

# Editorial Foreword

For the convenience of readers who may wish to read what has appeared in earlier issues on problems discussed in this one.

**MARKETING AND OTHER ASPECTS OF PEASANT SOCIETY: AFRICA, CHINA, VENEZUELA, SARDINIA.** Previous contributions on marketing in peasant societies have dealt with it as a mechanism breaking down isolation (Harold Schneider on indigenous African economy, in Vol. 7), widening opportunities for patronage (Sydel Silverman on central Italy, June 1970) and admitting new concentrations of capital (Forman and Riegelhaupt on Brazil, April 1970). Sidney W. Mintz now shows how in the context of modernizing development marketing procedures put economic power increasingly, on the Western pattern, in the hands of men, for the high status that African women have long enjoyed as market traders is being eroded. Is not our view of 'modernization' as necessarily making for enlargement of individual freedom somewhat culture-bound?

G. William Skinner presents a model of cyclical historical change in pre-industrial China which makes hay of the common notion that peasants tend naturally to local self-sufficiency within a socially closed community. Every upswing of dynastic power, he argues, has drawn village economy into the market activity of wide provincial areas, at the same time as it has opened far-reaching avenues of social mobility. This 'openness' is as characteristic of Chinese history as the periodical retractions entailed by the waning of dynastic power.

John Duncan Powell, surveying the course of modern agrarian reform in Venezuela against the broad historical perspective laid out by Elias Tuma (in Vol. 6) sees hope of improving peasant welfare through new types of local community action.

Alex Weingrod and Emma Morin treat Sardinia as a test-case of a 'post-peasant' society, that is, of a poorly-equipped rural society persisting within an industrial state. Their analysis suggests that such areas may long continue to coexist with industrialized areas.

**MILLENNARIAN MOVEMENTS: VIETNAM.** Frances Hill's contribution here is to trace the history of the Hoa Hao and the Cao Dai as highly organized sects expressing popular aspirations to which successive governments have failed to make any effective response. The paper falls into a long series on politico-religious movements. See especially van der Kroef on Java (in Vol. 1), George O. Totten on Japan and Burma (in Vol. 2),

Joseph R. Levenson on China (in Vol. 4), De Craemer *et al.* on the Congo (in Vol. 8), and the volume entitled *Millennial Dreams in Action*, edited by Sylvia L. Thrupp as a supplement to *CSSH* and reprinted in 1970 by Schocken Books.

**HISTORY AND ANTHROPOLOGY.** Alexander Gerschenkron's review of a recent symposium on the problem of continuity as German anthropologists see it points to their need to analyze it in such a way that they can come to grips with historical change.