

2.2 Definitions and conceptual clarifications

Oasis Markets: Economic Interactions between Permanent and Periodic Markets in Faiyum/Egypt and Kashgar/China

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1. Introduction

Investigations in regard to periodic markets and market cycles within the islamic Middle East have probably played a less important role in German geography than in that of France, Great Britain or many other European countries (BROMLEY, SYMANSKY and GOOD 1975; CENTLIVRES 1972; TROIN 1975). Besides an important theoretical approach by WIRTH (1976) in combination with some detailed case studies on Afghanistan (GRÖTZ- BACH), Central Anatolia (ÖTTINGER), Yemen (NIEWÖHNER-EBERHARD), Afghanistan (WIEBE 1976) and Syria (GAUBE), all outcome of a symposium in Tübingen in 1975, only a few further studies have been published in German language. Noteworthy examples are the contributions of DIBES (1978), GEBHARDT and SCHWEIZER (1992), SCHMITZ (1981), SCHWEIZER (1984) and FISCHER (1984) as well as FISCHERs recent methodological approach on development and distribution of periodic markets in the Middle East (1992).

It is the purpose of this paper to analyse - in model-like simplified oasis environments - the role and function not only of periodic but also of permanent markets. The term "permanent market" in this context means daily markets of itinerant traders usually setting up their stalls and leaving in the evening, but not the stationary shops and workshops of suqs or bazaars. Examples from two different areas of the Islamic Middle East were chosen to show the traditional economic interactions between these two types of markets: One is the oasis of Faiyum in the Western Desert of Egypt and the other example is Kashgar in the Chinese province of Xingjiang at the western edge of the Tarim Basin. Thus the case studies are dealing with one example from the centre and one from the northeastern fringe of the Islamic Middle East. The economies wherein these study areas are incorporated still are, to a large degree, self-sustaining and only in parts market orientated.

The main focus of investigations has been the question how far differences in purchasing power influence the economic interactions between

- a) periodic markets,
- b) permanent, daily markets of itinerant traders and
- c) stationary shops of suqs and bazaars.

Could the existence of periodic markets be an indicator for a less developed system of suqs and bazaars? Are periodic markets typical for rural areas with low purchasing power; and are, on the other hand, bazaars with permanent operating shops characteristics of regions with high purchasing power? Or, do periodic markets also play an important economic role in regions characterized by dominating suqs and bazaars?

2. Permanent and Periodic Markets in Faiyum

Periodic and permanent markets in Faiyum can be classified according to different criteria such as type and quantity of goods on offer; forms of general marketing structures; relationship to neighbouring markets or markets operating simultaneously. The marketing system of Faiyum is characterized by six major market types:

Table 1: Types of Permanent and Periodic Markets in Fayum

TYPE A: PERMANENT MARKETS	TYPE B: PERIODIC MARKETS
<p><u>TYPE A-1:</u> <u>Grocery wholesale markets</u> <u>Animal markets</u> (Wholesalers sell, usually from a lorry, to small and intermediate dealers)</p>	<p><u>TYPE B-1:</u> <u>Animal markets</u> (Farmers and intermediate dealers sell mainly to wholesalers, but also to breeders and other producers)</p>
<p><u>TYPE A-2:</u> <u>Grocery markets of the itinerant small suppliers</u> (Itinerant small dealers sell directly to consumers)</p>	<p><u>TYPE B-2:</u> <u>Markets for household goods and groceries parallel to animal markets</u> (Simultaneous to cattle markets there are markets for household articles, tools and grocery in the same town or village)</p>
	<p><u>TYPE B-3:</u> <u>Combined mixed forms with cattle, household goods and groceries</u> (Type B-1 and Type B-2 goods are on offer at the same market area)</p>
	<p><u>TYPE B-4:</u> <u>Grocery markets without simultaneous animal markets</u> (Producers and itinerant dealers offer groceries and sometimes tools and household articles).</p>

2.1 Permanent Markets

2.1.1 Grocery Wholesale Markets (Type A-1)

Mainly vegetables and fruits are sold by the itinerant wholesalers to the smaller dealers and middlemen. Transactions are mainly carried out directly from the lorries which park at the peripheries of the larger towns. There are grocery wholesale markets in Sinnuris, Tamiya and Ibshaway as well as two in Madinat-al-Faiyum.

The suppliers of these markets are mostly male, coming with their own or rented vehicles. They have bought their goods directly from the farmers. Some of the groceries on offer, however, originate from other wholesale markets in the Nile valley (root vegetables e.g.) or from the Delta (fish, poultry). Unsorted, pre-packed groceries are bought primarily by middlemen and then re-sold to itinerant small dealers. Thus the market type A-1 customers represent a large proportion of the market type A-2 suppliers. Both types of markets are interdependent.

