

UNION ORIENTATIONS, UNION PARTICIPATION,
AND PATTERNS OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION:
THE CASE OF THE ARGENTINIAN
AUTOMOBILE WORKERS

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ABSTRACT

UNION ORIENTATIONS, UNION PARTICIPATIONS, AND PATTERNS OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION: THE CASE OF THE ARGENTINIAN AUTOMOBILE WORKERS

by Jorge Raul Jorrat

This study theoretically derived and empirically determined types of workers' orientations toward union functions. On the basis of 203 Argentinian auto workers' responses to an item about the main functions of the union, two main types were distinguished: political orientation and economic orientation.

These types were intended to explain degrees of union participation, and degrees of integration in the plant, neighborhood, and the wider community. Hypotheses derived from Form and Dansereau were examined in light of the particular historical experience of the Argentinian working-class, and the specific characteristics of the broader social structure where such an experience was generated.

As a result of the empirical analysis, it was proposed that two life styles seem to underlie the two types of orientation: a) a working-class life style, in which union and wider community play the dominant role, and b) an individualistic life style, in which the plant and the local neighborhood figure significantly.

Finally, it was mentioned that the limitations of the heuristic value of the proposed orientational types--as the limitations of all typology--revealed the necessity of alternative approaches to the problem.

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By

Jorge Raul Jorrat

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"Il me semble en effet que la sociologie n'a réussi à construire un système d'analyse qu'au prix de l'abandon à une histoire sociale descriptive des sociétés industrielles contemporaines d'une part importante du domaine observable. Elle parle d'organisation et laisse aux économistes l'étude de l'entreprise; elle définit les formes d'adaptation ou d'inadaptation au changement et abandonne à la science politique la connaissance des mouvements sociaux qui orientent le développement; elle s'intéresse à la stratification urbaine mais laisse aux géographes et aux urbanistes l'étude des politiques urbaines; elle connaît bien les contacts de culture, mais plus mal les mouvements de libération nationale ou ethnique; elle laisse aux historiens l'étude du mouvement ouvrier, tandis qu'elle s'intéresse aux relations professionnelles."

ALAIN TOURAINE

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INTRODUCTION

The worker's view of his union, as Seidman et al. (1) have pointed out, may be influenced by a variety of factors. Among the most relevant, they noted: a) family background, particularly the unionist experience of the worker's relatives; b) his employment experiences; c) his experiences within the union; d) the age of the union and the strength of its tradition in the industry; e) the economic situation of the industry and the particular enterprise; f) "the size of the plant, its location in a small town or a metropolitan area, the steadiness of its operations, and the general attitudes of the community toward unionism may all play a part" (2); g) "Finally, aspects of the worker as an individual--age, sex, education, degree of skill, racial or ethnic background, and level of

aspiration--may all play a part in determining the worker's attitude toward the union" (3).

If a general principle of cultural relativism is taken into account, to all those aspects related with the study of union members orientations should be added some observations about the particular conditions of the country and the working-class under consideration. Given that our work is based on an investigation carried out in an Argentinian automobile industry--Industrias Kaiser Argentina--as a part of an international research project directed by W. H. Form, the specific characteristics of Argentina and its working-class must be discussed. In this sense, we are going first to introduce some notes related to such a discussion, based on the works of A. Touraine, D. Pecaut, and G. Germani (4).

Touraine and Pecaut, in their analysis of the labor consciousness in Latin America, point out that "the Latin American workers have, in fact, an access to power, . . . , and this differentiates them from the European workers at the beginning of industrialization" (5). They add that such a process can adopt indirect or symbolic forms, but that it is fundamental to understand the formation of workers' attitudes in Latin America. As they specify:

The European industrialization took place when the workers were still marginal to all form of political participation. On the contrary, the Latin American workers have been very soon admitted within diverse forms of participation, what has allowed them, at the same time, greater possibilities of influence; this advance of the political participation in relation with industrialization has expressed itself through the "national-popular" movements analyzed by G. Germani; it has been manifested in the precocious development of a social legislation which shows less the intervention of the state in the economic life than the influence of the new urban masses; and finally it has been followed by anticipated references to the cultural and consumption models of the industrialized societies (6).

Touraine and Pecaut conclude that when this early participation of the masses in the political system is considered, it should be taken into account that such a participation is not so much the expression of labor conquests, but the result of a "democratization through the authoritarian way" (7).

The ambiguities of the mobilization process in Argentina, in comparison with the rest of the Latin American countries, have been analyzed by Gino Germani as follows:

Only in Argentina the transition from partial (though amplified) mobilization toward total mobilization has already taken place; but just here arises the failure in the formation of mechanisms of integration, and the acute problems that this country is confronting are an

expression of such a failure. The position and attitudes of the lower classes already "mobilized" will be very different not only in accordance with the rapidity of the mobilization process, but also in accordance with the social structure within which such an emergency takes place (8).

While discussing the character of the urbanization process which took place in Argentina as a result of the massive immigrations at the beginning of the century, Germani remarks:

The urban growth, combined with the expansion and transformation of the economy, originated substantial changes in the type of society: already at the beginning of the present century, what we could call the traditional pattern had been destroyed and replaced by forms closer to the "modern" model (9).

He adds that the measures introduced for the economic development of the country, together with the impulse given to the internal activities by the great urban concentrations, led, in the first decade of the present century, to the first industrial development in the modern sense.

The impact of this process in the social structure, notes Germani, was reflected in the fact that the lower strata of the old society--rural to a great extent--were replaced by an urban proletariat and a middle-class in a process of rapid expansion (10).

