

THE MARKET PLACE  
AS A SOCIAL MECHANISM IN PEASANT SOCIETY

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Introduction

It has long been recognized that the marketing process is infinitely more far-reaching than the transfer of goods from producer to final consumer. This is no less true of peasant societies than it is of tribal societies or of our own in the industrial, mid-twentieth century, western world.

Peasants are described (Kroeber 1948:284) as "part-societies with part-cultures." Despite a common adherence to this concept in theory, anthropologists have for many years studied peasant communities as if each of them were an isolate. Only in recent years have we begun to face outward, to examine the little community as a functionally dependent part of a much larger whole. One method of examining the semi-autonomous nature of peasant society is to study the contact points between the different societal components. The market place is one of the most frequent of many such points of contact between peasantry and its opposing halves--between the little and great traditions, between the folk community and the greater society of which it forms a part. Moreover, this is so not only between peasantry and the urban elite but also between the peasant and other peasants, other ethnic groups, and the outside world. As a consequence, the market place would seem to provide a reflection of social realities, a reflection that might profitably be observed by the social anthropologist.

The following paper will consist of two parts: the first will be an exploration and refinement of existing ideas regarding the market place and, especially, its sociological implications. Some new ideas will hopefully be added to compile a body of current concepts regarding the market place as a social mechanism in peasant society. The second part will consist of an attempt to apply these concepts to the ethnographic context of the Balkans, particularly Yugoslavia and Albania. This will be based on that data which is available in the literature, on personal observation during a visit to Yugoslavia in 1959-60, and, in small part, on brief interviews of Yugoslavs now in this country. Because of the paucity of data available, this latter portion of the analysis will reveal certain large gaps in our knowledge. These are postulated as areas deserving of exploration in the field at a later date.

The Market Place as a Social Mechanism

Before going further it is necessary to distinguish between the market place and the market. Economists have long maintained, as has been pointed out by Bohannon (1963:241), that "the site of the market is irrelevant to the working of the principle." Thus, one should be held separate from the other in any analysis. According to the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences (Hardy 1933:131), "a market . . . is the area within which the forces of demand and supply converge to establish a single price. It may be viewed geographically as a physical extent of territory, or it may be viewed as a more or less organized group of individuals whose bids and offers disclose the

supply and demand situation and thereby establish the price." Examples are a town or city within which the owners of housing space must find tenants, or the worldwide markets for corn, cotton, and cancelled postage stamps. On the other hand, the market place has been described (Mintz 1959:20) as "the loci where concrete exchanges take place. They facilitate the sale and acquisition of goods and services not as easily obtainable, or not obtainable at all, within a smaller social circle or unit."

Structurally, two models can be set up to describe peasant market place systems. The first of these has been called the market town. This can be visualized as a central hub with radiating spokes connecting it with a number of surrounding points. These points represent market-less villages, scattered homesteads, or other rural communities depending on the prevailing settlement pattern. The hub represents a city, town, or larger village with a market place utilized by the surrounding population. Socio-cultural-economic ties established by this market are represented by the radiating lines.

The second model, that of the cyclical market, consists of a number of points all of which are connected to one another. Each point on this model stands for a village, city, or town with a market place; the inter-connecting lines represent the socio-cultural-economic ties established by participation in one another's market. The cyclic market has been described (Silverman 1959:31) as "a system of markets in which each of a number of separate, scattered communities holds a fixed, periodic market, such as a weekly market on a particular day of the week, with the market days of all nearby communities being staggered so as to conflict as little as possible. Any group of staggered periodic markets attended by buyers and sellers within a certain radius may be considered a market cycle." While I find this definition quite adequate, I must debate Silverman's implication (1959:31) that this represents "a particular type of market." It seems far more useful to visualize this as an ideal type in conjunction with the additional ideal type of the market town. It may be that perfect functioning examples of each of these may actually be found and described, but it seems far more likely that all systems of peasant markets contain elements of each. There are few if any market places which do not exchange at least occasional buyers and sellers with areas having their own market places; similarly, each market town of a cyclical system is surrounded by its own group of outlying local clients. The market cycles of any given region tend to overlap producing entire networks of related market towns. Thus, it would seem better to visualize each particular peasant market at any given moment in history as containing elements of one or the other of these perfect types. These are postulated as two models, not arranged in any sort of a continuum, but, rather, which can be examined in conjunction with one another to help explain a given market situation.

The same conclusions described here in theoretical terms seem to have been reached empirically by Alice Dewey in her examination of Javanese market places (1962:64):

It is said that all [Javanese] markets are organized into circuits of five [the Javanese employ a five-day market week], that the market day rotates around the ring, completing a circuit every five days. Actually this seldom occurs. In the first place, there are not always five large markets within easy traveling distance of each other. In the second

place, even where there is a group of markets which may technically be arranged in such a ring, they may differ in size so much that one or more heavily outweighs the others in volume of trade and attracts many more traders. Some of the biggest markets have two important days. In practice, therefore, the pattern is irregular.

Hence, the overall impression of most peasant market place systems is that of a network linking rural villages to their local town markets and the town markets to each other and the city markets.

In any analysis of a system of market places, or of market place systems in general, there is a given set of questions that the enquirer must ask: When and where is the market held? Who sells at this market? What does he sell? How is he and his produce transported to market? Who is it sold to? How much is it sold for? Such basic questions must be answered before any analysis of sociological implications can be attempted. In the comparison of several sets of answers, each from the context of a different peasant culture, certain patterned variations become apparent. These, owing to the sparsity of cross-cultural data, usually must be considered as mere indications of cultural uniformities and guidelines for future field work.

There are two basic alternatives as to when a market is to be held: either every day or periodically at a given interval. Even in most cases of the former, one day is set above others in importance and volume of trade. In some cases, a second day will come to have secondary importance, less important than the principal market day but more important than other daily markets of the week. In determining the interval between regularly held markets, the foremost consideration seems to be that the period must be long enough to be convenient, yet short enough not to allow spoilage of food purchases in cultures without refrigeration. Aztec markets were held every fifth day (Beals and Hoijer 1953:372); various West African markets are arranged in either four or five-day cycles (Bohannon 1963:244-245). European markets and markets in most societies heavily influenced by Europe are regulated by the seven-day week. This includes many peasant societies of the world; Mexicans, for example, did not cling to the five-day Aztec market but adjusted to the Spanish seven-day system. There are exceptions. In Java, an indigenous five-day market week operates alongside the official seven-day work week imposed by the Dutch (Dewey 1962:63).