2.1.2 Grocery Markets of Itinerant Intermediaries (Type A-2)

The variety of goods offered by itinerant small dealers (type A-2) are influenced by the range available in the wholesale markets. Contrary to the situation in the wholesale markets more than 85 % of the sellers here are female. Most of their merchandise originates from the aforementioned wholesalers. Only 10 to 15% of their stock is acquired directly from the producers. Less than 10% of the itinerant small dealers are selling their own products.

Typical of the A-2 markets are the itinerant small dealers in the centre of the old town of Madinat-al-Faiyum. Altogether some 180 to 200 suppliers visit these markets daily. The itinerant grocery dealers are concentrated especially along the Shari-en-Nafi, a narrow dusk road, the eastern end of the partly roofed bazaar. Here the dealers are allotted a sales area of two or three square meters each where they spread out their goods. The selection is limited by the fact that their merchandise has to be carried by them and their helpers from the wholesale markets to the Shari-en-Nafi. The product range of any one dealer is minimal: more than 70% of the dealers were only offering one product and almost 20% only two; no dealer was selling more than four products. The goods on offer are dependent on seasonal availability and the range of goods is much greater in

February/March than during the summer months (LARSON 1982, 132). There are certain indicators to assume that in former times some of the Faiyum type A-2 permanent markets had been periodic markets which were held only once or twice a week.

The sales stands of the itinerant dealers are located immediately in front of the established shops and workshops of the bazaar. With few exceptions the dealers took up the same position every day. On both sides of the street a greater range of products is on offer than in the stationary shops. The concentration represents an average proportion of established merchants to itinerant dealers of 1:4; or 1:3 if services are included. Profit margins on retail groceries purveyed by the itinerants are small but calculable. Net profits increase proportionally with the value of the goods. Staple goods such as potatoes and tomatoes yield only 2-5 Piasters per kg whereas the profit on goods not needed on a daily basis (sugar, preserved olives, poultry, eggs) can be 40-60 piasters per kg.

If we consider these forms of marketing of rural products at least partly as forms of an "informal sector", we get at the same time an idea of the social and economic importance of this part of Faiyums marketing systems.

2.2 Periodic Markets

The Faiyum oasis is characterized by a complex system of periodic markets which are held once a week on different days and locations. The markets are always held on the same day. There are about 155 villages and towns in the area of Faiyum with 41 periodic markets in 35 different settlements. The periodic markets are more or less evenly spread in time and space. However, the rotary system of the markets is somehow concentrated on islamic weekends. There is a certain degree of overlapping in the areas served by markets with respect to their size and organisation. This is exemplified by the two large weekly markets of Madinat-al-Faiyum. These markets serve a rather extensive area with approx. 450,000 inhabitants in the most highly populated district of the oasis. Within its sphere of influence only 4 further weekly markets take place, whereas in the other districts 9 to 10 periodic markets are held.

Table 2: Periodic Markets in the Districts of Fayum

Admin. district with inhabitants (1986)	animal markets (Type B-1)	household goods /groceries (Type B-2)	combined forms (Type B-3)	grocery markets (Type B-4)	Markets in total
Al-Faiyum 444,302	1	1	2	2	6
Ibshaway 350,771	1	1	4	4	10
Itsa 299,822	1	1	4	3	9
Sinnuris 260,616	1	1	1	4	7
Tamiya 186,747	1	1	4	3	9
Total 1,542,258	5	5	15	16	41

The periodic markets in Faiyum can be divided into four different types (tab. 1): Mainly the animal markets (Type B-1) and the household/grocery markets (Type B-2) which are held at the same time in the same settlement have an importance beyond the immediate region. These markets are exclusively limited to the larger cities of the oasis area. With the exception of Madinat-al-Faiyum (1986 approx. 211,000 inhabitants) the population of these settlements is about 25,000 to 30,000.

2.2.1 Animal Markets and Simultaneous Household Goods and Grocery Markets

With regard to the variety of goods on offer, the number of suppliers, the number of visitors and the area the two most important markets of the whole oasis area are the animal market and the household goods/grocery market which are held on thursdays in Madinat-al-Faiyum. The animal market has an importance beyond the immediate oasis area slaughterhouse wholesale dealers regularly arrive from Cairo. On average 3.500 animals are on offer to some 2.000 buyers in this cattle market which is held within a fenced area outside town. In addition to beef cattle, which represent more than half of the total business, there are also buffaloes, camels, donkeys, sheep and goats on offer (for details see DITTMANN 1990, p. 146-147).