Hence, the "two-party" scheme of a traditional society . . . , is substituted in the central areas by a three-party scheme (high, middle, and lower class), or a multi-party one, because the differentiation between strata, especially among the cities, becomes confused and the structure assumes the image of a series of super-imposed positions in which the transition from one to another results difficult to be perceived (11).

With respect to the transformations of the stratification system in Argentina, Germani mentions that the lower strata, constituted by rural workers, unskilled personnel, old artisans, personnel for domestic service, are transformed in urban workers occupied in industry, business, and services; that is,

activities carried out in accordance with the typical relations of the modern enterprise and concentrated in the cities. In this way, the "mobilization" of the population which inhabited the "central" areas of the country took place, arising in such manner that the conditions for the formation of proletarian movements, in accordance with the typical pattern of the first stages of the industrialization and urbanization process, acquire the characteristics of "social protest" movements (12).

If this was the situation in the first decade of the century, when the country did not have yet the self-image of an "underdeveloped" nation, in the 1930's, points out Germani, as a result of the impact of the world depression of 1929, two convergent processes took place in

Argentina; industrialization entered a new and decisive phase, and the massive immigration toward the cities from the interior of the country stimulated urbanization (13).

It was a massive exodus by which vast lower strata of the underdeveloped zones--masses until that moment completely marginal from the political life--settled themselves in the big cities and particularly in Buenos Aires (14).

These masses rapidly transplanted to the cities, immediately transformed in industrial workers, acquired political significance without finding the necessary channels for their integration. These circumstances persisted, and the "disposable" masses became, finally, the human base of Peronism. But,

the Peronist regime, typical "national-popular" movement, because of its origin, because of the character of its leaders, because of the circumstances of its emergence, was called to represent only an ersatz of political participation for the lower classes (15).

However, this limited participation was extraordinarily relevant:

. . . there is no doubts that the lower classes acquired with Peronism a consciousness of their own significance as a category of great importance in the national life, able of exercising certain power (16).

All these experiences, adds Germani, developed in the lower classes a clear consciousness of their power and

meaning. He concludes that, as a result, "the electorate was polarized in accordance with the line of class division, a fact that had never happened before in the country" (17).

We can summarize, then, the principal elements of this analysis: first, Argentina appears as a predominantly urban country; second, the "mobilization" process was very fast, with very wide effects on the whole social structure; third, the lower classes had an early participation in the political system, although it was a "process of demoncratization through the authoritarian way." Peronism was the channel for this participation, and as a "national-popular" movement used as its main instrument the obligatory unionization of the workers. The most important consequence of this process, as Germani notes, was that the workers developed, to a certain degree, a class consciousness; fourth, the obligatory unionization was also extended to many rural areas and, even more, the political socialization included these rural workers; finally, as a result of this, the General Confederation of Work (CGT), because of its organization and political necessities, extended its influence over all the regions of the country, probably diffusing among those rural workers,

without a unionist tradition, a political orientation toward the union.

On the light of the above discussion, the elements generally distinguished in the analysis of workers orientations toward the union will be constantly qualified here under the perspective of two main factors: the particular historical experience of the labor movement, and the specific conditions of the broader social structure in which such an experience is generated.

HYPOTHESES

One way of approaching the problem of the determination of union members orientations is through the study of the members' internalization of the union's functions. This is the approach proposed by Form and Dansereau (18), whose analysis will guide the present work.

Form and Dansereau distinguish three main functions of unions: a) improvement of wages and economic security, which can be internalized as economic orientations toward the union; b) protection from arbitrary management rule, internalized as political orientation; and c) the provision of fraternal and social contacts, internalized as social orientation (19).

In the following analysis, we will discuss some of the hypotheses proposed by these authors on the basis of the above typology, and we will reformulate them taking into account, particularly, the perspective we have already suggested.

The first hypothesis proposed by Form and Dansereau is that "Type of union orientation is related to the degree of union participation" (20). This hypothesis was formulated noting that

Specifically, those socially oriented toward the union would be most active, followed by the political, economic, . . . , orientational types. Theoretically, since the socially oriented have integrated the union in their way of life, they should be most active. The politically oriented, concerned with the struggle with management in various fronts, should also be highly involved with the union. The economic orientation is functionally more specific and may call for less participation (21).

In the discussion of workers' orientations, we have pointed out that it is necessary to relate those orientations to particular situations. In the case of the Latin American countries, Touraine and Pecaut have suggested that what is of fundamental importance is the national situation (22). In the characterization of this national situation, they distinguish three phases of development: the first is that in which the pre-industrial society is scarcely disturbed, and the last, on the contrary, is that in which the society under consideration is almost an industrial society, but still linked to the past by certain economic or institutional aspects; the intermediate phase represents the trajectory between these two moments (23).

On the basis of the above categorization, the authors have proposed the idea that

in its first phase, the popular movement is based on a class vindication, especially peasant; it opposes foreign domination and is oriented toward the initiation of development. In the second phase, characterized by a massive "mobilization" of the population, action is carried out on behalf of those just arrived, of the masses in formation; it opposes a class system conceived as a system of barriers, of privileges and heirdom, and tends toward the integration of the Nation. Finally, in the third phase, the movement is formed in the name of the Nation, that is, of the people conceived as the great mass of active citizens; it opposes the irrationality or the inertia of institutions and private interests, and it ascribes to a class ideology (24).

