crafts and other items The

⁶ Translation was given in the original Dutch text.

crafts and artifacts mentioned include lace, woolen jumpers, silver filigree, glass, pottery and ceramics. Jeans wear, an item that one would not normally describe as an artefact or craft is included, however jeans is manufactured in Malta and visitors are advised to look for designer labels at bargain prices.

Maltese people are described as “friendly locals” “welcoming” and “the friendliest people you could ever wish to meet”. Yet, some brochures try to give more insight into the traditions of the Maltese and Gozitan people “the people in Gozo are devoted to their old traditions” (*Arke*, Dutch brochure).

6.4.2.1 Imagery in UK and Dutch Tour-Operators Brochures

The above descriptions contrast sharply with the type of images used in the brochures. Tables 1 and 2 (Appendix 14) indicate the relative importance of the aspects of the product. The bulk of the images were dedicated to the hotel and its immediate environs with 70.5% (n= 558) and 64.6% (n= 422) in UK and Dutch brochures respectively. Beaches feature in 4.4% (n=35) and 2.6% (n= 17) images in UK and Dutch brochures. These images including a small number of image in which there is no setting leave a total of 190 images (24%) in UK brochures and 197 (30%) of images in Dutch brochures dedicated to the destination. The distribution of images was also revealing. In line with the first image of the destination, the highest number of images included in the brochures was of seaside towns in both groups (UK, n=52 and Dutch n=55). The second highest image associated with the Maltese Islands in the UK brochures (after beaches) was of leisure activities notably water-sports activities 3.9% (n=31) whilst the Dutch

brochures emphasised the local character with 5.1% (n=33) with the highest single image within this category being that of the *luzzu*. Dutch brochures gave more importance to culture than UK brochures by using a higher number of images depicting temples, art, architecture and historical pageantry. Tables 3 and 4 in Appendix 14 look in detail at the images associated with localities depicted in the brochures. The two tables indicate that for both the UK and Dutch brochures the most prevalent image associated with Maltese localities was that of harbour and fishing boats.

The Dutch and UK brochures referred to rather than presented images of sites. The highest frequencies in both brochures were of Valletta, Gozo, Mdina, Rabat and heritage sites. Brochures also made reference to emerging tourist attractions for example, Siggiewi and Haz-Zebbug (see Tables 5 and 6 Appendix 14). These localities are also described via their additional attributes, for example Grand Harbour in Valletta, Mdina's Cathedral.

Locals (see Tables 7a and 7b Appendix 14) are represented by 3.8% (n=30) of the images in UK brochures and by 6.8% (n=44) of images in Dutch brochures. This contrast is rather interesting since it was the UK brochures that made more emphasis on 'the friendly locals' and yet they were poorly depicted. In both sets of brochures the highest number of images representing locals was set within the context of the service industry (UK n=20 p=22, Dutch n =22 p=28) (where: n = number of images and p = number of persons in the images). This was followed by images of locals in the

'cultural' context of the *luzzu*, and fishing environment (UK n=7 p=16, Dutch n=16, p=28). In both cases, the population was predominately male of a middle-aged bracket. Children, are not a prominent feature and when they feature they were depicted in the same traditional cultural settings as their adult counterparts.

In addition to these pictorial images presented by the MTA and tour-operators, research revealed another image; the image projected by the Maltese population of themselves. As discussed in Section 6.3.3, the MTA was redressing its campaigns to 'educate' the visitors and the operators. Analysis of discourse used revealed that the MTA's campaign was not only addressed outwardly to the prospective visitor but it was also addressed internally towards the local population.

The tourist experience will be based on what the tourist will come across during his/ her stay. Thus it was very important that everybody (the Maltese) have the tourist at heart. It is only in this way that we can show how friendly and hospitable we really are. (TS I-2)

The image that the Maltese give of themselves, their attitudes towards work and the attitude towards tourism were defined as problematic and as factors that unless tackled will hinder the development of quality tourism. Informants argued that there were other factors beyond the "image" and which will add to the congruency of the destination image. Informants singled out certain character traits that could be termed as 'cultural' that impart a negative image of the Maltese. Elements highlighted were lack of cleanliness in general (TPS I-19) and in particular cleanliness at major tourist attractions

(TS I-6, CP I-13), lax regulations that reflect in the way service providers in Malta deal with the client (TPS I-18, I-19, I-20). Other “cultural” traditions identified as harmful to Malta’s image were bird trapping and hunting. Tourism sector informants argued that the Maltese government needs to control such practices, which were impacting negatively the prospects of (cultural) tourism in the rural areas (TS I-6, I-8).

6.5 The Potential of Malta as a Cultural Tourism Destination: Is Malta Still in Time?

One of the themes discussed in conjunction with culture and cultural tourism was the potential to attract the specific market segment of cultural tourists. The nature of cultural tourists has already been discussed in Section 5.5. The theme discussed in this section is the Maltese Islands’ potential to attract cultural tourists. Malta’s capacity to attract cultural tourists was attested by most informants. However there were some who nevertheless debated and expressed doubts on how much Malta was able to attract cultural tourists; the issue being that Malta has already acquired an image of a mass tourist destination.

6.5.1 Geo-economic position of the Maltese Islands

Informants argued that primarily it was a question of geographical location and economies of scale. In particular, recent technological development augmented price competitiveness within the Mediterranean region resulting in a scenario whereby:

Malta attracts beach tourists. Cultural tourists are going further, they go to Kuala Lumpur, to Thailand... (TPS I-29)

However, other informants interpreted this geo-economic factor as a positive rather than a negative element. Indeed the two foreign markets looked at in this study were using the composite whole to market Malta as a cultural destination:

Malta is compact, culturally rich, has agreeable climate and is less than 3 hours away from central Europe (TS I-28).

In addition, (TPS I-27) argued that although his company does not market Malta as a cultural destination, its location was ideal for a short-break holiday. From these observations it can be concluded that operators do not consider Malta as a purely cultural destination yet, it was ideal for a short haul destination. This type of visit was not totally distinct from cultural tourism since urban tourism, cultural tourism and short holidays are usually interrelated.

6.5.2 Uniqueness

Informants argued that due to the growth of mass tourism the Maltese have lost their uniqueness and feel of a destination undisturbed by time.

When we had lower volumes (of tourists) we were more unique however once we made a move towards mass markets the perception has changed a bit.... You have to be unique because you are in a different scenario - you are a cultural destination (TS I-1).

An operator, who in the 1970s sold Malta as a cultural tourist destination, argued that Malta could no longer be considered a cultural destination. The main reason being that it had lost its “upmarket” destination quality becoming “a destination of meat and two veg” (referring to the type of food generally consumed by mass tourists) (TPS I-39).

...

Tourism officials have acknowledged the fact that the Maltese Islands have been scarred by the impacts of mass tourism development (I-7, I-10).

Tourism development in Malta was mixture of good and bad, with mistakes such as lack of adequate planning and the destruction of beautiful views and important sites. (TS I-10)

In addition the tourism development policy adopted during the 1970s (see Section 1.3.1), has resulted in Malta being positioned as a mass tourist destination. This has, according to informants determined its course of tourism development. Even though informants feel that culture could distinguish Malta from other destinations, the way in which the industry has developed and the amount of resources that have been invested in it, have somewhat determined the course of future tourism development. A tour-operator commented:

You will get a sizable portion of visitors that will visit the monuments. You will get a percentage of visitors going to Malta because they want to see the Neolithic Temples. But

by and large, the core market, which drives the industry is the person who wants good weather, wants a good hotel, wants to know that there is culture and wants to know that there is a good restaurant if he [sic] feels like a good meal.
(TPS I-18)

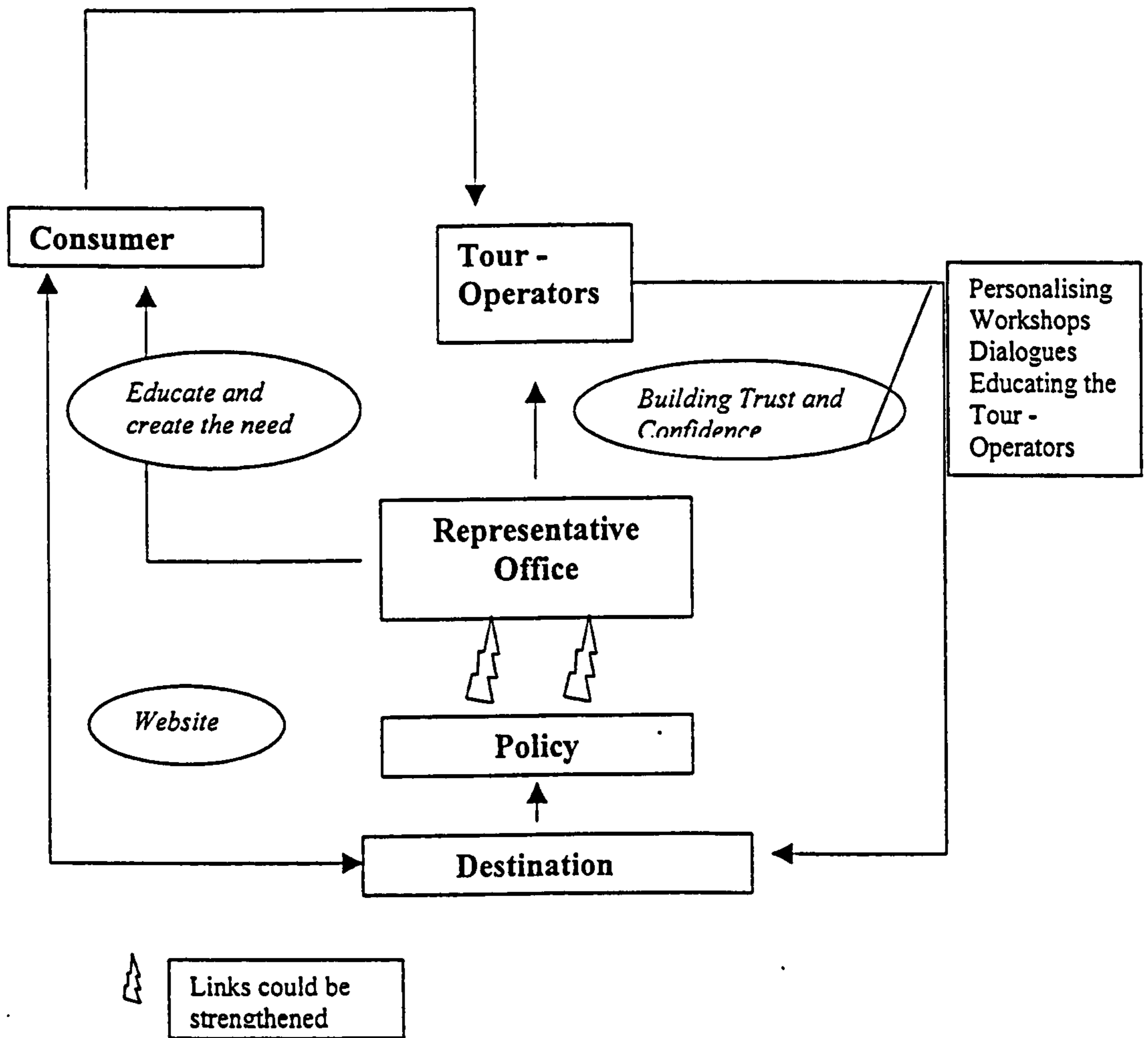
The above point raised two related issues. On the one hand it is being argued that Malta has already chosen its type of 'tourism' mass market on the other hand there is the recognition that this type of tourism has left an indelible mark on the Maltese Islands. There was an effort to redress the impacts of tourism. Primarily this was being conducted through the course of marketing action adopted by the MTA and secondly through redressing the course of tourism development. The Carrying Capacity Assessment (Ministry of Tourism, 2001) suggests that the Maltese Islands should aim for a sustained growth scenario that will limit the physical impact as well as utilise current bed stock

6.6 Discussion and Chapter Summary

This chapter has explored the role of culture in the creation of the Malta image. Through this analysis, the marketing relations between the destination, the MTA, tour operators and the prospective visitor were explored. This chapter has identified that the links between the MTA Head Office and the representative offices could be further strengthened and that there is the need for better co-ordination between the entities and within the institution, thus ensuring better flow of information and involvement in policy decisions. The MTA offices abroad have forged links with other sectorial partners and the consumer, with the MTA adopting the role of an 'educator'. This new

role is aimed at redressing the power-balance between the MTA and the tour-operators so that the MTA has more say in determining the way Malta is featured and marketed abroad. By adopting a more pro-active marketing approach and by determining its own image overseas, the MTA envisages to shift Malta's competitive advantage from one based on price to non-price factors. This relationship is summarised in diagram 6.1.

Diagram 6.1 MTA Marketing Process



This chapter has also looked at the imagery of Malta to assess the extent of use of culture within the literature. MTA and tour-operator brochures gave a similar description of the islands (history, cultural landscape) but differed in the imagery used. The MTA imagery was predominately based on heritage, culture and activities. The MTA brochures presented an image of the Maltese islands (which are the most densely populated country in Europe) as tranquil, idyllic islands, in which tourism resorts do not feature. There was just one reference to modern-day Malta that describes Malta as “urbanite”. The Islands were also presented in a series of opposite elements - a mixture of old and new (history and contemporary life) the past and the present, tradition and modernity, old and young and the element of festivity, light and colour - giving the destination “a younger feel”. MTA literature also made reference to the “heart” and “vibrant” colours suggesting a nation that was alive and interesting. The literature (words) and images used by the MTA complement one another since the predominant image was one of heritage, culture and activities.

Tour-operator brochures also presented a quiet Mediterranean country, reflecting this image in the predominately fishermen, sea-scape environment. Although brochures referred to history and culture (in text), these were masked through the superimposition of the other aspects of the product, notably the climate, the hotels and their environs of pools and beaches (in imagery). The locals whose friendliness and hospitality were exalted in text, were a minority feature in images and were categorised in a traditional

stereotypical (Mediterranean) setting - the fishing environment. Finally, the element of the young and vibrant environment promoted by the MTA literature was absent in the tour-operator brochures which presented the local environment via traditional contexts. None of the images, that is (an ever festive population) used by the MTA or a traditional way of life are entirely representative of the local population.

Upon reflection, the images of the Maltese Islands as presented by the MTA and the tour operators, elicit two versions of the Maltese Islands and hence of the Mediterranean giving rise to what could be termed as the 'two Mediterraneans'. The image presented by the tour operators is one in which the sun and sea are predominant, whilst that of the MTA highlights culture and history against a backdrop of sea and activities. These contrasting images of the 'two Mediterraneans' could lead to tensions between these two stakeholders. Although the MTA is through its newly acquired role as a negotiator, suggesting its own version of Malta, it will require time and effort to shift the image of Malta presented by the tour operator.

The final part of this chapter discussed the concept of Malta as a cultural destination. It was argued here, that Malta has the potential to attract cultural visitors however, Malta's acquired positioning as a 'mass tourist destination' appears to inhibit the further development of Malta as a cultural destination. This approach may be also propagated by the fact that as discussed in Section 5.5.1, the definition of culture adopted by the tourism sector is too narrow.

The MTA and tour operators use culture as a marketing asset, but this does not necessarily mean that the actual cultural product is marketed. The above discussion has identified the actual product is rarely mentioned in the brochures. This approach raised the question of the management of culture and its marketing. These themes are explored in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 7

Culture and Cultural Tourism in Malta: Management and Marketing Issues

*All cultures of course, have not shaped their thousand items of behaviour to a balanced rhythmic pattern... They scatter. If at one moment they seem to be pursuing certain ends, at another they are off on some tangent apparently inconsistent with all that has gone before, which gives no clue to activity that will come after. This lack of integration seems to be as characteristic of certain cultures as extreme behaviour is of others.
Ruth Benedict (1934:223)*

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the current practices employed in the management of culture in the Maltese Islands at the time of research and the implications of such practices. It has been argued that culture is an important aspect of the Maltese tourism product (Section 1.3.2); yet culture was not perceived as a defined product (Section 5.3.1). Culture was also used as the idiom for negotiating a competitive advantage in the arena of international tourism (Section 6.4.1). Chapters 5 and 6 have also raised the point that the management of culture needs to be addressed if tourism is to develop along this area.

The literature covered in Chapter 3 looked at marketing of tourism, marketing of culture and the management of cultural tourism. Section 3.7, raised a number of pertinent questions regarding the marketing and management of culture. In summary these

questions related to understanding better who markets culture, the procedures adopted in marketing culture and the type of culture marketed. In addition, the discussion on the management of culture raised the questions of who manages culture and the question of ownership of culture. The overall discussion raised in Chapters 5 and 6 has already shed some light on aspects of these questions. However this chapter aims to take the discussion further by focusing on the processes involved in the marketing and management of culture and relations that develop between the various stakeholder groups in marketing and managing culture. Due to the nature of the study and the methodology adopted it is possible to conduct this analysis by first focusing on the management of culture at the macro level and then proceed to assess management of culture at the micro level.

7.2 Managing Culture at the Macro Level: Stakeholders, Stakeholders Relations and Cultural Policy

The Maltese Islands do not have a formal structural framework for cultural management as suggested by Section 3.6. Thus it was imperative to first identify the stakeholders and their relations. This was also deemed important for the proper understanding of current practices of cultural management.

7.2.1 The Stakeholders

At the time of research the control, presentation and marketing of culture and heritage was apportioned between five main stakeholders: the Ministry for Education, the MTA, the Church, the private sector and the Maltese population at large, whose culture was

marketed for tourism purposes. The institutional organisation of culture set-up is outlined in Diagram 7.1. The following discussion will chart the roles of each of these entities and it will analyse the bearing these have on the current scenario of cultural tourism in the Maltese Islands.

7.2.2.1 The Ministry of Education

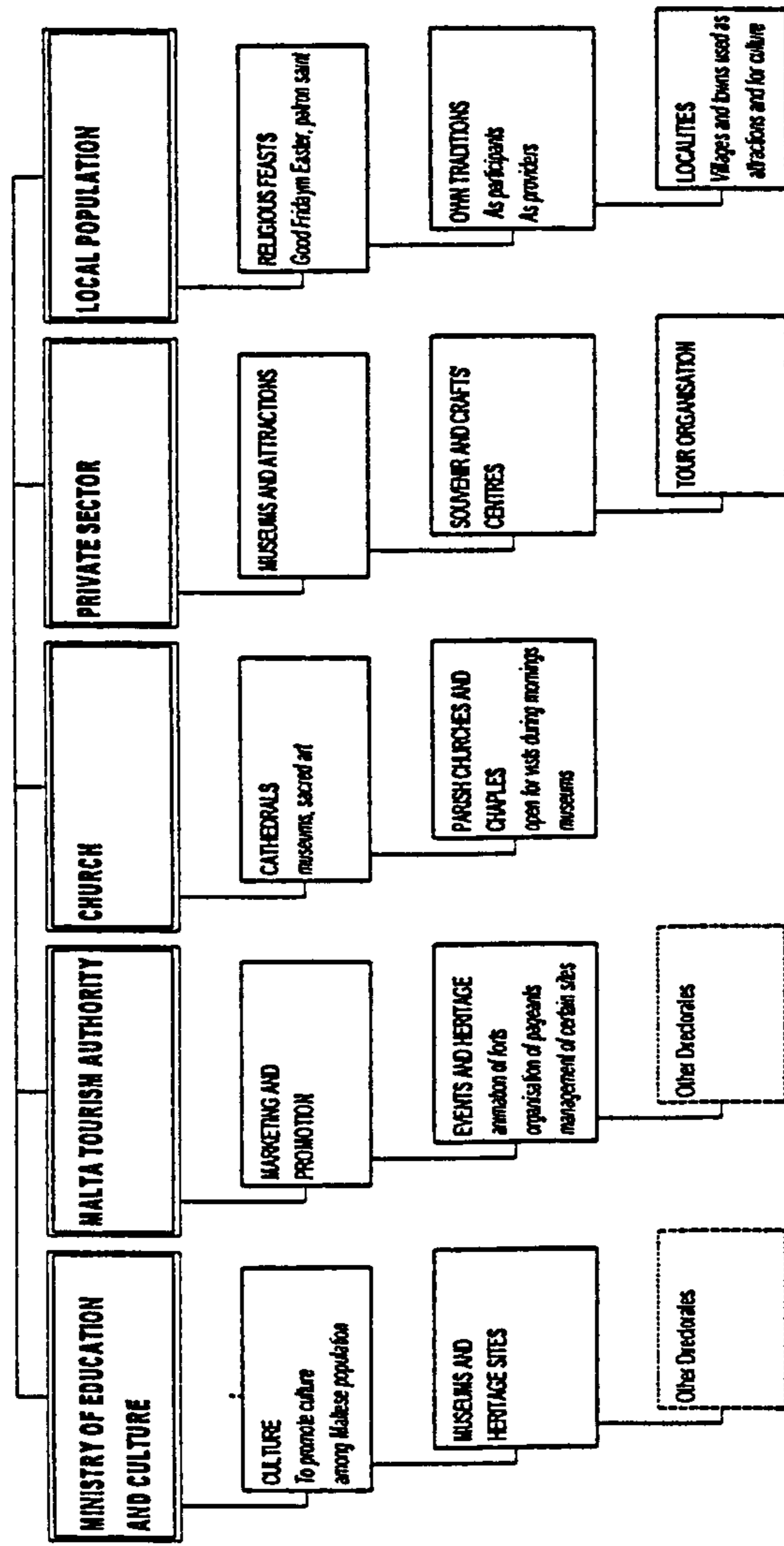
The Maltese government through the Ministry of Education had the largest responsibility for culture. The portfolio of this Ministry included the Department of Education, the Department of Youth and Sports, the Department of Culture and the Department of Museums. The Department of Culture and the Department of Museums were highly involved within culture and heritage.

The Department of Culture

The Department of Culture became functional in 1987. Prior to this date culture fell under the responsibility of various ministries including Education, Foreign Affairs, and Social Welfare (Pace 2001). The primary role of this Department was to enhance the awareness and appreciation of Malta's rich cultural heritage, and to promote local culture among the Maltese population. It was also:

responsible for the preservation and renovation of Maltese culture in order to draw out Maltese identity (CP I-23).

Diagram 7.1 The Organisation of Culture in the Maltese Islands



Tourists were considered “ancillary beneficiaries of the activities organised by the Department” (CP I-23). The activities organised by the Department of Culture included cultural tours organised for the Maltese population, the advancement of Maltese language by encouraging local writers to write drama in Maltese. The Department also gave active support to *ghana*, local brass and wind bands. Moreover, the Department organised lunchtime concerts, held every Wednesday between October and May targeted at persons working in Valletta. Although primarily addressed at a local audience, in recent years:

Tour-operators are bringing over tourists by the busloads to these concerts. Although this boosts the artist’s morale as he or she has an audience, this verges on exploitation of the artists concerned since tourists are not paying anything for the concerts, even though companies may be charging money for the transportation. (CP I-23)

This particular cultural provider did not object to tourists attending these concerts, since these activities “provide entertainment during the shoulder period and promote local artists”. The dissatisfaction was addressed at the operation of such tours and the possibility that these may be abusing local artists since concerts are free of charge. It is worth noting that the in-flight magazine “*Malta this Month*” which is distributed freely on the national airline advertises these lunchtime concerts in the “This month’s calendar of events” section.

In addition, the Department of Culture was also responsible for the organisation of major cultural festivals, such as Carnival, the Malta Jazz Festival, song festivals; the latter festivals were addressed mainly at a local audience. Although Carnival is targeted at a local audience it was also perceived as a tourist attraction by the MTA (TSI-3) and cultural providers (CPI-32). The Department of Culture has two other affiliated bodies whose activities deal with culture these are discussed below.

The National Theatre (The Manoel Theatre) and the Mediterranean Conference Centre (MCC) (formerly a hospital) are two historical and architectural monuments built by the Knights of St. John. Both buildings are used for cultural activities, namely the performing arts. The National Theatre and the Mediterranean Conference Centre were described as having an eclectic purpose - "all things to all men" (CPI-33). They hosted a number of cultural events ranging from national to international cultural activities, including popular theatre, song festivals, international ballets, operas and festivals. The buildings themselves are also cultural attractions. The National Theatre is the second oldest Baroque theatre still in operation and houses Malta's only theatre museum. The MCC houses the longest hall in Europe, which was used by the Knights of St. John as a hospital ward and in which the first modern medical principles, such as one bed per patient were practised.

The Museums Department

The Museums Department is responsible for the upkeep and management of national museums and heritage sites. The department was established in 1903 and by 1919 it had

six sites under its management namely the Roman Villa, St. Paul's Catacombs, Hypogeum, Tarxien Temples, Hagar Qim and Mnajdra (Ministry of Education, 2001). A number of these neolithic temples had just been discovered and these helped to establish the Maltese Islands as an important archaeological centre. In 1925, the Antiquities Protection Act entrusted the Museums Department with the "safeguarding of antiquities, development, excavations and the management of museums, archaeological sites and other attractions" (CPI-22). Today the Department is responsible for the management and upkeep of 22 museums and heritage sites, which are open to the public and of four others which are open only by special arrangement. These sites are a major tourist attraction and draw the majority of foreign visitors to Malta (see Section 7.4). The Department is also responsible for research and archaeological excavations.

7.2.2.2 The Malta Tourism Authority

Unlike the Departments of Culture and Museums, the MTA does not own sites, but it has a major role in product development and to enhance the visibility and attractiveness of Malta. This role is carried out by the Product Planning and Development Directorate. As mentioned in Section 6.3.1, another role of the MTA is to market Malta through the Marketing and Promotion Directorate.

The Product Planning and Development Directorate (PPDD)

The NTOM had over the years; created special "desks" which were responsible for the marketing of special interest tourism and niche markets. However culture did not have

a special desk nor it was considered necessary to have one - a tourism official pointed out that “there is no need for a separate desk since all of Malta is culture, marketing Malta is marketing culture” (TS I-2). Consequently culture did not evolve as a market in the same manner in which other niche markets such as diving and conference and incentive travel developed. With the establishment of the MTA, culture was given more prominence. Although the MTA did not assign a special desk to culture it was incorporated within the PPDD, which was an a new concept for Maltese tourism since:

The NTOM was more geared towards marketing and it could not remain like that, but we understood that there should be more control over management and development of what we were selling, such as product in general, human resources (TS I-6)

This directorate has the objective “to establish a framework for the improvement of Malta's tourism product with a view to developing a sustainable tourism industry” (MTA 2000: 50). In addition, it is also responsible for the “historical regeneration initiatives, and the management of local events” (MTA 2000: 24). In January 2000 the post of Heritage and Events Manager was established within this directorate. The main role is “to manage and upkeep smaller heritage sites and the organisation of events” (TS I-6). Although the MTA does not own heritage sites, through the Events and Heritage section it is responsible for the management of a limited number of heritage sites that it runs co-jointly with the Museums Department and / or NGOs (TS I-8). These are the Roman Baths outside the village of Mgarr, Malta (see Map 2), and a number of Forts; a legacy inherited from the NTOM. This role was then extended to include the animation

of Fort St. Elmo to represent military life during the Knights' era. During weekends re-enactors conduct tours of this fort and every other Sunday morning a military parade (In Guardia) portraying the visit of the Grand Bali as he inspects the troops of the fort is held.

The PPDD organises two types of cultural events - historical "invented" pageantry and other cultural (art) festivals. These events were initiated under the NTOM in the early 1990s following suggestions outlined by the Tourism Master Plan. One of the objectives outlined in this Plan was to organise events that commemorate the Knights of Malta. The Master Plan research team noted the heritage left by the Knights of Malta, their legacy and history was under utilised (CP I -26). Despite this suggestion, the initiative to organise historical pageants was initially taken up by a heritage NGO called *Fundazzjoni Wirt Artma*, rather than the NTOM (CP I-14). After some, time and following consultations with a Knights' military expert, the NTOM organised its first historical city festival in 1993 in Mdina. The first historical pageant was held as part of another festival - the Flower Festival. Subsequently these festivals were transformed into a historical pageant depicting Malta during the era of the Knights of St. John (1530-1798). The MTA is also responsible for the Choir Festival and assists with the organisation of the Malta Jazz Festival.

7.2.2.3 The Church

The numerous churches and chapels and the three cathedrals that dominate the Maltese skyline, attract a number of individual and group tourists:

A tourist visiting Malta and is in Valletta, including cruise liner tourists, comes to visit St. John's (Cathedral). (CP I-35)

Some of the churches and wayside chapels feature in tour operator brochures (see Tables 4 and 5 Appendix 14) and MTA promotional literature. In addition, guides make it a point to indicate churches on tourist itineraries¹. Being a Roman Catholic country, churches in Malta serve as venues of prayer as well as identity markers. The devout population has over the years embellished the buildings with various works of art, some of which are priceless. Moreover, churches and chapels are architectural monuments in their own right. As mentioned in Section 5.3.2, churches have an important social function and they are also the venue of the patron village feasts (*fešta*), which are a major tourist attraction. The Church also owns three Cathedral museums located in

¹ The following is an excerpt from a tour of the Maltese Islands (see also Appendix 8) The first 15 minutes of the tour are being reproduced here since a substantial part of the description given by the guide illustrates the above observation. "The coach left for St. Julian's and passed through to Regional Road. Our guide pointed out the two St. Julian's churches, which we did not really see as the coach zipped past. The coach then proceeded to San Gwann. The guide pointed out certain features, and gave us a brief outline of the village's history ... He also mentioned that the Parish church was built recently hinting at the relatively 'young age' of this town. ... From San Gwann we proceeded to Naxxar via the outskirts of Gharghur. The guide here pointed out to us the village and its Parish church (Gharghur). We then proceeded along the road to Naxxar. As we were coming to the main square from Tal-Balal, the guide drew our attention to the Parish church and the Palazzo Parisio. ... The bus then proceeded to Mosta through the narrow back streets of Naxxar. ... Arrived at Mosta Square. ... (It) was bustling with activity and crossing the road was a bit tricky..."

Mdina, Valletta and Victoria (Gozo). The museums house manuscripts, silver, vestments, church paraphernalia, and major art masterpieces, some of which are of world renown like Caravaggio's the Be-Heading St. John, located at the Oratory at St. John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta. Other important (religious) tourist attractions include St. Paul's Grotto, Mosta Parish Church and Ta' Pinu miraculous shrine in Gozo. Moreover, as a result of an increased cultural awareness a number of parish churches are developing their own museums, these include Naxxar, Birgu and Isla. Some other churches organise temporary exhibitions related to calendrical rituals such as Good Friday processions (CP I-40).

7.2.2.4 The Private Sector

At the time of this study there were three facets of the local private sector directly or indirectly involved in the marketing and management of culture. These were private museums, souvenir and craft retail outlets, and tour organising companies (travel agents).

Private Museums

Private museums and heritage centres have added to the availability of venues. In contrast to public funded museums, private museums and heritage sites are considered to be managed and offered better value for money.

Craft centres and souvenir outlets

These are important for displaying and selling of local crafts. However their contribution towards the development of cultural tourism is not as yet well developed. Outlets are mainly located in the tourist centres of Valletta, Mdina-Rabat area and Victoria (Gozo); the resort areas of Xlendi, Marsalforn (Gozo) and Sliema and the two government sponsored craft centres of Ta' Qali (in Malta) and Ta' Dbiegi (in Gozo) (see Maps 2 and 3). It is interesting to note that craft centres receive different treatment by travel agents. Ta' Qali Crafts' Village in Malta features highly in organised tours and visitors are given ample time during the tour "for shopping" (TS I-1, TPS I-21, see also Appendix 8) at the centre. On the other hand Ta' Dbiegi Crafts' Centre in Gozo is "completely ignored by agents; tourists are taken to a private crafts' centre at the detriment of craft workers in Victoria and Ta' Dbiegi" (CP I-43).

Tour-organising companies (travel agents)

This sector is divided into four categories outgoing travel, incoming travel, conference and incentive travel and organisation of local tours. Companies responsible for incoming travel and the organisation of local tours are of particular interest to this research, since they are responsible for the tourists' stay and holiday experience. Incoming travel companies can be considered to be the local arm of the foreign tour operator - since:

it (the company) takes care of all the necessary things on behalf of the tour operator eg. booking of the flight, accommodation, excursions etc. When our groups arrive, we have the tour representative or the courier, who meets the clients at the airport and gives them a welcome pack.
(TPS I-21)

Tour organising companies, which could also be subsidiaries of Incoming Tourism Companies, are responsible for creation and organisation of local tours. Tour companies can be subdivided into two: those that cater only for specialised niche markets and those that cater for both the specialist and the generalist tourist. The tour-organising companies are also responsible for the employment of the majority of tourist guides. In Maltese Islands there are a total of 529 licensed guides, of which only 329 are available for guiding. 26% work full time with travel agencies, 2.6% work with tourism industry, 37.8% are freelance, 20.5% are part-time freelance and 9.3 % work part time (Mifsud, 2001: 26). The term 'freelance' guides, is a misnomer; although it implies guides who do not work for one particular company, guides are subject to and depend heavily on tour companies for work. This dependence is dictated by a strict adherence to a designed programme:

You have to stop where the agent indicates, if you do not you will be in trouble and the agent will not call you up for work again. (CP I-13)

This observation is important as it has bearing on the way the majority of tourists visiting the Maltese Islands encounter and experience culture. This point is discussed further in Section 7.4.

7.2.2.5 The Local Population

The Maltese population is a major stakeholder albeit a stakeholder that was until recently ignored by tourism authorities and the other stakeholders mentioned above. This omission is rather serious given the fact that it is the local culture through its manifestations and its products that is exposed and utilised by tourism authorities and the tourism private sector to generate tourism-related activity. The local population provides the arena for culture through its cultural activities and it is also the object of tourist gaze, for which no charge is imposed. The local culture, especially the “local feel” features highly in MTA and other tourist literature; tourists are encouraged to visit areas that go beyond the resorts. The MTA especially:

... tries to encourage the tourist to visit areas that they do not usually visit, art and culture that is not found in Valletta or Mdina or in the other main tourist areas, we are trying to move out of that sphere (TS I-3)

The approach adopted by the MTA is to move out of the sphere of traditional sites and encourage tourist to go beyond the ‘beaten cultural track’. This can have an impact of spreading further tourism to areas, which have not been previously accustomed to such activity with the possibility that this may have adverse impacts on the local population.

The role of community in tourism development was at the time of research not yet fully understood and appreciated by the public and private tourism sectors; yet there were some attempts. One was through an education campaign initiated by the MTA to enlist

the support of the Maltese population by educating it in tourism matters. The most recent campaign (see also Ioannides and Holcomb 2001) carried out through adverts on television stations and printed adverts, sought “to increase the awareness of the importance of tourism to the Maltese Islands” (TS I-2). In addition there was the drive to ingrain the idea “where tourism becomes a family thing - all members of the family involved in tourism” (TPS I-19 quoting the Chairman of the MTA). This approach complements the ‘educational’ role the MTA has adopted with the tour operators and the target audience (see Section 6.3.3). It was not the scope of this research to assess the impact of this acquired role. However, these observations show that the MTA encouraged the Maltese public at large to “understand the importance of tourism” (TS I-2) as well as to appreciate the role of tourism as an important element of Maltese economy.