Mats, blankets, saddlery goods and tools are also on offer. Animal markets of Type B-1 are, besides, characterised by large tea and eating

tents which also serve for the exchange of news and information. As far as the sale of beef cattle, buffalo, camels and sheep is concerned the dealers have mostly acquired the animals only a few days earlier in the rural neighbourhood of the market. Only in case of donkeys and goats the seller occasionally is also the owner. On the other hand, 10-15% of the buffaloes and beef cattle dealers stated that they had also raised the animals. A considerable proportion of dealers also offer at other weekly markets in the oasis. It is noticeable that the rotation cycles (DITTMANN 1990, p. 145) of the individual traders hardly changes from week to week, although a broad spectrum of the Faiyum periodic markets does provide quite a number of theoretical rotational patterns.

The grocery and household goods market of Madinat-al-Faiyum (type B-2) stretches over a number of streets with modern buildings in the north-west of the town. The market is of particular importance for poultry (approx. 35%) and household goods of all types (approx. 25%) which are offered by between 750 and 800 dealers each week. Groceries on offer can be stored for longer periods and meet middle and longer term requirements. In this respect they differ from those which are offered by itinerant smaller dealers on the permanent grocery markets. The proportion of sellers who are also producers (20-25%) is considerably higher than on the animal markets or on the permanent grocery markets.

2.2.2 Combined Mixed Forms (Type B-3) and Grocery Markets without Simultaneous Animal Markets (Type B-4)

In the smaller settlements (10.000-20.000 inh.) no spatial separation of markets for animals on the one and markets for grocery and household articles on the other hand had developed. However, the necessary infrastructural facilities usually are not available here. In these locations one can observe a combined mixed form of the market types B-1 and B-2 with specific sections for animals, groceries and household articles within the same market place. The proportion of the groups of goods traded here are different: The smaller the market is, the bigger is the share of groceries and household articles. For these markets of type B-3 it is especially noticeable that there is an exceptionally high number of products on offer despite of the small market place available. Although the quantities of products involved are relatively small. These markets provide a great variety of goods within the overall spectrum of periodic markets in Faiyum.

The weekly grocery markets of type B-4 offer more or less the same goods as the daily grocery markets of the larger towns (type A-2). The proportion of the producers who are also sellers is, by 25-30 %, below the

general average. These markets mainly offer vegetable products. Animal trading is of minor importance.

3. Permanent and Periodic Markets in Kashgar

Compared with Madinat-al-Faiyum, the central place of the Faiyum oasis, the oasis of Kashgar shows a lot of structural and general economic similarities. But, however, concerning the question how purchasing power influences the relationships between permanent and periodic markets, the differences are of more importance:

One of the main economic differences, compared with the cities of Faiyum is the existence of a rather big bazaar which covers extended parts of the old city. The bazaar of Kashgar shows all the characteristics of a "typical oriental bazaar", which generally are missing in Madinat-al-Faiyum:

- specialisation on certain categories of goods by traders and shop keepers;
- spatial concentration of crafts and private services in special bazaar sections;
- spatial concentration of categories of goods and items of one kind in certain bazaar sections;
- structures like "covered bazaars"

Altogether Kashgar represents the image of an oriental bazaar much more than Madinat-al-Faiyum does. Less than 30 % of its inhabitants are working in agriculture (more than 55 % in Madinat-al-Faiyum). Nearly all kinds of goods and items, except camels and cattle, are offered in the bazaar. The financial power seems to be much higher than in Faiyum - if one consider the existence of a rather big bazaar with differentiated categories of goods on offer as an indicator for purchasing power.