Touraine and Pecaut generalize their reasoning in the following way: the orientations in terms of class, nation, or development, refer, really, to a double movement; the orientation in terms of class does not define only a problematic of class relationships at the level of society. Hence,

there simultaneously exists a movement of defense and a movement of redefinition of the global society: that is really the sense of class action of the European workers of the 19th century (25).

Taking into account the present phase of development of Argentina, it can be expected that the complexity of the workers' orientations will be characterized by a

simultaneous movement of defense of the particular category and of redefinition of the global society, such as it was noted by the above authors. That is to say, we can assume that an articulation between categorical and global vindication will occur. As the global vindication with reference to the nation will imply a "reference to the rationality of the political power" (26), it is possible to think that the economic orientation for the defense of the category and the political orientation will both be, as different aspects of a same process, strong determinants of the workers' actions.

If those orientations are so strong as we presume, then both will account for most of the workers' responses, and the category of social orientation will tend to reflect more an idea of class solidarity, and, in this sense, it can be considered as a part of a political orientation.

Hence, Form and Dansereau's hypothesis is reformulated in the following way:

- I. Type of union orientation is related to the degree of union participation. Fundamentally, the economic and political orientation can be expected to account for most of the workers' responses, but those politically oriented should be slightly more involved with the union life than the economic ones.

Another hypothesis discussed by Form and Dansereau is that "Type of union orientation is associated with the degree of integration of the member to plant, neighborhood, and the community" (27). The authors mention that the underlying proposition here is that workers differ in their social class references.

Those oriented toward the working-class tend to have diffuse social interests which involve interpersonal relations which are most commonly found in local associations, such as the union, plant, and neighborhood. Workers identified with middle status groups are more specifically concerned with individual economic mobility. They prefer to cut their local and personal ties and become associated with broader community interests, commonly identified with middle status groups (28).

Hence, they conclude that those socially oriented should be most integrated with plant and the neighborhood, but not with the wider community. The politically oriented should follow the same pattern, but be somewhat more concerned with community associations (29).

Finally, those economic oriented "should be less involved with the plant and neighborhood and more involved in community-wide activities" (30).

It at the Latin American level we do not have further references related to this problem, given the particular political involvement of the unions it is possible to assume that the politically oriented workers--taking

into account their higher involvement with union activities--will tend to be less involved with the plant and neighborhood, will tend to be more dissatisfied individuals. This situation should also be reflected in a relatively less involvement with the wider community. In this sense, it seems to us that what Lipset, Trow, and Coleman have pointed out in Union Democracy is also relevant in the Argentinian case:

Conservatives come to participate in union affairs through first participating in the non-political occupational community, while liberals and radicals are motivated more directly by their values toward participation in union politics and are not dependent on social relations as an activating force (31).

In the same way, they add that

If men bring a strong concern with liberal or radical political issues with them to the union, they will early find an outlet for their interests in the activities of the union. For such men, union politics is a highly satisfactory form of leisure-time activity. The conservatives, on the other hand, are more likely to look first to the nonpolitical social and athletic clubs for a social outlet if they seek their social satisfactions among printers (32).

If we equate the politically oriented with a more liberal perspective, and the economic oriented with a more conservative one, we can tentatively propose the following reformulation of Form and Dansereau's hypothesis:

- II. Type of union orientation is associated with the degree of integration of the member to plant, neighborhood, and the community. The economic oriented should show a higher degree of involvement with plant, neighborhood, and the community, than the political ones.

The last hypothesis considered by Form and Dansereau is that "Differences in union orientations may be partly related to different community backgrounds and occupational career patterns" (33).

While discussing the effects of the urbanization process in the Latin American countries, Touraine and Peaut conclude that

in general, the urban experience can contribute to define the labor orientations. But, by itself, it seems that it must not produce more than scarcely elaborated forms: the isolation within the city can surely develop a certain consciousness of the social barriers; but the representation which follows that fact has more probability of expressing itself under the form of a hierarchy of orders than under the form of class conflict. The access to the world of consumption can, without doubts, engender a certain reference toward development; but over all it produces a vague consciousness of change. Similarly, through the means of mass communication it can appear without doubts a certain consciousness of participation in the nation; but under a confuse form. In one word, this urban experience is fundamental; but by itself it favours heteronomous modes of action. It can be expected, then, that this experience will be even more important for the individuals who have a marginal work, than for those that, through the work experience, achieve a certain autonomy (34).

If the urban experience cannot allow us conclusive predictions, some particular historical factors related with the urbanization process in Argentina suggest that the workers of urban and rural background could tend to differ in their orientations. The fundamental experience of the rural workers was the political character of their participation in union activities, while the urban ones add to their political experience an old tradition of economic defense.

On the basis of these considerations, we can specify the first part of Form and Dansereau's hypothesis as follows:

- III. 1. Differences in union orientations may be partly related to different community backgrounds. In the Argentinian case, it could be expected that the urban workers will approximately show an even pattern of political and economic orientations, while the rural ones will principally express a political orientation.

Taking into account the different phases of evolution of industrial work described by Touraine (35), Argentina can be considered within that phase of development where class references express themselves with a contradictory character, and where such a contradiction is reflected in the confrontation between craft and

mechanization, between the professional autonomy and the system of organization of the enterprise.

As Touraine points out, if the skilled worker has less propensity to discuss the decision-making system than the unskilled, to that extent will his status determine a stronger identification with his work. On the other hand, he remarks that the skilled worker will also feel himself strongly drawn to discussion, to the extent that he is more directly threatened by a system of organization which permanently tends to limit his autonomy (36).