Nevertheless, the role of the community in tourism development has other facets, which have so far been given limited attention. One such aspect is the impact of tourism on the local population. This is a crucial element to consider when studying cultural tourism in Malta, since events (such as cultural and historical festivals) and exposure of communities to the ‘tourist gaze’ (through more elaborate and engaging marketing literature) are on the increase. However, it has to be pointed out that efforts by researchers to raise the importance of this issue were, in the past, rejected by tourism

authorities (see Section 1.4.1). To illustrate further the point on the impact of cultural tourism on the Maltese population reference is made to the MTA historical festivals and cultural tourism activity in particular localities.

The impact of events on communities where they are held is diverse and ranges from hostility to interest. Research conducted in Mdina in the early 1990s and for this study has shown that cultural tourism in this small medieval town had a negative impact on the residents. Mdina residents still considered the festival “a nuisance” (L I-44) and the problems identified by Boissevain (1996a) and Boissevain and Sammut (1994) of parking, access to the city by the residents, noise, and cleanliness were still prevalent (L I-44). MTA staff working on the Mdina Fest 2000 argued that:

Despite the fact that we involve them, they are still hostile -
you cannot work with these people they complain about
everything! (TS I-6)

On the other hand, historical pageantry has had “a tremendous positive impact on Birgu (Vittoriosa) and the locals” (L I-38). The reasons why there has been this difference are many. The first obvious reason is that Mdina has for a number of decades been a major tourist attraction. After Valletta, Mdina attracts the second largest volume of visitors, while Cottonera (the Three Cities of Birgu, Isla and Bormla) attracts the least number of visitors². Secondly, at the time of the first Mdina festival, Local Councils had not yet

². Cottonera attracts an estimated 75,000-100,000 visitors annually (MTA 2002b), Mdina attracts an estimate of one million visitors (following Boissevain, 1996b) and Valletta attracts nearly 1.2 million visitors (MTA 2001b)

been established³. Thus, the community had no representatives with whom tourism authorities could consult or a representative that could argue the residents' case. Thirdly, unlike the Mdina Local Council, Birgu Local Council felt that the city could gain from the festival and so Birgu Local Council invited the tourism authorities to organise the festival in Birgu rather than in Mdina.

Birgu is reputed to be a socially deprived area, and it has negative connotations among the general Maltese population. Informants mentioned that the introduction of this festival to their city has had a positive effect. A cultural provider who is also a Birgu resident outlined the impact that this festival has had on her community in the following manner:

Everyone started to do something ... such as doing up the façades of their houses, and embellishing the streets. The festival was a boost.... In the beginning, some people were shy but not now. *Barklori*⁴ fight amongst themselves as to who will carry the Grandmaster over⁵... For the festivals residents have set up 'old fashioned' stalls with bread, lemonades while some locals, like ourselves, participate in this event. When you tell them that the festival will not be held here (like this year), they will reply, 'for sure, Vittoriosa is always neglected' (*U zgur il-Birgu minsi!*) (CP I-16)

³ Local Councils are a form of local government elected by the community living in particular areas. One of the responsibilities of Local Councils is to safeguard the interests of the community. Due to their nature they are also seen as the official representatives of the community.

⁴ Owners of harbour boats - the *dghajsa*. These boats were used in the past to taxi people within the Grand Harbour area (see Map 2). Today these boats are used during Regatta races and are increasingly becoming a tourist attraction.

⁵ Part of the Birgu Fest takes part over water, as the Grand Master is transported from Valletta across the Grand Harbour on one of the harbour boats.

This quotation shows that cultural tourism activity has generated an interest in the locality by the residents. Consequently, this had a general positive impact on the physical environment of the area. In addition, the festival enhanced the sense of community and increased the residents' sense of pride in their locality. Another Birgu resident commented that the Birgu Fest was a means through which Birgu residents overcame "the social stigma" they had (L I-38). Furthermore, these festivals left an impact on the Maltese community at large. A Maltese couple interviewed during one of the MTA festivals mentioned that they have attended most of the festivals. The wife mentioned that thanks to one of the festivals she went to Birgu for the first time in her life and could appreciate better the history of the Three Cities, consequently the history of Malta. This observation further reinforces the point that cultural tourism promotes local identity.

The overview of the main stakeholders involved in culture and heritage in Malta indicates that these stakeholders have distinct roles and they control different aspects of heritage and culture. The largest stakeholders in terms of the heritage and culture are the Maltese Government (Department of Culture and the Department of Museums) and the Church. The MTA is responsible for the organisation of invented historical festivals whilst the local population is the arena in which culture, most notable the experiential aspects of culture are advocated. The stakeholder least responsible for heritage or culture is the private sector, yet this sector is also the sector that has most say in the way culture is exposed through the creation of tours and tourist itineraries. This is discussed

in greater detail in Section 7.4. Having outlined the institutional organisation of culture, the discussion now proceeds to assess the relationships between the various stakeholders.

7.2.3 Stakeholder Relations

A management approach to culture seeks to understand also the type of relations that exist between the various stakeholders. Hall and McArthur (1998) define this as the macro analysis of cultural management. This research has revealed that stakeholders very often operate independently of one another. This type of operation is further reinforced by the organisational structure of culture as outlined in Section 7.2.

Informants described relationship between the different stakeholders as one devoid of institutional communication (CP I-22) but based on “personal links” (TS I-6, CP I-23). In some instances informants argued that there is complete absence of communication and collaboration with the tourism (public) sector.

It is unfortunate that we have limited collaboration. It is a tragedy, we have a lot to offer, but contact is minimal (CP I-33)

This research revealed that there is lack of collaboration stemming from lack of communication and integration between the various stakeholders. This is prevalent at all levels of interrelationships between the stakeholders. Some examples are illustrated hereunder. Whilst tour-operators market Malta and its product, the tourist itineraries are

designed by the local agents. When asked by the researcher on the nature of the cultural product, tour operators referred her to the individual tour-companies. This can be understood if the operator is a multi-national tour company however, these responses were also obtained from Malta Specialist tour operators, indicating that these were different from the large multi-national ones. This is rather worrying especially since such operators were specifically set up to market and promote Malta and its products, including its culture. Some stakeholders were unaware of the cultural provision of others. A cultural provider, CP I-33 referred to an incident whereby a friend of his made a request for information on the Opera Festival (organised by the National Theatre) at the MTA desk at the ITB fair in Berlin. The persons in charge of the desk replied that they were not aware that Malta holds an opera festival. Tour companies responsible for the organisation of guided tours have minimal collaboration with the MTA. Informants spoke of "a company representative who has contact with the MTA" (TPS I-21), but no exact information was given as to what is the role of the company representative. In addition tour companies do not consult or work with the communities in which tours are held. The representatives of the communities studied argued that they have approached tour companies to work together in designing better tours for the localities, however such requests were never acceded to.

Collaboration between the tourism (public) sector and local communities is still in its embryonic stages. The first historical pageantry organised without any consultation with the inhabitants of Mdina resulted in a dispute between the community of Mdina

and the Maltese tourism authorities. This reaction, although still not fully understood by the MTA, has had a positive outcome. MTA has set up formal festival committees which apart from the MTA Events and Heritage team, include the Local Council representative, any other society/group from the community that will have direct role, such as NGOs (band clubs, heritage society) and a representative of the Police. The team meets usually every week until the day of the event (Fieldwork Report, March-April 2000). Levels of involvement vary between the different localities; some are more forthcoming than others. For instance, Valletta residents and the business community are not too keen about the Valletta Fest since their residence is far from the locus of the festival (TS I-6). Other localities such as Birgu participate with more enthusiasm. This approach of involving the local community representatives in the organisation of events is a step in developing a more appropriate management of cultural activities. However this is the beginning as what the MTA described as involvement was defined by the community representatives as mere "consultation" (L I-38) and "liaising with locals on behalf of MTA" (L I-44). This consultative role however did not give any power to the community representatives to design or to have a say in the programme of events, leading one representative to conclude:

We want to collaborate more but we have never been approached, our locality has a lot to offer to the tourist and working closer with tourist authorities will be of mutual benefit. (L I -25).

Moreover, collaboration between cultural providers and the local community is essential for the success of cultural tourism. An informant argued that the effort to take tourism to local villages “should be backed up by support from the individual communities” (TS I-26). The informant added that for most of the day, especially during the early afternoon, chapels and churches are closed and not available for viewing. Moreover when open, there is hardly anyone in the church to help or assist tourists. It must be pointed out that this does not occur in all localities since a number of parishes have volunteers acting as ‘guides’ in churches (L I-15).

Collaboration between the stakeholders was also lacking as at times the relations were characterised by criticism of operation. Stakeholders often blamed each other’s institutions for “lack of vision” in creating a better cultural product or for not perceiving the benefits of a better cultural product.

Lack of vision is also seen in the passive approach some institutions adopt towards culture. One informant argued that it is true that museums are afflicted by a number of problems but “museums need to help themselves” (I-10). Moreover another informant argued that in a society riddled by bureaucracy, it pays to be innovative.

If one had to wait and go through all the proper channels, you’ll end up doing nothing. You have to be creative and innovative. If it is a good thing, then people will accept it, if not, no harm has been done, but at least I would have tried (I-33).

Those in authority were blamed for not showing enough interest to develop the cultural product further. The two main bodies identified as hindering the development of cultural tourism were the politicians and the private sector. The former, were criticized for their failure to understand of the needs of culture, often giving it a secondary importance:

Governments in Malta have always focused on tourism (accommodation, restaurants) but have completely ignored culture. This is a mistake as the two are interrelated. (I-25)

Whilst the private sector was criticized since it did not give enough support to cultural events (TPS I-18) and did not foster enough creative energy.

The above examples show that the organisational segregation illustrated in Section 7.2 is mirrored in the relations between the stakeholders. However, there were instances where despite the lack of institutional backup stakeholders worked together by resorting to personal networks. Although personal networks facilitated initial contacts and led to collaboration between certain stakeholders (for example, MTA and Department of Culture) these networks are not a long-term measure. They are sporadic and do not have institutional structure making their continued existence improbable. Appropriate cultural heritage management requires a sound backing based on integration and trust; suspicions and mistrust that have so far characterised “institutional dialogue” (CP I-22) do not augur well for the development of culture. Perhaps one of the main factors

leading to this type of relationship between the various stakeholders is the lack of overall cultural policy.

7.2.4 Cultural Policy in the Maltese Islands: Towards a new approach of cultural management?

In Malta there is no formal cultural policy. Attempts at its development have been characterised by political exigencies with the consequences that the fate of culture was dependent upon the government of the day. Cremona (2001) in her intervention at the National Conference on Malta and the Arts remarked:

Culture in Malta suffers from two serious disorders: (a) it does not earn votes (b) it is always defined as something that has to be 'saved' (ibid: 73)

In addition, informants often alluded to the general lack of interest and know-how on tourism in general and on culture in particular.

A form of cultural policy was initiated in the early 1970s under the Labour Government when new state museums and other cultural venues were set up. During the subsequent decades and in absence of a clear policy, governments made sporadic attempts to try and address a number of issues that Maltese culture and heritage were facing. In 1987 the Department of Culture was set up (see also section 7.2.2). Whilst in 1994 in an attempt to boost culture the Ministry of Justice and the Arts (the Minister in charge was during the previous administration responsible for Tourism) commenced a series of

activities that helped to ameliorate the state of culture. Local and foreign funds were sought to restore works on major heritage sites. A study on the state of the government museums (MSU, 1996) was also conducted. This study argued that the organisational set-up of the Museums Department was no longer viable, museums lacked adequate management skills and know-how, had shortage of trained personnel and some museums were not adequately equipped to cater for visitors. The document concluded that the structure could no longer be maintained, the Department could not rely only government funds and that the private sector had to be introduced to share in the management and running of museums.

A Bill, to replace the 1925 Antiquities Act was drafted and presented in Parliament in 1996 under the name of the Heritage Act 1996. An election in October 1996 and a subsequent change in government meant that the law was given secondary importance. The newly elected Labour government launched an inter-ministerial Heritage Commission with representatives from the Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Tourism, Museums Department and chaired by the Chairman of the NTOM. This Commission had the brief to meet the needs of tourism and constraints of museums (I-4). However, an early election brought about yet another change in government and the Heritage Commission no longer met.

In September 1999, a week long National Conference on the Arts organised by the Ministry of Education initiated a debate on the role of culture (Camilleri and Gatt, 2001,

Cini, 1999; Schembri, 1999). Following the attack by vandals on the World Heritage Site of Mnajdra, and the heavy criticism of the Maltese population and International bodies such as UNESCO, the Ministry of Education immediately resumed the work on the Heritage Bill. In August 2001, the first national cultural policy document was published. The document outlined a policy that was targeted towards the “population at large, and to take culture to the people” (CP I-32). The document covered culture in its widest possible sense - heritage, media, performing arts, local music, and cultural events such as village *festas*, carnival, language, and emigrants. A number of local experts were invited to contribute with ideas towards the future development of cultural policy. However when it came to the chapter on cultural tourism, the MTA was not involved despite the fact that it had a consultant working on culture, but other experts from the Foundation of International Studies (a branch of the University of Malta) were involved. When the researcher asked for the reason behind this choice, the reply was that within this institution there were experts on the field. This ‘oversight’ pinpoints to the lack of awareness and the use of appropriate channels.

In May 2002, two acts related culture and heritage were enacted by the Maltese Parliament (Government of Malta 2002a, 2002b). The two laws had (at the time of writing) not as yet come into action will be discussed briefly since in the future they could have a bearing on the way in which culture and heritage will be managed. The Acts made provisions for the setting up of two autonomous bodies to replace the Department of Culture and the Department of Museums (Government of Malta 2002a

and 2002b). These will be run by separate management bodies but will still fall under the Ministry of Education. The Bills will enable the Council for Culture and the Arts (to replace the Department of Culture) and the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage (to replace the Museums Department) to work freely without the constraints of governmental institutions. Nevertheless the set-up as outlined in the respective Bills appears to be too bureaucratic with a number of committees to be set-up. The new law envisages that these bodies are to co-ordinate their work with other stakeholders including the Church, Local Councils, the Planning Authority and the MTA. However the nature of the set-up suggests that unless there is collaboration at all levels, this could be problematic and it remains to be seen whether it helps to solve the issues that have been raised so far. However it must be pointed out that the inclusion of the MTA and the Local Councils is an attempt towards integrated cultural management.

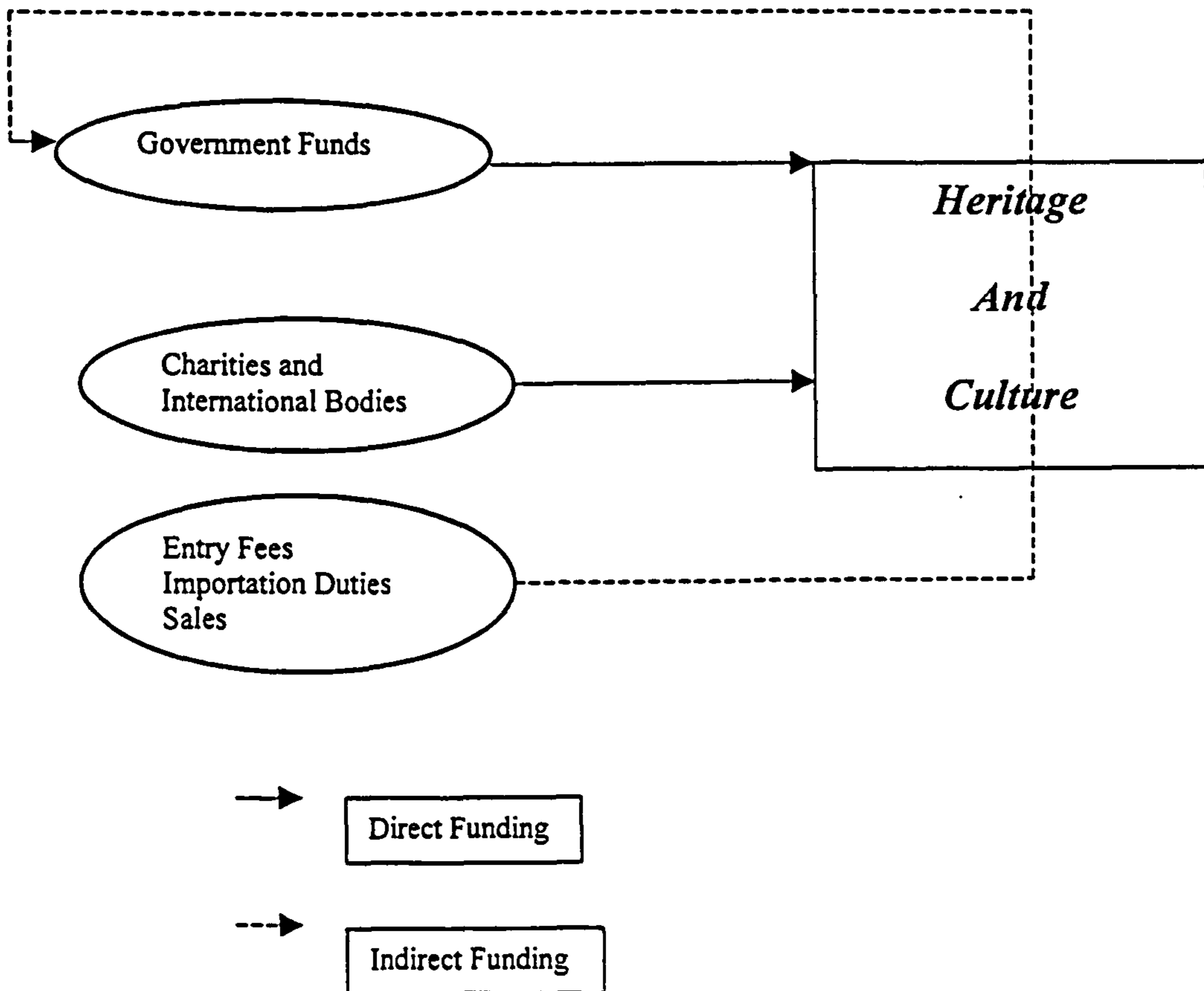
One of the major changes that this law would bring about is in the area of funding of heritage and culture. With the exception of private museums, culture and heritage in Malta are state financed, with a yearly budget allocated for recurrent and capital expenditures. As illustrated in section 7.2.2.1 culture and heritage (museums) fall under the Ministry of Education. In the opinion of one informant, this was a major stumbling block.

How can you dedicate energy to two such demanding portfolios? How can you allocate funds to culture, when the Ministry of Education has so many demands? (TS I-10)

Cultural providers argued that the government budget allocation was “not sufficient to meet the needs of culture” (CP I-33, I-22). Informants went on to argue that the “government is not able to provide the necessary funds for the proper upkeep of heritage” (TS I-1) and therefore alternative measures have to be sought (TS I-10, CP I-33).

Apart from the government, culture and heritage receive funds from local private bodies, charities, and international bodies (see Diagram 7.2). Government funds go towards capital and recurrent expenditures whilst other funding measures go towards capital expenditure, in particular, restoration. Private donations were deemed “not enough” (TS I-10) and those companies notably banks, who donate money towards the restoration of heritage argued that other private bodies should be more forthcoming (Masini, 2001). Moreover, public heritage and cultural sites do not retain any of the income earned from entry fees and sales of museum artefacts. The fees generated are passed back to the Central government. This particular set up could have led to a situation where museums were not willing to generate additional funds for government with the consequence that choice of museum merchandise was rather poor. Field visits revealed that merchandise at public museums offered a limited choice of two sets of postcards (at the Museum of Fine Arts) and a booklet on temples available from Ggantija Temples.

**Diagram 7.2 Current Heritage and Culture Funding in the Maltese Islands
(State Owned)**



The new law envisages that heritage and cultural entities will be self-financing however the law also stipulates that entities will from time to time receive money from the Consolidated Fund (Central Government) in addition they could borrow money from the government for capital expenditure. Looking at the situation of heritage and cultural sites in Europe, where most cultural entities work on the principle of self-funding and the problems of economic nature that these are facing (Heilburn and Gray, 2001; Kolb, 2000) such a proposal for the Maltese Islands raises the issue of viability. The financial

provision will give heritage entities more flexibility to create new cultural products (such as for example souvenirs) but it does pose a challenge. Heritage and cultural sites will have to compete with one another for a steady visitor base. This will imply that government entities will need to provide a high quality product (including better visitor interpretation, good quality merchandising) and they will have to compete with the private cultural entities already set up and with whom the tour organising companies have set agreements (see Section 7.4.2). Moreover the culture sector in Malta will require more sponsors; who as stated earlier are not too forthcoming. Another implication is that this new legislation would bring about a reassessment of the current cultural tours, where it is expected that it would be in the interest of cultural entities to entice visitors to spend more time (and money) at the site.

7.2.4.1 Tourism Entities and Cultural Policy

As discussed in Chapter 6, the MTA and tourism entities have utilised culture and heritage to create a new image for the Maltese Islands based on the culture activities and experience. In analysing the developments that have occurred since the inception of the MTA in September 1999, the public meetings and conferences organised by this entity it became evident that the MTA was trying to carve out a niche and take an active role in the area of cultural policy.

The topics chosen by the MTA for its annual conferences have a running theme of partnership and the phrase “help us to help you” were often used by the MTA Chairman. In contrast to the NTOM annual conferences, the MTA annual workshop-

based conferences allowed for active participation of the public. The themes of the papers dealt with synergy, partnerships and collaboration. Heritage and culture featured strongly in both 2000 and 2001 conferences.

With reference to culture, the MTA organised a seminar on local gastronomy in February 2001. This has led to the creation of a Food Festival that was held in March of 2002 and a Fish Festival to be held in September 2002. In April 2001 the MTA organised an event called "City Alive" a month-long evening cultural programmes with the aim to revive Valletta to its old splendour through the use of culture (museums opening until late, concerts). Cultural providers argued that the re-introduction of cultural events would help to revitalise the city (CP I-24, I-33, I-41) since during the theatre season Valletta is bustling with activity. The opening of a number of restaurants in Valletta had also increased night activity in Valletta (CP I-24, I-33). In April 2002, the MTA organised a one-day seminar on *Tourism and The Arts* with the aim to bring together a number of stakeholders involved in culture and performing arts. One of the aims was to identify ways in which the performing arts "Could be better promoted to assist the tourism product" (Ebejer, 2002).

The MTA has also through its workshops set up and maintained a list of individuals and organisations from which it could enlist help and participation. Thus for each for its meetings the MTA makes public announcements in the press, but people who have

already participated in previous meetings are formally invited to attend. This approach had further extended the role of the MTA. Observations at such activities over the course of the current research revealed that certain individuals and companies have become regular attendees (referred to by the MTA chairman as “partners”). These included cultural providers - a stakeholder was previously not included.

The above discussion on the organisational set up of culture, relations between the stakeholders and cultural policy raise two important and pertinent questions who should manage culture and how to manage culture. Although the two new culture and heritage bills referred to in Section 7.2.3, hint at a new management practice of culture, this has as yet to be established. Moreover, informants had their own perspectives as to how culture could be managed.

7.2.5 Managing Culture: Who and how?

Informants identified three main alternatives - tourism authorities, the museum personnel and a synergy between various stakeholders.

Tourism Entities

Some of the informants opined:

The MTA should have a leading role in managing heritage on behalf of the nation, to increase value added of the tourism offer. We have to assess who is the primary user of heritage, if it is the local population, then someone else should manage it. But, if it is part of the tourism offer and the majority of the target audience is predominantly tourists, then it (heritage) should be the aegis of the MTA. (TS I-7)

Another informant argued that the tourism public sector should lead a “synergy between tourism and culture” (TS I-10) since tourism and culture are complimentary. Such a proposal however does not take into consideration that the local population is also a participant and user of its own cultural heritage, and thus its cultural needs have to be considered as well. Research has shown that there were instances where tourism authorities have perceived culture and cultural events from a narrow perspective - namely tourism's perspective. One cultural provider commented:

...when they (tourism, MTA) want to market Malta or participate in fairs they do not choose to take good (artistically) paintings, by a local artist but they choose something that depicts Malta (CP I-34)

The traditional pictorial element (which may be also what a visitor wants to see) is preferred over the contemporary artistic expression, which nonetheless is also an aspect of “Maltese culture”, albeit less known or less traditional. In addition, tourism authorities have also over the years debated whether festivals should be addressed at a local or a foreign audience; and tourism authorities have adjusted the timing and content of the festival events to suit better the foreign rather than the local audience. These instances show that so far, tourism authorities have seen culture as an asset for tourism; this approach may in the long- run exclude the interests of the local population.

Heritage Entities

Informants working within the heritage sphere argued that the curator's brief automatically endows the curator with responsibility to manage culture:

They are a different breed of management, they have to take care of the '*ben essere tal-beni kulturali*' (tend and take care of the cultural heritage) by engaging in preservation, presentation and conservation and as well as run the museums (CP I-22).

Despite this role other cultural providers and tourism sector informants felt that museums personnel were not capable of managing culture since they were not adequately equipped (CP I-32) - "we need cultural managers and not academia [sic]" (TS I-10). Moreover, informants felt that the Museums Department was more interested in "preservation and conservation rather than presentation" (TS I-6). Conversely, informants coming from the museums sphere, felt that other stakeholders notably politicians and the local population were not capable of appreciating the role of heritage, and thus the role of museum expertise was considered crucial for the proper management of culture. Despite these divergences in opinion, there was consensus among the Museums informants, other cultural providers and the tourism sector that the current institutional organisation was considered inappropriate for quality heritage management (TS I-10, CP I-22, I-34)

The model presented by the heritage sector, is not appropriate since culture is seen only from a heritage perspective and does not incorporate other aspects of culture such as the expressive culture and the local feel outlined in the culture map (see Diagram 5.1). Therefore, this approach would suffice for the heritage and museums setting but is not valid for the management of a holistic cultural product.

Synergy

The third alternative, raised by informants was of synergy between the various stakeholders involved. This option was the most laudable given the current situation.

The first reason cited was that:

MTA does not own anything, and therefore our role should be one of alliance (TS I-6)

From the perspective of the MTA a synergistic approach makes sense since the MTA has certain responsibilities towards the marketing of culture as well as in the management of culture. This synergistic approach towards the management of culture would also bring closer the private and public sector:

We need to bring together the public and private sector; these two sectors need to collaborate more and to reciprocate more. The private sector needs to be involved more in the cultural product while the public sector is to provide the knowledge and the research (TS I-10).

However this view was counteracted by some informants, especially those from the private sector who argued that the private sector would be interested in such a synergy if it will render money in return (TPS I-18). Apart from the private sector, informants identified other possible partners such as other governmental departments and community representatives (Local Councils).

The latter approach is a similar approach to that proposed by the new heritage and cultural bills. This shows that as far as the management of cultural is concerned there is a consensus that the different stakeholders should all be involved in the management of culture. Yet, there is an important question which so far has not been addressed namely, the actual management practice.

7.2.5.1 How to manage culture: A reflection on traditional means of cultural management

The answer to the question of how to manage culture may be found in the already successful events such as the religious festivities, which are managed without the need of external bodies. Village *festas*, Good Friday processions, and Easter processions are managed at a parish / fraternity level, with organisational structures that in certain villages are centuries old (CP I-40). These events run smoothly with minimal problems and with commitment and participation from all levels of the community. These observations raise an interesting point, whereby there is a distinction between the type of cultural management of culture at a local (village / town) level and at the national level. The former is based on enthusiasm, ownership and dynamism whereas the management of national culture was obscure and at times problematic. This tends to suggest that for appropriate management there needs to be an element of '*ownership*'; therefore cultural managers need not be just experts in management and/or culture but also have to have *a feel* for the product. Another example that reinforces this argument is the situation of Birgu (Vittoriosa) and Mdina. The former city is enthusiastic about the cultural events organised by MTA in its city because its inhabitants feel that the city

is theirs and that it has benefited from tourism. In Mdina, because the locals were at the beginning excluded from the event and because they felt their city is being over-ridden by such events, were hostile and did not feel that they own the event, unlike Birgu. This argument tends to point to the conclusion that good cultural management incorporates ownership and therefore a management team has to involve those working *with* culture; people who may not necessarily be experts but have *a feel* for culture and know their work. Secondly, as the discussions above have shown, good cultural management also needs a *good basis of identity*.

The above points also highlight the need for a management structure that would coordinate and manage culture across the institutions. It has been argued that a form of synergy would be the best option. Synergy requires collaboration and integration between the various institutions. As outlined in Section 7.2.2 collaboration between the various institutions has so far been minimal. The issues highlighted in this section indicate that the development of cultural tourism requires an integrative approach based on collaboration and awareness of the cultural product offered by other stakeholders. In addition, this collaboration necessitates a backdrop within which it could function a clear cultural policy.

Following the discussion on cultural management at the macro level, this discussion will proceed to the analysis of cultural management at the micro level. This analysis is divided into two parts. The first part will focus on the actual marketing practices

employed to attract tourists to culture and cultural events. The second part will focus on management of the sites. In doing so it will address cultural management issues experienced by the different cultural providers. It will also highlight those aspects that then will need to be addressed at the macro level.

7.3 Managing Culture at the Micro Level: Marketing of Culture and Cultural Events

In the discussion of the literature it was pointed out that marketing of culture is an aspect of its management. The analysis of marketing of culture in Malta shows that the emphasis made on the marketing of the Malta destination, contrasts heavily with the lack of marketing activity concerning cultural activities and the cultural product. A tour operator commented that: "I do not think we are doing enough to market culture" (TPS I-19). However, another added that:

Culture is only part of the holiday; people want variety. We would market it (culture) by having pictures on our brochures and other sales material. But we do not actually push it (TPS I-17)

Private and public tourism sector informants argued that the primary prerogative is to get people to Malta through the use of Malta's "salient [cultural] features"⁶, and then through local advertising channels direct visitors to the cultural sites and venues. The only exception are special interest or niche market operators, who design their

⁶ "So we mention, the Knights of St. John, the Temples, Hagar Qim, blue sea, good weather and some natural attractions like Azure Window...". (TS I-3).

brochures specifically on cultural itineraries, and who at times use the brochure to market cultural activities. The marketing of culture locally is then the responsibility of the cultural providers, destination management companies and the Malta Tourism Authority. However it is very clear that this approach is not having the desired impact in promoting culture effectively. This is also acknowledged by the public tourism sector, an MTA representative argued:

There is demand for culture from the tourist, but either they are not aware of it before they depart (for Malta) or the information is not reaching them (TS I-2)

his observation requires some in depth analysis of the current marketing practices employed in the marketing of culture in the Maltese Islands, by focusing primarily on the planning and marketing of cultural activities and advertising procedures.

7.3.1 Planning and Marketing Cultural Activities

The success of an event depends on marketing and marketing requires time (TS I-1, I-2, I-3 and CP I-33). However not all the cultural activities held in the Maltese Islands had adequate timeframe to allow for appropriate marketing. A study of the process involved in the marketing of cultural activities revealed that the objectives of cultural activities were not clear from the outset, consequently planning of events suffered, in turn effecting the whole process of management of the cultural activities. A good example is given by the analysis of the way in which MTA events are marketed.

The PPDD of the MTA organises two types of cultural events historical pageantry and artistic events such as the Choir Festival. As discussed in section 5.5.1, the MTA perceives these two types of events as attracting different types of cultural tourists. A major difficulty encountered by the team organising the cultural events was that the objectives of the cultural events were not clear and there have been debates whether the organisation of these events was to be maintained or not:

There are two schools of thought. One school is of the opinion that we can market this product as a tourist attraction and organise it ourselves, the other school insists that this event should be organised by others, and as an organisation we should focus on its marketing. (TS I-6)

One of the main hindrances experienced with cultural events like the historical pageantry was the lack of planning in the organisation of events. The dates of the events, especially, historical pageantry organised by the MTA have over the years been rather inconsistent (TS I-2, I-3, I-6). There were no fixed dates for the festivals and at times, the organisers were not sure whether the actual events (notably historical pageantry) were going to be held at all.

The biggest problem is the instability in decision taking regarding these events... I had some friends who were coming in Malta in November and I told them to come in October so that they could come for the Mdina Fest, then it was held on the 26th of September! This date shifting is the biggest handicap. Or else we had a time when there were serious debates whether it (the festival) would be held and then just two months before it is due they give you the go ahead to start the preparation, you start going about like a

mad person trying to get things organised. That timeframe is not enough to organize a good festival. (TS I-6)

This lack of consistency and lack of adequate planning meant that not all visitors were not aware of the historical events prior to their arrival in Malta and attended these festivals either because they were on site “by chance” or out of curiosity.

In contrast events that are well planned in advance have had a good response and are increasingly growing in success and in visitor numbers. The Opera Festival organised by the National (Manoel) Theatre is advertised abroad for more than a year in advance and attracts a good market of cultural tourists (CP I-33) who combine art with other cultural activities (*Malta Opera Festival* - Hannick Reizen). Links with specialist tour operators in continental Europe have guaranteed the success of such an event. The Malta Jazz festival and the Choir festival are two other major events that have become established and attract a cultural audience (TS I-1, I-3, I-4). They been organised on set dates, have had consistent marketing procedures (see Section 7.3.2) and had from the outset clearer objectives than historical pageantry.

In addition to adequate time for planning of events, informants argued that it would be better if the events were spread out throughout the whole year in order to have a more comprehensive cultural calendar. In particular, informants expressed the need for specific cultural activities during the low-visitor months of January and February. A tour-operator argued:

Try to put on the market a new product, cultural plays, historical plays, and you will get a response. (TPS I-18)

Good planning and management of events would also lead to better distribution of cultural events throughout particular periods. Informants referred to instances where there were a number of cultural events being held at one particular time. Lack of planning of cultural activities organised by Local Councils has also resulted in situation where the council had confirmation of events just two weeks in advance (L I-44); making it impossible for widespread advertising even on a national basis. Setting clear objectives for cultural events and advance planning would ensure a variety of events and it would eliminate the glut of cultural activities during certain parts of the year (CP I-12, I-33).

7.3.2 Publicity and Advertising of Cultural Events

Each stakeholder had a distinct marketing and advertising procedures depending on the nature of activity the stakeholder was responsible for. The simplest form publicity was “word of mouth” (CP I-24, I-42), a form of marketing used in all settings (food, events and museums). In particular guides, whilst on a particular tour, would, refer visitors to other sites. For example, while passing through the village of Naxxar, the guide on the Malta Tour informed that this particular village held other interesting sites such as the Naxxar parish church and a palazzo. He also informed tour participants that they could easily get to the village by using public transport. Another form of publicity is the printed word such as guidebooks, the national air carrier magazine (*Malta This Month*) are also avenues for publicity (CP I-22, I-23, I-35) and booklets issued by tour-

companies (TPS I-21). In addition, the MTA and cultural providers as well as Local Councils advertised cultural events in the local newspapers. This served as a medium to capture both the Maltese as well as foreign audience (TS I-6 and CP I-33, I-34, I-35).