The foremost consideration in the choice of the particular market day of a newly established market, would seem to be avoidance of conflict with pre-established markets nearby. Thus arise "cyclical markets." Benet (1957:197-198) says of Berber markets:

A distribution of markets must have been reached in each region by a method of trial and error. Rivalries were bound to arise if two neighboring markets were held on the same day. In Kabylia, when a tribe wanted to establish a new market it had to obtain the consent of the neighboring tribes and select a day which would not infringe their rights. Thus, decision by decision, always with the general interest in mind--the nearer and more frequent the markets, the better--the mesh came to be knit.

The existence of potential customers, however, is another consideration. Sometimes a secondary market day will develop when another market in the same cyclical system is so located that buyers and sellers pass through the first town, presenting a potential market, on an off day (Tax 1963:123). At least

one example is reported of a principal market day arising in a daily market on a day given to sale of stock, thus attracting greater numbers of potential buyers to the market place on that day (Dewey 1962:64-65).

In addition to the weekly pulsation of the market place, there are seasonal fluctuations. For the main part, these are due to the agricultural year which plays so large a part in so many aspects of peasant life. During harvest time, when produce is abundant, the market place flourishes; during the winter it may consist of little more than a few eggs, a skinny chicken, a few winter vegetables, a portion of someone's hoard of grain who is forced to sell. In addition, the market year is also affected by the ritual calendar. In some cases this influence may be great: markets may close for holy days, slow up for periods of fast, or flourish in preparation for holiday feasting. In other cases, particularly in localities of mixed religion, the influence is relatively slight (Dewey 1962:65-67). This may vary. Moslem traders in Java do not observe their Friday holy day for fear of losing business to non-Moslem traders who would remain in the market place (Dewey 1962:63). However, this writer observed that Moslem, Jewish and Christian shop owners in Moroccan bazaars each closed for their respective holy day, thus maintaining a full seven days of produce availability.

Taken as a group, the buyers and sellers to be found in a market place represent a cross section of the population. Prominent among the sellers are likely to be wives of local peasants who carry to market a handful of produce in order to obtain ready cash for some minor but immediate need. But their husbands, too, are likely to be present as well as peasants, male and female, from other villages both near and distant. Many will be selling produce of their own labors; others may offer goods obtained from fellow peasants by trade or purchase. Professional middlemen may sell a wide variety of goods, from cooked food to agricultural produce and "folk art." These intermediaries may be citizens of either a village or the market town itself. Their function in the economy may be of several sorts: they may bulk produce, transport it, store it, process it, and break bulk for retailing (Mintz 1959:23). Craftsmen may offer their own handicrafts, such as pottery, baskets, or sandals. Among the peasants, traders, and craftsmen may be representatives of adjacent ethnic groups--nomadic herders, tribal peoples, or gipsies--and these may offer their own specialties. Manufactured and imported articles are often sold by professional traders of a culturally nonindigenous group: the Chinese and Indians in Malaya, the Ladinos in Guatemala, the Lebanese and Syrians in West Africa (Dewey 1962:11).

A division of labors in the market place as determined by sex is common. In Haiti and Jamaica, as in West Africa, almost all middlemen are women (Mintz 1959:23). In Guatemala, only women sell in the local market; men will not enter the market place even to deliver merchandise to their wives and daughters but leave it at the market gate instead. On the other hand, other, more distant markets in Guatemala are attended by either sex but predominantly by men (Tax 1963:123, 125). Similarly, in Malaya local trade is in the hands of women while distant trade and small scale wholesaling is commonly done by men (Dewey 1962:12). My own experience in Morocco indicates women also dominate local Berber markets there. Correlations have also been indicated with regards to market tradesmen and social status. In Guatemala, it is the wives of rich peasants who are most often seen in the local market place (Tax 1963:

125). Also, poorer families tend to sell in more distant markets. Wealthier men do not sell far from home "both because they have much to do at home and because they do not need to travel for a living" (Tax 1963:126).

Buyers in the market place are at least as heterogeneous a group as the sellers; most of these salesmen will turn purchaser in this or another market once they have sold their wares. Mintz (1959:21) estimates that over one-half of the produce in peasant market places is consumed by members of the same class as the producers. In many cases individuals buy back the same items sold earlier, with the market serving a storage and credit function in these instances (Mintz 1959:22). Horizontal exchange is therefore important.

But the market place also serves the urbanites of the town or city in which it is situated. Representatives of the middle classes and servants of the upper are among the buyers and these are indicative of an upward movement of goods, especially foodstuffs, but also utilitarian objects and "folk art." This counterbalances the downward vertical movement of imported and manufactured goods purchased by the peasant from shops or market place middlemen.

The totality of goods exchanged in the market place between these various social and ethnic groups is most often described as a complete inventory of all the moveable, cultural artifacts of that society. Food, and particularly agricultural produce, is virtually always of primary importance, but a wide variety of other merchandise also passes through. In most cases, market places are divided into various segments on the basis of type of merchandise, each segment being devoted to the sale of a different specialty.

This variety of goods is transported to the market place by as wide a variety of conveyance: on the back of man or beast, by cart or by boat, in recent times by train, bus or automobile. Although there are few if any cross-cultural uniformities in regard to type of transportation employed, the type has great import with regard to the particular example. The amount of produce that can be brought to market is limited by the transportation facilities at one's disposal. Changing vehicle types can have drastic effect on a system of market places, particularly in regard to established cycles of market days. Greater ease, and therefore greater range, of transportation may bring other villages and other market towns into the cycle.