Along this same line, Touraine and Pecaut mention that a study of workers' attitudes in France, the same like other investigations in different countries,

has shown that the skilled workers almost always possess capacity to autonomously organize their action within the enterprise; instead, the unskilled workers frequently react in accordance with an elemental calculus, by means of which they correlate the professional difficulties of work, the obtained wage, and the possibilities of maintaining that wage in other occupations (37).

As a result of these observations, the second part of the hypothesis can be stated in the following way:

- III. 2. Differences in union orientations may be partly related to different occupational career patterns. Specifically, those most skilled should tend to reveal a higher political orientation than the less skilled.

RESEARCH SITE

The field work on which this study is based was carried out in Cordoba, Argentina, a city of almost six hundred thousand, from October, 1965, to July, 1966. As it was mentioned before, the field work was a part of an international research project directed by William H. Form.

The principal sources of employment in Cordoba are automobile manufacture, state government, and trade. To these, should be added some other less important industries. The workers studied were those employed in "Industrias Kaiser Argentinas," who are members of a local of the national Metallurgic Labor Union, the second local in order of importance after Buenos Aires.

R. Gale, who was the director of the field work in Argentina, notes that

the study population is limited to workers with at least one year seniority at the time of the study employed in tool and die making, experimental, machining of parts, inspection, and repair, and final assembly departments. The rationale for concentration on these departments is two-fold. First, these departments

constitute the core of the automobile manufacturing process, and consequently would be expected to reflect maximum similarity across cultural boundaries. Secondly, they represent a range of skill levels (38).

With respect to the sampling procedure, Gale mentions that "the study sample was drawn from listings of workers in selected departments mentioned above" (39). In total, 315 IKA workers living in the city and the surrounding urban areas were interviewed in their homes. From these, 275 are included in the representative sample used in the study. The "representative sample" not only includes different degrees of skill, but "also reflects the wage distribution of workers in the departments from which the sample was drawn" (40).

Tables I, II, and III, respectively, show the representative sample according to wage rate, functional classification, and skill level:

TABLE I

REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE ACCORDING TO WAGE-RATE (41)

Wage-Rate	IKA Workers
"Line-rate"	22%
"Above line-rate"	59
"Skilled trades"	19
Totals (N)	100% (275)

TABLE II

REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE ACCORDING TO
FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION (42)

Functional Classification	IKA Workers
Assembly Line	33%
Machine operator	31
Test, inspection, or repair	26
Skilled trades	10
Totals (N)	100% (275)

TABLE III

REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE ACCORDING TO SKILL LEVEL (43)

Skill Level	IKA Workers
Unskilled	49%
Semi-skilled	35
Skilled	16
Totals (N)	100% (275)

TYPES OF UNION ORIENTATION

Form and Dansereau theoretically derived and then empirically determined the different types. The empirical location was carried out on the basis of the workers' responses to the question of what they consider to be the main functions of the union. This will be our approach also.

Political Orientation

Approximately 37% of the workers considered that the most important function of the union was: a) to change the political and social system of the country (5%), and b) organize workers to make them feel socially united (32%). This second alternative was considered by Form and Dansereau as the basis of the "social orientation" type, but, as we have noted, in the Argentinian situation this item appeared intimately related with the political orientation, as meaning an idea of class solidarity.

Economic Orientation

Another 37% of the workers considered as the most important function to secure higher wages.

Mixed Type

The remaining 25% answered that the most important function of the union was to obtain better working conditions. The classification of these answers was difficult, because the item could suggest either an economic or political viewpoint. In the analysis of the data, such type tended to randomly agree with one or the other main types. Finally, as a first tentative approach, it was left as a kind of mixed type, without further relevance in the development of the present study.

UNION ORIENTATIONS AND UNION PARTICIPATION

In the first hypothesis we considered that while the economic and politically oriented would be both highly involved with the union, the latter will tend to participate more. The index of participation was determined taking into account the frequency with which workers attended union meetings, the offices they held in the union, their participation in union activities, their knowledge of current local officers' names, and, finally, their concurrence to vote in the last election of local officers.

We can observe in Table IV that those politically oriented tend to reveal the expected pattern: 62% fall in the category of high participation, while only 55% of those economic oriented show the same degree of participation.

If these differences are small, the data, in general, systematically shows the politically oriented more involved with the union. The methodological approach here is to look for the consistency of the findings, more than for their significance (44).

TABLE IV

UNION ORIENTATIONS AND UNION PARTICIPATION

Union Participation	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
High	55% (57)	62% (62)	119
Low	45 (46)	38 (38)	84
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

Following the same pattern, as Table V shows, the politically oriented are more interested in the union (52%), than the economic ones (48%).

TABLE V

UNION ORIENTATION AND UNION INTEREST

Union Interest	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
High	48% (49)	52% (52)	101
Low	52 (54)	48 (48)	102
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

In general, those politically oriented are also more integrated with the union (40%) than the economic ones (31%):

TABLE VI

UNION ORIENTATION AND DEGREE OF UNION INTEGRATION

Union Integration	Union Orientations			
	Economic		Political	T
High	31%	(32)	40% (40)	72
Low	68	(70)	59 (59)	129
Not ascertained	1	(1)	1 (1)	2
Totals	103		100	203
	100%		100%	

The index of integration is determined through the workers' evaluation, interest, and level of participation in the union.