The use of the internet and the MTA website were identified as ways through which visitors could find more information about Malta (TS I-2, I-6 see also Section 6.3.1). The MTA website (www.visitmalta.com) had a calendar of events section listing all the cultural events held throughout a particular year. This site also offered visitors the possibility to view future events. This site was also utilised to announce events and to link up with events such as the Jazz festival. However, the festivals were featured differently. An analysis of the festivals held in 2000 showed that the Choir Festival had a direct link on the MTA homepage, with photographs and its own logo. The Jazz Festival not only had a direct link with the MTA homepage but it had its own website (www.maltajazz.com). This site contained a profile of the artists participating in the festival and a three-day itinerary of activities and sites that the visitor could engage in and visit whilst in Malta. In this manner this site combined the Jazz festival with other cultural events, transforming this festival into a complete cultural festival. This contrasts sharply with the marketing of the Mdina Festival, which, was only mentioned under the Events section of the month of October. The event was marked only by a one line statement: "Mdina will come to life with the sights and sounds to this festival at Mdina" (www.visitmalta.com/events as at 26/06/00). It was only closer to the actual event (end of September) that the site had details of the programme. Such late advertising could only

be of interest to visitors who had already made up their minds to visit Malta. This approach further reinforces the attitude adopted by the MTA that these festivals are “an add on”, rather than a main attraction. Late detailed information will not help towards making these events more popular.

Similar to planning of cultural activities (see Section 7.2.3.1) advertising of events needs co-ordination. Although the MTA issued adverts in the local newspapers so that any organisation wishing to utilise the service of the MTA could contact the MTA (TS I-3), cultural providers were not aware of the existence of this calendar (CP I-33, I-34, I-35). These cultural providers have an extensive calendar of events yet they could not advertise on the MTA website or the printed calendar of events leading to *lost* opportunity of mutual benefit.

7.3.3 Availability of Information

Informants argued that availability of information pertaining to culture was essential for its success as a cultural attraction. The availability of information was according to informants based on three factors: awareness of the actual cultural product, circulation of the relevant information and the availability of the product.

Awareness

Lack of awareness proved to be one of the major problems with the cultural product. For example, despite the fact that tourism authorities had been organising historical pageantry since 1993 tour operators and cultural providers referred to these events as ‘a

recent phenomenon' (TS I-17, CP I-32). The lack of awareness of, and lack of adequate information about the cultural product led an operator not to promote the cultural event:

We do not know enough about it. We use the pictures in our brochures but we do not market it. (TPS I-17)

These reflections show that the basic element of marketing of culture is the creation of an awareness that a cultural product or a cultural attraction actually exists. This is equally important both in attracting tourists as well as the provider. Thus an MTA official argued that:

If you put up an excellent product, no matter how good it is, if people are not aware of it, all your efforts would be in vain (TS I-6)

Moreover, a representative of the local stakeholder group argued that unless the local communities are aware of what they can offer in terms of cultural diversity, local communities would continue to be passive rather than active participants in tourism activity.

What is marketing? First you need to be aware of your own product, in order to sell it; otherwise, you will not sell it. (L I-25)

Communities such as Rabat and Birgu have started to organise cultural activities such as concerts and exhibitions and embellished historical buildings in their localities to

create awareness of the 'locality' among its residents. This would primarily create pride in the locality as well as imbue the residents with identity. It is only then that residents could be market their own communities as cultural attractions.

Diffusion of Information

The access of information on cultural heritage and cultural events could be allocated through tourist information centres. Tourist information offices were run by the MTA and at the time of research there were four tourist information offices located at Luqa International Airport, Valletta (in Malta), Mgarr harbour and Victoria (in Gozo), whilst. Throughout the summer months and other office is open in Bugibba, a tourist resort situated in the North of Malta. These offices had the purpose to circulate printed information on cultural events and attractions, sell tickets for MTA activities, notably the In Guardia festival and provide additional information by word of mouth. Informants suggested that these tourist information centres could have a more active role in promoting culture by increasing the amount of information available at these sites and the type of services that tourist information offices offer (TS I-3).

In addition to improving services at the MTA based tourist information offices, the local stakeholder group argued that information on cultural sites and events could also be circulated through the offices of the Local Councils of major tourist attractions such as Cottonera, Rabat and Mdina and St. Julian's. One particular Local Council (Birgu) was already providing this service. Besides acting as a distributing office of cultural

information the Local Council also distributed a leaflet it had published featuring the major historical sites of the locality (L I-38). Other Local Councils were willing to take up a more active role (L I-25, I-44) in distributing information about their locality. By involving Local Councils in such an activity, the MTA would be passing on some of its responsibilities to the local areas. This will promote further co-ordination between the tourism authorities and the localities. In addition, the local community would gain ownership of the tourism activity conducted and at the same time it is given a chance to participate actively in the tourism process. At the time of research this was not possible since the marketing and consequently the management of tourism within localities was outside the jurisdiction of the respective localities resulting in a situation where:

The advertising of this locality is done by private entities, but they market their outlets only and not the city. Visitors should be given more information - and not just have buildings pointed out to them [by guides]. A tourist office [in this locality] would provide the necessary information and historical details of the locality. (L I-44)

However the most influential role in displaying culture is that conducted by tour-organising companies and their representatives. Their role is crucial due the high percentage of tour operator business generated and the reliance on guided tours. The MTA, cultural providers such as museums and the community representatives argued that tour-organising companies do not collaborate in marketing cultural events (TS I-1, I-3, CP I-22, I-25, I-34, L I-38, I-44). If such interest was forthcoming and occurred on

regular basis, then “there is a chance that they (cultural events) will be more successful” (TS I-3).

Availability of the product and adequate resources

In addition, informants argued that they would not market certain cultural product unless there is the certainty that such products are available at the destination (TPS I-18, TS I-30). One of the least advertised cultural products is the local gastronomy, even though there is an interest by the foreign visitor. In an attempt to promote local gastronomy, the NTOM published a brochure in the late 1980s (NTOM 1998b). However this brochure had one major drawback - no restaurant was listed on it. Consequently, the food mentioned on the brochure was rarely located if not by chance. One of the foreign informants interviewed had a similar experience:

We decided to stay for one more day in Malta and be tourists. It was only then that we realised how difficult it is to get about the island. We wanted to go to a good Maltese restaurant, but since there is no information [about restaurants], we had *no* idea where to go, in Paceville. There is no information whatsoever, so we had to end up in XXX (a franchise). (TS I-30)

Information has to be also correct as misinformation about particular events or attractions could lead to bad publicity and frustration. A particular case in point is the misinformation about one of the major heritage sites - the Hal-Saflieni Hypogeum underground burial chambers. This site, which is also a World Heritage Site, was re-opened in 1999 after extensive restoration. As part of the preservation and visitor

management procedures, only 10 visitors per hour, per day are admitted. The site is only open between Mondays and Fridays and tickets have to be bought from the site and collected before the visit. For some reasons this new procedure is not well diffused and the researcher has met with visitors who were bitterly disappointed:

Had we known about this before we would have bought our tickets earlier - it is a pity that we do not have enough time to see the site. (A British couple)

Some guidebooks such as Wilson (2000) just mention that the site has re-opened but fail to mention this crucial point (ibid: 99), Boulton, (2002) comments that “pre-booking is advised as there may be long queues” (ibid: 103). While Gaul, (1998) and Lawson and Fenech (2002) inform visitors that they have to book in advance. Although personnel at the Tourist Information offices are aware of the entry procedures, and notices (albeit, small and perhaps not easily visible) are placed on the notice boards at these offices, somehow this is not sufficient since the message is not getting through to all visitors. This further reinforces the need for more collaboration between the various stakeholders.

Marketing of culture was also characterised by a lack of adequate structures and (financial) resources. Consequently, cultural providers resorted to creative means of advertising (CP 1-14). Certain venues, especially public museums and heritage sites relied on in-house expertise to advertise major cultural events (CP I-34). The lack of infrastructure to back up cultural events needs to be addressed since it would help in creating further awareness among users.

7.3.4 Signage - Access

Informants commented that one reason for the lack of awareness of the cultural product is its 'invisibility':

Heritage and culture are Malta's best kept secrets (TS I-30).

This has had the effect of keeping the visitor away from the sites and to rely on to the guided tours. Signage and markers act as a medium that transports the visitor to sites of interest. However the lack of adequate signage meant that visitors could easily get lost, as the Irish family quoted below

It took us ages to get to the Roman Baths, we got hopelessly lost trying to find the Neolithic Temples and we never managed to find the Cart Ruts. Gozo's sites are much better sign posted. Villages and towns are well sign posted too.

Another Dutch tourist commented that locating particular museums such as the Folklore museum in Gozo was difficult. Since the onset of this research signage has improved with clear brown-coloured signs indicating heritage sites and areas of interest. Adequate signage implies access, and this is what is being implied by TS I-30 in the above quotation. Signage will also make it possible for the independent traveller to get around the island:

We have to try and improve signage for these people (tourists) to get to these locations more easily. As things stand at the moment there is not much of an incentive for people to go and wander about (TS I-3).

Access to most sites is mediated by the tour companies through guided tours. However, independent travellers who do not rent transport find it difficult to access certain localities - either there is no public transport (for example to Hagar Qim) or transport is erratic (as in Gozo) (CP I-37). In cases of night and evening cultural events (for example *festi* or evening events such as concerts or festivals), the independent traveller will find that public transport finishes early, consequently visitors risk to remain stranded (CP I-33, Bötig, 2000: 98)

The theme of signage and access raises an important issue namely, how will access to previously hidden or inaccessible areas impact small communities. A tourism sector informant, TS I-8 mentioned that the MTA in collaboration with a Local Council in Gozo was designing a rural route around the town to be used by visitors interested in walking. Although this is a desired activity, it is also important to assess how such activity will effect the farmers living in the area⁷. One such problem already identified by informants is a possible clash between visitors and hunters and bird trappers (TS I-6, I-8, TPS I-19) over the issue, since much of the rural parts of Malta are inaccessible during hunting and bird trapping seasons. A sound education campaign and closer

⁷ The researcher has relatives living in the rural parts of Malta and they have argued that visitors have caused havoc with their land and in particular property. In one incident the family was robbed of beehives. Although the trespassers were Maltese, an increase in visitors to the rural areas could lead to clashes between the locals and visitors.

working relations between the MTA, the community and other stakeholders may be required to create an activity that is of benefit to all parties concerned.

The above section explored the marketing of the culture. Culture, with very few exceptions is not actively marketed abroad and it is up to the local providers to market culture through the channels discussed above. It has been demonstrated that the current means of marketing are not adequate. A tourism sector informant went on to argue that Malta “lacks (tourism) marketing professionals” (TS I-7). This was also attested by the fact that neither the MTA nor the cultural providers interviewed, with the exception of the Manoel Theatre has ever conducted a market research study to identify the cultural users, to determine their needs or to assess the marketing procedures used. This element considered by literature as an important aspect for the success of cultural tourism (Beattie McCarthy 1992; Getz, 1991; Hall, 1992 and Kolb, 2000) has so far been ignored.

This discussion throughout this section has highlighted certain problematic issues in the planning, co-ordination and promotion of cultural tourism. This section has also explored ways in which the marketing of culture could be enhanced. Primarily, at the macro level objectives of cultural events have to be clearer thus ensuring that events are planned in advance and the desired outcomes are met. Moreover better use could be made of local communities, whereby these could offer supporting services to those

offered by the MTA Tourist Information offices. In addition, more involvement of the communities would further add to their participatory role in tourism activities.

Having identified the manner in which culture is marketed the next section explores another facet of management of culture at the site level.

7.4 Managing Culture at the Micro Level: Localities, Sites and Cultural Attractions

The museum is a bit dull and dead ... perhaps it could be given a more lively touch (may be soldiers wearing some costumes of that that or some audio-visual effects) ... Also guides should give more time to visit the place - the guide gave good information and knew what they were talking about, but the tour was too quick, she had to practically "run" about the place. (Spanish tourist - guide by profession at the Place Armoury).

The sites are great but there should be more co-ordination so as to prevent the sites from getting ruined (German visitor - teacher by profession, at Ggantija Temples, Gozo)

These quotations set the scene for the final part of the analysis. They are excerpts from conversations held with tourists throughout the research period. They are but two of the many similar feelings about the Maltese cultural and heritage sites encountered throughout this research. Visitors as well as informants cited so far in this thesis had praise for the cultural heritage but were critical of its management. This pointed the researcher towards focusing further the analysis to the management of culture at the site

level. During 1999 /2000 over 840,000 tourists participated in guided tours, over 1,120,000 (nearly all visitors for that period) visited historical sites and 900,000 tourists visited museums (Ministry of Tourism 2001: 34). These figures suggest that visitor management at sites is of utmost importance, especially since the pressure of visitors has already caused damage to certain sites like the Hypogeum which had to be closed down for restoration (CP I-11, I-22) and St. John's Co-Cathedral (CP I-35). Tourists can access cultural sites either through the guided tour or else by visiting the sites on their own. These two instances give rise to two different considerations for cultural management practices. This discussion will start by giving a general overview of how visitors get to localities, cultural and heritage sites. In doing so the discussion will further explore relations between the tourism sector (public and private), communities and cultural providers.

7.4.1 Localities as Attractions

Throughout the course of this chapter reference was made to the particular role of the tourism public and private sector in determining the way in which tourist come across culture. In Malta certain localities, like Valletta, Mdina and Rabat have been marketed as tourist attractions for decades. Others, like the city of Birgu are with time becoming tourist attractions. However community representatives felt that the public tourism sector (MTA) and the private tourism sector (the tour-operators and handling agents) did not include local communities in their tourism plans; moreover certain localities were preferred over others. For example (L I-25) argued that his town (Rabat), although a major attraction and is *en route* to other major tourist attractions “has been ignored”

by the Maltese tourism authorities. The informant argued that hardly any investment by tourism authorities has been carried out while the area is not mentioned or included in the overall tourism product. Mdina representative (L I-44) argued that although his city attracts hundreds of thousands of tourists, these only pay a fleeting visit without understanding the worth of the city. Primarily this is due to the current structure of tours (see also Section 7.4.2). Birgu representative, (L I-38) argued that tour operators and travel agencies do not give the locality (Birgu) any importance.

They do the tour of the city in half an hour, when in half an hour you do not even visit one museum properly. Our town has a lot to offer, but guides merely point out places of interest and move on. Agencies use the excuse that there are no cafeterias here and so they prefer to go elsewhere. The reason is that from 'elsewhere' they get commission.
(L I-38)

This outburst raises a number of issues that have resonance throughout this research. These issues are discrepancy in site exposure, guiding practices and commissions.

The discrepancy in attention given to certain sites has been substantiated by this research through participant observation. The Malta Tour (see also Appendix 8) shows that the time spent at Rabat and Mdina was of a total of three hours and forty minutes including one hour for lunch. During this tour, around 55 minutes were spent at three major historical/cultural sites (Roman Villa, the catacombs and Mdina Cathedral) but half an hour was dedicated to an audiovisual show (owned by a private entity). The analysis of this particular tour also indicates that the actual towns were not visited but

tourists merely passed through as the tour guide was pressed for time. Tourists on tours to Cottonera have much less interaction with the respective cities. The majority of the tours are held on Tuesdays when there is a weekly market. Literature produced by tour companies highlight the Tuesday market as a main attraction of the area. However, it has to be pointed out that this market is not particular to the area and it is very similar to the other markets held throughout the week in various localities of the Maltese Islands. Tours then highlight a walk through the city and boat rides (which are optional) on the traditional harbour boat in the Grand Harbour. Tours to the Cottonera which last about an hour hardly give the opportunity to tourists to interact, sample or absorb the feel of the Three Cities (Cottonera).

Although communities complained about the lack of interest on behalf of operators to sell the locality, operators felt that certain localities lack 'saleability'. An operator (TPS I-21) argued that tours to Birgu are not popular with visitors and so the company tries to sell this locality combined with other areas such as the Harbour tour or the South of Malta. Another argument put forward was that the area, unlike Valletta and Mdina, Birgu lacks tourism infrastructure. In fact one particular company advises tourists to take a packed lunch with them.

Certain tourist itineraries exclude parts of a locality while congesting other parts. A case in point is Valletta. A tourist itinerary of Valletta usually entails a route that goes the

upper parts of the city excluding the lower parts (CP I-34, I-41). This view is also propagated by certain guidebooks. One in particular gave the following advice:

...if World War II holds little interest, don't bother to venture beyond Casa Rocca Piccola other than to see the Malta Experience (Gaul, 1993: 92)

However informants argued that such a view “which is even propagated by tourism authorities is myopic and does not do justice to the rich panorama and sites (and therefore experience) that can be offered by the lower parts of Valletta” (CP I-41). Similarly Gozo tours are very restricted in their itinerary and visitors are taken to three sites “Citadella, Marsalforn and Xlendi” (CP I-37). This approach to guided tours in Gozo led one particular guide to lament “Poor tourists, they hardly visit Gozo, they go there but they do not experience it” (CP I-13).

7.4.2 Tourists and Cultural Attractions: Guided Tours and Individual Visitors

The tourism public sector, cultural providers and the community groups argued that travel agents are often motivated by profits and they tend to choose itineraries that are of major benefits to the company (TS I-1, I-3, CP I-12, I-22 and L I-38, I-44). Generally, tours to parts of the islands combine visits to heritage sites and areas of interest with visits to venues for shopping of souvenirs (TS I-1, I-13). The objection to such tours is based on two related factors. Primarily, not all sites mentioned in a particular tour programme are actually visited; some sites are ‘optional’, reference has already been made to the boat tours in Cottonera (Section 7.4.1). This practice is also

prevalent at other cultural sites. Cultural providers such as museums mentioned that such attractions, in particular museums located in Gozo are part of the tour “free time” (CP I-37).

The museums in Citadella (Gozo) are given secondary preference. Guides offer them as an optional, the entry fee is not included in the tour price and therefore tourists prefer to roam around the Citadel than visiting museums (CP I-37)

Guided tours were also criticised due to the discrepancy between the time allocated for visiting of sites and time spent at shopping/souvenir outlets (TS I-1 CP I-11). A tour-company representative argued that the company allows between 35 to 40 minutes for each site visit. Despite this claim the time spent at sites was much less. Taking the Malta tour as an example, two hours and twenty-five minutes were allocated for site visits (Mosta Dome, Museum of Roman Antiquities, St. Paul's Catacombs (in Rabat), Mdina and Mdina Cathedral including a thirty-minute audio-visual show and thirty minutes at Dingli Cliffs and Buskett Gardens). One hour was allowed for lunch, one hour and thirty-five minutes for shopping and one hour and forty minutes travelling. Such guided tours do not offer possibility to absorb what is being seen and heard, since tourists are rushed in and out of the site and tourists would have to rely on the interpretation given by the guide which at times is not sufficient. A Spanish tourist at the Palace Armoury commented that “the guided tour was adequate but information by the guide could be longer”.

Moreover, tour participants do not always perceive shopping stops positively; they would rather spend more time at the sites or to visit other sites. A case in point was the researcher's companion on the Malta tour, who would have preferred a visit to Verdala castle to the shopping time allocated at Ta' Qali crafts' village. The current tour structure irritates tourists who feel short-changed by tour companies and guides.

Shopping time is crucial for guides, tour-operating companies and shop owners who are linked together via an intricate system of commissions based on the amount of money spent by tourists in the particular souvenir shops and shopping outlets. The account of the tour undertaken by the researcher clearly illustrates this inter-relationship in particular that between guides and shop owners. This was very evident at the Ta' Qali crafts' village, where two particular huts were singled out and chosen as examples of local crafts. The tour account however does not illustrate the relationship between the tour-company and the retail outlets which is also a part of the continuum of an economic relationship set up that exists between the various facets of the tourism private sectors (tour companies, retail outlets and private cultural providers). Retail outlets and private cultural providers such as some of the craft hut and restaurant owners "sponsor adverts in the company's brochures" (CP I -12, TPS I-21), in return companies include certain specific 'shop-stops' on the tour itinerary. Although guides are often picked out as the ones who are receiving commissions from retail outlets, findings also illustrate that commissions are institutionalised. The guided tour set-up is increasingly fostering competition (based on profitability from tour price and visitors)

between numerous tour companies on the one hand and a number of retail outlets on the other. These are through their actions striving to ensure viability, at the detriment of the quality of the cultural experience.

Guided tours addressed at niche market or special interest tourists allocate more time for the visit at cultural and heritage sites (CP I-13, I-37). Field visits show that there was more interaction between the guide and the tourist, and each item at the cultural sites was dwelled upon. One example cited is the Museum of Fine Arts. The guide responsible for a particular tour took time to explain important paintings and sculptors. Individual visitors also tend to spend more time at heritage and cultural sites. Individual visitors spent on average 90 minutes at Ggantija Temples in Gozo. They followed guidebooks and other material closely, and asked additional questions regarding the nature of the site, its history to the museum attendants. Technically called custodians and guides, museum attendants are responsible for administrative duties such as sales of tickets. At times they may assist visitors, however this is not a mandatory role. However, being at such close proximity to the site and the tourist this role should be expanded, especially since individual tourists at sites commented that “a guide for the individual tourist would make the visit more interesting” (British tourist).

7.4.3 Visitor Management

The nature of cultural and heritage attractions and the particular set-up of tours has led to the creation of particular visitor patterns. Such patterns were regulated by “the popularity of sites (TPS I-21) as well as by tour-companies (CP I-22, I-34). Guidebooks and MTA literature, to certain extent influence visitors patterns by indicating ‘must see areas’.

Data available for visitors to state museums showed that groups (guided groups) visited certain sites and not others. Sites like the Museum of Roman Antiquities, Ghar Dalam Cave, the Neolithic Temples, the Palace State Rooms and St. Paul's Catacombs attract more group visitors than individual tourists. On the other hand the Museum of Natural History, the War Museum, and Museum of Archaeology and the Folklore Museum in Gozo attracted more individual tourists. Certain sites, like the temples were considered popular since they are unique and thus elicit more interest (CP I-22, I-37). Other sites attracted group visitors because they were ideally located:

Yes, guided tours are here regularly. I think they primarily come here not because they are that keen but they are brought here because of the season tickets which allows them to visit three museums. This museum is in Valletta and is well suited, it is easily accessible not like the War Museum, which is a pity as it has an interesting collection. (CP I-34)

The popularity of certain sites with tour companies and tourists and the fact that tour groups have over the years become bigger are effecting the way in which tourists experience culture. A tourist guide (CP I-11) contended that a guide will not give adequate explanations if the group is larger than 15 participants, (yet, depending on the language some groups could be as large as 50 people). In addition, physical space at museums and heritage sites is limited making it more difficult for listening to what is being said by the tourist guide. Large groups lead to congestion at sites. Fieldwork revealed that due different tourist groups congregating at particular heritage site congestion was observed at Palace State Rooms, Ggantija Temples, Roman Villa and Mosta Parish Church. Smaller groups are more conducive for crowd management and visitor satisfaction. Large visitor numbers limit visitor satisfaction as well as detract from the scope of the attraction, since groups have to be rushed in and out of the site, with the consequence that visitors have “little time to absorb and interact with the object they are seeing” (CP I-34). This also has a negative impact on the individual visitor. The latter tend to visit heritage sites and museums “during the afternoons when most of the organised tours are over” (CP I-37).

As with the point raised on lack of market research (Section 7.3.4) visitor management practices in Malta do not incorporate an adequate system to record user characteristics.. Records at most heritage sites are maintained for fee purposes only and do not distinguish between visitor types and visitor patterns. At times record keeping practices are most erratic. For instance individual visitors to St. John's Co-Cathedral are not

charged and therefore go unrecorded; only records of guided groups are kept. Even so these are not systematically kept and the only records are located in hand filled registers. Data according to the person in charge of filling in this register is not accurate since “guides may give us the wrong number of people on the tour” (Personal Communication, Co-Cathedral representative, April 2001). Whilst on site, a guide came in and told the verger, “I only have five people can I come in?” - these five visitors went un-recorded.

7.4.4 Visitor Interpretation

The rich historical and cultural heritage of the Maltese islands necessitates good visitor interpretation. However, a foreign informant commented:

You have to know something in advance prior to coming to Malta, otherwise you will miss out on things, you will not be able to recognize; you have to read in advance so that you can actually *see*. (TS I-28)

The above quote raises an important point the *seeing* of culture. As Urry (2002:117) argues tourists do not see things but they see objects constituted as signs. Hence the interpretation of culture goes beyond the explanation of what the object is but what it stands for. Interpretation then serves also as a means of instruction, which enables the visitor to understand the site but also to imagine what could have occurred and what buildings stand for. Thus visitor interpretation will also extend the experiential notion of the site.

Despite the importance that visitor interpretation has on the cultural management, public tourism sector informants and tourists encountered at particular heritage sites commented that visitor interpretation at a number of cultural sites is poor. With few exceptions such as the Museum of Archaeology and the Hypogeum in Malta and the Museum of Folklore in Gozo which have adopted state of the art interpretative signs, the sites have descriptive captions not larger than few centimetres. Some captions are decades old and are merely legible such as those located in the Museums of Roman Antiquities and in Mosta Parish Church. Moreover, visitor interpretation located at most sites were written in English (for example, the Museum of Fine Arts and the Museum of Roman Antiquities) and did not take into account “the nationality of the visitor population who has changed over the years” (TS I-6). From a predominantly British market prevalent during the 1970s and 1980s, the Maltese Islands' visitor base has expanded to include continental visitors who do not necessarily understand English - “authorities have to show more empathy with the visitor” (TS I-6), by using the visitors' language.

Visitors argued that at times some more information at the site itself would have been of help. This included visual effects such as better explanation and photographs to animate certain displays, better lighting and sound effects. In addition to better visitor information, presentation of the cultural could also be enhanced.

Our museums are cluttered. There are museums that have one hundredth of what we have and they are better presented (TS I-5).

Moreover, cleanliness at heritage sites was perceived to be of a very poor state and this was identified as a major deterrent for the enhancement of cultural experience (CP I-35). Foreign visitors at heritage sites commented on the lack of cleanliness “museums could be kept in a better state, cleaner” (Dutch tourist). Visitors interpreted the lack of cleanliness at heritage sites as lack of pride and cultural awareness by Maltese population. Cultural providers reiterated that the general cleanliness of the environmental landscape is just as essential for a holistic cultural experience.

On Sundays we take tourists to the Marsaxlokk market, the place earmarked for coach parking looks more like a rubbish tip. It is embarrassing. Once I told the driver to pull somewhere else and we ended up quarrelling. I asked him to park elsewhere since I do not want to give tourists a bad impression. It's the same thing when we go to Had-Dingli. There we try to point out to the visitor the mystery of the Cart Ruts and the beauty of the fauna and flora instead, the visitor is treated by an array of plastic bags, empty plastic water bottles and rubbish! (CP I-13)

7.5 Discussion and Chapter Summary

This chapter has identified the major issues concerning the management and marketing of culture in the Maltese Islands. The analysis initially focused on the macro level of cultural management and then throughout the course of the chapter progressed towards the analysis of cultural management at the micro level by focusing on specific

examples. In the process, this chapter has further elaborated on the links and relationships that exist between the stakeholder groups. This analysis discussion raises a number of observations

A salient point that emerged from this discussion was that the particular institutional organisation of culture (see Section 7.2.1) meant that the different stakeholders were responsible for different aspects of culture. This structure did not foster stakeholder group alliances resulting in lack of collaboration between the various stakeholder groups. Moreover, a proper cultural policy framework was lacking. This coupled with lack of direction from tourism entities as to what cultural tourism means or implies, led to a situation where objectives for cultural tourism development are not clearly stipulated. Consequently, this has had an impact on the management practices of culture resulting in the situations presented in Section 7.2 through to Section 7.4.

This chapter has also identified that culture and heritage are faced with limitations of funding. The centralised governmental system, which inhibits government departments from generating their own funds, has characterised culture and heritage. However, other elements were highlighted; notably *failure to consider seriously ideas proposed and the failure to stimulate creative new ideas*. This oversight needs to be rectified in light of the new culture and heritage acts. Alternative sources of funding will be needed through sponsorships and private partnerships. In 3.5.3 it has been argued that one aspect of

marketing of cultural organisations is also to attract sponsors; sponsors will only be attracted to those organisations that can ensure good returns.

Reflecting upon the analysis presented throughout Section 7.2, one can conclude that best approach for cultural management would be one of synergy in which all stakeholders are involved as equal partners. In addition, it has been demonstrated that ownership of culture is an important element for successful management (see Section 7.2.4.1).

Tourism (public and private) entities used culture to market the Maltese Islands abroad, yet, with very few exceptions, cultural providers and the MTA conduct most of their marketing for cultural-related activities in Malta. This chapter highlighted the need for better awareness of the cultural product; namely what it is and where to locate it. Marketing of culture requires better planning and co-ordination between stakeholders.

Visitor management occurs at a country level (guided tours), locality level (Valletta example) and at the individual site level (museums). Certain itineraries have remained the same for decades⁸. This reflects on the lack of action on creative ideas mentioned earlier, guide training and the way in which tours are conducted. In addition due to large

⁸ For example tours of Valletta and Mdina suggested by MGTB (1940), Pearce (1955) and Gaul (1998) are very similar although new sites have been established and tourist attractions have become broader to incorporate social and cultural landscapes

increase in numbers of visitors over the years, these visitor patterns have led to congestion of tours at particular sites. Research has also revealed that presentation at sites needs to be developed to offer more entertainment, increase quality time and, possibly to educate.

The themes and observations raised by this chapter have highlighted two important factors in the management of culture. The first point that requires attention is the emerging role of local communities in the development of cultural tourism. Communities have been ignored by tourism entities yet, this chapter has shown that communities have an important role to play in managing culture. The second point is the role of the private sector. Travel agents and tour-organising companies have been crucial for the development of tourism in Malta yet, they have influenced the cultural product by controlling the manner in which tourist encounter and experience culture. Culture in Malta is in a state of flux. This movement is occurring at a local level (through Local Councils) and at the national level with new bodies being set up and new roles being acquired. This augurs well and suggests that the future management of culture and the potential for the development of cultural tourism be better than the one outlined in this discussion. However good cultural management practice will not occur unless the divergences in opinion, lack of collaboration and failure to recognise grassroots suggestions prevail.

SECTION IV

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 8

Final Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

Most people, after accomplishing something, use it over and over again like a gramophone record till it cracks, forgetting that the past is just the stuff with which to make more future.

- Freya Stark (<http://www.creativequotations.com>)

8.1 Introduction

The main objective of this thesis was to understand better the phenomenon of cultural tourism through the study of processes and relationships involved in the production, marketing and consumption of cultural activities using the Maltese Islands as a case study. The final chapter of this thesis will discuss the main findings of this research and identify outcomes of major import concerning cultural tourism. In the process, it will discuss whether the research objectives set out in the first chapter have been met and will also suggest recommendations for future research, policy and practice.

8.2 Discussion and Conclusions: The Main Themes

This thesis has covered five major themes. It has looked at the meaning of culture and cultural tourism, the impact of cultural tourism, the role of stakeholders in managing and marketing cultural tourism, the political, economic, and socio-cultural relations that exist between the various stakeholders and the importance of research in the area of cultural tourism. Each of these themes characterised the way in which cultural tourism

has developed in the Maltese Islands as well as providing a potential influence on the future development of cultural tourism. The emergent themes are discussed below.

8.2.1 Meaning of Culture and Cultural Tourism

Stakeholders perceive culture as a major attraction, however cultural tourism in Malta is not yet fully defined. The main findings show that there is demand for culture and that the cultural resource is available yet, the cultural product as currently presented by the MTA and the Museums Department is limited and not readily accessible: it is static and requires consistent rejuvenation. An ongoing well-planned strategy will ensure that the resource will be transformed into a viable product. The challenge will lie in utilising its full potential while at the same time encouraging its sustainability.

In looking at the meaning of culture given by informants, two main perspectives emerge. Primarily, culture has a number of meanings based on its various aspects. It encompasses history, experiences, landscapes and invented pageantry. The fact that multiple meanings exist is not problematic since culture by its very definition is complex; nevertheless this raises some concern as there is no consensus on what should be promoted as culture by stakeholders that are responsible for its marketing, leading to confusion or lost marketing impact. The second notion (linked to the first) is that Maltese tourism authorities apply a very narrow definition to cultural tourism and cultural tourists. The literature reviewed has identified various levels of cultural tourists, however it has been shown that in Malta, tourists are considered “cultural tourists” only when they fit the criteria of those tourists whom the literature defines as “cultural

specialists". The incidental cultural tourists, that is, tourists whose main motivation for travel is not culture but will engage in culture once at the destination, are not perceived as cultural tourists consequently their needs are not acknowledged. This research shows that the Maltese Islands have the ability to cater for various levels of cultural motivations of tourists. Acknowledging and recognising the fact that a variety of cultural tourists exist could have a bearing on the way in which the various stakeholders perceive and present culture. Chapter 5 has demonstrated that 'culture' in Malta is still in its *raw* stage; it has not been fully transformed to *a product*. For culture to become a cultural product it needs better presentation, better interpretation and more accessibility. The cultural expressions examined in this study namely, events (traditional religious festivals and invented pageantry), gastronomy, museums and heritage sites are at various stages of 'development'; all elements could be developed further by the respective stakeholders. The creation of new products such as creative crafts, comprehensive use of local produce in cuisine, the extension of activities related to historical pageantry that involve more the local and foreign visitor are all ways in which the cultural product could evolve. The development of these cultural-related activities would generate a better quality cultural product encouraging the visitor to spend more money whilst encouraging the local industry and benefiting the community at large.

8.2.2 Impact of Cultural Tourism on Culture

In the previous section it was mentioned that cultural tourism in Malta has a narrow definition. Despite this, tourism authorities have over the years developed a number of cultural activities (such as invented pageantry) and marketed others such as *festi*,

heritage and the local population, all of which are aspects of cultural tourism. The onset of such activities has had an impact on the cultural product.

Informants reiterated that local culture (in particular temples, architecture, villages, and cultural expressions such as *festi* and gastronomy) is authentic yet certain aspects of the cultural product on offer (crafts, entertainment, historical pageantry and elements from above, like gastronomy), are not professionally produced resulting in a 'fake' cultural product. This has a negative impact on the tourism product in general by giving it a 'cheap' outlook. Warnings cited in guidebooks (Bötig, 2000; Boulton, 2002) and comments made by informants show that inauthenticity has already tarnished the cultural product. One main reason attributed for the lack of authenticity is the lack of know-how (gastronomy, lace-making) and increased commoditization (lace-making). Authors like Boniface (1995) and Hall and McArthur (1998) argue that unless the quality of the cultural product is guaranteed, it is highly unlikely that cultural tourism will be sustained. This research has shown that promoting the quality and authenticity of the cultural product results in culture retaining its uniqueness. However for this to be guaranteed culture has to be *nurtured, protected and promoted by the local population*. Black (1996), Boissevain and Serracino Inglott (1979) and Schouten (1996) argue that an increase in interest by outsiders in one's own culture would promote pride and enhance identity amongst the local population. The findings of this research indicate that interest by outsiders did bring about an increased awareness by locals in their own

culture however findings also suggest that *unless people are aware of their own identity, cultural propagation is not possible.*

If a person from this community does not appreciate his/her own heritage, how can he/she guard that heritage? If we are not aware of our heritage how can we be proud of it and boast about it (*niftahru bih mal-barranin*)? (I-25)

Moreover, cultural awareness has to be accompanied by *ownership* of culture. Ownership does not imply owning a cultural product or a cultural item but it relates more to *endearment* towards one's own culture. This point will be discussed further in the third emerging theme - the role of stakeholders in the production and propagation of culture and cultural tourism.