Goods in peasant market places are obtained almost wholly through the use of money. Although trade can occur without a standard of value or a fixed medium of exchange, it is expedited by the use of some standard unit. In most peasant societies, this consists of a national currency. The exceptional use of barter, in parts of Guatemala and the Andean highlands for example, is uncommon and is rapidly diminishing (Mintz 1959:21). Dewey (1962:12) gives credit for this fact to the operation of forces within the peasant economic system itself. "Obviously even in an economy of this simple sort barter is unwieldy and ill-suited to a system of exchange where considerable amounts of goods pass over long distances between people who may be complete strangers. The economics dealt with here are too complex to depend on barter as a means of exchange."

The amount of money obtained in trade for any given portion of goods may vary greatly; in other words, haggling over prices is widespread. By

this means, peasant markets tend to be self-regulating. They are, in economic terms, price-making rather than set-price markets. This bargaining, however, does not extend to every transaction. Dewey (1962:73-74) found bargaining to be the usual and accepted method of setting prices in Java. But, in general,

. . . the greater the fluctuation in quality and supply, the wider the range within which bids will be made by both buyer and seller, since market conditions are harder to judge and the testing must allow for this. When the product is fairly standard and the supply constant, the range of bidding is narrower, the extreme example of this being factory-made goods, most of which are supplied at a constant rate and fixed price to the traders who in turn sell them for a uniform settled price.

Such a general principle must operate in most peasant markets. Tax (1963:137) concurs that bargaining in Guatemala is limited to commodities which vary in quality and size and therefore have no fixed value. He adds that there are some things in the market place which are never bargained for and his list of these (salt, sugar, lime, matches, cigarettes, etc.) fits the picture drawn by Dewey. Polanyi (1957:255) has maintained that bargaining is necessary if a market exchange is to have an integrative effect. "In order for exchange to be integrative the behavior of the partners must be oriented on producing a price that is as favorable to each partner as he can make it." The fact, then, that peasant markets tend to be price-making markets is a forewarning of the role the market place plays as an integrative device.

It is interesting to speculate that there may also be some variance of haggling or the degree of haggling between different social categories. It has been suggested (Silverman 1959:33) that within each of the separate units of a cycle of markets, the economy is governed by what Polanyi (1957) has described as "redistribution" and "reciprocity" rather than market exchange. If this is so, and I believe it is, what happens when people of the same village encounter each other in the market place as buyer and seller? Do they refuse to sell to one another? Do they haggle in the same impersonal and aggressive manner as if they did not know one another? Or do they both proffer prices advantageous to the other as a means of reinforcing the pre-existing bond? Unfortunately, this situation seems not to be reported in the literature, although it would seem important in regard to sociological implications.

According to Mintz (1959:24), there is little if any evidence of deliberate price control on the part of sellers in peasant markets. Nor is there evidence of government price fixing for those items sold in local market places. Hence, prices seem governed almost wholly by the relationship of supply and demand and are fixed by the process of bargaining. In fact, in Guatemala, at least, the prices and price fluctuations in stores are fixed according to those in the market place (Tax 1963:137).

Market places were defined earlier as "the loci where concrete exchanges take place." The foregoing, more or less descriptive, discussion of peasant market places has concentrated somewhat on this aspect. But markets have several important functions other than the obvious one of transferring goods from producers to final consumers, and the market place is the locus for these as well. Market places provide regular meetings of relatively large numbers of people. They are a cross section of the population. Thus,

they can be, and have been, utilized for almost every conceivable purpose that requires a large number of people brought together in a controlled situation.

Bohannon (1963:240-244) has introduced the concept of "peripheral markets." In contrast to societies like our own in which the market principle dominates the economy, these are found in societies which have a subsistence economy, i.e. an economy in which "the factors of production are not transacted by the market mechanism." Consumption of one's own produce, and the principles of reciprocity and/or redistribution are most important. However, such a society may also maintain a market and a market place peripheral to these primary methods of obtaining the means of subsistence. And, according to Bohannon (1963:243-244), it is particularly in such peripheral market places that the noneconomic functions of the market place are to be found.

Possibly the most important, and certainly the most often mentioned, of these noneconomic functions is communication. The assemblage there of such relatively large groupings of the population make the market place one of the most important nodes in the communication network of a peasant society. The dissemination of information may be either formal or informal; official announcements may be made and notices posted or gossip and news may merely pass from mouth to mouth. The presence of buyers and sellers from other towns and villages insures that the news will be taken there. Professional traders traveling constantly from market to market in a circuit of market towns bring the latest information to each of the market places.

Communication is not limited to words; the spread of ideas may also be made possible through this commercial intercourse. It is likely to be in the market place that the peasant most often encounters the representatives of the great tradition and different ethnic groups. Certain artifacts may not be imitated because peasants rely on the market as a source, but other features, such as dress or custom, are spontaneously noted and may be copied. It is in such a manner that traits filter down and culture comes to diffuse.

One important aspect of communication noted by Bohannon (1963:242) in West African market places, is that it is here that a woman meets and visits with kinsmen from her own natal village. This has gone unrecorded among peasants, but in those societies where wives are drawn from other villages, the market place probably provides an important linkage in this manner.

As might be easily inferred from the foregoing paragraphs, another important noneconomic function of the market place is entertainment. These pleasures may be informally derived. "The market is a place to meet people, have a snack at one of the food stands, and sit and watch life go by while gossiping about the latest news" (Dewey 1962:69). Or the entertainment may be more formal. The market place provides a ready-gathered audience for the wandering minstrel in Morocco, troupes of dancers in Java, or a gipsy and his trained bear in the Balkans. Little wonder that part of the reason for more wives of rich peasants than poor in Guatemalan market places is that it is these who can afford the social and pleasurable aspects of the market (Tax 1963:125).

The market place may also be associated with religious activities. Sometimes, as in Morocco (Benet 1957:200) or medieval England, the market may



actually be under the control of religious authorities. Usually, however, the relationship is less direct. The market place assemblage may be utilized for announcements of a religious nature, a special market may be associated with some religious shrine or holiday, or the annual fluctuation of the market place, either in intensity or specialties offered, may be tied to the religious calendar. One must be careful, however, not to overemphasize such points. The Javanese example has already been cited in which economic competition overrides the religious obligation to observe the Moslem holy day.