If we equate again the politically oriented with a more liberal outlook than the economic ones, our findings agree with the observations we early cited from Union Democracy. In this sense, our data show the politically oriented reflecting a higher ideological bent, a more militant perception of union behavior. The index of ideological intensity was built on the basis of the workers' agreement or disagreement with the following items: a) "It is better to take the position of live and let live than to insist on a point of view that it is really right;"

TABLE VII

UNION ORIENTATION AND DEGREE OF IDEOLOGICAL INTENSITY

Ideological Intensity	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
High	30% (31)	34% (34)	65
Low	70 (72)	66 (66)	138
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

b) "Once one makes a really important decision one mustn't pay any attention to other points of view no matter how convincing they may seem;" c) "One shouldn't let his family suffer because he believes in an ideal which can be realized only in the distant future."

TABLE VIII

UNION ORIENTATION AND PERCEPTION OF UNION BEHAVIOR

Perception of Union Behavior	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
More Militant	35% (36)	42% (42)	78
Less Militant	61% (63)	57 (57)	120
Not Ascertained	4 (4)	1 (1)	5
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

While only 30% of those economic oriented express a high ideological intensity and 35% tend to see the union as fighting militantly, 34% of those politically show the same degree of ideological intensity and 42% perceive union behavior as more militant. Lipset et al.'s observations that the more conservatives tend to be more involved with nonpolitical activities should be reflected in a higher involvement of the economic oriented with the neighborhood, or the "popular barrio" (45), and the wider community. We will see later that our data corroborate this assumption only to a certain extent.

In general, we can see that the empirical findings agree, to a certain degree, with our assumptions. That is, if the differences are not significant, they systematically reveal the politically oriented as more interested and more active in union life than the economic ones.

UNION ORIENTATIONS AND PATTERNS OF SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Data in Tables IX, X, XI, and XII, tend to correspond with our initial assumptions: the economic oriented worker appears as the most integrated with the plant. They show higher job satisfaction (28%) than the political (22%); they also show higher work satisfaction, 82%, against only 73% of the political; again, they reveal a higher satisfaction with the work environment, 96%, against 94% of the political; finally, and in the same sense, they tend to feel higher situs satisfaction (74%) than the political (67%). Of course, it can be seen that the differences are also small here, but their consistency in the same direction seems to us highly relevant. The same occurs, as it is reflected in Table XIII, with the degree of occupational involvement, whose index was built on the basis of the workers' occupational fulfillment and interest: 60% of those economic oriented appear as highly involved with their occupation, while only 53% of those politically oriented express the same pattern.

TABLE IX

UNION ORIENTATION AND JOB SATISFACTION

<u>Job Satisfaction</u>	<u>Union Orientations</u>		
	<u>Economic</u>	<u>Political</u>	<u>T</u>
High	90% (93)	83% (83)	176
Low	10 (10)	17 (17)	27
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

TABLE X

UNION ORIENTATION AND WORK SATISFACTION

<u>Work Satisfaction</u>	<u>Union Orientations</u>		
	<u>Economic</u>	<u>Political</u>	<u>T</u>
High	82% (85)	73% (73)	158
Low	15 (15)	24 (24)	39
Not ascertained	3 (3)	3 (3)	6
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

TABLE XI

UNION ORIENTATION AND WORK ENVIRONMENT SATISFACTION

Work Environment Satisfaction	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
High	96% (99)	94% (94)	193
Low	4 (4)	6 (6)	10
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

TABLE XII

UNION ORIENTATION AND SITUS SATISFACTION

Situs Satisfaction	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
High	72% (74)	67% (67)	141
Low	23 (24)	30 (30)	54
Not ascertained	5 (5)	3 (3)	8
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

TABLE XIII

UNION ORIENTATION AND DEGREE OF OCCUPATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Occupational Involvement	Union Orientations				
	Economic		Political		T
High	60%	(62)	53%	(53)	115
Low	40	(41)	47	(47)	88
Totals	103		100		203
	100%		100%		

However, the economic oriented appear also as the most mobile individuals, a fact that is reflected in Table XIV: Asked if they have ever thought about changing their

TABLE XIV

UNION ORIENTATION AND ASPIRATIONS FOR
OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY

Aspirations for other occupations	Union Orientations				
	Economic		Political		T
Yes	60%	(62)	50%	(50)	112
No	40	(41)	50	(50)	91
Totals	103		100		203
	100%		100%		

present occupation, 60% of those economic oriented gave an affirmative answer, while only 50% of the politically oriented answered in the same way. In the same sense, they were also found to be the most unstable, particularly when we analyzed data referring to aspirations for other jobs, other types of work, and changes of shift.

With respect to the last part of the present hypothesis, our data tend to differ. While the economic oriented appears as more involved with neighborhood activities, the politically oriented tends to be more involved with the wider community. As Table XV shows 86% of those economic oriented reflect high neighborhood involvement, against 75% of the political ones. The index of neighborhood involvement is based on the workers' answers to the questions: would they like to continue living in the neighborhood or move, what number of friends and acquaintances they have in the neighborhood, were they disposed to attend meetings to discuss neighborhood problems, what number of relatives they have there, do they exchange visits with neighborhood friends, and, finally, do they perceive problems in the neighborhood or not.

TABLE XV

UNION ORIENTATION AND DEGREE OF
NEIGHBORHOOD INVOLVEMENT

Neighborhood Involvement	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
High	86% (89)	75% (75)	164
Low	14 (14)	24 (24)	38
Not ascertained	-	1 (1)	1
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

On the other hand, the reverse relation holds in the case of involvement with the wider community: while 73% of those politically oriented reveal a high involvement, only 66% of the economic ones fall in the same category. The index of community involvement takes into account the workers' answers to the questions which refer to: a) satisfaction with community of residence, b) interest in local or national news, c) membership in voluntary organizations, and, d) perception of community problems.