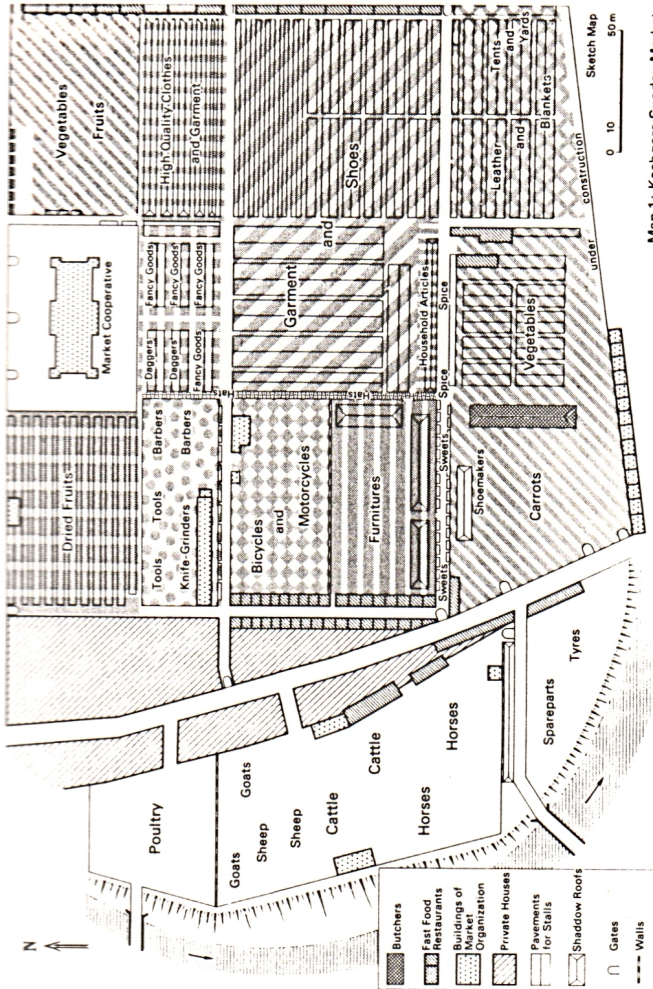
In Kashgar several types of periodic markets and permanent markets of itinerant small dealers have developed. Altogether there are - beside the shops of the bazaar - four different types of permanent and periodic markets in Kashgar:

Beside the well established stationary shops and workshops of the bazaar there are within the old city - like in Faiyum - itinerant small dealers with mobile stands and stalls mainly selling fruits, vegetables and fast food (type A-1).

In addition to the well supplied bazaar of Kashgar there is a weekly market on Sundays within a fenced area at the eastern fringe of the city.

This quite famous periodic market is frequented by traders and customers from all over the hinterland of Kashgar. Traditionally this market was held at the islamic week end but later shifted to Sundays by the chinese government of the Xingjiang province.

Map 1: Sunday market of Kashgar



Map 1: Kashgars Sunday Market

Table 3: Types of Permanent and Periodic Markets in Kashgar

TYPE B: PERMANENT MARKETS	TYPE A: PERIODIC MARKETS
<u>Type A-1:</u> Grocery and fast food market within the old city bazaar	<u>Type B-1:</u> Grocery and household article markets on Sundays
<u>Type A-2:</u> Vegetable and fruit market at the Sunday market place	<u>Type B-2:</u> Animal market on Sundays

Kashgars Sunday market is divided into two different parts (map 1): One is a rather big market for grocery, household articles, garments and tools (type B-1); the other one being an animal market (type B-2) with sheep and goats as well as cattle and horses on offer. Both markets are held on separated but neighbouring market places; they are interdependent. The type B-1 market is situated within a fenced area with strictly separated section for certain categories of goods and a quite impressive infrastructure of more than 20 fast food restaurants, shaddow roofings and fixed pavements for trading stalls. Both types of Sunday markets are controlled by an official market organisation taking from the traders and dealers small fees ranging from 10 fen to 1,50 yuan according to size of stalls and value of goods on offer. During week there is an other permanent market of itinerant small dealers trading fruits and vegetables within the fenced area of the Sunday market near to the northeastern gate but covering only approx. 5 % of the market place (type A-2).

4. Conclusions

The analysis of permanent and periodic markets in Kashgar and Faiyum shows the great economic as well as social importance of market mechanisms which are - at the same time - rather formalized and informal. The survey reveals that especially the periodic markets serve a threefold function as:

- suppliers of a large variety of goods (and services) for the rural population;
- outlet of rural products for intermediaries and middlemen;
- communication centre for the rural population.

Important for the relationship between urban retailing and wholesaling, on the one hand, and rural marketing systems, on the other, are role and function of periodic markets within the overall network of central

places in the Faiyum and Kashgar oasis areas: The investigations gained so far show up the important economic role of periodic markets not only in rural areas with no or quite young and undeveloped bazaars (Faiyum), but also in regions with enlarged bazaars and differentiated bazaar sections (Kashgar). The existence of well organised suqs or bazaars does not necessarily exclude the co-existence of traditional periodic markets. Both types of marketing systems fulfill special economic functions, which are not interchangeable. This holds true especially true for periodic animal and grocery markets, as it does for permanent markets of itinerant small dealers. Although some of the markets of itinerant small traders might have been periodic markets in former times, there is no general prove for the view that these types of markets are a necessary intermediate step of development from periodic markets to stationary shops of suqs and bazaars. Thus the existence of periodic markets or permanent mobile markets seems to be neither a matter of the age nor of the developmental stage of a traditional marketing system. The fact that periodic markets very often represent the major economic activities of rural areas does not mean that periodic markets are typical for rural areas only. They are as well a traditional part of urban economies within the Islamic Middle East.

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