The market is also of political relevance. This is not confined merely to using the market place for official pronouncements or as a center for courts or other legal activities. Market places are usually under the actual control of political authorities. Bohannon (1963:242) suggests that there are two obvious reasons for this: 1) "It can be politically advantageous to control the market place itself, and hence to some degree the people in it," and 2) "it can be politically advantageous to control, in whatever degree, the produce that goes through the market place." Not to be forgotten is the valuable, and often exploited by-product--taxation. In Haiti, for example, the tradeswoman is taxed "for tethering her beast; for butchering a pig, sheep, goat or cow; for the stand on which pork is displayed for sale; for the grass roof beneath which wares are spread; and for the assessed values of the wares themselves; not to mention the license fees which are paid to permit dealing in certain products" (Mintz 1959:27). Furthermore, she is prohibited by law to sell outside the market place limits and resellers who buy from her are taxed again on their purchases.

In return for this substantial source of income and this measure of political control, authorities provide a market place and the assurance that traders and customers can conduct their business there in safety. Market peace is a prerequisite if the economic and the other functions of the market place are to be performed. Hence, in the minds of many scholars, the development of markets has erroneously come to be associated with centralized governments and the physical ability to enforce this peace. Bohannon (1963:243), for example, states that:

. . . successful trade demands at least a minimal degree of political stability. The man who is responsible for the market peace thus must have a police force of some description at his disposal, and he must control sufficient power actually to maintain the peace.

But markets have also been described under "conditions of near-anarchy" (Benet 1957). In such a society, successful trade maintains the "minimal degree of political stability." Francisco Benet describes such a situation in the Berber highlands and, in so doing, introduces the new concept of the "explosive market."

The Berbers occupying the lowlands of northwest Africa recognize the authority of a central government. Consequently, their economy is governed largely by the principle of redistribution in the form of a taxation system comprising all classes of the population. This tax-levying and storage economy maintains the governing civil service and army. The Berbers of the Atlas, however, have been reluctant to accept the patterns of the lowlands; they exist politically "as a loose aggregate of social segments without reference to a common center" (Benet 1957:190). The basic socio-political unit is the taqbilt consisting of a few hundred families in a dozen or less villages all



within a day's walk of one another; these are very loosely grouped into a number of tribes which share little more than a name, a definite territory, and a few common traditions. Rule is by a graded series of representative assemblies--the village, the taqbilt, the tribe. The inhabitants within each village or taqbilt are tightly bound to one another through reciprocal exchanges and communal feelings of interdependency. Between different taqbilt or groups of taqbilt clashes and resultant blood feuds are the rule. From the classical viewpoint, the market place could not exist under such conditions; the pattern of decentralization allows no one force with sufficient power to maintain market peace. Yet, markets are needed to sustain the livelihood of these highland Berber peasants; from them they obtain the fresh meats and produce and the imported foodstuffs necessary for their physical existence. And there are other necessities for the continued existence of a society; if we look closely, we see that the Berber market place provides these as well. The market place transactions play an integrative role that transcends the sphere of economics alone. This has great significance in a society which lacks redistributive forms of integration because it is without political centralization and which lacks out-group reciprocity because of the permanent political tensions that exist.

Markets are said to be "a dominant theme of Berber life" and to secure the peace in these markets, one of the foremost goals of highland polity (Benet 1957:198). Markets, arranged in overlapping cycles, are held on flat areas physically removed from the fortified villages. The market site is regarded as neutral ground and tribesmen of hostile groups may meet there even if engaged in a fierce and merciless intertribal war during the other days of the week. Attendance at and travel to market places is permitted by ánaia, safe conduct granted by the tribe over whose land the market goer must pass. In the market itself, peace must rely on the balance of forces between the hostile segments. The resulting tension produces the "explosive market." In such an area of tightly knit, highly independent social groups and traditional feuding, the market peace may be broken at any time; "markets are powder kegs which may go off at the slightest shock" (Benet 1957-203). A simple incident between two individuals may erupt into a brawl costing several hundred lives, intertribal war, and perpetuated blood-feuds; such incidents are said not to be uncommon. The sole mechanism of control averting such catastrophes is the tenseness of the market crowd itself. The potential perpetrator of a deed breaking the market peace may be dead beneath a pile of stones cast by fellow marketers before he can commit his act. Only such brutal lynch law can insure the neutrality of the highland Berber market place.

Articulation between the independent segments of Berber society is thus obtained through the market system. Any business relationship depends on certain social factors; it implies a certain equality of position and power on the part of the transactors. Thus, since it is the market place which relates the segments, this relationship is one of great personal freedom. Hence, the functioning "anarchy" that characterizes Berber society--the system of freely relating societal segments, the combination of in-group reciprocity and individualism--would seem to spring from the market system of the Atlas.

These foregoing descriptions and discussions of peasant market places and their noneconomic functions can only serve to provide a foundation upon

which we can develop certain ideas regarding the sociological implications of the market place. It is this--the role in social organization--which certainly must be regarded as the most important of the noneconomic functions of the market place in peasant society.

In describing peasantry as a "part-society with a part-culture," we are drawing attention to its semiautonomy. As markets are primarily mechanisms to facilitate the exchange of goods, their very presence is a manifestation of this nonself-sufficiency. Thus the market place is not only a point of contact between peasants and their opposing part of society, but peasantry is actually defined through this relationship to the greater society.

L. A. Fallers (1961) has isolated three separate aspects of the semi-detached quality of peasant society: the economic, the political, and the cultural. It can be readily demonstrated that the market place provides a principal means of articulation between peasantry and the urban elite on each of these fronts. Semiself-sufficiency is obviously expressed in economic terms at the market place. This is the primary *raison d'etre* for any market place, be it in New York, West Africa or peasant Mexico. The peasant market is not wholly a peripheral market. By definition, the peasant community is not completely economically isolatable; it is not completely capable of self-sufficiency. The vertical movement--upward of produce and "folk art," downward of imports and manufactured goods--binds the two halves of the society irrevocably together. This economic exchange makes each demi-society dependent upon the other.