Another point that emerges from this research is the economics of heritage and culture. Current means of funding need to be re-assessed. Culture and heritage are heavily dependent on government funds, which often is not enough. The new heritage and culture laws propose that cultural and heritage entities will be self-financing yet government subsidies will be given to provide funds for research and restoration. The planned arrangement is not adequate to provide the necessary funds: nor does policy stipulate the manner in which self-funding will be attained. Consequently, alternative measures, such as sponsorships and merchandising need to be sought. This study has shown that alternative means of funding could be generated within the cultural domain by enhancing the product offered within the museums and heritage sites. However to be

effective, a good visitor base will be required to ensure that sustainable funding would be generated. The level of museum visitors is healthy in general however this research has shown that time spent at heritage sites and museums varies between a minimum of 15 minutes (guided tours) to a maximum of 90 minutes for the individual tourist. The time allocated for the former group (which is the majority of visitors) does not allow for appropriate appreciation of the site let alone time to browse around museum shops and to make use of other amenities such as cafeterias. On a community level the development of a good cultural product will in the long term promote development of the local community.

This study has highlighted that more *integration* is needed between local communities, the MTA and tour organisers in the design and creation of tours that are of mutual benefit to the stakeholders and the visitor. Clearly this is not an easy task since each stakeholder has its own agenda; however it is only in this manner that a sustainable cultural product could be attained.

8.2.3 The Stakeholders - and the "control" of culture

Role of the Local Community

The local community is identified as a major stakeholder in culture. Primarily the local community and its cultural expressions are the subject of the tourist gaze, secondly the local population is effected by tourism in general, and thirdly the local population is also a participant in its own culture. Maltese tourism authorities have promoted local culture for a number of decades (Boissevian, 1996b; *Malta This Month*, 1978; MGTB,

1940), however it was not until the late 1990s that tourism authorities started to acknowledge the role of local communities in tourism. Local community involvement was not a pro-active approach adopted by tourism authorities but rather a reaction to a strong protest launched by Mdina residents against tourism authorities for organising an event in their locality without their consent and approval. So far community involvement in tourism relates to consultation during the preparatory phase for the enactment of historical events. Informants consider the level of involvement still limited; some of them suggested that they have a more active role in the events organised by the MTA as well as in tourism in general. Local communities acknowledge that tourism has an indirect impact on their communities and expressed the need to participate more fully in events notably cultural tourism activities that are slowly transforming the physical and communal ethos of their localities. Communities studied feel that they have a lot to offer, and they are requesting a leading role.

This introduces an altogether novel scenario in tourism development in Malta, which has until now been always controlled by external entities such as the government, tourism authorities, travel agencies and tour operators. It introduced the notion of what Marsden (1994) calls indigenous management as opposed to external management. It is fledging, and more collaboration is required in this area to ensure better management of cultural tourism. This study has highlighted two main areas that are in need of careful re-assessment. Primarily, at a micro-level a proper analysis of the management of tourism activities at the local (town/village) level is required. Local communities should

have an active role in managing this and access to adequate tools by means of which they could enhance their locality should be made available. Secondly, at a macro-level, tourism in general and cultural tourism in particular, are reputed to have beneficial economic impact. However research has pointed out that this impact is *felt* rather than *studied*. Data on the economic impact of tourism in Malta is limited, with one major study being conducted in 1999 (Vella and Mangion, 1999). This study highlighted the economic importance of tourism and shed light on tourist expenditure and employment. However it must not remain an isolated exercise; it must be backed and followed-up by constant research in the area. Another area that requires attention is presentation of statistics on tourism. National statistics on the economic impact of tourism are still hard to decipher (for example under the category of tourism employment data is given only for hotel and catering establishments other categories such as guides are not included). Research on the economic impact of tourism on local communities is non-existent. In an environment where, new tourism activities such as cultural tourism are being proposed this is an area that requires immediate attention.

The Role of the Malta Tourism Authority (MTA)

The MTA amongst other roles has the responsibility to market the Maltese Islands abroad as a destination; one of the images used to market Malta is culture. Although the imagery used by the MTA highlights the historical and cultural elements of the Maltese Islands it also gives relative importance to leisure activities, indicating that the Maltese Islands are capable of providing a whole range of activities. Secondly, the

MTA has the role to develop the tourism product, which includes culture. One area of the cultural tourism product that falls under the jurisdiction of the MTA is the production of (invented) historical festivals and artistic cultural festivals. The organisation of these festivals is commendable, as this study shows, such activities add to visitor (local and foreign) experience.

Despite the fact that the MTA promotes culture through its marketing literature and organises cultural festivals, this study shows that the MTA has a minimal role in the actual marketing and production of cultural tourism and its management. The MTA for example needs to *re-assess the way it manages* these festivals. The findings of this study indicate that the festivals could be better marketed and could be of better quality (in terms of offer and provision of a unique experience) thus enhancing visitors' overall cultural experience. The potential of these festivals to attract *both* cultural specialists as well as incidental cultural tourists has been so far underestimated. A product such as festivals in which a lot of effort and resources (human and financial) are invested, should be given more attention by all directorates within the MTA.

The MTA has central role in the development of cultural tourism and it should clearly state the course of its development. Yet, for the success of this venture, the MTA needs first to re-define its concept of cultural tourism and then set out to strengthen its links with the other stakeholders, especially the tourism private sector. In addition, it has to be involve more the local communities through increased communication and

participation. It can make use of existing local infrastructure such as Local Council offices as tourist information offices via cost-sharing. Furthermore the MTA needs also to influence tour-operators to sell Malta differently. This work has already commenced and this research highlighted the fact that such a task is not easy.

Marketing Culture: Marking and Enshrinement

One of the statements that left an impression on the researcher was that expressed by one participant (I-30) who referred to local heritage and culture as Malta's best kept secrets. This phrase elicits reflection (cf. Black 1996:113) since culture and heritage are physically present yet not marked or identified as such. This research has shown that the type of marketing of local culture is reminiscent of the way culture is viewed by tourism entities and cultural providers. Imagery in tourism literature marks a different type of culture to that identified by informants (cf. findings in Chapters 5 and 6). Tour-operators tend to identify Maltese culture via its churches and *luzzu* (traditional fishing boat). These images reflect local culture but the islands' megalithic past, renowned for its uniqueness worldwide is absent from the tourist literature - temples are not considered "markers"; they are perceived as an additional attraction to the beaches and leisure activities. The *geographical location* of culture and its *control* is one reason why such a perception exists. Tourist resorts in the Maltese Islands are located in fishing villages; thus fishing boats are a common sight in all the major resorts. It is interesting to note that none of the informants referred to the *luzzu* as an expression of local culture but referred to it as a tourist attraction. In addition, churches in Malta are inescapable -

their domes dominate the skyline. It is therefore the visibility of churches and the proximity of the fishing environment to the tourist resorts that identifies these two elements as potentially “cultural”. Conversely, temples are located in the internal parts of the islands away from the immediate tourist gaze and some are not easily accessible unless use of guided tours or hired cars is made. Since culture and heritage are controlled by ‘other stakeholders’ (this theme is discussed in greater length in the following point), very little has been done by tourism authorities or cultural providers to identify the temples and other aspects of Maltese culture such as gastronomy as cultural. The only exception is the National Theatre (Manoel Theatre) which, actively seeks to mark theatre heritage in Malta. Therefore culture and heritage are not visible not because of their absence but because of their *lack of marking and signage*. This is clearly an area in which all stakeholders are called to collaborate and improve. In concluding this section it has to be pointed out that lack of marking and enshrinement is not isolated to tourism sphere. The Maltese population at large is also unaware of aspects of its own cultural heritage and contribute to the problem.

The Role of the Private Sector

A pervasive theme that emerged from this research was that the control of culture was in ‘someone else’s hands’. Data pinpoints the private sector - namely tour operators and agencies as major influence in defining what is and what is not culture and the way in which tourists experience culture. Tour operators use aspects of culture in their literature mentioning must see sites and highlighting a cultural image based on a version

of the Mediterranean characterised by sun and sea, with a side order of culture. Agencies control the types and size of tourist groups and consequently determine the way in which guides conduct tours and promote culture.

Two major issues that need to be redressed in the current guided tours are the *size* of the groups and the *time* allocated at heritage sites and places of interest. The large groups (average 50 tourists per guide) and the limited time spent at sites in contrast to time spent at shopping outlets result in low quality guided tours with the consequence that tourists spend *limited quality time at sites*. The concern for profits on behalf of tour companies and the desire of guides to earn additional income through commissions have led to the above scenario. The private sector must be encouraged to provide more quality tours that are of mutual benefit to local culture and business interests. This research discussed gastronomy. One way of enhancing the local cuisine could be through a scheme where restaurants serving (typical or traditional) local cuisine are marketed through the MTA. In addition the MTA through its Enforcement Directorate could ensure that restaurants that claim to serve Maltese cuisine, actually do so.

Role of the Government

The Maltese government has been for a number of years a silent stakeholder in the area of culture. As this research evolved, it became increasingly evident that Maltese governments often paid lip-service to the guardianship of culture with limited active involvement in the actual propagation and more importantly guardianship of culture. It

was only in the past decade that the government started taking active interest in culture. This interest is most probably related to Malta's ongoing process of accession to the EU and subsequent conformation of Maltese legislation to EU regulation on cultural protection and hence the interest in the promotion of cultural tourism. The new legislation in the area of culture and heritage will, when it comes into action, have direct influence on the future management of cultural and heritage in the Maltese Islands. However the planned role of the government will be one of 'overseer' rather than direct involvement. This development raises the question of who ultimately will be responsible for the management of culture, issue of funding and quality issues of the cultural product.

8.2.4 Data Collection - Knowing the User

Research is an important aspect in identifying and understanding better the cultural tourist. Careful data collection will ensure targeting of the desired visitor and the employment of good visitor management practices. It has become evident that there is a great shortage of reliable research on cultural tourism. The present study has attempted to provide a framework for future research by looking at the providers of culture. More data and information is required to understand better the needs of the cultural visitor and the needs of the heritage sites. Very few stakeholders know their users and very few, if at all, monitor the effectiveness of their marketing and advertising campaigns. Until now this was not absolutely necessary, as cultural stakeholders did not need to compete for visitors. However in view of the newly enacted cultural laws which stipulate that cultural and heritage entities would in the future be self-financing coupled with

diminished competitiveness of the Maltese tourism industry suggest that the present state of affairs be redressed.

The Maltese Islands cannot afford to remain passive in this area - stiff competition from other destinations within the Mediterranean region is growing and the cultural product on offer is already undermined through bad publicity. Insights about product quality, efficacy of marketing campaigns, visitor patterns, visitor satisfaction and product development can only be determined via more information hence more research.

8.2.5 Links and Relationships

Silberberg (1995) mentioned that co-operation between different stakeholders in promoting cultural tourism to a particular area could have positive outcomes for cultural providers, the business community and the community at large. The analysis of the Maltese situation show that current interactions between stakeholders involved in the production, marketing and management of culture and cultural activities are based on personal rather than institutional relations. This has led to a fragmented approach towards the management and marketing of culture, very often with conflicting results and the fostering of misconceptions and rivalries between stakeholders. The lack of co-operation has resulted in a situation where there is no coherent direction as to where the cultural tourism product is heading. The findings presented in this thesis highlight the need for a more viable situation where there is integration and collaboration between *all* stakeholders concerned. Although the new cultural legislation stipulates that the MTA, the Church and Local Councils will be involved in governing committees, the terms of

reference are not yet outlined. Nonetheless, cultural tourism management requires a group of experts, possibly under the auspices of the MTA who could act as the coordinating body which would integrate all the interested parties. This would foster a synergistic approach towards the marketing and management of culture and cultural tourism thus ensuring a better quality cultural product and visitor satisfaction.

8.3 Cultural Tourism in Malta: The Way forward.

The basic question that drove this research was why despite efforts of the past decade to promote Malta's culture, is the country still perceived as a mass, sun, sea and sand destination?

The answer to this question lies in the way stakeholders *perceive* culture and cultural tourism and *deal with* its marketing and management. If the Maltese Islands want to develop cultural tourism as a way of future tourism development then the move has to start from within (Dann 1988); stakeholders need to take an active role. Towards the latter part of the study signs of change in the field of culture started to occur. During 2002 two laws related to heritage and culture were enacted by the Maltese Parliament. The MTA organised three new festivals and the community of Rabat was asked to co-host the October historical festival together with Mdina. In addition the MTA adopted a more active role in marketing of culture on two main spheres. The first was to update its website, giving the visitor more information and details on cultural events. For example it has now a direct link to the National Theatre and the addresses of Local Councils

which can be contacted by the visitor for further information regarding the village *festa*. The other area in which the MTA was having a more active role was in the naming and marking of culture. At the beginning of 2002 the MTA together with a mobile phone company set up visitor information plaques (similar to the ones used by the MTA to mark venues of cultural activities during its historical festivals, see Appendix 7) at various sites in Valletta. Visitors could by dialling the mobile phone number (displayed on the plaque) listen to information about the site. This will surely help visitors to “see better” the “object of their gaze”¹.

The literature discussed in the literature review chapters presents cultural tourism as a natural process, a course of development whilst highlighting that the adoption of cultural tourism development is not without consequences. This study has demonstrated that in adopting cultural tourism, new tactics have to be used in marketing campaigns to encourage a simultaneous shift in the mentality of operators and prospective clients. This research indicates that providers of cultural tourism (including the local population) experience difficulties in defining culture and therefore in marketing and management of the product.

¹ The same scheme was launched in Mdina in August 2002. After consultation with the locals it was agreed that the logo of the company sponsoring the stands be reduced in size. This was not done with the consequence that these stands were destroyed (possibly by residents as a sign of protest). This example reinforces the findings of this research -namely that partnership implies that views are not only listened to but also endorsed.

In changing the image of the destination from a mass tourist destination to a more culturally oriented one, tourism authorities and tour-operators face important issues. A change in focus implies a change in market segmentation and hence visitor numbers, which could have adverse impacts on the company or the country. Culture may not appeal to all prospective visitors and hence it is packaged with other activities including leisure activities. In so doing, tourism authorities and tour-operators are ensuring the visitor that the destination offers a variety of attractions. This wide appeal is evident in the imagery used to portray a more culturally-oriented destination. Although informants have mentioned history and experience as salient elements of Maltese culture, imagery used by tour-operators and tourism authorities presents a stereotypical Mediterranean country where a fishing and an eternal festive community thrive. The kind of imagery has attained considerable familiarity and probably imposes on the promotion of culture a similar artificial mould.

For a country like the Maltese Islands, a tourism development scenario endorsing a wide definition of cultural tourism and aimed at enhancing tourist experience through the development of quality cultural activities is a viable option. It would provide activity beyond tours and museum visits, provides a fresh approach towards culture (educational, interactive); it is also sustainable as it will utilise a renewable resource (cultural product). It will maintain and preserve living history, involve local communities and at the same time generate income. The current study shows that cultural tourism could be sustainable, but sustainability is a principle that unless it is

endorsed by all stakeholders concerned could be elusive with more harm being done to the cultural resource, the user (tourist and local) and the provider that is, the local community.

8.4 Recommendations

Following the above discussion and conclusions of the main findings of this research, the next section outlines the main recommendations. Given the nature of this research two types of recommendations are being postulated: practical as well as academic.

8.4.1 Implications for Policy and Practice

This research has adopted a macro approach towards the study of cultural tourism. The recommendations that will be made are therefore of a general policy and general practice nature.

1) *Cultural product development*. The cultural product needs to be developed in such a way that it enhances visitor experience and is sustainable. This could be obtained via:

- Augmenting historical (invented) cultural festivals through the promotion of educational activities in which local and foreign visitors could participate. Such activities could include hands-on activities, talks or exhibitions related to the era by involving local experts. These events would heighten the interest of local and foreign visitors in local history via the preparation and provision of food and crafts related to the historic era in turn encouraging the use and development of local

craftsmanship and local produce and stimulating visitor expenditure. The practice adopted by the community of Birgu whereby permits are only issued to local entrepreneurs could be further developed to stimulate local community development.

- The development of a sustainable crafts industry. This would require the co-operation of various stakeholders, including others such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Industries. A possible scenario would involve the Crafts' Villages and make them available for crafts tours which could incorporate a hands-on learning experience on glass-blowing or lace-making or classes where visitors can take-home the 'craft' item that they would have created during their visit. These tours would serve as an educational tool, promote local crafts and limit pressures on other cultural and heritage sites; making a visit to the Crafts' Village sustainable in more ways than one.
- Limiting congestion at cultural and heritage sites. This study has shown that presently congestion is a major problem in the Maltese Islands and heritage sites tend to become congested on certain days. This problem could be curtailed via a thorough study of visitor patterns followed by discussion with tour-organising companies to create different routes that limit congestion.

- Enforcement of high-service quality. A lot of rhetoric has resulted in minimal impact. The present study has highlighted the fact that service is often lacking, that tourists could be given a better experience and a better cultural product than is currently done. The Maltese Islands will not succeed in developing the islands as a destination of choice unless the competent authorities with the participation of all stakeholders tackle this issue. Culture has to be of good quality in terms of diversity, experience, and value of the visitors' money and time. Secondly, cultural tourism, like any other tourism activity would not succeed unless there is a backing infrastructure of good service by guides, adequate interpretation at heritage sites, quality (genuine) food and service at restaurants and souvenir retail outlets. If such criteria are not satisfied the use of cultural tourism would turn into yet another marketing gimmick with short-term impacts.

2) *Education in culture-related matters.* Education is the basis of good product development. Areas that could be further developed include:

- The re-assessment of the Institute of Tourism Studies courses of food and beverage services to incorporate a defined number of hours on the gastronomy of the Mediterranean and the Maltese Islands. This will teach students to appreciate and make appropriate use of local ingredients and to promote local cuisine.

- Training courses designed for re-enactors participating in MTA historical pageantry to ensure that re-enactors are conversant with their roles in order to give a more authentic performance.
- Training course designed for organisers of MTA historical pageantry to understand better the role that these festivals have in the overall cultural tourism product.
- The re-evaluation of education and teaching of local crafts in secondary schools. Given the nature of crafts and their assumed economic contribution, craft education could incorporate business studies and entrepreneurship.
- The provision of courses for personnel working in museums and heritage sites. Cultural providers need to master better the skills needed for the better management of cultural sites. Cultural providers need to learn how to make use of the resources at their disposal, attract more funds and manage better the sites they are responsible for.
- A re-assessment of guides' training courses. Current courses offered by the ITS and the MTA need to be validated to check their applicability. In addition to the present input of history and archaeology, guides' training should give more attention to the social and cultural aspects of the landscape, local communities and customs. Moreover, schemes whereby licenses are renewed every couple of years following

short in-training courses need to be introduced. This would ensure that guides are keeping abreast of new techniques and knowledge consonant to their area of expertise.

8.4.2 Limitations of the Research Approach Adopted and Implications for Future Research

The main objective of this study was to explore the relationship between culture, cultural tourism, and the agencies responsible for the marketing and management of tourism in the hope that future considerations of the development of this type of tourism would consider the views that these informants have raised. In so doing, this research gave “a voice” to an often-ignored element in tourism: that of the providers (cf. Boissevain, 1977 in Crick 1989). Looking at cultural tourism from this angle has helped to fill in a gap in the literature as it has explored the way that providers perceive culture and in the process, interact with one another to provide the cultural product.

The research approach was valid as it explored the processes involved in adopting cultural tourism as mode of tourism development. It has explored the processes and interactions between various stakeholders - namely the providers of tourism and cultural tourism (local communities, individual cultural providers, tour agencies, the national tourism authority and the tour operators). Furthermore this research has outlined the way in which tourists come across the cultural product. The major limitation posed by this type of research was that due to time constraints the ultimate consumer (tourist)

could not be fully studied. The limitation related to the research approach used. A Grounded Theory approach looks at interactions which raises multiple leads. A recommendation for future research using this approach would be to use small samples of stakeholders. Given the macroscopic exploratory nature of this study, this research has attempted to gain a better understanding of cultural tourism via the management and marketing of the cultural product by a number of stakeholders. Nonetheless, this is only a facet of the domain of cultural tourism and a more composite picture of the issues involved would be achieved if research is conducted in the following areas.

1) *Cultural tourists*. This research has demonstrated that cultural tourists are not well defined, and their motivations are not clearly understood. A detailed study on motivations and expectations of tourists engaging with culture is necessary to supplement the present study. It would also provide background information for visitor management at particular heritage sites.

2) *The role of cultural tourism in community development*. Communities in Malta are increasingly becoming more interested in tourism in their area, and thus the impacts of tourism at the local level need to be monitored and evaluated.

3) *Destination marketing and the image of the Maltese Islands*. Research in this area is required to assess the impact of the new marketing campaigns employed by the MTA and to assess whether such imagery is attracting the desired tourists and in addition,

whether, the choices made are based upon the effective use of imagery and the experiential notion that they evoke.

4) The culture and heritage scenario in the Maltese Islands is at present in a state of flux. *A study on the effectiveness of the new cultural and heritage legislation* would complement this study.

8.5 Contributions to Knowledge

This research sought to address the notion of cultural tourism development in a mature tourism destination. Although it has focused on cultural tourism development in Malta, findings presented in this research can be applied to other contexts and situations.

The findings of this research demonstrated the complex nature of cultural tourism. It depends on intricate political, economic, and socio-cultural processes established between various stakeholders at various levels of interaction. These include on the one hand interactions at a national /regional level (for example tourism entities and cultural providers and tourism entities and local community) and international/national relations (for example tourism public sector and tour-operators) on the other. This research has indicated that cultural tourism is adopted by tourism public and private entities often for political and economic reasons such as market competitiveness, utilising cultural expressions and communities as the vehicles through which this particular tourism activity can be propagated. This research has also shown that cultural tourism can be

used by local tourism entities to re-dress the 'power' relations that may exist between the national (tourism entities) and the international (tour-operator) entities with regards to destination product. This is attainable since public tourism entities are, together with other local stakeholders responsible for the destination /country/ region's culture. Therefore, cultural tourism can empower local tourism entities to develop their own version of tourism rather than that led by the external (international) operators.

In addition, it was demonstrated that cultural tourism can transform communities, bringing about development of the community through the evolvement of crafts, the use of local produce and the enhancement of cultural identity. In turn, cultural tourism if well developed could provide visitors with a unique experience based on quality products. However, for this to occur, cultural tourism should not be perceived merely as 'another product to develop'.

Cultural tourism development at the macro level requires the effort of all stakeholders involved. It is an activity that permeates all aspects of the tourism system (marketing, product planning, communities and the tourism industry itself) and hence, the collaboration of all stakeholders is paramount to its success. More importantly, cultural tourism development should be conducted in tandem with the communities in which it is developed. Communities are not passive spectators of their own culture, rather they are the ones who will propagate culture and therefore their endorsement and

participation in the development of cultural tourism are to be encouraged. Moreover, cultural tourism development should be community-led.

Cultural tourism is not an activity that is managed only at macro levels; if it remains at this level it risks to become a product without any meaning or import to the destination developing this activity. The crux of cultural tourism development lies in understanding the meaning of culture, for all those involved. Culture by its very nature has multiple meanings, and therefore it should be clear from the outset, what type of cultural tourism activity is desired. Prior to managing and marketing culture tourism entities need to reflect on what they are to manage. In brief, they have to identify what culture means and entails. This could be achieved only through the ownership of culture. Thus, *the development of good quality cultural tourism should be based on appreciating what culture entails and offers.*

This thesis has acknowledged the importance of social interactions between stakeholders involved in the marketing and management of cultural tourism and has given ample examples of the processes involved. In particular it has emphasized community development through cultural tourism, the relationship of stakeholders to the tourism industry and cultural tourism in particular. It is concluded that cultural tourism could be propagated through the provision of *cultural* intermediaries. A cultural intermediary would be any stakeholder that besides the product (a craft, a tour or a local dish) would offer a service (catering for the needs of the user) based in knowledge

(cultural knowledge, professional outlook) and adequate skill. Cultural intermediaries would enhance the quality of the product highlighting aspects (such as interesting facts and anecdotes) that add to its value. Thus, a local dish for example, is no longer food to be simply consumed, but food to be sampled, becoming imbued with meaning, where the tourist gains insight into the local culture. In this manner, tourism and culture would seamlessly integrate offering stakeholders (tourism public and private entities, cultural providers and local communities) and tourists alike a uniquely fresh perspective.

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List of Brochures Analysed

1) Dutch Brochures

Amacita (Youth travel) 1999
Arke (TUI Group) Summer 2001
Connexion Travel Summer 2001
De Jong Intra 2001
Fox Vakanties Malta (First Issue 2001)
Holland International Group (Tui Group) October 2001
Hotel Plan Sun Holidays 2000/2001
Hotelplan 2001
Malta Opera Festival (Hannick Reizen) 2001
NBBS Summer 2001
OAD Travel Summer 2001
Prisma 2000
Reizen mit Hofstra
Surprisng Trip 98/99

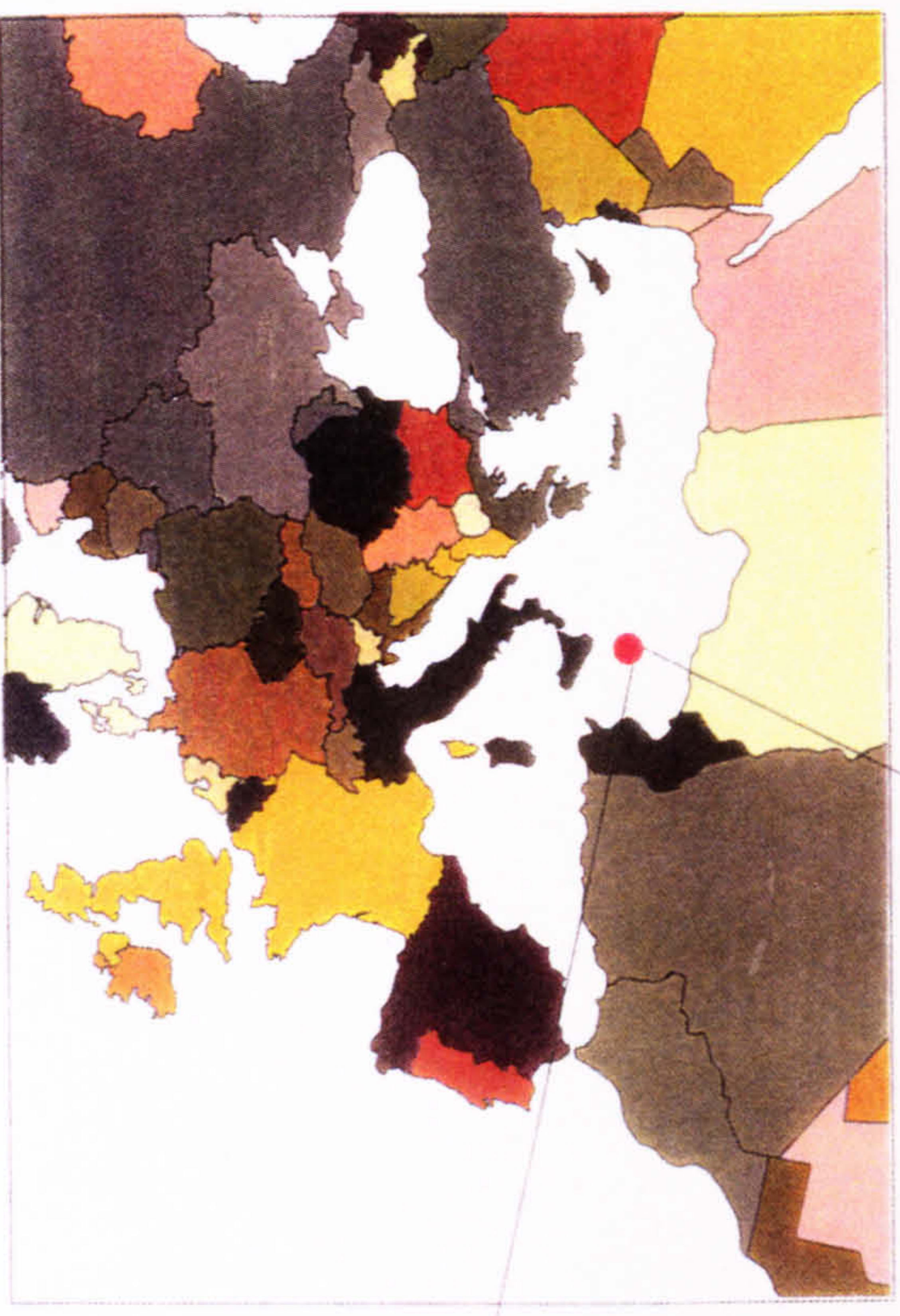
2) UK Brochures

Airtours Prestige
Bellair Holidays 2000/2001
Cadogan Holidays Nov. 1999 – Dec. 2000
Chevron Summer 2000
Cosmos Golden Times Winter 2000
DA Study Tours Fringes 2000
First Choice 2000/1
Malta Direct 2000/2001
Panorama 2001/2002
Sky Tours Summer 2000
Sovereign Summer Sunshine 2001
Thomson 2000/1
Thomson a' la carte
Travelscene Short City Break 2000
Unijet 2001/2002

GOZO

COMINO

MALTA



Map 1



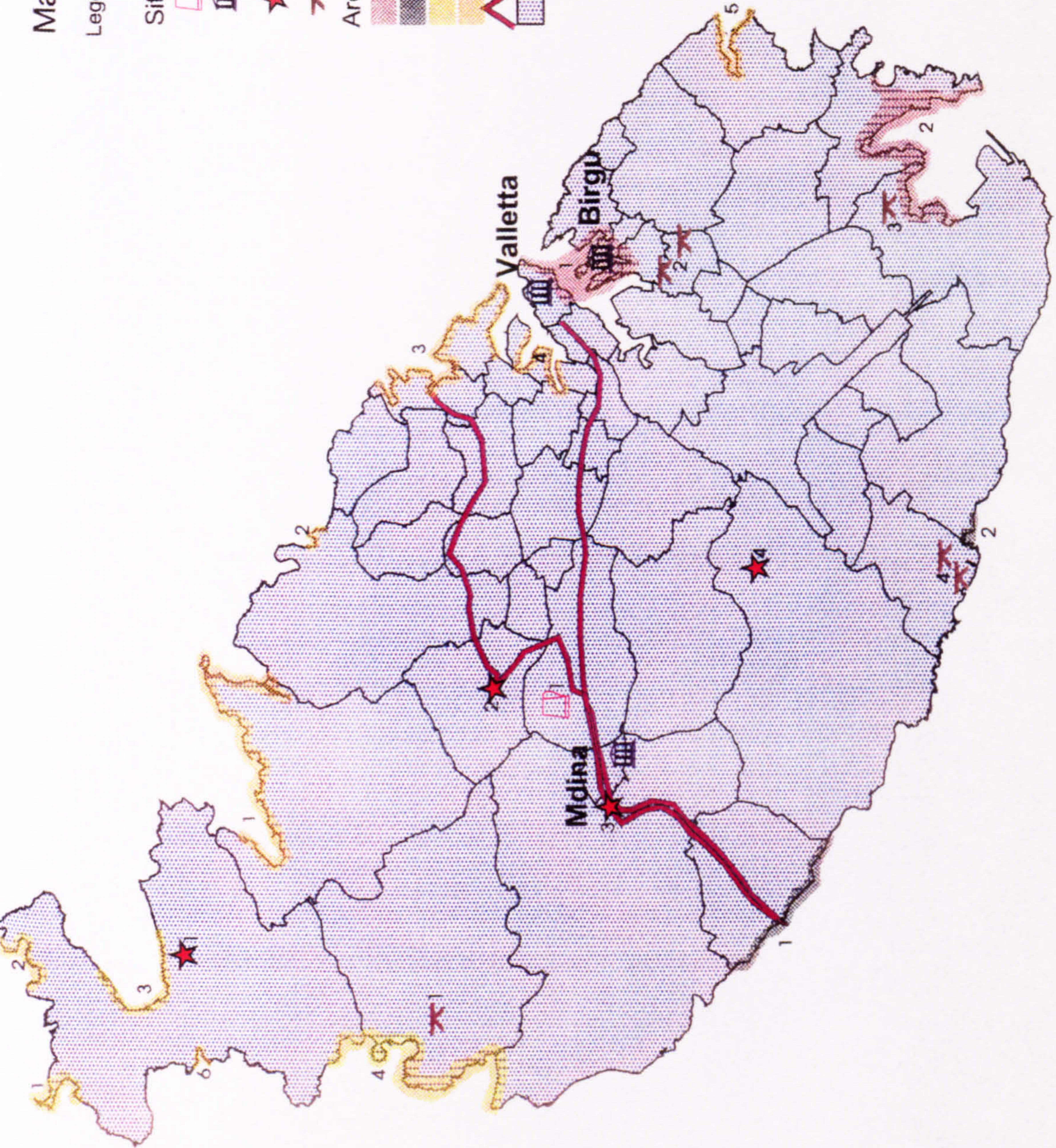
20 Kilometers



Map 2.