In accordance with Lipset et al.'s observations, the idea of the economic oriented worker participating

TABLE XVI

UNION ORIENTATION AND DEGREE OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Community Involvement	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
High	66% (68)	73% (73)	141
Low	29% (30)	24 (24)	54
Not ascertained	5 (5)	3 (3)	8
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

more in the neighborhood and the community seemed to us consistent at the very beginning. But, the parallel between conservatives and economic oriented workers does not hold at the level of the social relations. It seems that, given his necessities of defense of the category and social support, the economic oriented workers tend to be somewhat involved with the union and to participate more in neighborhood activities, but this circumstance is not reflected in a higher number of friendships. The politically oriented, on the other hand, given his stronger social orientation supposedly expressed in the idea of class solidarity, tends to develop more friendships than the

economic ones, even when the latter have slightly more possibilities to do so.

TABLE XVII

UNION ORIENTATION AND POSSIBILITIES OF
MOVING FREELY DURING WORK

Mobility during work	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
High	55% (57)	54% (54)	111
Low	45 (46)	46 (46)	92
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

TABLE XVIII

UNION ORIENTATION AND NUMBER OF FELLOW WORKERS
AROUND DURING WORK

Number of workers around	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
High (more than 5)	76% (78)	75% (75)	153
Low (5 or less)	24 (25)	25 (25)	50
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

TABLE XIX

UNION ORIENTATION AND NUMBER OF FELLOW WORKERS
WITH WHOM THEY GO TO THE FACTORY

Number of workers they go to the factory	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
High (more than 10)	64% (66)	44% (44)	110
Low (10 or less)	36 (37)	56 (56)	93
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

We can see in the preceding Tables that there are practically no differences between the political and the economic oriented with respect to the distance they can freely move during work and with respect to the number of fellow workers around them while they are working. But, the economic oriented go to work with more workers than the political: while 64% of the former go together with more than ten workers, only 44% of the latter go with the same number. However, as we have pointed out, data in Tables XX, XXI, and XXII, show that even if the economic oriented worker has slightly more objective possibilities for friendships, it is the political who reveals himself having more friends.

TABLE XX

UNION ORIENTATION AND NUMBER OF FRIENDS IN
THE WORK GROUP

Number of friends in the work group	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
High (more than 5)	11% (11)	11% (11)	22
Low (5 or less)	89 (92)	89 (89)	181
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

TABLE XXI

UNION ORIENTATION AND NUMBER OF FRIENDS
IN THE DEPARTMENT

Number of friends in the department	Union Orientation		
	Economic	Political	T.
High (more than 5)	16% (16)	23% (23)	39
Low (5 or less)	84 (87)	77 (77)	164
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

TABLE XXII

UNION ORIENTATION AND NUMBER OF FRIENDS
IN THE PLANT

Number of friends in the plant	Union Orientation		
	Economic	Political	T
High (more than 5)	11% (11)	19% (19)	30
Low (5 or less)	89 (92)	81 (81)	173
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

It can be observed that, if again there are no differences at the level of the work group, the politically oriented has more friends in the department; while 23% of the latter answered that they have more than five friends, only 16% of those economic oriented mentioned having more than five friends in the department. The same with respect to the plant: while 19% of the political have more than five friends, only 11% of the economic oriented show the same pattern. Also, and in the same sense, data in Table XXIII reveals that 57% of those politically oriented answered that they are consulted by friends, against 51% of the economic ones.

TABLE XXIII

UNION ORIENTATION AND CONSULTATIONS BY FRIENDS
ABOUT UNION OR COMPANY PROBLEMS

If consulted by friends	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
Yes	51% (53)	57% (57)	110
No	49 (50)	43 (43)	93
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

Again, with respect to the social relations outside the factory, Table XXIV shows that 24% of those politically oriented meet outside with more than five fellow

TABLE XXIV

UNION ORIENTATION AND NUMBER OF WORKERS
MET OUTSIDE THE FACTORY

Number of workers met outside factory	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
High (more than 5)	15% (15)	24% (24)	39
Low (5 or less)	85 (88)	76 (76)	164
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

workers, while only 15% of the economic ones reflect the same circumstance. Finally, the most confirming instance is expressed in Table XXV, where we can see that while 71% of the politically oriented workers answered that they can trust fellow workers with respect to very intimate and important problems, only 63% of those economic oriented gave an affirmative answer.

TABLE XXV

UNION ORIENTATION AND CONFIDENCE IN FELLOW WORKERS
WITH RESPECT TO INTIMATE AND IMPORTANT PROBLEMS

If can trust workers	Union Orientations				
	Economic		Political		T
Yes	63%	(65)	71%	(71)	136
No	37	(38)	29	(29)	67
Totals	103		100		203
	100%		100%		

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND AND

UNION ORIENTATIONS

Data in Table XXVI do not allow conclusive interpretations in regard to the relationship between community background and union orientations. Practically, workers reared in rural and urban areas tend to reveal the same pattern of orientation: of those economic oriented 29% come from rural regions and 71% of urban ones, while 27% of the politically oriented are rural and 73 are urban. The very small difference of 2% in the sense that the economic oriented would be slightly more rural and the political slightly more urban, in the absence of further data cannot be taken into account.

TABLE XXVI

UNION ORIENTATION AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

Community Background	Union Orientations		
	<u>Economic</u>	<u>Political</u>	<u>T</u>
Rural	29% (30)	27% (27)	57
Urban	71 (73)	73 (73)	146
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

OCCUPATIONAL STRATIFICATION AND

UNION ORIENTATIONS

Form and Dansereau note that "social and economic attitudes are frequently associated with position in a stratification system and with mobility aspirations" (47). In their analysis, the most important index of stratification used was occupation. In the present work, also the most important available index is occupation.