Cultural articulation between the peasantry and the urban elite has been mentioned earlier. It is most often on market days in his market town that the peasant may encounter the most immediate representatives of the great tradition: the market officials, other petty administrators and police, professional tradesmen, urban customers, and so on. It is from these individuals that culture traits are observed. The culture of the peasant community is a folk version of a "great tradition"; it is neither the same nor independent but, rather, a reintegration of elements learned from the urban elite with other elements unique to the village. It is frequently the market place that provides the opportunity to observe the carriers of this great tradition. Any institution which encourages the mingling of people with variant habits provides an opportunity for a mutual appraisal of their differences.

In political terms, the relationship expressed between the two societal components is more one-sided. Situations such as that shown to exist in the Berber highlands are not common. Some form of centralized control in the hands of the urban elite governs the actions of most contemporary peasants. And it is largely through power wielded over the economic activities of the peasant that he is manipulated. The tax collector in the market place is one expression of this power. Although we have seen that governments cannot usually set prices in peasant markets, taxes and market place regulations may provide the ruling class with a principal means of control. By insistence that certain products can be sold only in stores or with special licenses, the growth of new groups of economic intermediaries can be prohibited (Mintz 1959:22). Thus such limitations may inhibit the growth of a middle class and serve to keep peasants peasants.

Through control of licenses and permits, through decisions as to the number of intermediaries, and by other means, the state channels the movement of certain products outside the internal marketing system to serve its own ends and those of the classes which control it (Mintz 1959:25). It is clear, then, that peasantry cannot be imagined in isolation from the greater society and that it is in the market place that much of this interdependence--economic, cultural, and political--takes place. It can be truly said that peasants exist only "in relationship to market towns" (Kroeber 1948:284).

Peasant polity, however, consists of two aspects; the relationship to the urban elite is only a part of the entire picture. On one hand there are the vertical ties that relate the peasant to the greater society as described above; on the other hand there are the horizontal ties binding him to others like himself. These, too, can be expressed in the market place. Within the peasant household, neighborhood, or village, personal interaction is great and the local community is tightly bound together by a network of dyadic relationships. Reciprocal exchange of services and goods closely integrates the unit. Between these local communities the relationship more often finds expression in the market place. Here integration is achieved by market exchange rather than reciprocity. A cycle of market towns sharing market places is tied into an entity independent of formal political or administrative units. Through market exchange the peasants of each local unit are related to peasants of the others. Since market town cycles tend to overlap, peasants over a wide area are brought into relationship with one another. Created is a society, consisting of small, closely integrated units loosely related to one another, of which the Berber example above is an extreme case.

It has been shown (Silverman 1959:34-35) that this economic relationship serves also to structure the value system of peasants in regions where cyclical market systems are in evidence. In such societies the values of hard work, commercial gain, and the accumulation of wealth are prevalent. There tends to develop a tolerance of the differentness of other peoples and an acceptance of extended contact with them without personal involvement. There is a distinct differentiation of attitudes toward the members of one's own local community and toward those outside it. Hostility toward these outsiders can be expressed in the aggressive haggling of the price making market. The individual is seen as a free agent, not unbound by in-group obligations but with the right and capacity of free choice inasmuch as it does not conflict with these obligations.

It is in the market place, too, that the peasant may encounter the world beyond his own greater society--a posted newspaper in the coffeehouse to which he retires after his lot is sold, a group of nomads, an occasional tourist. And, just as he is related to a peasant from a distant village, economic integration and mutual interdependency will relate him to the nomad; just as he has learned to accept the differences of that peasant, so is he likely to tolerate the idiosyncrasies of the tourist.

Something must be said here of the role of professional tradesmen in the peasant market system. Whether the movement of goods is vertical or horizontal, these middlemen occupy a position between the producer and the final consumer. Although not all peasant produce at the market place moves through

their hands, the bulk of it does in many cases. They therefore play a major role in the articulation of the peasantry with both the urban elite and other peasants. According to Mintz (1959:27), these middlemen do not form a homogeneous group economically, socially, or politically. He describes three particular types of resellers: the city retailers who reside in cities, buy produce wholesale, and retail to all classes through permanent market place shops; the middlemen who reside in cities, buying produce wholesale in the countryside to sell in the city or vice versa or both but on a much smaller scale than the city retailers; and the middlemen who live in the village but carry on a similar operation. These latter two groups may have a folk culture themselves; their economic operations, however, oppose them against the peasantry. It is therefore these latter types of middlemen who are the more significant as a means of social articulation between the peasantry to whom they are culturally akin and the urban bourgeoisie with whom they are aligned in economic interests.

Dewey's findings in Java suggest an explanation for the heterogeneity of the middleman category:

Members of this occupational category never enter into joint activity as a group. . . . Even when there are close ties of kinship, neighborhood, and occupational status there is little group collaboration, for traders usually feel it to be to their advantage to operate independently; and thus the structure of the economy discourages group activity (Dewey 1962: 82).

There would seem to be present among professional traders, then, an intensification of the concept of man as a free and independent agent that was found present among peasant participants in the market place.

Mintz (1959:23) has pointed out that the specialization of women as petty middlemen in some peasant societies is significant. This would seem to be one way in which to resolve the contradiction between the productive and distributive aspects of the peasant economy. The productive aspect of peasant economy is guided by "conservatism, nonexpansiveness, traditional technique, and less firmly rooted market orientation." In contrast, the peasant market system seems to be more open to change and more expansive. A division of labor of these two factors of the economy between the two sexes serves to separate these contradictory orientations.

This data suggests that the market place plays a special role with regard to social mobility. Traders would seem to represent a group of marginal men arranged in a continuum between peasantry and the urban elite. They are attracted to marketing step by step in an attempt to gain wealth and the urban life they envisage as prestigious. It has been shown that this refers only to isolated individuals within a predominantly tradition-oriented peasant population. Once again, Java provides us with an example that may well prove typical (Dewey 1962:39-40). Here, as in many other peasant societies, both the elite and traditional villager look down upon the professional trader; but to villagers oriented toward modern ways, the trader provides a model of sophistication. In order to emulate his way of life that goes with urban living, they may become village wholesalers. Eventually they may move to town and are absorbed into the poorer trader class themselves.