Legend

- Sites of Interest
 - Craft Centre
 - Cultural City
 - Locality of Interest
 - Temple/Remains
- Areas of Interest
 - Area of Mixed Use
 - Area of Natural Interest
 - Sandy Beach
 - Resort
 - Tour
- Local Council Boundaries



8 Kilometers

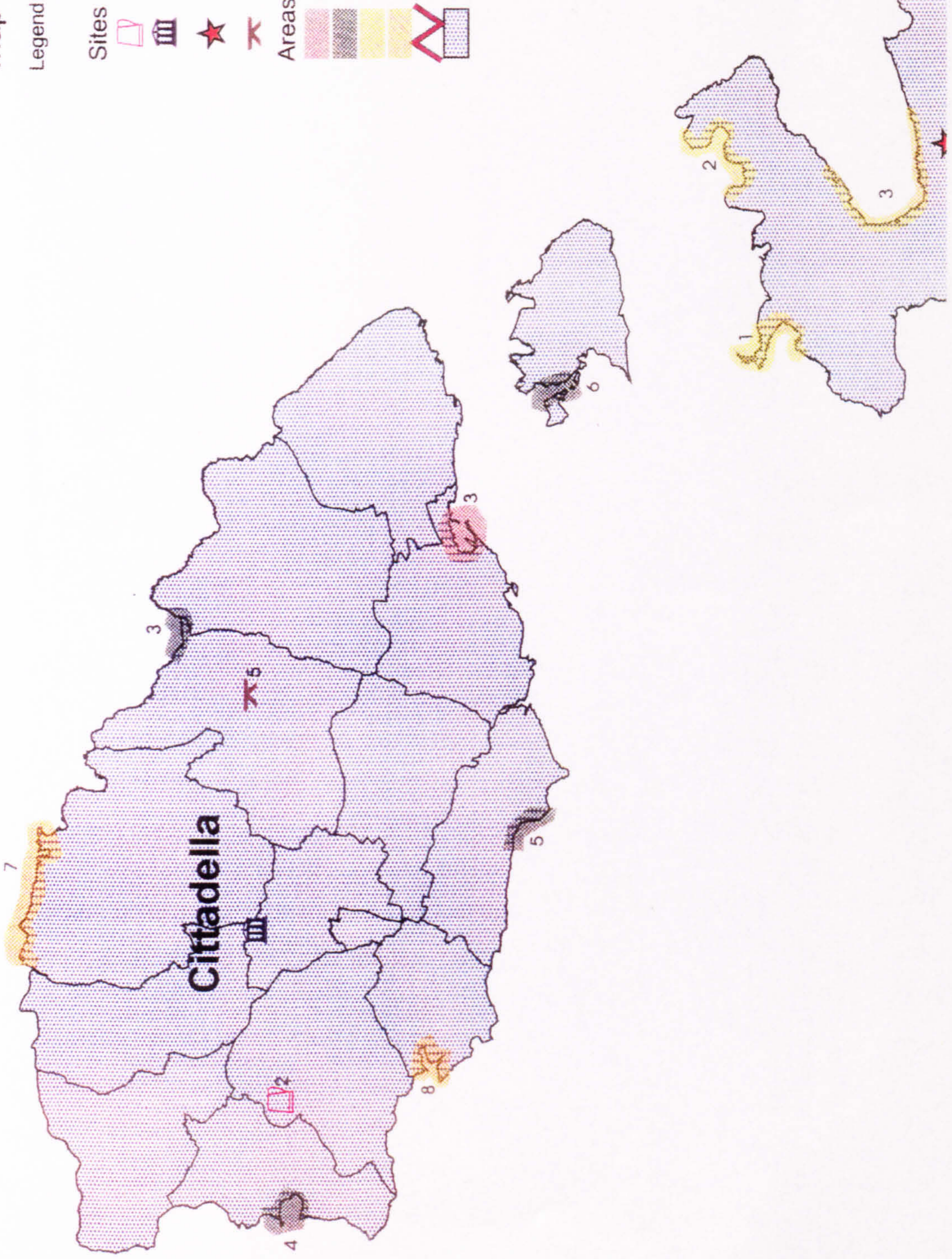
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8

Map 3

Legend

- Sites of Interest
- Craft Centre
- Cultural City
- Locality of Interest
- Temple/Remains
- Areas of Interest
- Area of Mixed Use
- Area of Natural Interest
- Sandy Beach
- Resort
- Tour
- Local Council Boundaries



5 Kilometers

0

5

List of Sites of Interest Indicated in Maps 2 and 3

Craft Centres

1. Ta' Qali Craft Centre
2. Ta' Dbiegi Centre

Locality of Interest

1. Mellieha Village (Panoramic views, typical Maltese village, miraculous shrine and major resort)
2. Mosta Dome
3. Rabat (Historic town, Roman Villa, Christian Catacombs and St. Paul's Cave)
4. Siggiewi (One of the Internal villages promoted for its 'village atmosphere')

Temples / Remains

1. Roman Baths (presently managed by MTA together with the Museums Department)
2. Tarxien and Hypogeum Hal-Saflieni Underground Burial Chambers
3. Ghar Dalam Cave - Pre-Historic Remains
4. Hagar Qim and Mnajdra
5. Ggantija Temples

List of Areas of Interest Indicated in Maps 2 and 3

Area of Mixed Use

1. Grand Harbour Area - Area covers a site which is a major attraction and which features heavily tourist literature, the Mediterranean Conference Centre, Fort St. Elmo both are located in Valletta and the Cottonera area. The Grand Harbour is also renowned for its fortifications..
2. Marsaxlokk Bay and Birzebbuga. The fishing village of Marsaxlokk is a major cultural attraction. Tourist are taken to visit the market, the fishing village and fishermen. The area also contains an archaeological dig, it is also a scenic site. The area also has the only sandy beach located in the south of Malta . The area also houses a number of fish restaurants and some accommodation.
3. Mgarr Harbour - Site for Gozo ferry, a fishing village and a tourist resort

Areas of Natural Interest

1. Dingli Cliffs and Cart Ruts - Area is renowned for its scenic beauty, panoramic views and fauna and flora. Area also features cart-ruts which are reputed to be of archaeological importance.
2. Blue Grotto - Boat trips are organised to the sea caves in the area. The locality is also a fishing village, a tourist attraction and houses a number of souvenir outlets and restaurants
3. Ramla Bay - Area of Scenic beauty, natural importance for its physical environment and also historic importance. In addition caves above the bay are reputed to be the dwelling of the nymph, Calypso.
4. Dwejra Bay and Azure Window - An area of natural heritage containing an inland sea.
5. Ta' Cenc Cliffs - Area of scenic beauty and natural importance as endemic birds use the cliffs as their breeding grounds.
6. Blue Lagoon - A unique bay and a major attraction for locals and tourists

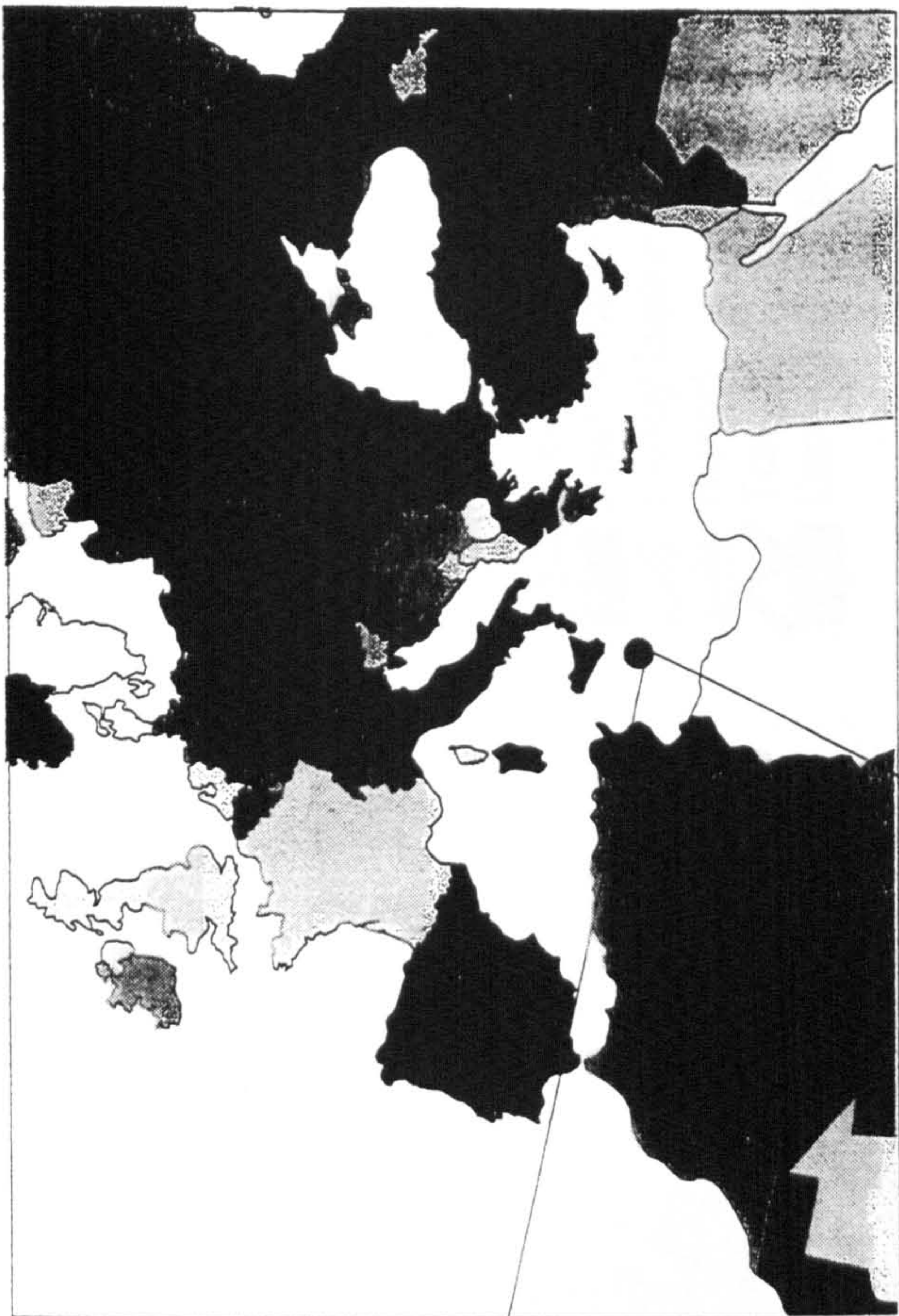
Sandy Beaches

1. Paradise Bay
2. Armier Bay
3. Mellieha Bay - largest sandy beach in the Maltese Islands
4. Golden Bay/ Riviera/ Gnejna Bay

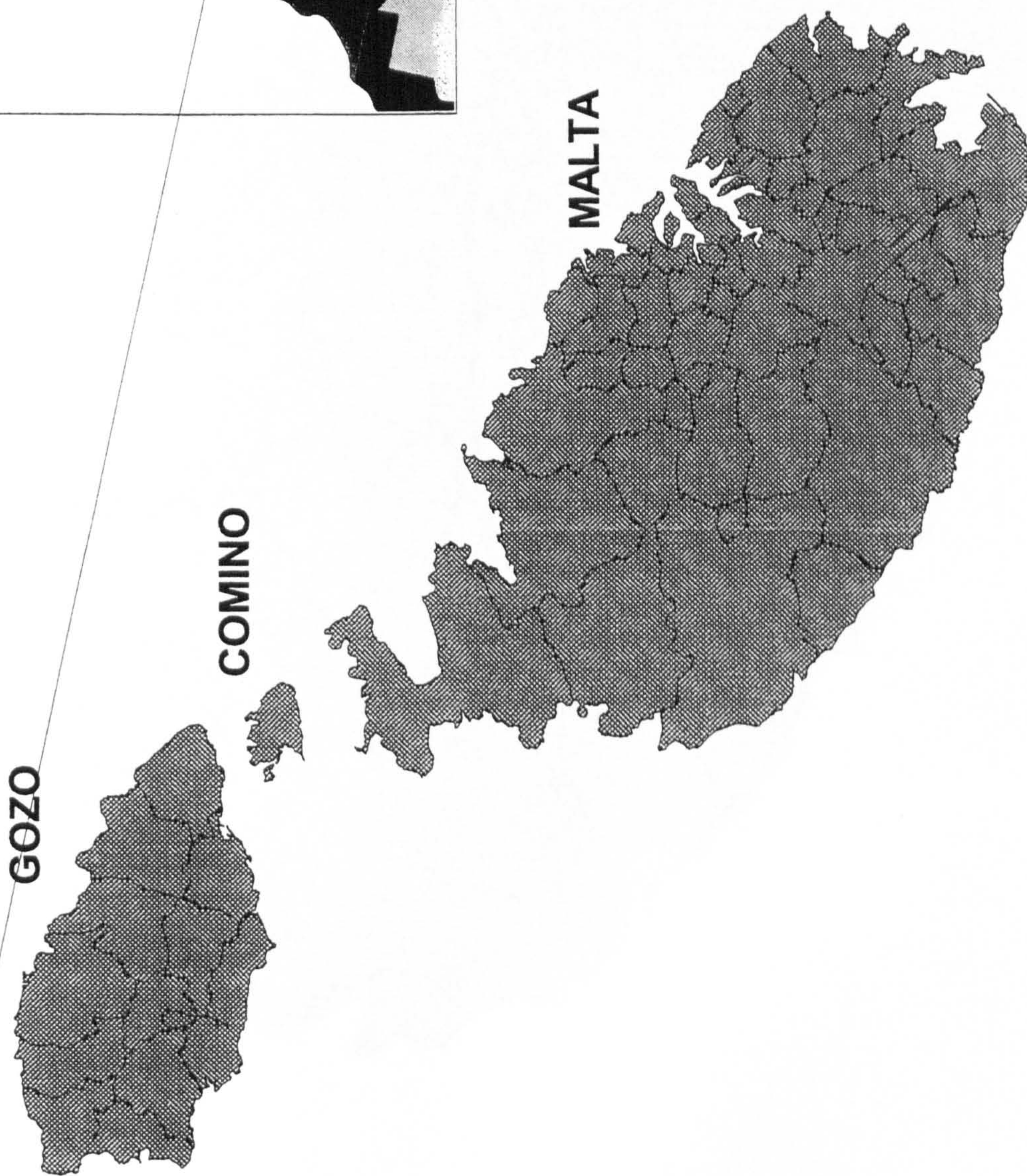
Resort

1. St. Paul's Bay / Qawra and Bugibba - The largest resort in terms of accommodation
2. Splash and Fun Theme Park
3. Paceville / St. Julian's /Sliema - Apart from being a resort this area is also synonymous with nightlife entertainment
4. Msida and Manoel Island Yacht Marinas
5. Marscala
6. Popeye's Village - Popeye's Film set is now used as theme park

7. Marsalforn - previously was used by Gozitans as their summer resort now it is a major resort in Gozo accommodating Gozitans, Maltese and tourists
8. Xlledni Bay - A much smaller resort but slowly expanding. A number of diving schools are located in this resort and in Marsalforn, since Gozo is more renowned for diving holidays



Map 1



20 Kilometers

10

0

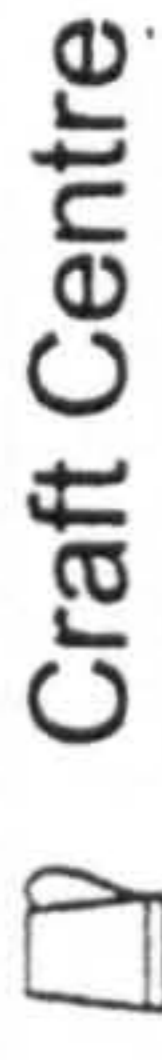
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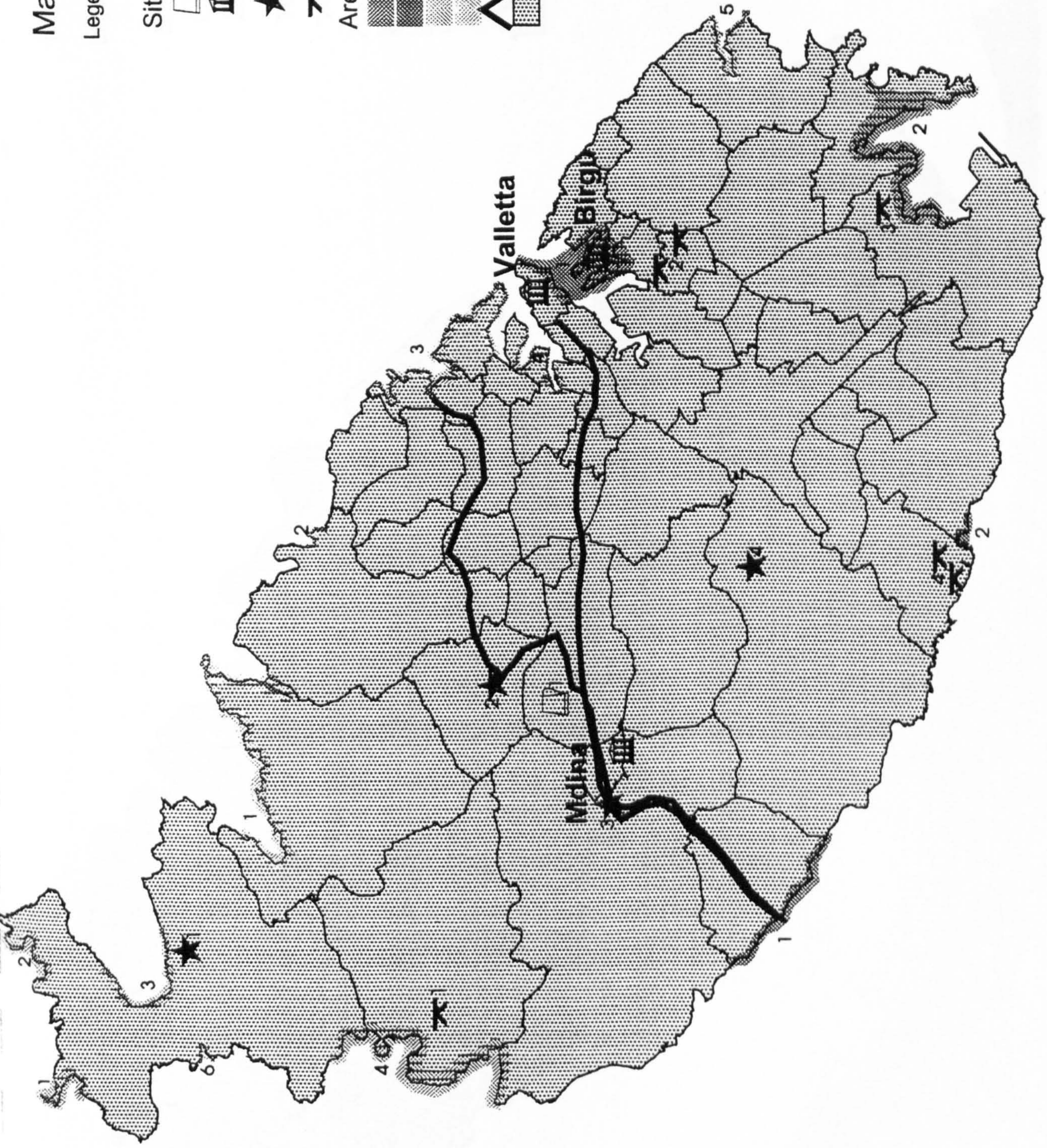
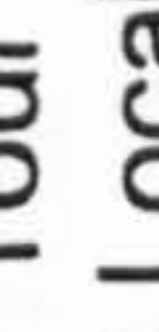
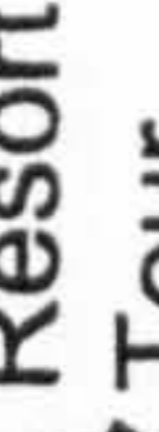
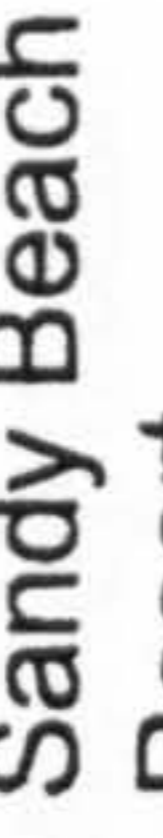
Map 2.

Legend

Sites of Interest



Areas of Interest



8 Kilometers



Map 3


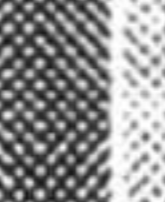
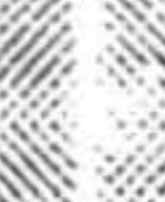

Legend

Sites of Interest

-  Craft Centre
-  Cultural City

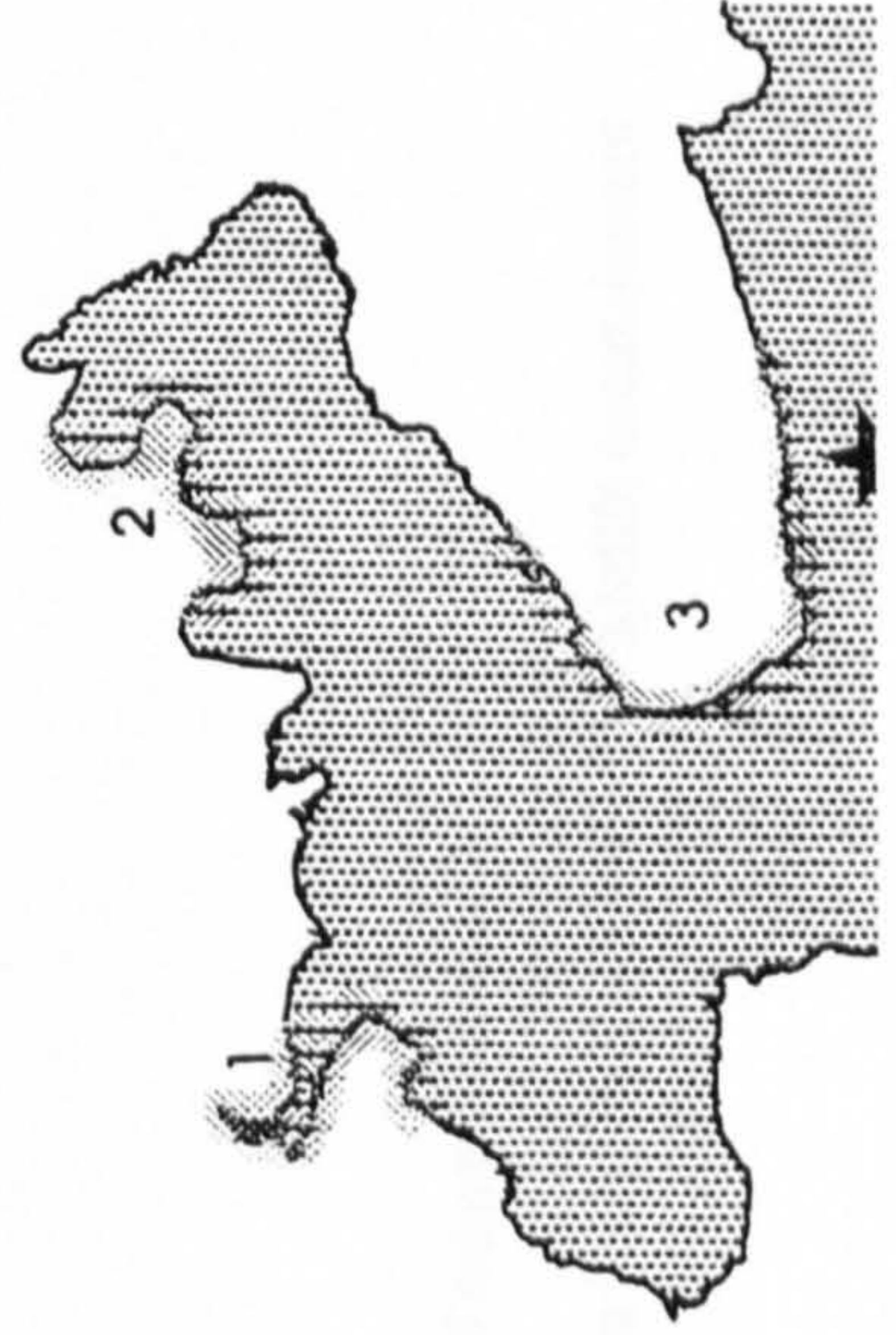
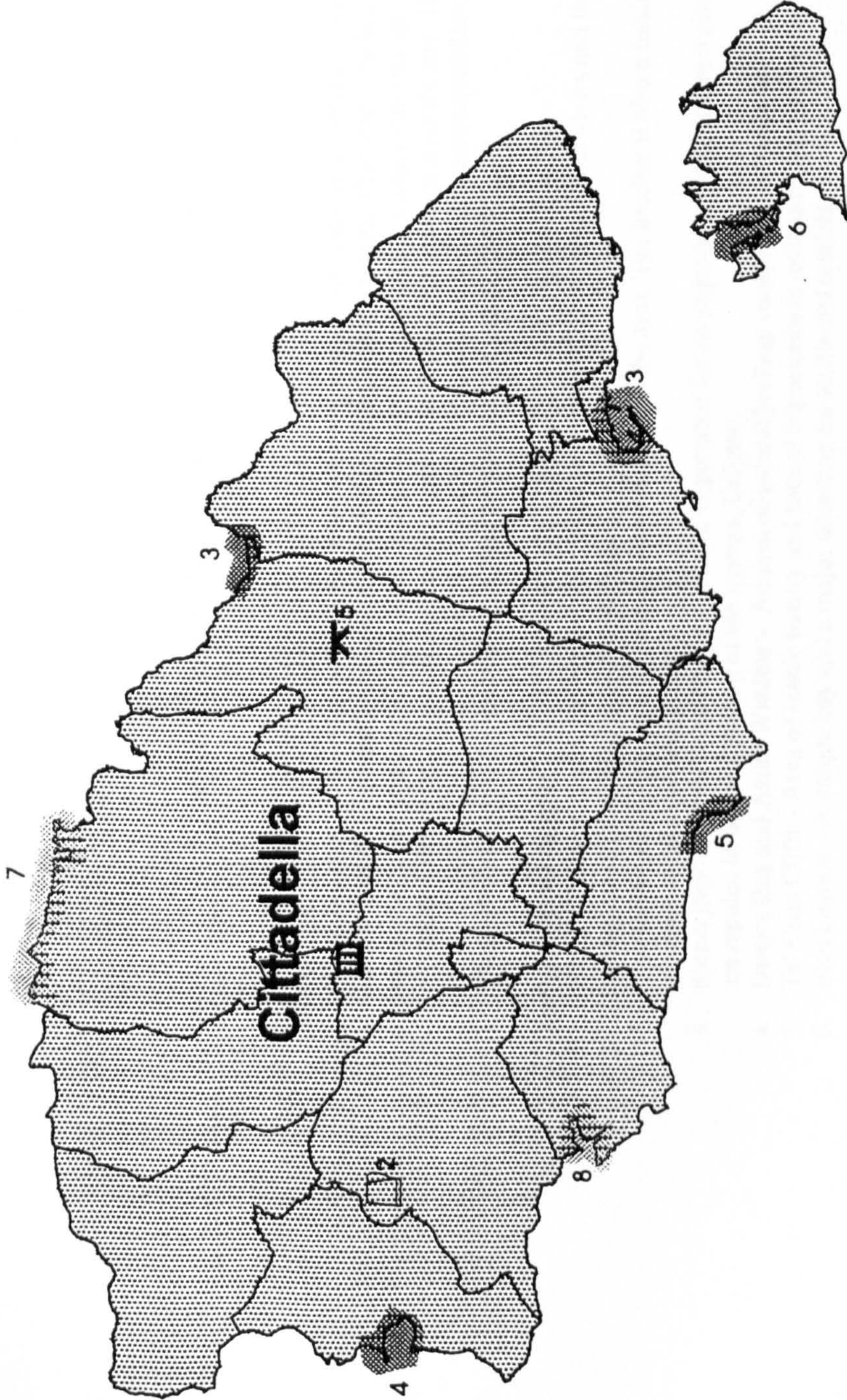
-  Locality of Interest
-  Temple/Remains

Areas of Interest

-  Area of Mixed Use
-  Area of Natural Interest
-  Sandy Beach
-  Resort

-  Tour

-  Local Council Boundaries



5 Kilometers



List of Areas of Interest Indicated in Maps 2 and 3

Area of Mixed Use

1. Grand Harbour Area - Area covers a site which is a major attraction and which features heavily tourist literature, the Mediterranean Conference Centre, Fort St. Elmo both are located in Valletta and the Cottonera area. The Grand Harbour is also renowned for its fortifications..
2. Marsaxlokk Bay and Birzebbuga. The fishing village of Marsaxlokk is a major cultural attraction. Tourist are taken to visit the market, the fishing village and fishermen. The area also contains an archaeological dig, it is also a scenic site. The area also has the only sandy beach located in the south of Malta . The area also houses a number of fish restaurants and some accommodation.
3. Mgarr Harbour - Site for Gozo ferry, a fishing village and a tourist resort

Areas of Natural Interest

1. Dingli Cliffs and Cart Ruts - Area is renowned for its scenic beauty, panoramic views and fauna and flora. Area also features cart-ruts which are reputed to be of archaeological importance.
2. Blue Grotto - Boat trips are organised to the sea caves in the area. The locality is also a fishing village, a tourist attraction and houses a number of souvenir outlets and restaurants
3. Ramla Bay - Area of Scenic beauty, natural importance for its physical environment and also historic importance. In addition caves above the bay are reputed to be the dwelling of the nymph, Calypso.
4. Dwejra Bay and Azure Window - An area of natural heritage containing an inland sea.
5. Ta' Cenc Cliffs - Area of scenic beauty and natural importance as endemic birds use the cliffs as their breeding grounds.
6. Blue Lagoon - A unique bay and a major attraction for locals and tourists

Sandy Beaches

1. Paradise Bay
2. Armier Bay
3. Mellieha Bay - largest sandy beach in the Maltese Islands
4. Golden Bay/ Riviera/ Gnejna Bay

Resort

1. St. Paul's Bay / Qawra and Bugibba - The largest resort in terms of accommodation
2. Splash and Fun Theme Park
3. Paceville / St. Julian's /Sliema - Apart from being a resort this area is also synonymous with nightlife entertainment
4. Msida and Manoel Island Yacht Marinas
5. Marscala
6. Popeye's Village - Popeye's Film set is now used as theme park

7. Marsalforn - previously was used by Gozitans as their summer resort now it is a major resort in Gozo accommodating Gozitans, Maltese and tourists
8. Xlendi Bay - A much smaller resort but slowly expanding. A number of diving schools are located in this resort and in Marsalforn, since Gozo is more renowned for diving holidays

APPENDICES

Number of Visitors to the Maltese Islands
(1959-2001)

Year	Total Number of Visitors (including Maltese)
1959	17,385
1960	47,806
1961	170,853
1962	354,579
1963	728,732
1964	1,173,654
1965	1,713,776
1966	2,311,971
1967	3,053,788
1968	3,911,161
1969	4,887,351
1970	5,916,235
1971	7,013,711
1972	8,199,199

APPENDIX 1

**Number of Visitors to the Maltese Islands
(1959- 2001)**

**Total Number of Visitors to the Maltese Islands
(1959-2001)**

Year	Total Number of Visitors (including excursionists)
1959	12,583
1965	47,804
1970	170,853
1975	334,519
1980	728,732
1985	517,864
1990	871,776
1995	1,115,971
1996	1,053,788
1997	1,111,161
1998	1,182,240
1999	1,214,230
2000	1,215,712
2001	1,180,145

Source: NTOM (various years) and MTA 2001

Main Economic Indicators for the Maltese Islands

Indicators	2001
Land Area	316 sq. km
Population	379,200
Population Density	1200 per sq. km
In Malta	1409 per sq. km
In Gozo	423 per sq. km
Tourist Density	100 per sq. km
Total Density	1300 per sq. km
GDP	Lm 1,618.4 million
GNP	Lm 1,616.2 million
Employment by Industry	
Private (Direct Production)	37,937
Private*	50,004
Government and Public Sector	30,778
Companies with Public Sector Shareholding	7,757
Temporary Employment	1138
Unemployed	7433
Tourism (FTE)^	41,451 (27.37%)
% Contribution to GNP	
Tourism	24.29%
Trade Balance	- Lm 80.9 million

Source: Ministry of Tourism (2001): National Statistics Office (<http://www.nso.gov.mt>)

* NSO statistics include Hotel and Catering Establishments under this category

^ Note that the total (direct and indirect) employment in tourism industry has always been measured as Hotels and Catering. It was only in 1998 that the total of 41,451 full time equivalent jobs were estimated as a result of the tourism economic impact study (Vella and Mangion 1999).

APPENDIX 3

Tourist Arrivals by Market

Table 1 International Tourist Arrivals by Market

Market	1985	1990	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
UK	256,468	450,002	461,159	398,899	436,899	448,763	422,368	428,780	451,530
Germany	56,998	130,200	187,761	184,110	193,020	203,199	212,430	204,749	160,262
Italy	43,810	64,039	97,384	89,439	90,190	90,558	92,726	92,522	93,564
France	24,439	34,395	72,876	64,453	62,457	72,512	73,264	75,809	82,639
Netherlands	7,927	22,228	45,526	48,928	52,238	56,534	65,345	64,168	50,756
Scandinavia	19,990	33,346	38,531	40,420	39,248	39,997	50,607	52,392	52,197
Belgium	2,917	10,042	22,008	21,879	25,567	25,146	28,349	26,713	23,695
Austria	4,830	12,109	20,095	15,909	17,913	23,741	29,027	27,670	27,670
Switzerland	9,959	14,426	18,502	19,900	17,924	24,776	23,448	21,982	24,365
Greece	n.a	1,649	3,408	3,800	5,964	8,010	10,706	8,457	8,358
Spain	n.a	3,275	8,018	6,837	4,937	4,575	5,597	5,434	9,091
Irish Republic	n.a	10,424	14,158	10,211	11,717	15,094	20,082	19,848	21,855
Libya	n.a	36,063	37,186	50,950	39,289	37,509	44,968	43,268	31,017
Russia	n.a	n.a	10,593	13,596	21,339	23,717	16,223	18,780	22,054
Ukraine	n.a	n.a	413	650	1,586	2,746	2,768	2,409	3,447
USA	6,836	9,934	10,945	11,969	14,924	17,641	18,558	19,269	19,890
Canada	n.a	5,522	5,276	5,434	6,060	7,182	7,017	7,256	7,559
Australia	n.a	6,694	7,908	8,459	8,952	8,934	9,656	10,841	9,595
Japan	n.a	1,305	2,130	2,950	3,879	5,586	6,396	8,468	10,655
Others	83,690	26,123	52,094	54,995	57,058	66,020	74,696	76,897	69,910
TOTAL	517,864	871,776	1,115,971	1,053,788	1,111,161	1,182,240	1,214,230	1,215,712	1,180,145

Source: Cockerell (1995); MTA (2001); MTA (2002) [online]

APPENDIX 4

Interview Schedule

The Interview Schedules used for this research were based on the following criteria:

Background Questions

- Description of the role of the company/ department/
- Description of activities conducted by the company (marketing, advertising, PR, tour-organisation, museums etc.)
- Description of the informant's role
- Duration that the company and individual involved with Malta / activity such as (guiding, re-enactments, restaurant), whether there have been any changes since the informant's involvement
- Description of client/visitor

Culture and Cultural Tourism

- Meaning of culture for the informant
- The way in which culture is expressed through the company's / department's activities (use of images, and reason for the particular use)
- Explanation of and reasons for the type of marketing campaign used to market culture
- The use of culture in tourism
- Major problems/issues with culture in Malta and in its use as a cultural tourism product
- Major problems/ issue in the management of culture
- Suggestions for future

Links and Relationships

- Partners with whom the entity collaborates on the matter (nature of partnership, duration and when and how does it come into action, outcomes)
- Manner of communication (problems /issues, frequency, by whom is it initiated, nature - formal / informal, feedback, nature of feedback)
- Nature of involvement in decision taking (ownership)
- The way informants' see the other stakeholders' role in the marketing and management. Is anything done to improve current situation and if so by whom?