TABLE XXVII

UNION ORIENTATION AND SKILL LEVEL

Skill Level	Union Orientations		
	Economic	Political	T
Skilled	11% (11)	23% (23)	34
Semi-skilled	39 (40)	31 (31)	71
Unskilled	50 (52)	46 (46)	98
Totals	103 100%	100 100%	203

Data in Table XXVII show that those most skilled tend to be more politically oriented: 23% of the latter fall among those most skilled, while only 11% of the economic oriented fall in such a category. The reverse relation holds for the semi-skilled: 39% are economic oriented, while among the politically oriented we only find 31% of semi-skilled. A similar pattern is revealed by the unskilled: among the economic oriented 50% are unskilled, while only 46% of those politically oriented fall in this category.

Form and Dansereau mention that "workers may also be stratified according to their aspirations for higher jobs and the degree to which they accept their present status" (48). In our case, we have only data to determine the degree of mobility, but not its verticality. However, such observations can be suggestive with respect to the aspirations for upward occupational mobility. Earlier in this work, we found that those economic oriented affirmatively answered that they were thinking in a different occupation in a higher proportion than those politically oriented. In the same sense, the number of occupations they had before entering IKA is higher than in the case of the political ones. As shown in Table

15% of those economic oriented had more than five occupations, against only 5% of those politically oriented. Here again, the "Janus-faced" character of our economic oriented worker reveals itself: while he is the most stable, the most satisfied with all the aspects of the plant, the most involved with the local community, he is also the most mobile individual, that with higher aspirations for mobility.

CONCLUSIONS

At the end of our examination, a provisional characterization of the orientational types can be suggested.

The economic oriented workers seem to be those most conservative, those less active in the union, those who show a lower degree of ideological intensity, those most satisfied with their job, their work, their immediate environment such as the plant and the local neighborhood, and, hence, those most stable. But, at the same time, they appear as the most mobile, as the individuals with higher aspirations for change.

The politically oriented, on the other hand, are those most involved with union life, those who show the higher degree of ideological intensity, those less involved with the immediate environment, and those who have developed more ties with the broader community.

In this distinction, a controversial fact arises at the level of the social relations in plant and the neighborhood. The observed systematic and consistent tendency of those politically oriented to develop a bigger

number of friendships seems that should account not only for a higher involvement with the community, but also with the immediate environment. However, the circumstance that they tend to participate less in the latter could be explained at a more structural level: Payne, in his study of Labor and Politics in Peru, has pointed out that the Latin American workers is reflected in the political character of the strikes, by means of which the workers continually threaten the executive stability (49). Their typical political participation requires a wide involvement with the national political problems. This circumstance is most outstanding in Argentina after Peron's fall in September 1955, particularly because since then the CGT was continually looking for alliances with different political groups; the stability of all the governments which were in power after Peron depended on their relations with the CGT and, indirectly, with the whole Peronist Movement. As J. C. Torre has noted,

the overthrown of the Peronist regime, the weakness which then characterizes the organization of the social movement, the questioning of the "public status" of the working masses produces an extension of the representation that the union holds. The union becomes the organ of representation for the working masses not only as a productive category but also in their condition of consumers and citizens. Its action

will constantly transcend the professional vindications and the ambit of the civil society to which the union is institutionally ascribed, and it will claim a higher participation in the more general political decisions (emphasis in the original) (50).

He adds that it could be argued that the political features of the Argentinian union were a distinctive note under the Peronist regime. However, he observes that

under the Peronist regime, the State not only recognize and stimulates the political role of the union, but it defines the terms themselves within which such a role should be played. As an instrument of mobilization of the working masses for the objectives of the national-popular movement, the union undergoes a derived and not an organic politicalization. After 1955, however, the union will be the only subsisting organization of the Peronist social movement; it will tend, then, to resume a broader gammut of vindications than those which emerge from its institutional ends, and, by this way, its contractual activity will tend to be replaced by that of a pressure-group (51).

All these observations tend to show that the political life of the Argentinian workers is much beyond the limits of the union. That is, while the politically oriented participate more in the union and the national political life, it seems that these circumstances conspire against their wider involvement with the immediate environment.

While Form and Dansereau suggest that union orientation could be accounted for the community background

and skill level of the workers, it is only the latter factor which revealed here certain relevance. In accordance with our analysis, those politically oriented appeared to be the most skilled ones. As it was suggested, such fact could be understood as a result of the conflict between craft and mechanization, in the sense pointed out by A. Touraine. In his discussion, Touraine gives a picture of the most skilled worker as the individual whose professional autonomy is threatened by the organization, at the same time that the development of a class consciousness appears as

the appeal to a professional principle of vindication opposing to a social power considered as hostile, within the technical system to which the worker feels to belong and to participate" (52).

Class consciousness, adds Touraine, can only achieve a maximum development when a principle of affirmation of the rights of work coexists with the opposition to the social conditions of the organization (53). Of the seven industries studied by Touraine, this coexistence revealed itself more firmly established among the skilled and specialized workers of the metallurgic enterprises which are not based on mass production and the use of the assembly-line and they can maintain certain autonomy. Colabella,

in his review of Touraine's work, remarks that the skilled workers in the metallurgy of mass production

defend themselves in a more classist way against those pressures (of the assembly-line) The worker does not already rely on his craft but on the consciousness of an economic exploitation carried out in behalf of the modern system of production (54).