Those in whom the set of values generated by the market place are weakest, would seem the least drawn to marketing as a full time way of life. Those individuals who are less oriented toward the communal unit bound by reciprocal relationships than they are toward loose bonds between free agents, are more attracted to the life of the entrepreneur. This is borne out by the fact that professional middlemen in Java and elsewhere do not consider themselves as constituting a special group and do not act as such.

There would seem to be some contradiction here; both elite and peasants have traditionally regarded the trader with distaste, yet here are increasingly more individuals who enter trading of their own accord. Where do these entrepreneurs come from and what causes them to change their attitude toward business? Some have been shown to be aliens--immigrants who tend to monopolize certain aspects of market place trade. But professional tradesmen develop out of the indigenous population as well. Hagen (1960) suggests an explanation. Traditionally, peasants have worked with their hands at manual labor; the elite, holding their position through no personal achievement, justify this position by a sense of identity demanding that they dislike such work. This view filters down and is also accepted by the peasantry. The frustration suffered by some discontents with traditional society, however, causes them to reject that society and the values of its leaders. Feeling a need to prove themselves in some new field, they turn to the market place and economic enterprises. Hence, the market place can be a mechanism not only of social mobility but also of culture change. "It is only when some people get to feel that business and industry present a dignified way of life is a country going to make economic progress" (Hagen 1960:185).

Cultural dynamics expresses itself in other ways in the market place as well, especially in regard to the types of cultural change which are now taking place. One might ask, for example, what is the effect of transportation changes on cyclical market systems. The improvement of transportation facilities can seriously affect systems of markets carefully arranged so as to be within a day's journey of one another by primitive means of transportation. What does this mean? Are new expanded cycles of markets formed or does the system break down completely? Data is unfortunately unavailable, but there are indications that the latter is the case. Easier transportation in Guatemala has resulted in fewer people from each village going to market. Since more people from a greater area are able to attend, prices are lower and there is less incentive (Tax 1963:127). Other changes in transportation systems can cause similar effects. In Java, increased bus and train fares made it no longer profitable to travel the market circuit and now most tradesmen and peasants remain in their home markets (Dewey 1962:64). One might reflect on the reaction of social organization and value system in societies where there has been shown to exist a real relationship between them and the existence of the cyclical market.

Through the foregoing examination of peasant market places, there have been strong indications of uniformities and correlations which extend across a variety of peasant societies each with greatly different cultural content. The test of such concepts is to apply them to some new context.

### The Market Place in the Balkans

In Europe, as among peasants elsewhere, the market place long held a position of great importance with regard to both peasant economics and social organization. Within the last century, however, this importance has declined in both respects. Today, although market places survive in some form in every European nation, in most cases they have lost their earlier significance. Unfortunately, the greater part of these changes took place before the attention of social anthropologists was drawn to European peasant societies. There have been numerous studies of European economics and even of peasant markets but few of the market place itself. Today, in most areas, it is too late. Only in the Balkans and perhaps in a few other peripheral areas of southern and eastern Europe has the market place maintained any semblance of its earlier import.

But let us turn to a "typical" market place as it might be seen today in southern Yugoslavia: the rows of peasant women lining the streets often spinning or knitting as they sit on the cobblestones behind baskets of eggs, cheese, a few items of produce, or a chicken or two; men, still wearing folk costume, standing near great wicker baskets of peppers or huge piles of cabbages or melons; a small group of Viach women, distinctive by their own costume, who offer bundles of wool ready for spinning; a gipsy with a small stack of wooden spoons or a basket of berries picked from nearby fields. The scene has often been described by travelers to Yugoslavia. (One should refer to Lodge 1941:152-155 for a rather typical view of the market place in this fashion.) But how does this picturesque scene fit into the body of theory elaborated before?

The market place plays a large role in the economic life of the Yugoslav peasant. Every city and town in the country has a market at which the peasants sell produce, and a large city like Belgrade has many such markets in different sections of town. In 1930, for example, only 20 percent of the milk consumed in Belgrade was bought from stores, the remainder being brought directly from the village by peasant producers or middlemen (Tomasevich 1955: 605). Even now, the roads leading to Zagreb are clogged each morning with village cyclists bringing milk into the city (Halpern 1963:172). In the interwar period, marketing cooperatives were established in an attempt to supplant the bulk of market place trade. They were, however, largely unsuccessful. They primarily helped the well-to-do peasant who could afford to join; they achieved a measure of popularity only in the north of Yugoslavia, primarily in Slovenia and among the German minority in Vojvodina; and they never became of basic importance either for the marketing of agricultural products or for their price formation (Tomasevich 1955:615-616). Even today, "a relatively minor proportion of the peasants' produce is sold to the local cooperative or directly to state agencies" (Halpern 1958:86). The central outlet, and for many peasant families the only outlet, is still the pijaca or pazar, the market place.

The Yugoslav market places, according to that information available, would seem to conform in most respects to the patterns shown by peasant markets elsewhere. Each market town is surrounded by a number of villages which it services. The Serbian town of Arandjelovac, for example, is described as functioning primarily as a "market town for the twenty-odd villages in the

surrounding region" (Halpern 1958:8). In most towns the market is held weekly. In the larger cities the market is held daily but with one day of the week more emphasized than the others. Some cities and towns have principal market days twice a week. Skopje, for instance, has daily markets with emphasized market days each Tuesday and Saturday. The days upon which markets are held seem quite stable; a list of market days noted by Lodge (1941:299) just after World War I compared with a list of my own made in 1959 showed seventeen correspondences of which only two market days had been changed. These staggered market days indicate the presence, although it has not been specifically reported, of cyclical systems of markets. This would imply that the socio-cultural correlations of such systems would also be present, but this, too, remains to be investigated. This poses a rather interesting question inasmuch as many of the complex of values formulated for the Yugoslav peasant--an intolerance of the differentness of other peoples (Halpern 1959:284-289), the almost complete subservience in the past of personal good for that of the zadruga--do not correspond to those formulated for other groups involved in cyclical markets.