Other Comments

At the end of the interview informants were invited to add any other comments and / or suggestions that they may have a relevance to the research.

APPENDIX 5

Data Trail

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The Data Trail presented here looks at the process of data analysis employed in this research of the three main types of data collection methods (i) semi-structured face -to-face interviews, (ii) participant observation and (iii) document analysis.

(i) Semi-Structured Interviews

This excerpt will demonstrate the interview process, that is the interaction between the informant and the interviewee. In addition it will also demonstrate the analysis procedure, starting with description which arises from the interviews themselves, the categorisation process and the interpretation of the data.

EXPLANATION

[marketing] - denotes one of the categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1998a) /naming (Locke, 2000)

[OPENING QUESTION to establish rapport and to start informant talking] - denotes methodology notes on conducting interviews. They are included here demonstrate the rigour of the data collection method

present an image, because there are a lot of misconceptions about what Malta is and what Malta has to offer. [destination image] - denotes text being analysed. The categories were then collected from all the interviews to check for relationship between the various categories of data.

Interview with I-18

Date: 29/12/99

Venue: I-18 's Office, London

Meeting No: 1

Duration: 1.5 hrs

Q: Could you tell me something about the background of this company? [OPENING QUESTION to establish rapport and to start informant talking]

A: Company XX which, is the company brand name, the holiday company name, has three predominant brands first of all, "A", "B" Travel and "C" Holidays. Now we produce those, brochures - summer and winter one. The "C" Holidays we do not have at the

moment because that is an overseas brand, a brand that is sold in the Gulf, Scandinavia and in Ireland.....

Informant went on to describe the way in which the company grew over the past 16 years and the type of marketing techniques employed by the current company. Part of the data, especially about the growth of the company was not directly related to the research but then the informant, without any prompts, broached the subject of marketing procedures employed.

We have re-branded it we focused on ~~direct marketing, direct services, direct marketing~~ [marketing] and we are actually building it that way. "A" is retailed to the travel trade, and "B" Travel that is sold direct, we are looking at ~~e-commerce, we have a web site~~ [marketing - use of web sites] on which we are doing a lot of work at the moment, and ~~direct distribution~~ [marketing]

Q: ~~Could you elaborate~~ [ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION] more about changing profile of the clients buying your product.

A: It is a bit difficult to elaborate. It is a round about way of answering your question. From our point of view it is rather early to start determining what sort of movements have been over the years in terms of client demand. You must also bear in ~~mind that client demand is also driven by the value for money, by the price~~ [informant is discussing here motivation of the visitor and its relationship to the tourism demand] so, the law of elasticity here works extremely well. There ~~is a lot of stock of five star beds that came on the market over the last one and a half years in Malta. That brought the price down on the five star beds it also knocked on to the four star beds, which brought it down. The consequence is that there is a massive growth on the four and five star and massive drops on the three star~~ [situation in Malta, cf. to I-30, I-7, I-28, these spoke also on the same topic and related it to quality] Which indicates to us that people are ~~willing to buy up, spend a bit more money and get a four star hotel, spend an even further amount of money and get a five star hotel. So whatever you do whatever you say this market~~ ~~is a very price conscious market and price fluctuations do actually matter a fair bit~~ [price and quality]

Q: You are saying no matter what Malta tries to offer will it be price bound. What would happen if one tries to portray a different image of Malta?

A: First of all, first thing we need to do is present an image, because there are a lot of misconceptions about what Malta is and what Malta has to offer. [destination image] I am not being critical of the tourist office but unfortunately the destination's carrying capacity is a reality of life. You can't expect Malta taking, round figures, half a million visitors per annum from the UK to have the same amount of exposure and the same amount of budget and advertising activities as Spain does that takes something like five or six million, so that is a reality. [marketing constraints] Ehm I think as regards location we are pigeonholed as a destination. [destination image] I think there is a lot to draw from the Gozo experience. Any opportunity we actually try and divorce the two destinations. Where we say Malta is, OK, versatile and so on and so forth, Gozo is a bit more upmarket, more sophisticated, better environment. [distinction between Malta and Gozo]. It is a fact whether you like it or not. And that is creating more off a sustainable type of client.

..... I've always trying to concentrate very much on the perception of our consumer, the consumer' perception of our product and really a client looks for an experience, rather than a holiday. It is virtually impossible to start determining the reason why a client is purchasing a holiday or a potential client is trying to purchase one of your holidays, because it is immense and varied. There are people who want a short 3 or 4 night break, there are people who want 14 nights to switch off and so forth. [motivation] You are looking at a package, and say to us look we have got cultural heritage which unequal, can you go out and sell that? I would say forget it would not be commercially viable to do that because of the gearing and the whole structure of where we sit within the industry. [informant is arguing that Malta cannot sell culture only - issue due to tourism structure in Malta] If we were doing something like 4 or 5 million passengers 4 or 5 million holiday makers per annum, then it would be slightly different. There are various segments to be sizeable enough to promote and market and gear your self up against. [Then, Malta's size and its capacity is also a problem] What I am saying is this, with Malta, yes fine you will get a

sizable portion of visitors that will go to follow and view the monuments of the Knights of St. John for the sake of the argument. You will get a proportion of people going there because they want like to see the neolithic temples. They are wonderful examples [culture : Knights, temples, monuments, cultural tourists are seen as a 'proportion'] But by and large the core market, which drives the industry, which keeps the industry in a safe and viable situation is the person that wants good weather, wants a good hotel, wants to know that there is culture wants to know that they can go out in and have a good time in the evening and they have a broad spectrum of what is available on holiday [main tourist to Malta is that tourist who can be termed as incidental cultural tourist?] If they are going to spend two weeks there are see that they enjoy all these things. So you are offering an experience, so focusing on an aspect of that experience its scientifically [tourism as experience, and experience includes culture]

Q: So far you have mentioned the Knights of St. John, monuments. But there is another aspect of culture, village *festas*, food, rituals, and new invented pageantry. How do you see these fitting in the overall image of Malta? [prompt questions, I was trying to get the informant to define and explore further the notion of culture]

A: Most of these things came, through competitive need rather than creative need, especially the staff that is coming on the market now. [interesting comment - requires further investigation, so the next question was posed]

Q: Can you elaborate?

A: For example, the pageantry that goes on, the Birgu Fest. It is all fairly recent stuff. [temporality, and marketing, information. It's not fairly recent. I-19 also made same comment - could this be due to the marketing campaigns adopted. See I-2, I-3, I-6 on marketing and planning of events] These come because most of the European destination and even Mediterranean destination do these things already. So it is through competitive need rather than through heritage. Yes, I think they are extremely important [role of events] but they cannot be [limitations] the sole proposition that we are going out with. I think we would have series difficulty hitting a fairly

substantial core market saying hey come to Malta because on the 15th of August we have the feast of Sta. Maria [limitations of cultural tourism] and wherever you on the island you cannot miss the fireworks, plus there is the festivals in the villages, it is interesting, the various stalls and the procession which is mediaeval. It is extremely difficult to actually make that proposition to the market. But to say that look we are offering you the package and that there is that, there is this and that, you know the whole package makes it more and more interesting [culture as experience].

..... So what I am saying is this yes, fine, you got summer, looking at it cynically and looking at it in very round about way, you have summer where we are actually saying this is the whole experience [culture as summer 'experience'] this is what we actually offering, but then in winter to try an increase where there is a certain amount of under-utilization of the aircrafts, certain under-utilization of our beds. Try an increase what we are going to do is to put on the market a new product which is cultural plays, historical and whatever it is. And that is when you will start getting some sort of response. [cultural product development in winter. Informant is also arguing that cultural tourism in winter would be sustainable. Cf. to other tourism documents]

But I do not think we have, I do not think anybody has been bold enough to spend a lot of money on that to do what I would term a good job out of these situations [vision - cultural tourism product development].

.....

Q: Apart from brochures, how would you market what the destination has to offer? [destination marketing]

A: Well, we, technically speaking our position is to fulfill what destination advertising the tourist office (NTOM/MTA) does. [marketing - tour operators] So, I am a firm believer that the tourist office, if the tourist office within the market they should be pushing the destination (Malta) [role of MTA] From our point of view we can make ourselves available to generate the reservations call. Once we generate the reservation call we have got the knowledge to convert the booking. Ehm we most of

our budget do not extend to market the destination. [budget marketing constraints]

Q: Do you use trade magazines?

A: ~~Anything. Anything~~ I mean, over the last few months we've had one of the colour glossy magazines, I can't remember which one it was about the ~~new San Lawrenz hotel with the health treatment~~. I think we had a similar sort of thing in Cosmopolitan. We do have a PR agency, a professional agency that looks after our PR point of view, with data bases, with clout, with lobbying powers so on and so forth. We've had (articles on) the Telegraph, the Times, we've had the News of the World. The News of the World took the angle that you know that the myth of no beaches on Malta is a load of rubbish, because there are some beaches. And if not sandy beaches there are the flat limestone beaches as well. So these sort of aspects. [use of media, direct marketing]

Q: How do you define the product that Malta offers and what is the image of the destination?

A: Right what do you want the good news or the bad news?

Q: Both, I want the truth.

A: The bad news is that up to now ~~Malta has been very lucky we've had some very very lucky and fortunate breaks from a point of view of either being news worthiness, something that brought Malta to the fore front.... Therefore the amounts of money that a holiday maker could take out was the same amount that he would take if he was going to a holiday in the UK~~ [history] But, sunshine, it's Malta it's in the Mediterranean. So it was fantastic. It was a wonderful break. Ehm, I have always ~~been extremely critical of NTOM, now hopefully with the MTA, and have looked at the constitution I think that is promising and that we can only improve on things.~~ [past and present, hopeful of new structure] But from a point of ~~view of perception of what Malta is. It is all over the place.~~ [image of Malta] It's has always been faulty. The ~~image or perception of the destination is poor.~~ And any slight perception, I think we have been very lucky. Now that was the bad news. Now for the good news, remind me what was the other question.

Q: How does the image fit in within the product?

A: The product is a summer sun sort of destination, which is easy for the British holiday maker, it is regarded a safe destination, we drive on the right side of the road. So it makes it easier. What actually happens is a client is inclined to get that sort of thing because, they do not need to get accustomed. ... They are not going to have problems to go through phrase books to try to find out how to say can I have a cup of coffee please? It is an easy destination. So you are getting away from it all, it's quality is reasonable it is good at times it's superb on rare occasions. It's good and acceptable, people easily slip in to the holiday mode. And it's what is all about. [image, home from home, easy]

Q: So people are interested in Malta because it is similar in the environment in Britain, rather than it is different [ASKING for clarification].

A: No they are attracted because it is entirely different.... Now I doubt very much if somebody who lives in the inner city would go into another inner city, so from London transport themselves from down town New York. Yes, there are people who want to do that but the vast majority of people would want to go away for something completely different. ..No. I would disagree entirely with the fact that people go to Malta purely and simply because it is home from home. No it makes life easier for them, they go there and start enjoying their holiday. You know what they do, what they can see, people might want to just enjoy the sea.

Q: Earlier you said that MTA to the NTOM, are different in what way are they different? [making reference to earlier comment made by informant and also GUIDING the informant back to the main focus of the questions]

A: From a pyramid type of structure that has been inverted. You have a flat structure, you have got five directorates that focus and concentrate on their own area of responsibility, which I think is extremely important. Now how we have directorate concentrating on the marketing of the destination....[informant elaborated on the new structure and how it would benefit tourism to Malta,]

Q: You mentioned food, do you feel that Malta can promote food more?

A: Yeah, definitely. Again, I tend to oversimplify matters by equating them with personal tastes. If there is one thing I can't stand is going to a restaurant, a pretentious restaurant in Malta, and being served up a wonderful fresh Mediterranean fish which at times are rather rare to come across, covered in some stupid Hollandaise sauce served with Brussels sprouts and other vegetables which are not native of Malta. [gastronomy, product and authenticity of product] That is when, you my calm and composed attitude towards life in the evening, is completely lost. I can't stand it. I think there are dishes that have worked their way of Maltese folklore that should be used much more. [gastronomy]

Q: Do you see that form as a cultural tourism?

A: Again it would not be the *raison d'être* of a product but it would be, I think it would be an interesting part of it yes. [role of gastronomy in cultural tourism] I've got a liking for Greece.... food is always a feature of Greek islands.

Q: Do you see your company making some more effort to market food or mention it in you brochures? [This question was an UNSCHEDULED QUESTION in order to check what is the willingness on the part of the informant to market new products]

A: You can't mention it or make an issue out of it unless we are completely convinced that it can be fairly consistent across the board and it is available. [availability of the product - continuation of the chain] In other words, it would be an absolute disaster if we were to say, look we are going for Maltese cooking and present it in that way. The next you know you go to Bugibba and all you can get is a hamburger and French fries. Maltese food is so difficult to come by. [availability] Like all this the move has got to start from the destination itself. [ownership] It is extremely difficult for us to create the demand for certain things and that demand being fulfilled, because invariably the demand. What you want is numerous restaurants to start to convert. In Malta it is probably more, it will be led by a local consumer demand. If local consumer goes and starts having *impanna* instead of a McDonald's burger, then yes things will start happening and then probably that would be the time when we would start talking to our client about it. [future ,

changes that need to occur to make cultural product more available]

Q: Can you describe your relationship as a tour operator with the Tourism authority? Is there a relationship or a link?

A: Let's put it this way, there is a lot of dialogue, lots of co-operation. You are probably asking the wrong person bearing in mind that up until NTOM, our parent company put a fair amount of funds towards the NTOM, then I think we could impose our voice on the NTOM. [relationship depends on position and role, company felt that since they were contributing towards NTOM funds they has more say] We can be a bit biased and we tend to be taken seriously. Secondly, being the largest specialist on the UK market, we do get a fair amount of exposure to the extend that we get to meet the ministry of tourism about 3 or 4 times a year, myself and some other members of my team. [access] So, yeah, dialogue is going from. From the point of view of communications, I think there is still a lot to be done. [communication - problem area] We communicate a lot with MTA and NTOM. Sometimes communication back, there is a slight imbalance. We tend to put in much more than we get out in terms of information. [nature of communication, information] But we have some meetings this week and it is changing

.....

(ii) Participant Observation

Extract from Fieldnotes (Valletta Fest 2000) Thursday 27th April, 2000

Questions posed to the fieldnotes: 1) How do visitors to the festival experience the festival? and 2) What is happening?

EXPLANATION

[product] - denotes one of the categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1998a) /naming (Locke, 2000)

All along there were visitors stopping and chatting to re-enactors, asking about their costumes and events. [role of re-enactors] - Text that was analysed, including category

[OBSERVE surroundings,...] - methodology

[It turned out that in conjunction with this event, there was an environmental week held during the time of the festival - timing; collaboration; and...] - denotes notes for interpretation.

Arrived at 10.00 a.m. when the day events had already started. There were very few activities at top part of Republic Street (Valletta Main gate). This gave me time to observe what was happening at the Main Gate and the opportunity to check also the visibility of the Tourist Information stands. [OBSERVE surroundings, especially for information stands - availability of information] On the previous days informants had mentioned that they did not see the tourist information stand at Freedom Square. I could not locate it either and then I looked back and I realised that it was under the Main Gate and not in Freedom Square. It was not very visible and visitors coming in through the Main Gate were not able to see it either as was confirmed by two informants later on. [It turned out that in conjunction with this event, there was an environmental week held during the time of the festival - timing; collaboration; and the stand was camouflaged by others. MTA was shifting the stand from place to place to find the most effective location.]

Whilst walking down Republic Street I met an MTA official and asked her how things were getting on. She commented that the programme for the day did not have too many

activities and so attendance was quite poor. [product] She went on to add that to make matters worse, the President had some foreign guests presenting their credentials and the day's events (which use Republic Street) had to be interrupted at least four times to allow the cavalry and the President's car to go through [timing, planning of the event] This has caused some logistical problems. In addition, the Albar Exhibition held at the Palace and advertised as part of the festival programme was closed due to these visitors. [disruption of the event; timing] In fact later on in the day I interviewed a person who had come to Valletta purposely for the exhibition, but finding it closed, stayed on to watch the event.

I then went to the tourist information office stand in front of the law courts. The person in charge said that today they had very poor sales (programme). [this was later confirmed with I-6, sales of programme VERY low - efficacy of media, programme went out on sale two weeks before the event] She argued that it would be better if the festival was held for four days rather than seven, more people would turn up [timing, festival is still being tested for the best duration]. She also argued that the programme of the day was rather poor, very few 'crowd pullers' contrary to yesterday's bands. [product; quality] Whilst I was talking to XX, two elderly (Maltese) men came up to the stand and asked when will the Ghana session be held as it was meant for that time and it had been postponed. They did not welcome the reply that the session will be held at 12.15. When I asked why it was shifted, XX commented that it was shifted since the performer (who has a session on Tuesday) complained that he had very few people watching. Shifting the time to 12.15 would capture a bigger (tourist) audience. So the organisers shifted the time. ... [local vs. foreign interests; locals interested in particular elements]

As I was leaving the stand a group of 12 Italian students approached the stand asking what was going on; since they had seen a lot of people wearing costumes but they had no idea of what was going on. [lack of awareness is this due to the manner in which the festival was advertised and marketed?]

Following this I went up Republic Street and encountered a company XYZ Folk Dancing Group. Today they were wearing the peasant's costume [same dancers different costumes, will the dance be different?] (on Tuesday they were nobles), complete with the horse and cart. They were accompanied by a number of tourists and locals watching what was taking place. Some tourists were not aware what was happening, as they were asking others who were watching what was going on, and what does this event commemorate [awareness, lack of]. This event was being held in Republic Street, which is the main thoroughfare, and there were some people complaining about the congestion, some of them were quite annoyed (use of words) [impact on locals - negative] Others however, were intrigued. A Maltese

lady turned on to her lady companion and told her "Look how entertaining, and you always want to stay at home!" Another middle aged Maltese man, asked, "Is this held very often?" [impact on locals - positive; interest, see interviews with locals at the festival]

The crowd moved slowly to the opening in front of the Law Courts and there the dancers started their performance. They also tried to include the onlookers whom judging from their attire and demeanour were in their majority tourists, with some Maltese parents accompanied by young children. [audience, mixed audience, interest of locals] The fact that the dancers tried to involve the crowd meant that there was some more interaction than last Tuesday's. [participation in festival interaction between performers and visitors] However, I noted that the dance routine was very similar to that performed last Tuesday when 'nobles' were dancing. [authenticity - dances of nobles and peasants were very similar, both were presented as 'Maltese' but they are not]

All along there were visitors stopping and chatting to re-enactors, asking about their costumes and events. [role of re-enactors]

I proceeded to St. John's Co-Cathedral where a Trumpet and Organ concert was going to be held. ['high' culture - concert] This was also marked by a stand on the parvis, which announced the time and the type of concert to be held. [marking, advertising] A programme (on a separate) sheet was being handed [information] out to visitors as they entered the Cathedral. People started to find their places before {more interested?} the concert commenced. The crowd inside was relatively large, (numbers are not taken in as there is no ticketing system) counting by seat I roughly counted around 160; although they were fewer in number than the crowd watching yesterday's band march. Age-wise, again difficult to assess but appeared to be around 40 plus and I noticed that on most cases they had the souvenir programme. [this tends to suggest difference in behaviour of 'special' cultural tourists and 'incidental' this also relates to the following incident] One thing that I noticed in contrast with the other event that I had seen this morning, people were already seated before the concert started (in other instances, visitors followed the crowd or their attention was alerted because of the noise). Also participants stayed on until it was over - the folk dancers did not have a similar impact on the audiences' attention. [difference in motivation]

Following this I went out again. The last event of the day was AB - a folk singer. His intervention was shifted to this time upon his insistence. He started by making an announcement (in English) for the audience to approach the stage and to participate in his songs. [aimed at foreign visitors rather than locals; the performance was shifted for this purpose] His songs which are different from *ghana* could be best described as

songs about Malta depicting local character. The crowd in its majority was tourists with Maltese people hardly to be seen as for many Maltese who commute to Valletta for shopping 12:00 is the time they head towards their homes (other villages town outside Valletta) for their lunch. (This was confirmed also by two Maltese couples, one of whom were migrants visiting their relatives. I had interviewed this couple prior to going into St. John's Cathedral. They argued that they were in Valletta by chance [passive visitors] (*kumbinazzjoni dhalna il-Belt*) and would have loved to see AB especially since it would have reminded them of the past. They expressed their disappointment for the fact that AB's piece was shifted to a later time, "when we will be at home - it is a pity we are not bale to see it, but at 12:00 we are always at home"). [local vs. foreign] AB was started to sing songs about Malta (Maltese driving, Maltese lifestyle) in English and other songs (popular rhymes and some of his own repertoire) in Maltese.

(iii) Text Analysis

Example: UK multi-National Tour Operator

Question posed to the text was: How do the brochures (and other tourist literature) describe the Maltese Islands and what aspects are identified as culture (history, food, crafts)

EXPLANATION

incredible sunshine record, [climate] - highlighted text denotes text analysed, and categories.

Malta: The island of Malta has an incredible sunshine record, [climate] sparkling clear seas, [water] and a fascinating history to discover [history - discovery].

Follow the footsteps of the Phoenicians, Greeks and Romans [history connection. Note: no mention of prehistory or temples] and spend some time in this welcoming [people] Mediterranean island. [geographic description]

Malta has gentle landscape of low green hills sloping down to a coastline that varies between wide, sandy bays and rocky coves [landscape, romantic description - no reference to built up areas] The clear seas [water element] are perfect for watersports [leisure activity] and if your idea of a beach holiday is one that offers more than just a perfect suntan Malta is a great choice. You'll find almost every imaginable watersport from windsurfing to paragliding, water skiing or fishing. Scuba-diving is particularly good, even for complete beginners. Head for Golden Bay or Mellieha if you're looking for sand, whilst Bugibba has a series of small coves for more secluded sunbathing and snorkeling.

If nightlife is high on your agenda try St. Julian's which has plenty to offer, with lively bars and nightclubs and a casino if you fancy a flutter. Quayside restaurants [traditional Mediterranean feel] overlook a harbour where traditional coloured boats offer perfect photo opportunities [luzzu - traditional]. And you'll find pizza and burgers as readily available [familiar food] as Maltese favourites such as rabbit

cooked in wine [Maltese gastronomy]. For traditional entertainment, join in the local festas that take place all over the island. These are lively affairs with fireworks and feasting [culture - festa. Note the description, not much meaning]

Malta is steeped in history [history] and you really should visit Valletta, the fortified city built in the 16th century by the Knights of St. John [what should the visitor see - pointer]. A ride in a horse-drawn carriage [culture] is a pleasant way to see the sights and is a comfortable alternative to strolling around the narrow streets.

The ancient city of Mdina dates back some 4000 years [Mdina - history] and is another interesting day out [additional visits]. If all sounds a little too strenuous, refresh yourself with a boat trip to the sleepy islands of Gozo or Comino [Gozo, different, more quiet].

Malta was a British colony until quite recently and you'll feel very much at home. English is widely spoken and there are plenty of reminders of British rule [familiarity - reassurance - nostalgia?]

(Brochure also had the following additional information related to the study)

Local Specialities

Maltese cooking has strong Italian and British influences [gastronomy Maltese unknown, Italian exotic, British familiar- food is exotic and familiar], and a variety of wines are locally produced [local produce]. Gold, silver, lace and glassware are good local buys [crafts = shopping]. Gozo specialises in knitwear, including fisherman's sweaters [knitwear- not lace!].

Discover Malta

The beautiful island of Malta has many hidden charms [marking hide = not immediately seen]. The chapel of San Martin, Mosta Church, the tiny hamlet of Ta' Sant, the old village of Siggiewi, Rabat and the old capital of Mdina [mixture of 'traditional' tourist sites Mosta, Rabat, Mdina and 'new' off the beaten track sites - Chapel of San Martin, a small hamlet (spelt wrongly - Tas-Santi and NOT Ta' Sant and Siggiewi - see I-26 on tours to this village)]

**APPENDIX 6
CALENDAR of EVENTS**

Tourism Related Calendar of Cultural Events: A Summary

Month*	Type of Event	Frequency	Month*	Type of Event	Frequency
January	In Guardia	1 Sunday	July	Villages Festas Jazz Festival	31 Localities 3 days
February	In Guardia Carnival	3 Sundays 5 days	August	Village Festas	27 localities
March	In Guardia Food Festival ^ Opera Festival	3 Sundays 4 days 1 week	September	Village Festas In Guardia Fish Festival ^^^	14 localities 2 Sundays 3 days
March/April	Exhibitions - Last Supper Good Friday Processions Easter Sunday Processions	26 localities 18 localities 18 localities	October	Birgu/Mdina Fest** In Guardia Theatre Season commences Wednesday Concerts	3 days 3 Sundays Various activities through to May Every Wednesday
April	In Guardia Valletta Fest	3 Sundays 1 week	November	Choir Festival In Guardia International Music Festival	1 week 3 Sundays 1 week
May	In Guardia Fireworks Festival ^ Ghana Festival Baroque Festival ^^	3 Sundays 3 days 3 days 1 week	December	In Guardia Nativity Week	3 Sundays Crib Exhibitions (various localities)
June	In Guardia Imnarja (local Folk Festival) Village Festas	2 Sundays 2 days (various localities) 18 localities			

*Fort St. Elmo (responsibility of MTA) is open on all weekends Saturdays 1.00 – 5.00 pm and on Sundays 9.00 – 5.00pm throughout the year.

** A Festival is held in one of these cities on alternate years.

^ Festivals started in 2002 (organised by MTA); ^^ Held every two years; ^^^ 1st edition to be held in September 2002

Source: Adapted from Calendar of Events, MTA 2002, Manoel Theatre Performance Diary.

APPENDIX 7

Cultural Tourism in Malta: A Photographic Review



Photos 1 and 2 Re-Enactors Peasants and Nobles





Photos 3 and 4
Street Theatre at
the Mdina Fest



Photos 5 and 6 In Guardia Re-Enactment
at Fort St. Elmo, Valletta.





Photo 7 Traditional Lace Making - Tourist Souvenirs, Xlendi Bay, Gozo.



Photo 8 Modern Lace Making Exhibit at the University of Malta, Gozo Branch.



Photos 9 and 10
Ghannejja - Maltese Folk
Singers

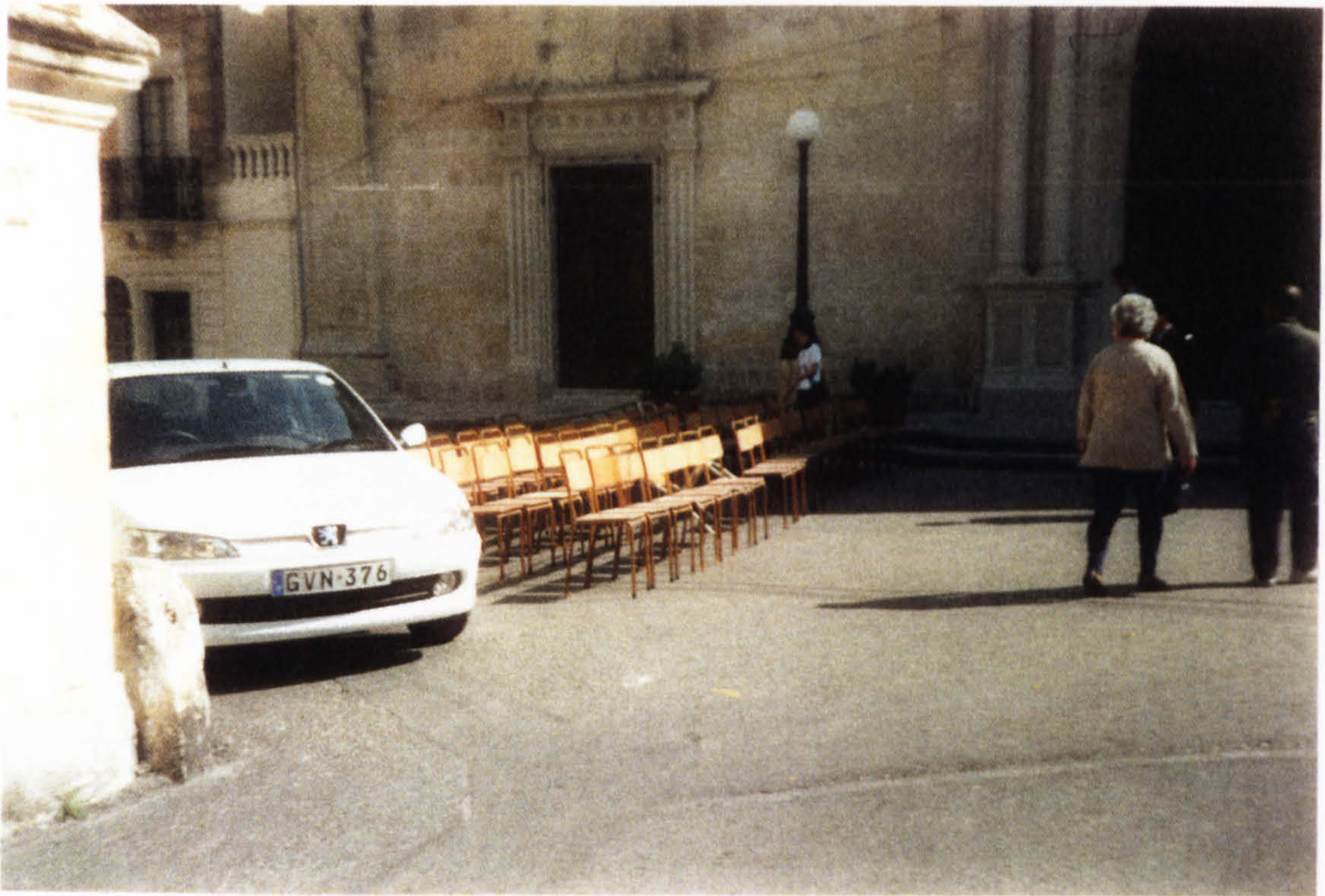


Photo 11
(Staged) Maltese
Folk Dancing



Photos 12 and 13
Participation in
Good Friday
Procession -
Traditional and
Modern





Photos 14 and 15 - Tourist and Local Space at Good Friday Procession in Rabat, Malta.

(Tourists can be seen sitting on the chairs at the front in photo 15 below, whilst locals are standing behind)





Photos 16 and 17
Marking Heritage
and Culture.
(Above) MTA stand
at Mdina Fest
announcing a musical
concert.
(Below) One of the
MTA stands
introduced in 2002
to mark historical
sites in Valletta.



APPENDIX 8
MALTA TOUR - An Account

Friday 4th August, 2000 - Malta Tour

“ We drive towards Ta’ Qali to the Crafts Village to watch local artisans at work producing typical Maltese ware which includes glass, silver filigree and pottery. Free time is allowed for shopping of local products at bargain prices. We then proceed to the Silent City Mdina with its defense bastions dating back to the 9th Century. We walk through the town visiting St. Paul’s Cathedral and then to the Bastions for a panoramic view of the island. We shall also experience a Sound and Vision show. We then walk to Rabat to visit the Roman Villa with its mosaic floors and St. Paul’s Catacombs, an underground burial place used by early Christians. A typical Maltese lunch will be served in one of the village’s restaurants. We also stop to see local handwork for which the village of Rabat is renowned. Then on Dingli Cliffs for a panoramic view of the open sea where we will also stop to see some Cart Ruts. Finally we drive to Mosta to visit the famous Dome considered to be the third largest in Europe” - (Company Brochure, 2000:9)

9.05 Pick Up "Malta Hotel" Foyer

9.25 Departure from Luxol Grounds. There was some checking over the languages of the tour to be used. My companions for the day were English and Dutch tourists and our guides an English speaking Maltese guide and a Dutch guides. This sorted out, next formalities of the tour were seen to. First, the guides collected the tickets from the customers. Then we were asked to keep our seats for the whole tour, most probably such a measure will make it easier for the tourist guide to keep control over the participants. Following this, a head count was taken and as the bus was taking off the guide started to go around to stick on our tops the company sticker - our identity badge for the day.

The coach left for St. Julian’s and passed through to Regional Road. Our guide pointed out the two St. Julian’s churches, which we did not really see as the coach zipped past. The coach then proceeded to San Gwann. The guide pointed out certain features, by giving an overview of the village’s recent history - from an area of open plains through to its transformation into a town. He also mentioned that the Parish church was built recently hinting at the relatively ‘young age’ of this town. (By this time I got the feeling that the Dutch guide, was giving more information than our guide was. Later on two other tour participants said the same thing). The guide also pointed out a herd of cows that were in the distance grazing in one of the few remaining open fields in the Tal-Balal area. Jokingly he said that these would be our lunch for

the day. From San Gwann we proceeded to Naxxar via the outskirts of Gharghur. The guide here pointed out to us the village and its Parish Church. We then went along the road to Naxxar. As we were coming to the main square from Tal-Balal, the guide drew our attention to the Parish church and the Palazzo Parisio. He mentioned that the palace was built by one of the Knights but we were not told what its function was. The guide suggested that we could visit the village and the Palazzo, using the public transport system. The bus then advanced to Mosta through the narrow back streets of Naxxar. Got into a traffic jam and it was sometime before we got to Mosta Square.

9.45

Arrived at Mosta Square. We got down from the bus and the guide asked those of us who wanted to follow the English explanation to follow him. We were six in all; two Irish, two Spanish, a lady from Hong Kong and myself. Mosta square was bustling with activity and crossing the road was a bit tricky. On the parvis there were other groups of tourists. Some huddled in groups listening to their guides, others were in smaller groups. There were other people, who were going about various chores – what appeared to be cleaning the vast expanse of the parvis. (These were church helpers who were preparing for the approaching village feast). The guide suggested that we should take photographs of the church. He also told us that at this time, the church was being decorated for the feast of the Assumption, which is to take place on the 15th of August.

We approached a door at the side of the church. The door was not too wide and there were other groups who were, like us going into the Mosta Church. Others were coming out of the church via the same door. This created some confusion, which was further enhanced by the fact that all those entering the church had to be checked for appropriate clothing. There is a strict dress code for entering Maltese and Gozitan churches. An elderly man, acting as a warden, was standing next to the entrance. On an adjacent chair there was an array of pieces of cloth transformed into shoulder wraps and makeshift skirts. Those of us, who according to warden were not appropriately dressed had to wear the pieces of cloth handed to us and place them on the indicated parts of the body. The Irish girl was given a shoulder wrap as well as a makeshift skirt. The Spanish lady had to wear a shoulder wrap, myself having a sleeveless top and a bermuda shorts was considered by the warden decent enough to enter the Church. During this process, the guide unwillingly helping the warden to identify those of us who had inappropriate dress. The guide asked

the Spanish gentleman to remove his cap. At this particular moment the warden objected to something the guide said or did, resulting in an exchange of snide comments between the two. Eventually we managed to get through the door and found ourselves in an immense rotunda dominated by a single dome. Once inside the church we grouped together to hear what the guide had to tell us. There is very little interpretation inside the church and unless the guide is forthcoming with information, one cannot be able to interpret much. Inside, there was a sea of people, in groups or on their own; everybody seemed to be moving around the church at the same time. All of us in there had identity stickers identifying the group we belonged to, all of us were eager to listen to the information being divulged by the guide and to get a better view of the church and the various items of interest being pointed out to us. Our guide first showed us the dome. He explained that this is the third largest unsupported dome in Europe, with a diameter of 54m. He then pointed out to us the statue of the Assumption, which was out of its niche, since the feast was approaching. The guide told us that the statue will be carried out into the village on its feast day. He also directed our attention to the paintings along the upper part of the Church depicting instances of Jesus Christ's life going in an anti-clockwise direction. No explanation was given why the paintings had such a sequence. We then proceeded into a medium sized room, no name or function for this room was given. However it was very clear that this room served the purposes of a museum and a souvenir shop as a number of items, religious and non-religious such as postcards and books were on sale. This display attracted a number of people, who were going through the various items on display. However, this was not the only item of interest.

