

REFLECTING SOCIETIES: MARKETS IN TRANSITION

Interdisciplinary Workshop Organized by Department of Sociology, Yerevan State University, Armenia

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09.00-17.00

Yerevan State University,
Round Hall of Sociology Department
(Library Building, 3rd Floor)

Moderators/ Chairing:

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Reflecting societies

Since “the market was originally a consociation of persons who are not members of the same group” (Weber 1978), it makes perfect sense to assume that markets evolved literally between societies, with between meaning and unsettled neutral territory (Simmel 1992) or “a spot within the borderland” (Grierson 1980), in the first instance. Where the geographic situation did not meet the conditions, we find strategies for at least virtually realizing territorial neutrality (e.g. the Kula-Ring: Malinowski 1979; Mauss 1990). Even when the market already had approached the gates of the Ancient civilizations and crossed them (Polanyi 1963), the market within the city walls still was an outside, delimited by border stones and ruled by laws explicitly others than those of its host cities (Swedberg 2007). However, the more these borders blurred, the more the market could be perceived as an “inner environment” (Luhmann 1988) of the respective society, i.e. a “mechanism for limiting contact” (Humphreys 1969) between a society and its environment.

Studying markets therefore means tracing the limits of societies and, by this means, reflecting it. Reflecting markets and societies in such a way, we may find that markets function as not only quantitative but also qualitative mechanisms of the limitation of a society's contacts with both its environment and itself. In some cases, this limitation led to the depolitization of the market (Arendt 1958). In many others the “only public activity left under such conditions was the exchange market of the craftsmen, whose concern was with making and not with acting, and whom the Greeks exclude from political life as banausic” (Canovan 1977).

Nowadays, if we speak of markets, then we speak about the economy. However, this deeply rooted common sense does not only conflict with the existence of contemporary markets like the Djemaa el-Fna in Marrakesh, whose imminent economization prompted the UNESCO project “Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity”. If we can imagine that certain markets can be prevented from economization, then we can also ask how the economization of most others took place. How did “the market” actually become economic then?

Against the background of this question, contributions to the workshop should be tracking back the history and the functions of markets. In this sense, workshop members are going to ask whether or not there is sociological, ethnological, historical and archaeological evidence for the idea that markets did and do serve for more than just the exchange of economic goods. Haven't markets also been places and spaces for the exchange of stories, styles, melodies, beliefs, scientific ideas, languages, legal frameworks, teaching concepts, training methods and treatments in health care?

We are looking forward to both conceptual and mature, both theoretical and empirical approaches to these questions. Presentation may focus on market case studies as well as on both synchronic and diachronic analyses of ancient and contemporary markets in the region broadly defined as “the Orient”.

List of Participants

| N° | Author | Topic | E.mail |
|----|---------------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | Steffen Roth ^{1,11a,b} | Introduction: Reflecting Societies. Markets as the (Inner) Environment of Societies | strot@me.com |
| 2 | Artur Mkrtchyan ^{1a} | The Market as Mechanism of Self-Organization: From Chaos to Order | artur.mkrtchyan@sociologydl.am |
| 3 | Hamlet Melkumyan ^{3d} | Market and Exchange of Ideas: Reflections on Vernisage of Yerevan | h.melkumyan@yahoo.com |
| 4 | Boris Gasparyan ^{5f} | Before Market: Exploitation of Life | borisg@virtualarmenia.am |

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|----|--|---|--|
| | Artur Petrosyan ^{5f} | Supporting Resources in Primitive Societies | artur.petrosian@yahoo.com |
| 5 | Artak Dabaghyan ^{5e} , Mkhitar Gabrielyan ^{2e} | Market in Borderlands: The Case of Bagratashen | dabagart@gmail.com mkhitar2003@yahoo.com |
| 6 | Satenik Margaryan ^{1a} | Market and Punishment | margaryans@mail.montclair.edu |
| 7 | Mkrtich Zardaryan ^{5f,c} | Markets in the East and West of the Classical World: Unity of Contrasts | mhzardar@hotmail.com |
| 8 | Artur Atanesyan ^{1a} | Market of Violence in Mass Media Theories: Critical Approach | atanesyan@yandex.ru |
| 9 | Arsen Bobokhyan ^{1,5f,c} | The Market of the Gods and the Market of the Humans: Back to Troy | arsbobok@yahoo.com |
| 10 | Ara Brutyan ^{1a,b} | Corporate Social Responsibility: Creating Shared Value or Decreasing Volatility? | arnatnet@yahoo.co.uk |
| 11 | Hripsime Pikichyan ^{3,6g} | Music and the Market | hripsime-pikichian@rambler.ru |
| 12 | Tork Dalalyan ^{8e} | Etymologizing Market Vocabulary: A Philological Approach | torqdal@yahoo.com |
| 13 | Armine Zohrabyan ⁷ⁱ | The Phenomenon of Oriental Market | zohrabyanarmine@yahoo.com |
| 14 | Nikol Margaryan ^{3e} | Onyma and the Market | n.m.margaryan@inbox.ru |
| 15 | Diana Zardaryan ^{5f} , Boris Gasparyan ^{5f} , Gregory Areshyan ^{10f} , Ron Pinhasi ^{9l} | Medieval Markets and Trade Routes: View from a Cave | dzardaryan@ymail.com borisg@virtualarmenia.am khwareno@gmail.com ron_pinhasi@yahoo.com |
| 16 | Aghasi Tadevosyan ^{5e} | Influence of the Market on Formation of Cultural Landscape: The Case of Post-Soviet Yerevan | atadevos@yahoo.com |
| 17 | Hasmik Khalapyan ^{4j} | Nationalism, Women and Consumption/Market in Ottoman Empire | hkhalapyan@yahoo.com |
| 18 | Roman Hovsepyan ^{5k} , Arsen Bobokhyan ^{1,5f,c} | Market: Biological and Social Perspectives | roman.hovsepyan@yahoo.com arsbobok@yahoo.com |

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a – sociology; **b** – economics; **c** – history; **d** – culture studies; **e** – ethnology; **f** – archaeology; **g** – art studies; **h** – philology; **i** – numismatics; **j** – psychology; **k** – biology; **l** – physical anthropology