In Yugoslavia, as elsewhere, virtually the entire material culture of a people is found reflected in the market place. Agricultural produce, meat, and dairy products are most in evidence; in the market places of the more industrialized northern portion, there may be little else. In the south, however, there is still great variety: clothing, both folk costume and castoff manufactured items; raw wool ready for spinning; pottery, baskets, and other household artifacts; wooden plows and lesser tools; beads and cheap costume jewelry; musical instruments; and an unending variety of the other implements of peasant life in Yugoslavia. Since there is in Yugoslavia, as in the rest of Europe, a distinct differentiation in annual climatic conditions, there is a very pronounced seasonal fluctuation of agricultural produce offered in the market place. This is probably much more pronounced than in non-European peasant areas, many of which are located in more temperate climatic zones with less seasonal diversity.

Purchase in the Yugoslav market place is exclusively by use of money. The institution of haggling over prices of such commodities as agricultural products, animals, and crafts is well established. Since preserving of agricultural products is not usually practiced, there is a great range of the bargained price in accordance with the season of the year and the consequent product availability. (For a table of comparative prices of sample commodities throughout the year, see Halpern 1958:87.) In each of these respects, Yugoslavia conforms to patterns seen elsewhere. In spite of competitive prices at state stores and state operated stalls in the market place, business for the peasant tradesman continues to thrive. Urban housewives in Yugoslavia apparently prefer "to pay a few dinars more at a peasant's stall for the privilege of pinching tomatoes and hefting eggs" (Halpern 1963:173).

As in other peasant areas, goods, sellers, and buyers are transported to market by a variety of conveyances. As elsewhere, there have recently been rapid advances in this respect. The bicycle is rapidly gaining in popularity in northern Yugoslav villages; the morning trains into Belgrade are crowded with peasants en route to market; in Slovenia, a few villagers have even purchased automobiles. In the south, however,--Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia, the Kosmet--it is still more common to see a man and his pack animal



or a woman with a market basket along a mountain trail. Not all such changes have been entirely due to technical advancement; some are an expression of political power and a desire on the part of the present government to discourage private enterprise. In 1961, laws were passed prohibiting peasant wagons from entering Belgrade. Even earlier produce offered by any one seller in the market place was limited to what he could carry on his back (Halpern 1963:173). Thus, the most efficient means left available to a peasant salesman in the Belgrade environs is the train.

Those present in the market place include representatives of every social and ethnic group of Yugoslavia. Predominantly, there are peasants. Halpern (1958:86) notes that "almost every village household has one and sometimes two members going to market each week." There is, according to Halpern (1963:173), no sex specialization in the market place except inasmuch as it is easier for men to carry bulkier items to the more distant markets. In Albania, by contrast, a woman was prohibited by law and custom from attending the market place, although she might send a pair of knitted socks or such with a male relative and so participate in this minor fashion (Hasluck 1954:42). Moreover, the Albanian markets were usually attended by not just any man but by only the master of a communal household or a special "bazaar-man," usually the heir apparent, whom he had appointed (Hasluck 1954:37). Neither the Yugoslav nor the Albanian pattern conform to that reported in most other peasant societies.

There is ethnic specialization in Balkan market places. This is most often a result of differences in ecological adjustment: Vlach may sell wool or knitted goods; gypsies usually offer either the fruits of the forest (nuts, berries, mushrooms) or crudely made utilitarian objects for which the raw materials are available without cost (wooden spoons, baskets, distaffs). Although there is not present in Yugoslavia the trader specialists from China, India, the Near East, etc., as found among many other peasant groups, there are some indications that their role in dispensing imported and manufactured goods has been taken by ethnic or regional groups within Yugoslavia, perhaps Hercegovinans (Lodge 1941:153) or settled Vlach (Vukanovic 1962:27-29).

Professional middlemen have long played an important part in the Yugoslav market place. During the period between the wars there existed a whole series of tradesmen between the peasants as producers and as consumers and between peasants and other people who produced commodities for the peasants or consumed agricultural products (Tomasevich 1955:605). The general types of Yugoslav middlemen, as given by Tomasevich (1955:605-606), agree with the three categories set forth by Mintz. Country storekeepers operated as village-located wholesalers. The majority of peasants were at the mercy of the traders since they were not in a financial position either to hold their products or to bargain (Tomasevich 1955:606). The consequence was a great disparity between prices paid to peasants and prices paid by peasants. These ranged from increases of 7 or 15 to more than 150 percent (Tomasevich 1955:610). Such practices have been eliminated by the postwar government but small scale peasant middlemen still function to some degree. These, too, have been severely limited; there is, for example, the restriction that a man may retail in Belgrade no more than he can carry on his own back.

Although Yugoslav peasants have not yet become involved in a full-blown market economy, the market there is in no sense a "peripheral market." Since as early as the First Revolt in 1804, the peasantry has participated to some degree in a cash economy. At first they needed only salt and tobacco to supplement their own production. They later came to rely also on kerosene, sugar, matches, cigarettes, soda for making soap, etc. (Halpern 1958:81). All of these items had to be purchased and the most common means to raise funds was to take extra produce to the market place. The amount of production that was sold on the market was determined predominantly by the degree of need of the peasant for cash to purchase items such as those above as well as to pay taxes, interests and debts, doctor's and lawyer's bills, and perhaps to purchase a bit more land (Tomasevich 1955:603).

In recent years Yugoslav peasants have been drawn increasingly into a market economy. There has been a distinct trend toward agricultural specialization with the market place in mind. New homes in villages near Belgrade are said to be built with "salad," referring to profits from marketing lettuce and other vegetables in Belgrade's open markets (Halpern 1963:172). At the same time there has been another trend for one member of each family to become a regularly employed wage earner while still maintaining the family peasant farm. This was made necessary by the postwar limitations on ownership of land together with low market prices for agricultural products relative to prices for goods which must be purchased. Since peasants are not able to market enough to purchase necessities, an outside source of income must be sought. The communist government has done nothing to retard such a trend.