First we were shown a silver front altarpiece, (name in Latin was given to us). The guide told us that this is used to decorate the main altar on major church celebrations. Next our attention was directed towards a series of paintings, which we were told, were situated in the old Mosta church. The last item of interest was then pointed out. At the far of the room there is a replica of a 2nd World War II bomb, which had hit the church's dome, without exploding – causing minor damage to the dome. This was interpreted by many as a miracle. The display, located at the far corner of this room, consists of a bomb replica (the guide informed us that the original is at the War Museum in Valletta) standing on the floor, and four black and white photographs (not larger than 20 cm by 15cm). They depicted the bomb in the

church, the hole left by the bomb in the dome, the restored dome and the fourth photograph showing men in military clothes and the bomb. Accompanying each of these photographs there is a brief explanation written in small type in English, French Italian and German. The script is too small for one to read, even if one is standing in close proximity to the photographs. We spent around ten minutes in this room. The guide then ushered us out into the main church and gave us until 10.15 (around 10 minutes) to go around the church and the souvenir stand, and to take photographs.

Inside the church there was another activity going on. A number of ladies were cleaning the various parts of the church, while men were attending to the lighting system. The guide did not divulge any information about what was happening.

- 10.15 We left the Church and made our way to the coach. We walked through the main street of Mosta and the guide drew our attention to the street decoration but then reverted to passing comments and making jokes.
- 10.20-25 Arrived at the coach and made our way to the Crafts Village in Ta'Qali. We were told that we were going to a glass factory. As we were approaching the Crafts village the guide informed us this was the old military airport and that now it has been transformed onto the crafts village.
- 10.30 Arrived at the glass factory. We were informed that we could buy good glassware from the factory shops the guide went on to inform us that there were two shops. One where there is the finest quality glass displayed and another where seconds are available at a reduced price. We descended from the bus with the guides telling us that we had to be back at the bus around 11.00. We were ushered into the hut the door opened into the first shop selling glassware (finest quality). The guide opened another door and we were led into the actual factory. The factory is a large 3-walled room, with two furnaces located at one of the side-walls. There were about eight men and a lady who were going about the different stages of smelting, blowing and shaping glass into different forms. Our guide made an attempt to animate the group as he sat on a bench started to imitate the glass blowers and

invited us to have a go. Apart from this, we were left to our own devices. No explanation was given and we had to follow the process by observing what was going on. Though I did notice that there was a family (a mother and two teenage children, who were on the Dutch tour) who, were more daring than the rest of us as they went up to individual glass blowers and were talking to them and taking pictures. Having spent some minutes observing the process, I went into the factory shop to see what was on display. On the shop floor various designs of glass were displayed. These included standard factory glass designs as well as more modern and innovative shapes. Some items that were for sale were exquisite examples of craftsmanship.

I noticed that the one of the guides was sitting next to the sales counter and noting those of us who were buying items from the shop. This is possibly one way of ensuring commission.

Following this I went out, outside and met the lady from Hong Kong. I asked her whether she had enjoyed her visit, she moved her head from side to side and said that it was quite hot inside, and so did not spend much time inside. We started to talk about the 'holiday' both of us were taking. She was on a three day stop in Malta. I asked why she was in Malta and she said that she has seen a documentary about Malta and was quite impressed by the history that she decided to include Malta in her tour of Europe. Reverting back to our tour she added that she would like to visit a palace she saw on the way to the Crafts' village. She asked whether I think it was possible, and I told her that unless it was on the tour we were very unlikely to see it. Slowly we started to make our way to the bus.

11.0

Got into the coach and left for our next stop - a filigree factory in Ta' Qali crafts village. Our guide told us that we had until 11.45 to go back to the bus. I found that this was quite a long time for yet another shopping spree. The lady from Hong Kong looked at me and said "What"? We were told that we had time for shopping from the other shops as well, if we wanted to - pottery, lace and wool. Following this brief advise we were ushered into the filigree factory. Before going our separate ways, our guide asked us for five minutes as he had something to tell us. Once all six of us were around the guide, he started to give us some friendly advice – He started off by giving a very brief description of the filigree. He said that it is made from silver threads and that workers spend two hours working on a particular piece of art as

the intricate designs are too much for the eyes. He went on to say that all silver is imported, since Malta does not have any silver. The explanation ended by the guide telling us that if we intend to buy some jewellery whilst we are in Malta, it would be wise to buy it from here as this shop sells jewelry at a cheaper price than jewellery shops in Valletta. The guide although not forcing us to buy was (un) tactfully urging us to buy. After a short stay in this hut, where there was one of the filigree workers working on an item of jewelry, again without any explanation, I went out to have a look at the other huts. I went first into a pottery hut. This large hut occupies a large area at the Crafts' Village. The inside looks very much like a supermarket – with the only difference that rather than food items the shelves are stacked with various pottery items divided according to make and use. On the front part of the hut there are souvenir items – such as Malta bus models, neolithic statuettes, shelves displaying various pottery items, such as food containers, plates and books on Malta. There was very little explanation of what was displayed and very little indication that all the items were actually made in Malta. These items are easily found in the numerous souvenir shops scattered in the tourist resorts, Valletta and Mdina. Personally I found very few items of interest such as decorated crockery.(style resembled the Portuguese and Provençal artwork) . The book section had some choice - displaying books that I have not seen in bookshops in Valletta. Some of the books were quite pricey, others more reasonable. I bought a Maltese Cookery book.

I bought a book and while paying for this book I could observe closely how the commissions of items bought from the souvenir shops, at least this one work. There were two persons at the counter. When tourists go up to the cash to pay for the items they had purchased, the cashier notes the company or tour the tourists is on. This is easily identifiable since all tourists have company stickers on their tops. The cashier asked his assistant to note down (on a sheet of paper kept for this purpose) the name of the tour leader and the amount the tourist has spent. Whilst at the cash, I noted that there were a number of tour leaders and drivers of mini vans talking to this lady who appeared to be in charge of commissions due. The sales assistant (a lady) was asking a tour leader whether he has been given what was due to him for the previous month (*tax-xahar l-iehor hadthom?*). One has to note that during these conversations, no explicit reference was made to payment (either cash or kind) but the two incidents described

above suggest that some form of compensation was to be given to the tour leaders at a later date.

I found the visit slightly boring, especially there were few items of interest - I got the feeling that this hut attracted more the souvenir seeking tourists.

Having gone through this hut, I went out to have a quick look at the other huts and what they offered. Most of the huts had very few people inside, while some of them had no visitors at all. The facilities offered at the Crafts centre are quite poor with the only toilets that I found located in a cafeteria. I found that this visit was rather poor in interpretation. The visit could have been better enriched had the visits to the Mdina glass and the filigree huts were accompanied by an explanation of what is taking place, how the craft done, and how it is transmitted from one generation to the next. The same can be said for the other huts. Owners or crafts people did not appear willing to discuss the craft with the onlookers at all.

11.45 We left Ta'Qali village and headed towards Rabat. Our next stop was at the Roman Villa.

11.55 Our coach was parked and we were asked to go inside the museum. There were some other groups at the museum at the time we went in, but it did not appear to be very crowded, at least in the foyer. Once that the tickets formalities were over, our tour leader gathered us around him and he commented that since we were a small group, we would have a better chance to view the items on display. Our tour started from the far right corner of the museum where the olive press is displayed. The guide informed us that during the Roman times Malta had a good supply of olives, so much so that oil production was possible. We went on to the wheat grinder, he pointed out to us some pottery displayed in the shelves and the statues, He also mentioned that theatre was performed in Roman Malta, as there were theatre masks and theatre objects excavated. We then went down the stairs to see the mosaics and the ventrum. Due to the number of people inside the rooms downstairs we went first to the area where Arab remains are displayed, then we went out again to the courtyard area, some statues were pointed out to us and we were out again into the hot sun. The tour lasted just under 20 minutes! At 12.15 we were out and on our way to the catacombs. It was quite ironic that we had spent so much time browsing through the various items at the

crafts' village, whereas at the Roman Villa we were in and out with barely enough time to look at the inscriptions displayed or even to appreciate the Roman architecture and the art.

- 12.25 Passed in front of the Restaurant where we were going to have lunch. The owner was on the doorstep, presumably waiting for the tours and other customers. The owner asked our guide to hurry as he had two large groups later on. Our guide kept on insisting that since we were a small group, we should be back very soon and he asked the owner to serve us first. This exchange of ideas took place across the street in a true Mediterranean fashion, with the guide on one side of the street, and the restaurant owner on the doorstep, both gesticulating and waving their arms about. Judging from the looks on the faces of my fellow companions, I could see that this brief interaction was offering some form of entertainment but somehow it did not feel right. Following this conversation, our guide asked us to hurry up as lunch was waiting and since the restaurant was going to cater for a lot of clients that day, we would benefit if we got there soon.
- 12.30 We arrived at St. Paul's Catacombs. We descended the steps and were ushered through the side chambers by our guide. We were told that this place served as a burial place for Christians during the Roman era, following the visit of St. Paul. We were also told that there were four types of burial places, single, child's, a couple and a family's. There was also a social division as the more wealthy members of the community had canopied burial places. We were also told that during the Second World War parts of these catacombs were used as war shelters. Soon after this the visit was over. I felt that very little information was divulged to us. Was this a secret burial place? Was there any ritual associated with it? How many people could be buried? For how long was it used? Were there any private 'graves'? Could a burial chamber have been used twice?
- 12.40 We went out the catacombs and started again our route to the restaurant. On our way our guide was stopped by a shop owner who commented that the guide has not been for quite some time, he also told him that he would take good care of him! ("*Hawn, Charles (not his true name), ilek ma tigi ftit. Isma taf li jien niehu hsiebek!*") The guide did not commit himself but just laughed this comment off. I have to point out that one of our group did not want to go to the catacombs claiming that she had seen similar examples in Rome. Our guide told her that she could wait outside

or else to the Souvenir Centre*, which is the shop whose owner was at that precise moment talking to our guide.

12.45

Arrived at the restaurant and we were ushered upstairs. The restaurant is a beautiful old house whose original owner was the benefactor of the Rabat Parish Church. None of his was divulged to us. A short guide to the place would again have enriched our visit. We were seated in small groups and our group of six was split into two groups. The Irish couple were seated at a table for two in a balcony whilst the lady from Hong Kong the couple from Spain and myself were seated at a table of four. On the table we had a small caraffe of white wine and a plate with slices of Maltese bread. The lady who was going to serve us told us that if we wanted water or other drinks we had to get these from the bar. The members sitting at the table did not welcome this comment very much. We started a conversation and since we were 'tourists,' it was mainly based on travel and the countries we have visited. Our meal was brought to us. It consisted of a salad (tomatoes, onions, olives and French beans) smothered in a mayonnaise based sauce. I thought that this was not a good start as there was nothing typically Maltese in this salad. A Maltese salad would to my imagination consist of *bigilla*, broad beans, goats cheese, fresh tomatoes and caponata. I was bracing myself for the main dish when a plate was placed in front of me. Horror of horrors the Maltese main dish was a slice of beef smothered in gravy, cabbage with bacon and chips!!!!. I could not help it but I looked at the fellow group members and asked them, whether I had read correctly. The tour specifically mentioned a "typical Maltese lunch". Where was it? It definitely was not on my plate. The lady from Hong Kong then hit the nail home, she asked me what is Maltese food? Yes, I thought what is Maltese food? Is it available at all? What image are we giving if on a tour entitled specifically Malta Tour we are giving our visitors a medley of the Best British Cuisine! I tried to remember the conversation I had with the Tour Manager at the company on whose tour I was. He had specifically mentioned that meals are negotiated with the restaurant owner and that as much as possible traditional food is served. (*Excerpt from interview with (I-21) - Since he was being very general I asked him what to they offer for tourists who are on tour and who have a lunch included on their tour. He said that as much as possible the company tries to stick to traditional food such as minestra and timpana for starters. The main dish very consisted of beef olives, he also mentioned octopus but the he*

corrected himself (octopus is too expensive) – this will be checked out when I go on tour. For deserts he said that some restaurants would be willing to give traditional deserts such as qasattella (this is not Maltese but Sicilian) and / or fresh fruit. He said that they are not so particular about the desert and they would normally stick to fruit.

He said that tourists like this 'local' feel.

For desert we were given a chocolate ice-cream sandwiched in a chocolate sponge cake. A version of a *qasatella siciliana* but very remote from a Maltese sweet. Typically Maltese sweets are not that abundant as traditionally sweets are prepared to commemorate religious feasts (Sammut 2000), however, fruit and peanuts could have very well served the purpose of a 'Maltese desert'.

The overall impression of this 'typical Maltese lunch' was a poor one. Bearing in mind that both the owner and the tour company have to make some profit, I personally think that much more could have been done with the ingredients and some more imagination. The Beef slice could have easily been transformed into *bragjoli*, while the chips could have been prepared as *patata fil-forn*. These are slight modifications but would have made a big difference to both the visitor experience as well as for the tour. From the conversation we had on the table during lunch, it transpired that very few people know about Maltese food. This visit shows that more can actually be done to enhance the food experience.

These ideas were reinforced later on when I went into one of the local tea-shops cum bar located in the main square to buy a phone card. Inside there were two young ladies who were eating a light lunch composed of tomatoes, olives, peppered goats' cheese and fresh bread. I found this more appetising, more real and more typical of a Maltese lunch.

13.45

Our tour headed to Mdina where we were due to be at an audiovisual center to see a show. We entered Mdina through the Greeks' Gate. The guide informed us that in the past this was a Greek Quarter, we made our way through the narrow streets of this city until we came to an open square with We went into an old house, converted after rustic style. The ladies working there were wearing campagniola costume. No information was given to us about the origins of the place or the functions of the house.

14.00 –14.30 The audio visual show lasted half an hour. This show recounted the history of Mdina through the ages. It proved to be informative and useful especially since the guide did not give as much information on Mdina during the tour itself. It is a pity though that most of us slept through it. I for one!

14.35 We headed to the Cathedral from Mesquita Square up the road. The guide pointed out to us the Inguanez Palace and onto Villegainon Street on to the Main Square. We had a few minutes to interiorise the grandness of the square, then we headed towards the Cathedral. The guide gave us a relatively good tour of the Cathedral pointing out to us the various items of interest such as the tombstones, the altars from the old Cathedral and paintings. The visit to the Cathedral was pleasant and we were able to absorb what was being said, primarily because we were the only guided tour in the Cathedral at the moment. The tour of the Cathedral lasted about 25 minutes. What I found tiring was the numerous dates that the guide was firing at us

We then proceeded to the Bastions from where we could see a panoramic view of the island. We then walked along Villegainon Street. On the way we could take a short peep into the Norman House. We had around 20 minutes to spare before going back to our bus. The guide told us that we could either go for a drink or have a look into one of the souvenir shops in the Main Square. I found this quite tiring. One of the members of the group asked whether she could go directly to the bus as she was tired. By this time I felt that all of us were tired and personally a bit bored as we did not have much to do – we could either lounge, have a coffee or drink a cool drink.

15.40 We started our walk back to the bus. This time we went through Mdina's Main Gate and through Howard Gardens.

15.45 Got back to the bus and started off for our last part of the journey to Dingli cliffs. On our way the guides pointed out Buskett and Verdala Palace. We arrived at Dingli cliffs

16.00 Arrived at Dingli Cliffs. Our first stop was at the Cart Ruts. A brief explanation was given however the state of the ruts is appalling. They are filled with rubbish and weeds, with no

indications or explanation what so ever. On the cliffs there is a small chapel which was used for the film of Count Monte Cristo. However the guide did not mention this fact at all, such a detail would have given more significance to the area. The stay at this area was of half an hour. At the bottom of the small hill on which the chapel is situated there was a fruit van selling fresh fruit and drinks. This was a welcome site as we were really tired and thirsty.

16.30

We got back to the bus. On our way to Ta' Qali, we passed yet another small chapel. The guide commented that Malta had over three hundred chapels and churches. Only around 120 are churches the rest are chapels.

APPENDIX 9

Reasons for Choosing Malta

Table 1: British Tourists 1992 – 1998

Reason	Su '92	Sp '94	Su '94	Off peak '94	Su '95	Wi '95-96	Sp '96	Su '96	Aut '96	Wi '97	Sp '97	Su '97	Aut '97	Wi '98	Sp '98	Su '98	Aut '98
New Place to go	44.6	42.2	49.0	51.3	45.0	42.0	40.0	46.5	43.6	39.8	38.9	46.5	40.9	40.7	41.1	43.9	38.0
Previous Visit	26.8	32.4	33.4	21.8	34.0	36.0	34.0	31.0	31.5	33.3	37.6	21.6	35.9	37.0	36.1	36.0	35.6
Climate	45.1	53.5	35.6	51.1	37.0	49.0	42.0	42.1	58.2	54.6	46.6	40.6	50.2	50.2	39.8	46.2	55.0
History/Culture	22.8	25.9	25.6	32.3	28.0	33.0	30.0	30.5	25.7	37.6	33.6	28.1	32.3	31.6	35.0	31.0	32.0
Accessibility	9.8	7.0	10.2	8.4	4.0	7.0	----	6.9	5.8	8.5	8.0	7.0	5.5	9.4	8.4	7.7	7.9
Recommendation	20.8	16.8	17.6	15.2	21.0	12.0	15.0	18.0	13.9	13.8	13.3	20.2	14.5	11.7	12.1	17.1	14.3
Maltese Hospitality	19.8	21.6	22.8	19.0	19.0	20.0	26.0	18.5	20.4	19.5	27.3	22.6	24.5	21.5	21.8	17.1	14.3
Value for Money	19.8	26.5	19.0	29.7	14.0	27.0	15.0	12.9	23.2	33.3	22.1	23.6	22.7	32.9	25.4	21.7	26.2
Eng. widely spoken	21.3	23.2	21.8	18.4	24.0	----	26.0	20.1	20.4	18.5	----	18.1	17.0	21.6	18.2	19.5	19.4
Only place to visit	4.3	2.2	3.4	2.2	2.0	----	----	2.0	2.5	1.8	1.5	4.9	0.9	2.6	2.3	2.8	2.5
Other	----	8.6	10.4	6.8	6.0	8.0	11.0	11.2	11.6	5.8	9.3	32.2	11.3	6.0	8.2	7.4	9.7

Key: Su: Summer; Sp: Spring; Wi: Winter; Off Peak: October - June

Source: MTA/NTOM Statistics (Various Years)

Table 2: Dutch Tourists 1994- 1998

Reason	Su '94	Sp '95	Su '95	Wi '95-96	Sp '96	Off Peak '96-97	Wi '96-97	Su '97	Off Peak '97-98	Su '98
New Place to go	45.4	53.0	60.0	46.0	56.0	45.0	50.0	46.9	44.2	47.5
Previous Visit	7.9	11.0	8.0	9.0	7.0	9.4	7.4	10.0	5.6	8.5
Climate	60.4	61.0	49.0	68.0	59.0	0.7	67.2	64.6	64.8	74.9
History/Culture	37.0	47.0	38.0	50.0	41.0	47.4	42.6	41.7	57.0	46.2
Accessibility	3.5	11.0	12.0	7.0	9.0	7.0	9.0	7.0	8.7	----
Recommendation	16.7	16.0	16.0	12.0	11.0	13.5	11.5	13.7	10.6	13.0
Maltese Hospitality	---	5.0	6.0	8.0	----	8.2	4.9	7.4	----	----
Value for Money	16.4	12.0	14.0	17.0	16.0	13.5	13.9	14.8	13.7	15.7
Eng. widely spoken	14.5	6.0	12.0	5.0	10.0	7.0	6.6	12.2	15.3	----
Only place to visit	2.6	2.0	6.0	2.0	9.0	6.4	7.4	8.1	5.3	4.9
Other	17.6	12.0	12.0	9.0	5.0	11.1	12.3	9.6	7.2	9.0

Key: Su: Summer; Sp: Spring; Wi: Winter; Off Peak: October - June

Source: MTA/NTOM Statistics (Various Years)

A destination of choice

APPENDIX 10

MTA Logo and Brand Image

The MTA logo is a stylized representation of the letters 'MTA' in a bold, sans-serif font. The letters are white and set against a dark, circular background that resembles a globe or a stylized 'M'. The logo is centered on the page and is the primary visual element of the brand identity.

The MTA logo is a key element of the brand's visual identity. It is used consistently across all marketing materials, including brochures, websites, and social media. The logo's design is simple and memorable, making it easy for consumers to recognize and associate with the MTA brand.

A destination of choice



The brand image for the Maltese Islands uses the eye symbol as its central theme. The eye is a common feature carved and painted on the prow of traditional luzzu boats as a symbol of protection. The design has been drawn in the bright, vivid colours used on these boats, and is simple and illustrative in style, suggesting the natural beauty and cultural diversity that awaits visitors to the Maltese Islands. The unique eight-pointed cross is the single most recognisable symbol of Malta and is used to reinforce awareness and recognition of the Islands. The manuscript style in which the word 'Malta' is written recalls the Islands' seven thousand years of civilisation, whilst underlining the human warmth with which the people of the Maltese Islands greet the country's visitors.

This brand image presents the Maltese Islands as a destination of choice, emphasising Malta and Gozo's unique heritage, ideal climate, natural beauty, the hospitality and warmth which visitors find and the vitality and excitement of this young nation. It also serves as a corporate logo Malta Tourism Authority, the institution which has the mission to advance the economic and social activity of tourism in the national interest, by working with all stakeholders to develop a sustainable industry for current and future generations.

MALTA TOURISM AUTHORITY

280, Republic Street, Valletta
Tel: +356 224444/5, 225048/9
Fax: +356 220401, 246303
<http://www.visitmalta.com>
info@visitmalta.com

APPENDIX 11

Market Segmentation

Table 1 UK Market Segmentation for 2001¹

Type of Operator	Number of Tourists	Percentage
Major Operators (4)	197, 770	43.8
Malta Specialists (5 major ones plus 4 others whose estimates are >5,000)	164, 809	36.5
Other Operators (8 major ones plus all other UK operators whose business is >5,000)	74, 954	16.6
SIT/CIT/VFR	13, 997	3.1
TOTAL	451, 530	100.0

Source: MTA (2002) Unpublished Data

Table 2 Dutch Market Segmentation for 2002 (Estimates)

Type of Market	Estimates for 2002	Percentage
Operator: Leisure	44,000	67.7
S.I.T.	10,000	15.4
C.I.T	3,000	4.6
Sub-Total	57,000	87.7
Direct: Leisure	3,000	4.6
S.I.T.	2,500	3.8
C.I.T.	2,500	3.8
	8,000	12.3
Total	65,000	100.0

Source: Mallia (2001) Marketing Plan – The Netherlands

¹ Note: Data is not entirely comparable as market segmentation criteria are different. When the researcher asked MTA office for better data, they did not have any other data except the above which is in turn provided by the respective markets. This can pose serious problems when designing strategy since market base is not broken down according to the same criteria and hence it may be difficult to reach certain conclusion. For eg. the UK market does not clearly state whether the Other category may or may not include individual travellers. This is one of the recommendations that will be made. This could reflect the age old policy that the UK market is a mass market and therefore classification should be based on volume and not category

APPENDIX 12

MTA Brochure Analysis

Table 1 Relationship between Settings, Tourists and Locals in MTA Brochures (2000) (n = 157)

Setting in which Tourists and Locals are Presented	Explanation	Number of Images	Total (a)	% (a/n x100)
No Setting		4	4	2.6
Beaches	Sandy Rocky Beach + Scenery	2 1 3	6	3.8
Outside Dining		1	1	0.6
Sites and Scenery		5 6	11	7.0
Church		10	10	6.4
Localities	Valletta Internal Town Seaside Town	2* 6 3	11	7.0
Local Characteristics	Lace /craft Door Knockers Food <i>Luzzu</i>	3 5 2** 3	13	8.3
Activities	Water Other	26 9	35	22.3
Heritage	Neolithic Knights' Other Eras	22 8 6	36	22.9
Art and Architecture	Art Architecture	8 13	21	13.4
Festivities	<i>Festa</i> Carnival Pageantry Good Friday Procession	5 1 2 1	9	5.7
TOTAL				100

*A street in Valletta depicting local architecture stepped street, balconies and locals

** A 'tourist' couple in a local tea shop/bar with *pastizzi* (local delicacy) and wine - not eaten together. In the background there is a local talking to someone 2nd figure not quite visible, emphasis on couple and local delicacies, though picture is not 'authentic'.

Table 2 Local Population as Represented in MTA Brochures (MTA 2000)

Scene	Number of Images	Number of people	Gender		Age		
			Male	Female	Old	Young	Child
Chef	1	1	1			1	
Family eating in the yard	1	5	2	3	1	3	1
Men sitting on a bench	1	2	2		2		
Festive Spirit	7*						
Luzzu/Fishermen	2	2	2		1	1	
Lace/Craft	2	2	1	1	1	1	
Street	1	1		1			1
Decorated Street	1	1		1			1
Shopping Street	1**						
Maltese Leisure (fishing)	1	2		2		1	1
None	2	2	1	1	1		1
TOTAL	20	18*	9	9	6	7	5

* The highest number of locals depicted - showing people throwing papers, brass band accompanying the statue, re-enactors, a child dressed up in a carnival costume, statue carriers in a Good Friday Procession

** A typical Valletta stepped street, showing a number of locals going about their daily life

Table 3 Relationship between Cities, Towns and Attributes in MTA Brochures

Towns	Church	Harbour/ Fishing Boats	Church and Harbour	Other	Totals
MALTA					
Valletta		1	2	1****, 1	5
Marsaxlokk		1			1
Vittoriosa	1		1*		2
Mdina	3			1**	4
Mosta	1				1
GOZO					
Mgarr			1		1
Gharb	1				1
Xewkija	1				1
Citadella	3			2***	5
TOTAL	10	2	4	5	21

* Church, Architecture, fishing boats

** Street

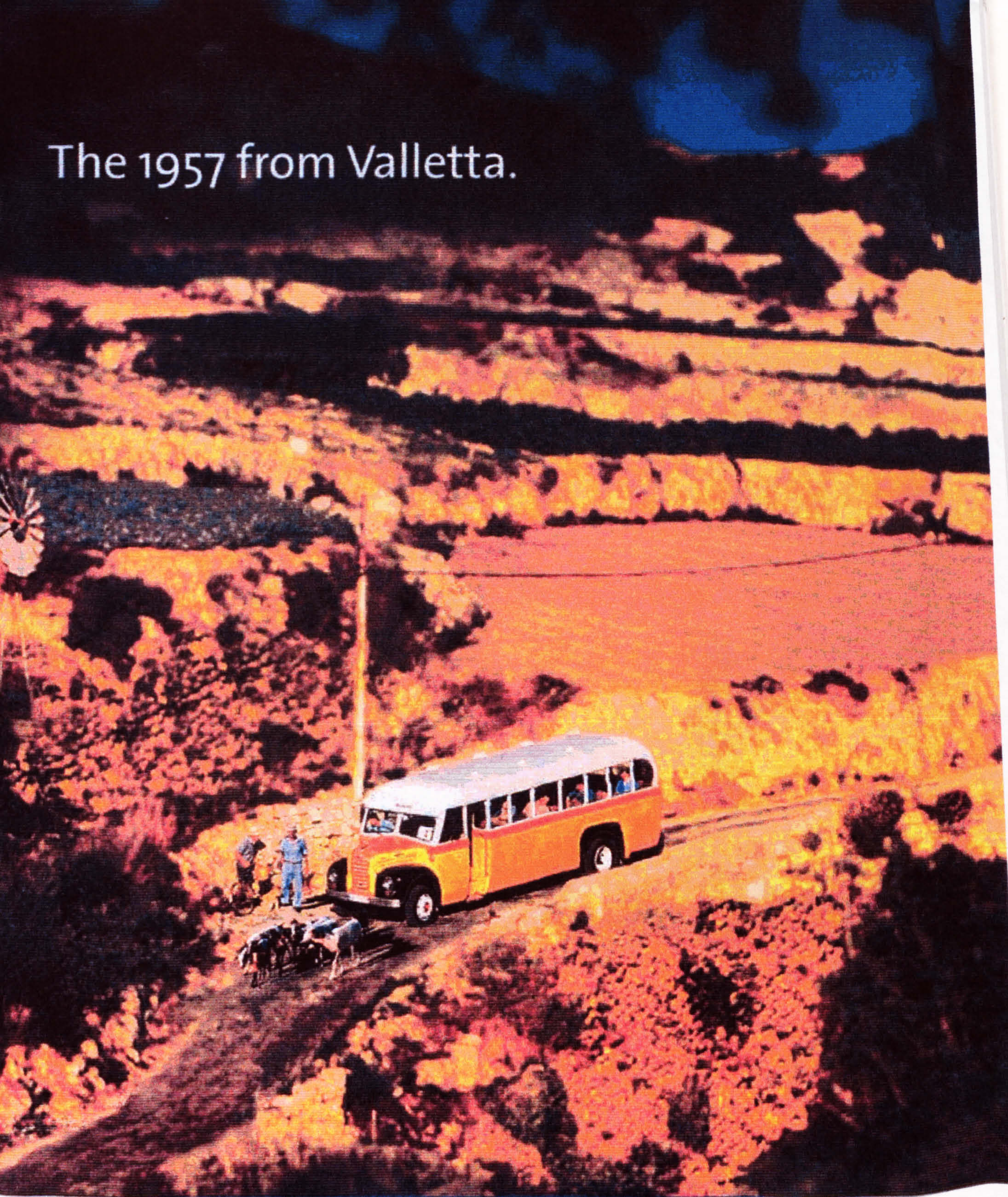
*** 1 pic city; 1 pic street

**** Church and Yachting Race

APPENDIX 13

Imagery used by MTA Representative Offices in UK and Holland

The 1957 from Valletta.