It is this freedom from the impositions of the assembly-line, or the fight against them, which seems to account for the political orientation of the most skilled workers. Even more, with respect to the French workers, Touraine observes that

the contradiction between capitalism and the general interest is fundamentally affirmed by one category, that which maintains a professional principle in the center of the big mechanized and rationalized enterprises (55).

Of course, it should be remembered that Touraine is referring here to a particular phase of development in the evolution of industrial work, where Argentina could tentatively be included.

In their conclusions, Form and Dansereau observe that

two assumptions underlie much research on local labor unions: a) that a greater degree of membership participation may attend union stability, and b) that union stability elicits greater membership participation in the plant, neighborhood, and community (56).

As a result of their study, they suggest that such assumptions "need to be refined to take into account the different meanings which labor unions have for their members" (57). In this sense, they add that their research revealed different union orientations, which were differentially related to the degree of integration within the union, the department, the neighborhood, and the community (58).

A cleavage was found to exist for some union orientational types between integration with union and plant, on the one hand, and neighborhood and community, on the other (59).

Finally, the authors conclude that

. . . three dominant life styles seemed to underlie both union orientations and broad patterns of integration. They are: a) a working-class life style in which the union and plant play a dominant role, b) an individualistic life style in which community associations are more vital, and c) an "isolated" life style in which the family and possibly the neighborhood are primary sources of social integration of the person (60).

If we refer the conclusions of our analysis to those of Form and Dansereau, some similarities and differences should be pointed out. On the one hand, our study also allows us to conclude that the central assumptions underlying union research have to be qualified on the basis of the differential orientation of the workers

toward union functions. But, on the other hand, the cleavage they found assumes here a different pattern: while the political orientation implied a high integration with the union and the wider community, the economic orientation was reflected in a higher integration with the plant and the local neighborhood. Given this situation, if following Form and Dansereau we distinguish dominant life styles underlying the types of orientation and the patterns of integration, our conclusions lead to a final differentiation. That is, we will only distinguish a working-class life style in which the union and the community play the dominant role, and an individualistic life style in which such a role is played by the plant and the local neighborhood. However, this differentiation is not conclusive. If a main characteristic of the Latin American working-class life style should be, as Touraine has pointed out, their active participation in the culture of the "popular barrio"--the local neighborhood--our distinction would lose heuristic value. At this level, both life styles appeared intermixed, in the sense that their connections with the "barrio" were one-sided: in the working-class life style the social relations with the neighborhood--the crystallization of friendships--were more vital,

while in the individualistic life style it was the mere participation in neighborhood organizations which seemed to be the decisive one. One possibly final speculation of the present analysis is that this apparently contradictory situation could imply a more extreme differentiation of the proposed dominant life styles: on the one hand, the individualistic character of those economic oriented could be reflected in the fact that, even when they have somewhat better structural possibilities for developing friendships, such a crystalization does not take place. On the other hand, even when those politically oriented have slightly less structural possibilities to involve themselves in neighborhood's friendships, they are--on the assumption of a stronger working-class solidarity--who tend to find more friends.

The limitations of the proposed orientational types, as the limitations of all typology, lead us to suggest the possibility of alternative approaches to account for the observed empirical relationships. On the other hand, if it is a typical pattern in sociological research to finally observe that "further research is necessary" to support the preceding conclusions, it is not our purpose to break such a well-established tradition. This

necessity reveals itself most imperatively in the present comparative approach, where the possibilities of differential communication with workers subjected to similar questions remain as an uncontrolled variable. Unfortunately, we cannot repeat here, as Samuel Becket in Endgame, "always the same questions, always the same answers."

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- (9) Ibid., p. 233.
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- (31) S. M. Lipset, et. al., Union Democracy, Anchor Books, Doubleday & Co. (Garden City, New York, 1962); p. 111.
- (32) Ibid., p. 112.
- (33) Form and Dansereau, op. cit., p. 441.
- (34) Touraine and Pecout, op. cit., p. 161.

- (35) He summarizes this evolution by describing it as the passage of a phase A, defined by the autonomy of the professional work, to a phase C, dominated by the integration of the means of production, passing through a phase B, which frequently symbolizes the work in the assembly-line, and where the professional work and the scientific-rational organization of work begin to coexist. Phase B, the most relevant for our analysis, is seen as "a contradictory union of elements which represent the opposing systems of work," and in this circumstance labor consciousness itself must be considered as contradictory. "Here labor consciousness confronts the most important event in the social history of classical industry; the confrontation of craft and mechanization, with the correlative changes in the direction of enterprises." A. Touraine, La Conscience Ouvriere, Editions du Seuil (Paris, 1966). After S. Colabella's review in Revista Latinoamericana de Sociologia, 3 (3) (Buenos Aires, 1967); pp. 511-513 (My own translation).
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- (39) Ibid., p. 80.
- (40) Ibid., p. 81.
- (41) Ibid., p. 83.
- (42) Ibid., p. 84.
- (43) Ibid., p. 85.
- (44) See in this sense the methodological note in the Appendix I of Union Democracy, particularly pp. 480-485.

- (45) Touraine notes that in certain proto-industrial societies predominates the popular consciousness, which fundamentally develops itself in the "popular barrio" more than in the enterprise. By this way, Touraine himself is questioning the privilege of the work situation, in the sense that the work experience overshadows all the other experiences of the worker, an idea that was generally accepted in his study. Colabella, while discussing Touraine's analysis of the opposition between class consciousness in the work situation and the workers' class representation of society, also observes this contradiction.
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