But if the Yugoslav market is not completely a peripheral one, this is not to say that the noneconomic functions of the market place are unimportant. Communication, socialization and entertainment, polity, religion, etc. --all the roles displayed by market places elsewhere are also in evidence in Yugoslavia. For example, the market place traditionally provides an opportunity for young people of neighboring villages to meet and mate (Halpern 1958:184); later, it provides these same girls with an opportunity to maintain contacts with their natal village friends and relatives. Market days serve to maintain contacts between villages and between village and town. "On his weekly market trip almost every villager passes by the center and frequently stops in at the kafana for a glass of plum brandy or pauses to exchange pleasantries with the priest or the men at the village offices" (Halpern 1958:39). In postwar years the government has capitalized on the traditional use of the market place as a node in the communications network by installing market place loudspeakers over which are broadcast communist slogans, announcements and propaganda.

It is, however, the relation of the market place to social organization that most interests us here. In Yugoslavia, as elsewhere, the market place serves to relate the peasant to both the urban elite and to villagers outside his own village. This is most graphically portrayed in the market towns of southern areas where folk costume is still the predominant dress. In the market place the members of each nearby village or group of villages is readily identifiable by a distinct costume. Gypsies in attendance are marked by another costume and Vlach by still another. All these are in contrast to the urbanite's modern or, in the case of many older women, Turkish

style clothing. These conspicuous labels are both indicative of social categories in the peasant ideology and correspond to market place behavior directed toward the wearers. In Yugoslavia there is evidence, unrecorded elsewhere, regarding market place exchange between fellow villagers. This is, according to Halpern (1958:286), a preferred exchange. The most important question in the bargaining process is said to be, "which village are you from?" In most cases, this probably remains unspoken but with the same implications present and with the same result of reenforcing existing intervillage bonds.

With the present growth of an industrial society in Yugoslavia and the consequent decline of the market place in sociological importance, there are indications that it is being replaced in certain aspects by another form of societal integration. As the city and town have come to have more importance to the peasant, dyadic relationships have been established between individual peasants and urbanites. These are established and maintained largely by the reciprocal exchange of services and agricultural products diverted from the market place. Often the urbanite is a relative who has moved into town (Halpern 1963:168, 177-178); in other instances, he is a regular customer for the peasant's products delivered to his door (Halpern 1958:286; 1963:173). In return for gifts of wine or food, the villager is given a place to sleep when he comes to town, assistance in finding a job, or boarding facilities for his son in the city school. Such relationships tend to be very stable, often persisting over decades. Thus, both agricultural produce and human relationships show a tendency to move out of the arena of the market place. This may well be a temporary situation bridging the gap between the market place and the supermarket, and between small, closely integrated villages loosely related to one another and organization more typical of industrial society.

The markets of northern Albania represent a special and very interesting case of a different type. There is no known data published concerning them other than scattered references which do little more than attest to their existence. They pose an interesting problem, however, in that the traditional political and social situation is remarkably similar to that of the Berber highlands. In neither area is there a centralized government. The system of Albanian extended families, clans, and tribes is similar to the Berber taqbils and tribes; in both, society is made up of small, highly independent social units loosely bound into larger tribes. The Albanian extended family is, like the taqbilt, closely integrated by reciprocity and a common feeling of oneness. Rule in the two societies is accomplished by a similar series of representative assemblies. Both societies are surrounded by lowland peoples who have tried for centuries to extend their centralized control over the highlands. The vendetta is an outstanding institution of both and besa, the safe conduct of the Albanians, corresponds to the Berber ánaia. To the political scientist, anarchy would seem to prevail in each.

Benet has shown, however, that what seems to be anarchy among the Berber is in reality an uneasy communal democracy achieved in large part through the system of market places. Markets can and do exist in noncentralized societies where no power structure links the segments and where blood feuds are prevalent; in such societies, the political device of intergroup truces secures the market peace and this, in so doing, relates the segments. No such

detailed information is available concerning Albanian markets, but the knowledge that they are necessary to provide Albanian highlanders with the necessities of life causes us to ask if the market place does not play a similar role in the Dinaric Alps as it does in the Atlas. Does the market place in Albania serve to integrate society by relating its components to one another? If so, does the resulting market resemble the "explosive market" of the Berbers? It would seem that north Albania provides a unique opportunity to put Benet's conclusions to the test. The ethnographic present used in description of the traditional Albanian pattern was that part of the twentieth century prior to World War II. Now the feud is no more and tribal society is breaking down. The government of the lowlands has at last succeeded in extending its power over the highlands. But a study of the market place during this previous era through a combing of all available literature and interviewing of still living participants might both test the Benet hypothesis and lead us to a better understanding of the contradictions in traditional Albanian society.

### Conclusion

It has hopefully been demonstrated in the foregoing paper that the importance of the market place in peasant society far transcends the mere transfer of goods. It is a functional part of society and culture with far-reaching ramifications. As such, from the standpoint of the anthropologist, it needs to be studied from a functional point of view with reference to many other features of peasant society and culture. Here we have been especially concerned with the relationship between the market place and some few features of social organization. In some ways a market place can be seen as a microcosm of peasant society; not only is much of the cultural content displayed there and representatives of the various categories of that society in attendance, but also the intangible relationships which bind that society together are reproduced or reflected.

It has also been shown that these general conclusions, developed for the most part in non-European societies, might well be put to the cross-cultural test in the Balkans, particularly Yugoslavia. There are several reasons to account for this; most specifically, the Balkans are of interest because, although they conform to general patterns established elsewhere, certain questions are raised. What is the nature of traditional cyclical markets in Yugoslavia? How have advances in transportation affected the existence of these cyclical markets? Why is there no sex specialization in Yugoslav market places? What have been the effects of purposeful direction of peasant marketing by communist states and how has this affected elements of social organization and value systems with which the market is correlated? What was the traditional market system of northern Albania like? The time in which we may answer such questions is drawing short. These nations are rapidly becoming industrial societies and their market places are losing former importance.

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