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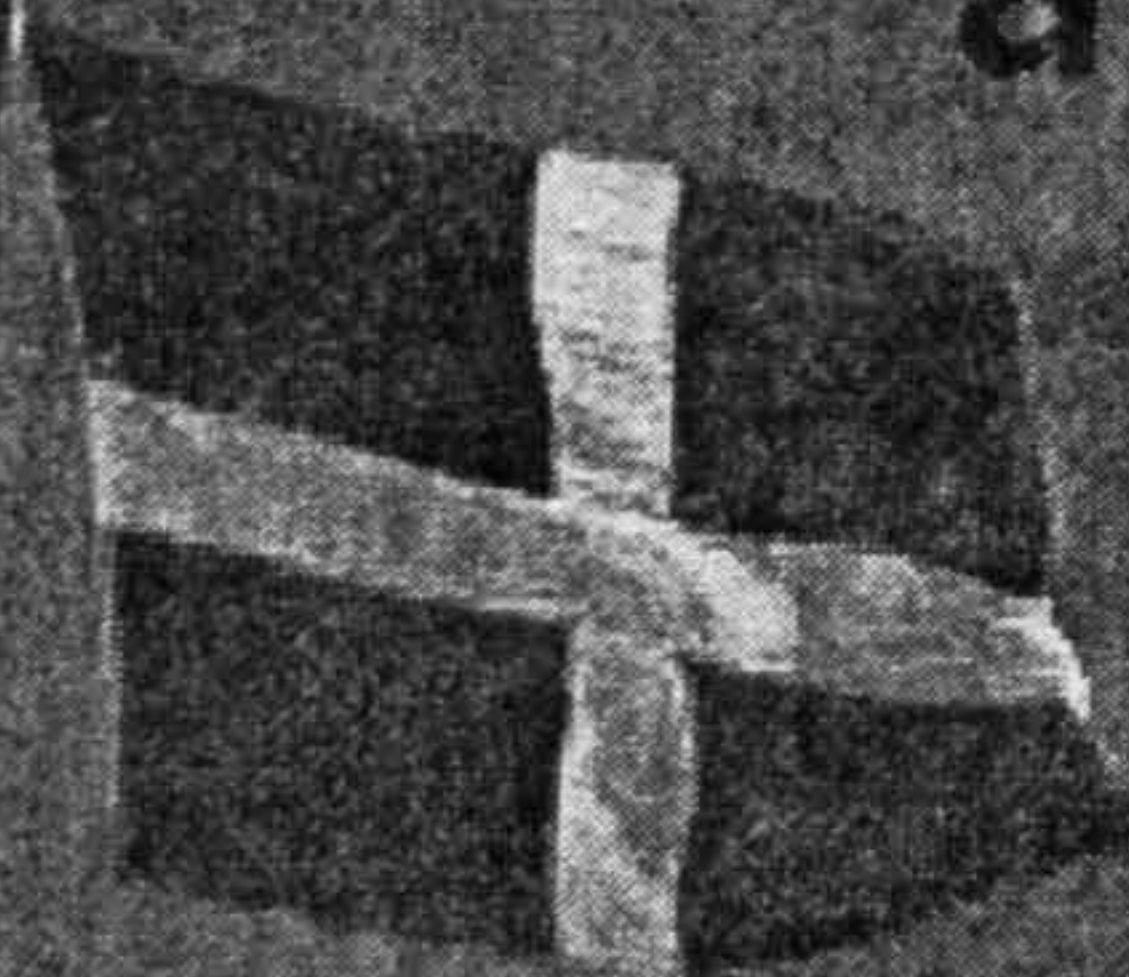
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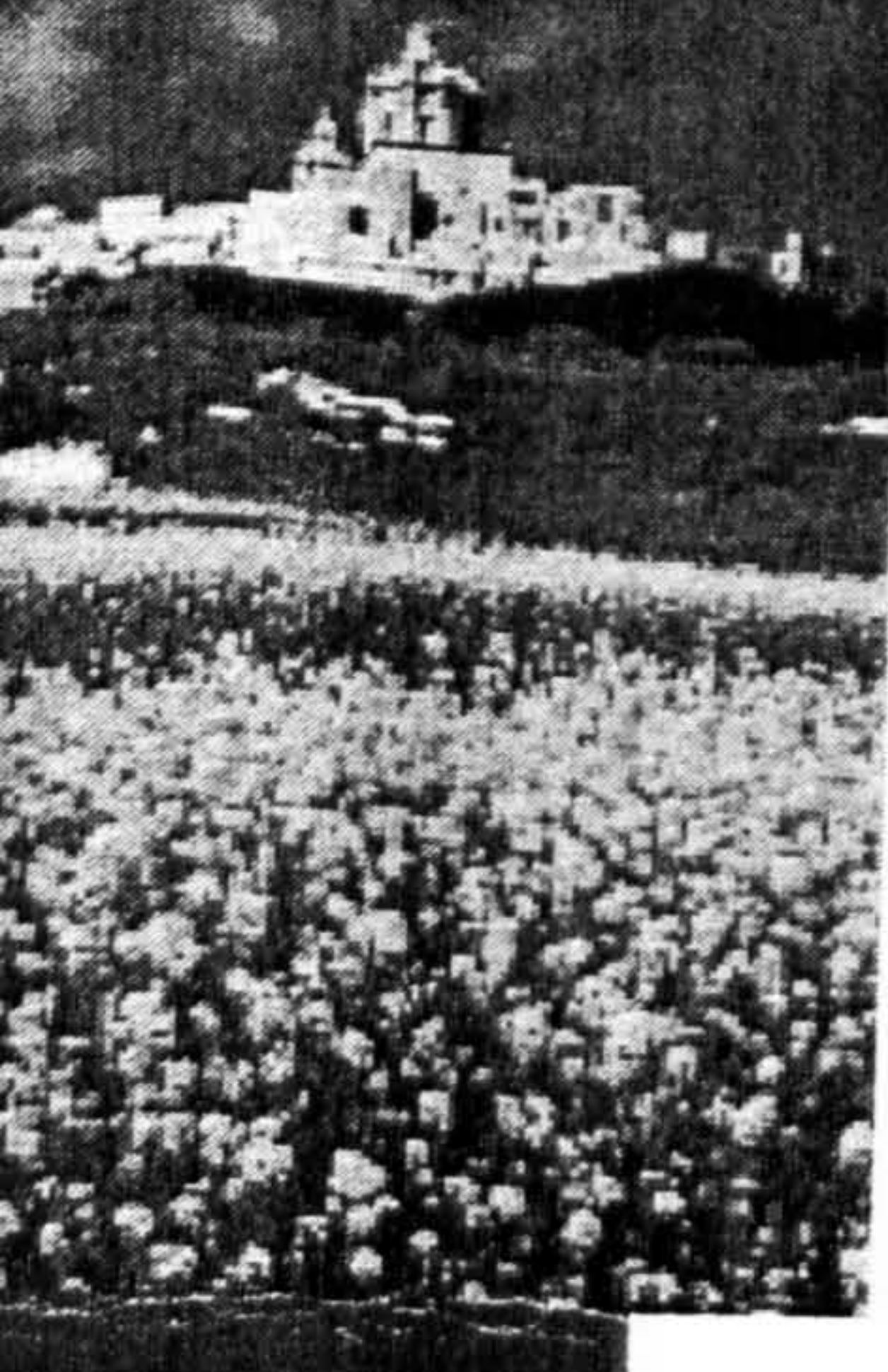
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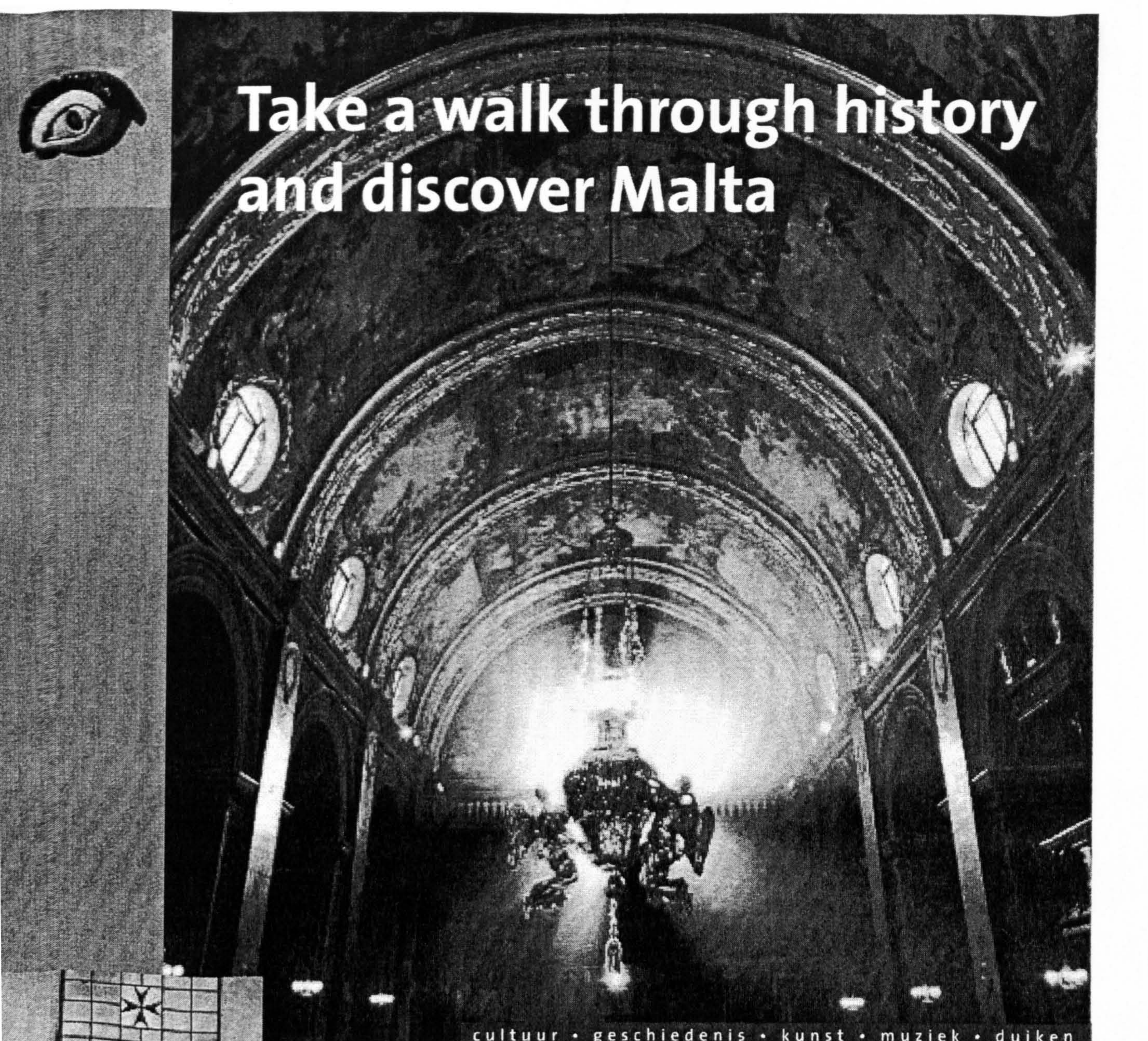


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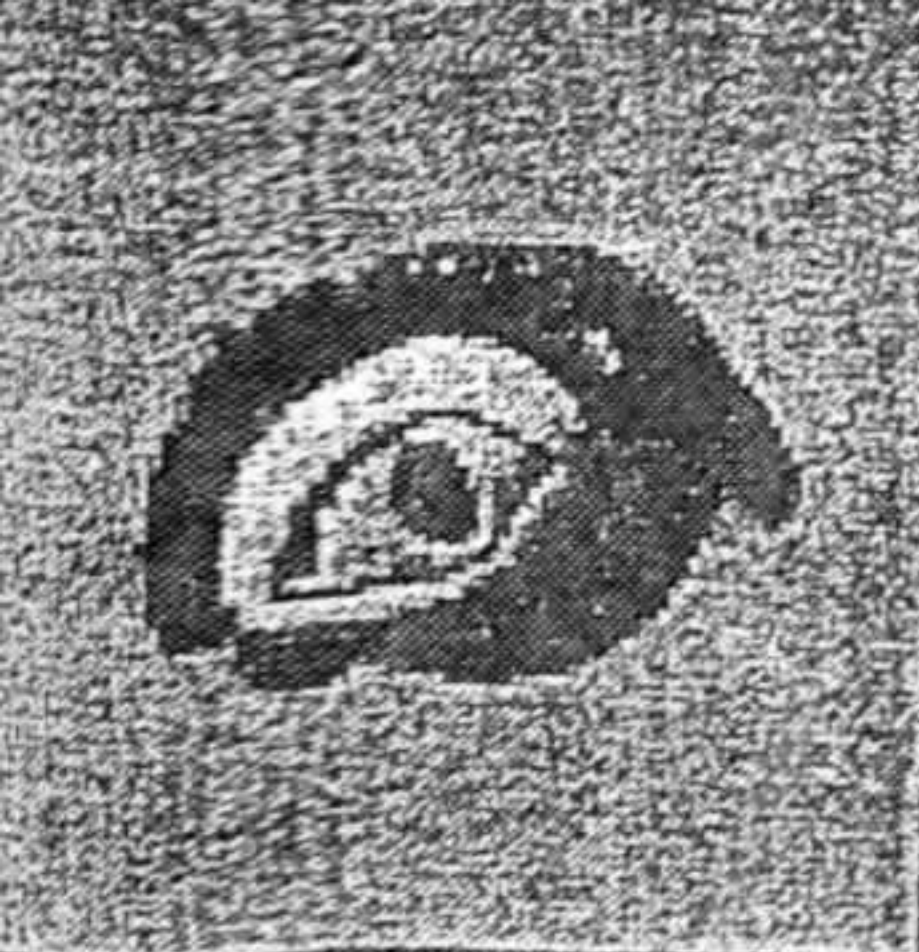


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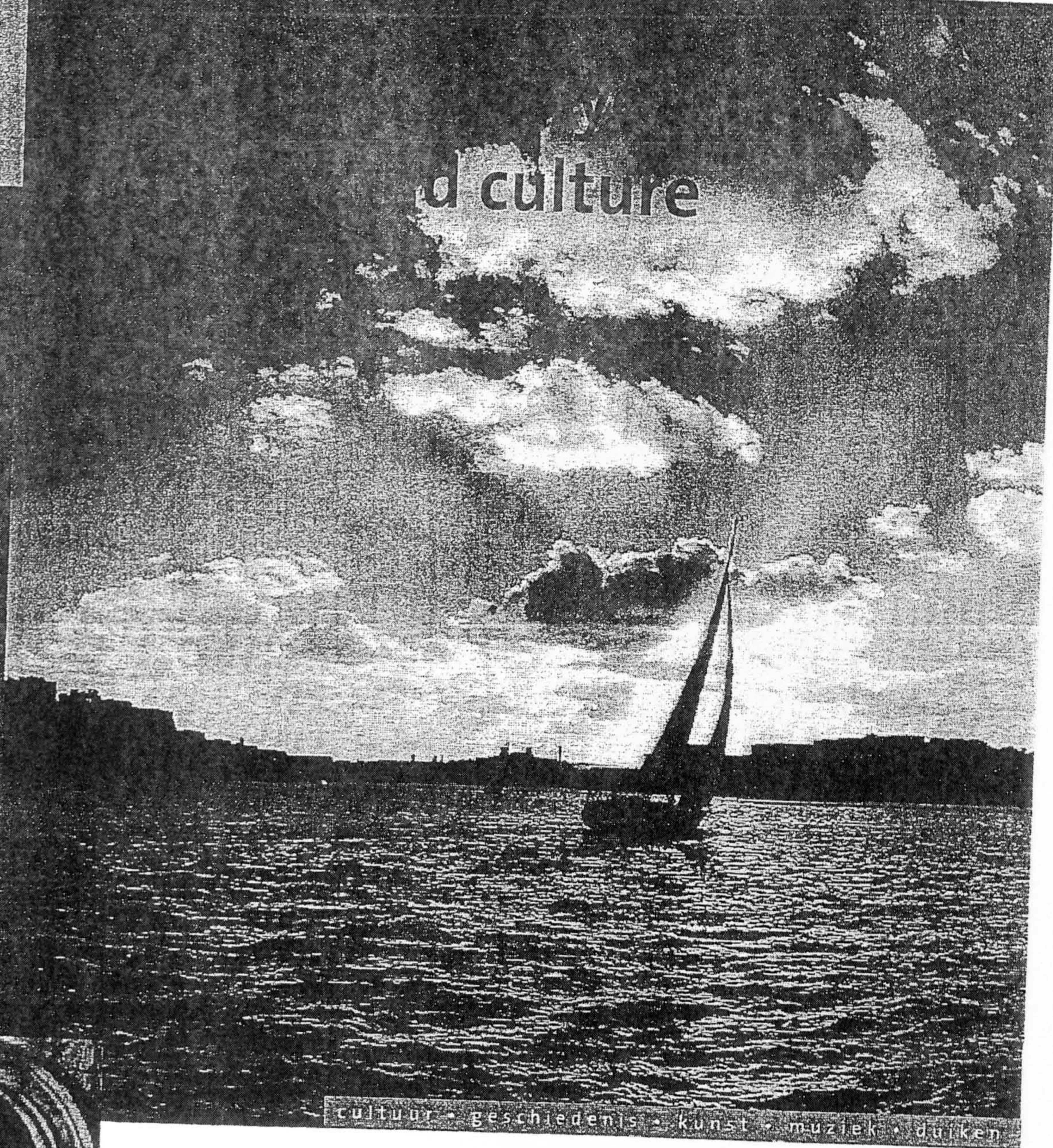


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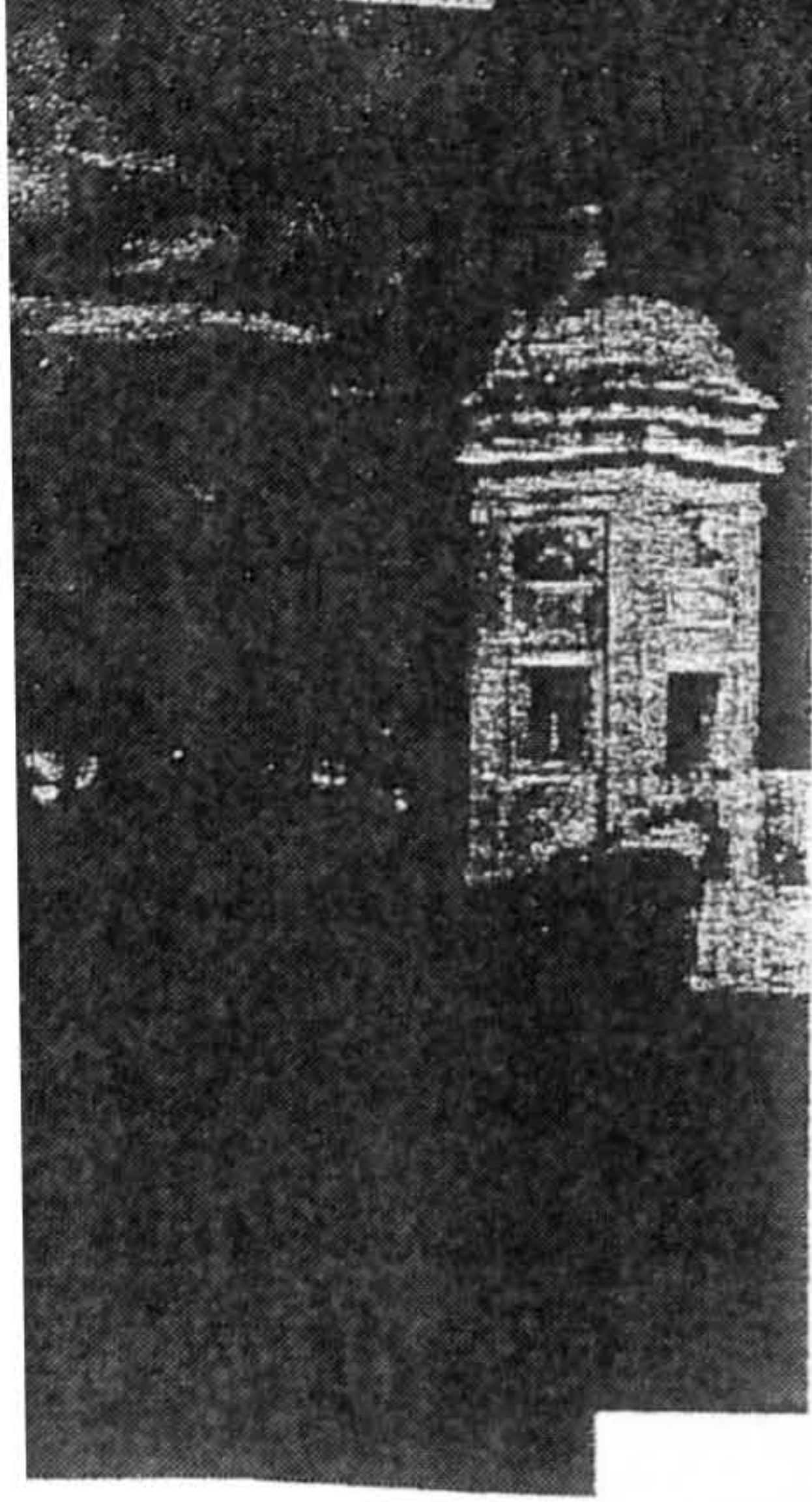
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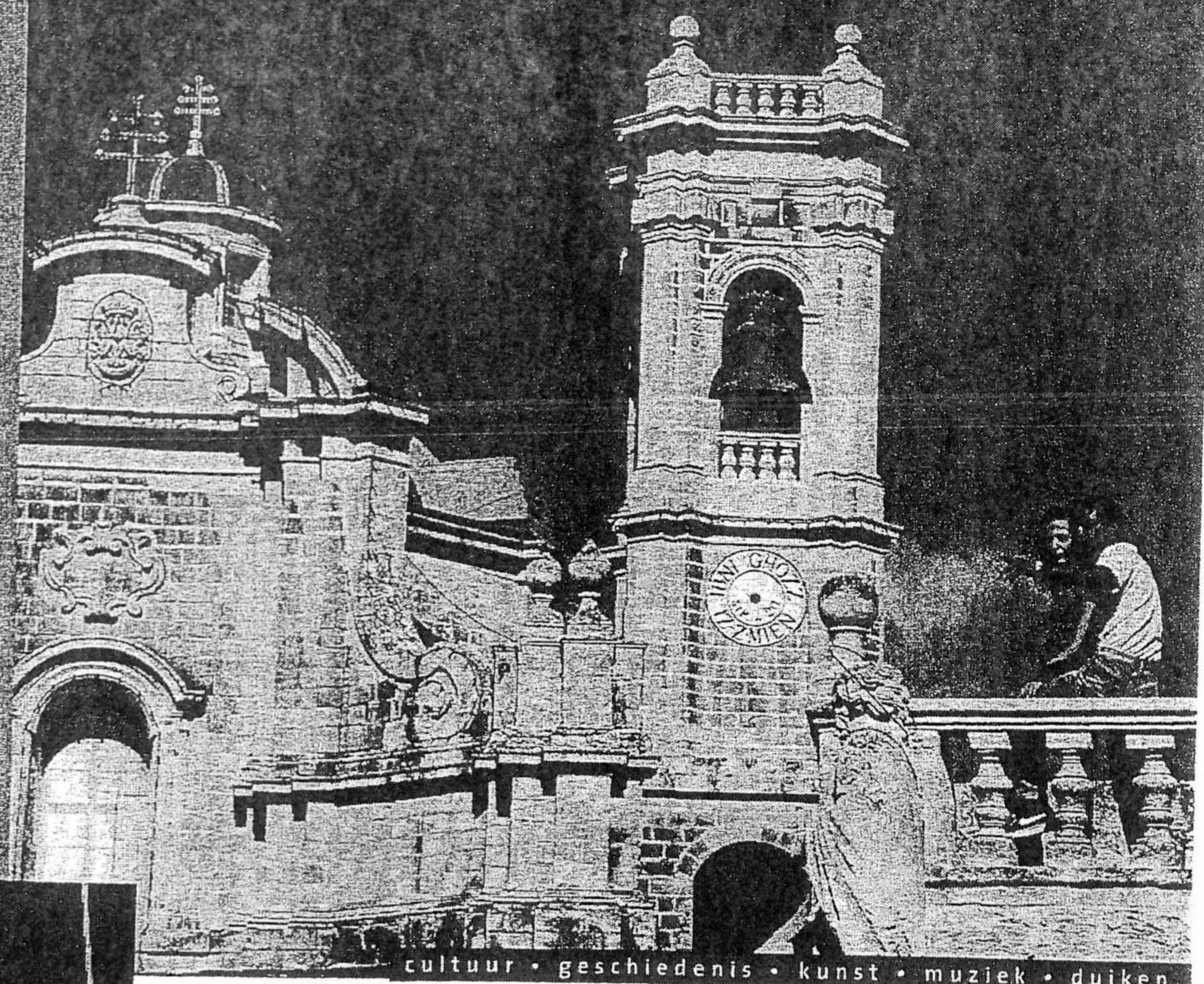
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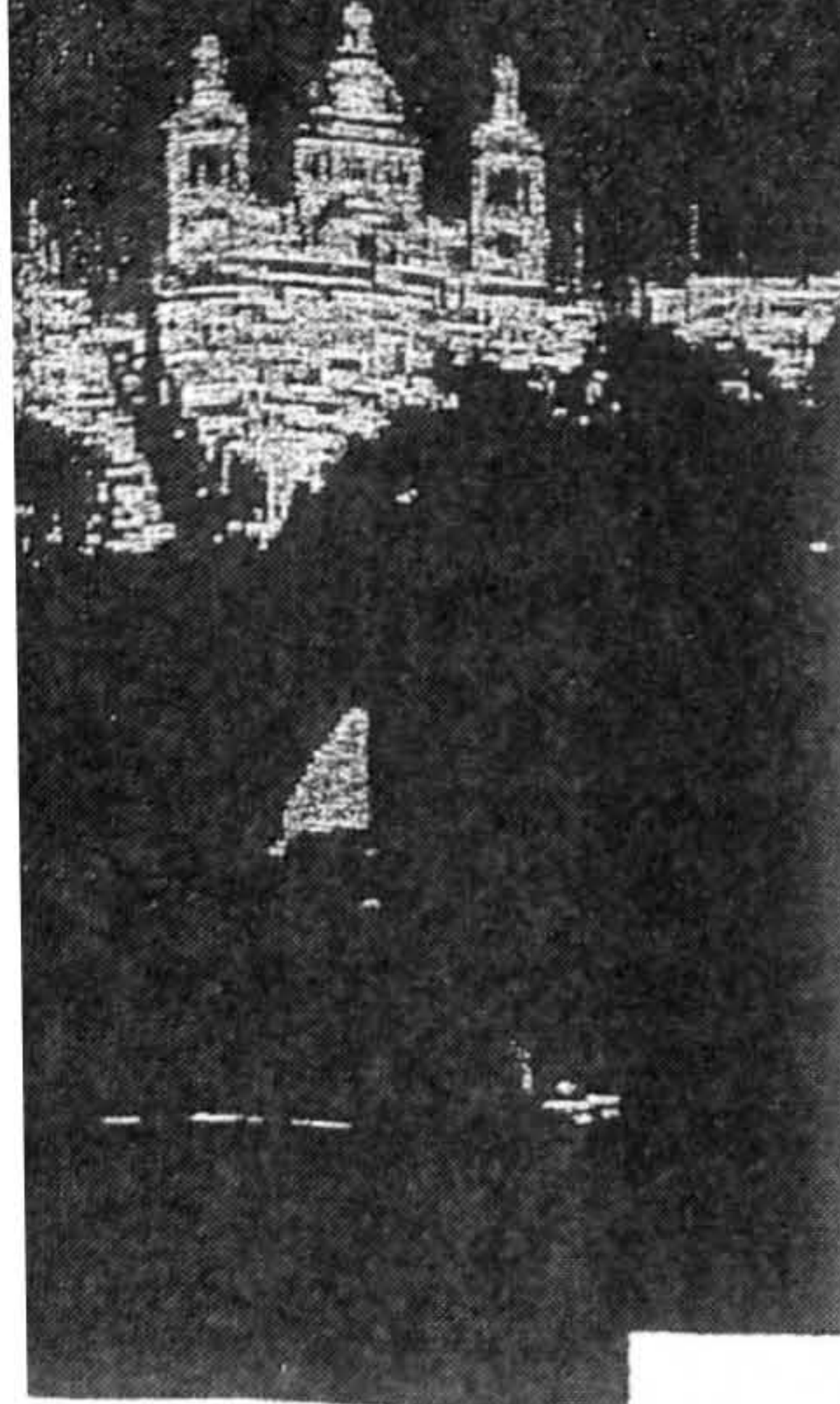
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APPENDIX 14

UK and Dutch Tour Operator Brochure Analysis

**Table 1 Relationship between Settings and Images in UK Brochures
(number of images = 792)**

Setting	Explanation	Number of Images	Total (a)	% (a/n x100)
None		9	9	1.1
Hotel	Exterior Grounds Bedroom Interior Restaurant Cafeteria Hotel and Pool Scenery and Pool Indoor Pool Outdoor Pool	80 17 136 41 27 15 117 27 22 76	558	70.5
Beaches	Sandy Rocky Scenery and Beach Hotel and Beach	13 6 13 3	35	4.4
Outside Dining		24	24	3.0
Site and Scenery	Site Scenery	5 14*	19	2.4
Church		10	10	1.3
Towns	Valletta Internal Seaside	11 6 52	69	8.7
Local Character	Market Lace Food <i>Luzzu</i> Horse-cabs	1 3 3^ 18 5	30	3.8
Heritage		2	2	0.3
Activities	Water Other	22 9	31	3.9
Art and Architecture	Architecture	3	3	0.4
Festivities	<i>Festa</i>	2	2	0.3
TOTAL		792	792	100

* One image contained multiple elements, it represents St. Paul's Bay old church and piazza and it incorporates the local bus, *luzzu*, two fisherman, the church and local houses (Panorama Summer)

^ Two tourists eating local food, at a local restaurant on the sea shore, Gozo *Luzzu* as a backdrop

**Table 2 Relationship between Settings and Images in Dutch Brochures
(number of images = 653)**

Setting	Explanation	Number of Images	Total (a)	% (a/n x100)
None		17	17	2.6
Hotel	Exterior Grounds Bedroom Interior Restaurant Cafeteria Hotel and Pool Scenery and Pool Indoor Pool Outdoor Pool	73 13 86 56 12 4 106 12 6 54	422	64.6
Beaches	Sandy Rocky Scenery and Beach Hotel and Beach	6 2 1 8	17	2.6
Outside Dining		13	13	2.0
Site and Scenery	Site Scenery	1 13	14	2.1
Church		13	13	2.0
Towns	Valletta Internal Seaside	8 5 55	68	10.4
Local Character	Lace Food <i>Luzzu</i> Horse-cabs Bus Religious Icon Niche (<i>nicca</i>) Ice-Cream van	1 2 23 2 3 1 1	33	5.1
Heritage		6	6	0.9
Activities	Water Other	22 4	26	4.0
Art and Architecture	Architecture	14	14	2.1
Festivities	Historical Pageantry Carnival	3 1	4	0.6
Nature	Local Flora Local Fauna	1 5	6	0.9
TOTAL		653	653	100

Table 3: Frequency of Sites Mentioned in all UK Brochures

Site	Additional Attributes	Frequency	Totals	
MALTA				
Valletta		18		
	St. John's Co-Cathedral	2		
	Grand Master's Palace	3		
	Armoury	2		
	Streets	2		
	Fort St. Elmo	1		
	Archaeology Museum	1		
	Fortifications	3		
	Knights of St. John	11		
	Grand Harbour	5		
	UNESCO World Heritage Site	1		
Mosta and Dome	Dome	7		
Mdina "Silent City"		14		
	Buildings	1		
	Cathedral	1		
Rabat "lace making town"		7		
	Mosaics	1		
	Christian Catacombs	2		
Prehistory and Temples		2		
	Ghar Dalam	1		
	Cart Ruts	5		
	Tarxien	1		
	Hagar Qim	3		
	Mnajdra			
Other sites		1		
	Three Cities	2		
	Marsaxlokk	1		
	Qrendi	1		
	Maqluba	2		
	Siggiewi	3		
	Mellieha	1		
	Tas-Santi (spelt Ta' Santi)	2		
	Dingli Cliffs	3		
	Baroque Churches	2		
	Marsa Sports Ground	2		
	Ta' Qali	5		
	Blue Grotto			
COMMINO		9		
GOZO				
Gozo		22		
	Xaghra and Gharb (Religious heritage)	1		
	Xewkija Dome	1		
	Mgarr	3		
	Calypso Cave	4		
	Ancient temples and Ggantija	9		
	Victoria	5		
		Citadel	4	
		Cathedral	2	
	Dwejra/Fungus Rock	3		
	Churches	2		

Table 4

Frequency of Sites Mentioned in all Dutch Brochures

Site	Additional Attributes	Frequency	Totals
MALTA			
Valletta	St. John's Co-Cathedral Grand Master's Palace Baracca Gardens Streets Archaeology Museum Museums Fortifications Knights of St. John / Malta Grand Harbour (Europe's largest natural harbour) The Malta Experience Open -air Market Manoel Theatre National Library	12 6 5 2 5 1 3 2 3 7 5 1 2 1	49
Mosta and Dome	Dome	2	2
Mdina "Silent City"	Former Capital Buildings Cathedral	5 3 2 2	12
Rabat	Roman Christian Catacombs St. Paul's Grotto	2 2 4 2	10
Prehistory and Temples	Ghar Dalam Tarxien Hagar Qim Mnajdra Ta' Hagra	3 1 3 3 1 1	12
Other sites	Three Cities Marsaxlokk Dingli Cliffs Baroque Churches Ta' Qali Blue Grotto San Anton	1 4 2 2 1 7 3	20
COMMINO		4	4
GOZO			
Gozo	Xaghra (Prehistoric Heritage) Xlendi (Diving) Calypso Cave Ancient temples and Ggantija Victoria Cathedral Ta' Pinu Church	8 3 3 2 2 6 1 1	26

Table 5 Relationship between Cities, Towns and Attributes in UK Brochures

Towns	Church	Harbour/ Fishing Boats	Church and Harbour	Other	Totals
MALTA					
Valletta	2		3	7	12
Marsaxlokk		2	4		6
Marsascala			2		2
Vittoriosa		3*	3		6
Sliema		4	3		7
St. Julian's		12	2		14
St. Paul's Bay		3	1	1	5
Mdina	6				6
Attard					
Melieha	2			3**	5
Blue Grotto		1		2	3
Mosta	3				3
GOZO					
Mgarr			5		5
Marsalforn					
Xlendi		1		1***	2
Citadella					
TOTAL	13	26	23	14	76

*Fishing Boats, harbour and local architecture

** Church, local architecture and land

*** Cliffs

Table 6 Relationship between Cities, Towns and Attributes in Dutch Brochures

Towns	Church	Harbour/ Fishing Boats	Church and Harbour	Other	Totals
MALTA					
Valletta	2	1	4	4*	11
Marsaxlokk		2	3		5
Marsascala			5		5
Vittoriosa		1*	1		2
Senglea				1	1
Sliema				1	1
St. Julian's		15			15
St. Paul's Bay		6			6
Mdina	4			1	5
Msida		1			1
GOZO					
Mgarr		4	6		10
Ghajsielem	1				1
Xlendi		3		1***	4
Citadella	2				2
TOTAL	9	33	19	8	69

*St. John's Co-Cathedral Interior)

** Local architecture

*** Outside Dining

Table 7a Local Population as Represented in UK Brochures

Scene	Number of Images	Number of people	Gender		Age		
			Male	Female	Old	Young	Child
Waiter/ Rest/ Bar	17	18	17	1	1	17	
Hotel Related Activities	2	2	1	1	1	1	
Local Food and Chef	1	1	1			1	
Luzzu/ Fishermen	7	16	14	2	11	3	2
Lace/Craft	1	1		1	1		
Horse Cab Driver	1	1	1		1		
Old man in front of shop	1	1	1		1		
Total	30	40	35	5	16	32	2

Table 7b Local Population as Represented in Dutch Brochures

Scene	Number of Images	Number of people	Gender		Age		
			Male	Female	Old	Young	Child
Waiter/ Rest/ Bar	11	11	10	1	2	9	
Hotel Related Activities	9	15	6	9	2	13	
Local Food and Chef	2	2	2			2	
Luzzu/ Fishermen	16	28	28		18	8	2
Lace/Craft	1	1		1	1		
None (everyday leisure talking)	2	4	3	1	3		1
Person standing near bus	1	1	1			1	
Old man	1	1	1		1		
Old man on donkey cart	1	1	1		1		
Total	44	64	52	12	28	33	3

APPENDIX 15
Funding of Heritage and Culture

Table 1 Revenue Department of Museums (1993-2001)

Year	Fees of Office Admission (Lm)	Examination of Importation and Export of Artefacts (Lm)	Sales of Publications and Reproduction (Lm)	Total (Lm)
1993	332,512	42,451	1,675	376,638
1994	665,021	58,903	1,188	725,112
1995	609,871	35,579	1,068	646,158
1996	633,412	32,396	453	666,261
1997	663,599	18,930	419	682,948
1998	918,558	13,417	196	932,171
1999	879,953	17,988	637	898,578
2000*	1,000,000	25,000	1,000	1,026,000
2001^	1,000,000	25,000	1,000	1,026,000

* Approved Estimates

^ Estimates

Source: Estimates, Ministry of Finance, Malta (Various Years)

**Table 2 Funding of Culture and Museums (Revenue and Expenditure)
(Lm)**

Year	Revenue * (Lm) (See Table 1)	Approved Estimate (Lm)	Expenditure			Money Not Utilised (Lm)	Balance (Income - Total Expenditure) (Lm)
			Recurrent Expenditure (Lm)	Capital Expenditure (Lm)	Total Expenditure (Lm)		
1996	666,261	(M) 966,000 (C) 1,583,000	1,005,745 1,261,864	611,472 14,854	1,617,217 1,276,718	(-) 651,217 306,282	(-) 950,956 n/a
1997	682,948	(M) 1,665,000 (C) 2,195,000	1,013,254 1,192,863	425,688 19,973	1,438,942 1,212,836	226,058 982,164	(-) 775,994 n/a
1998	931,971	(M) 1,559,000 (C) 1,205,000	988,291 954,306	256,264 24,179	1,244,555 978,485	314,445 226,515	(-) 312,584 n/a
1999	898,578	(M) 1,606,000 (C) 1,212,000	1,000,000 1,367,585	95,741 29,410	1,095,000 1,396,995	511,000 (-) 184,995	(-) 196,421 n/a
2000 [^]	1,026,000	(M) 1,530,000 (C) 1,279,000	1,180,000 1,232,000	350,000 47,000	1,530,000 1,279,000	----- -----	----- -----

[^] - Approved Estimates

* - Department of Culture does not register any revenue

(M) - Department of Museums

(C) - Department of Culture

(-) - Negative Balance

Source: Financial Estimates : Ministry of Finance (Various Years)