

Andrej Sinčić

The peasant Urbanites

A study of Rural-Urban
Mobility in Serbia.

N.Y.: Seminar Press 1973

CHAPTER VI

KINSHIP AND RURAL-URBAN RECIPROCITY

Introduction

Upon his arrival in the city, the rural migrant begins almost at once to develop new networks of exchange within the urban environment. This is both the expression of a conscious process and the inevitable result and by-product of his participation in city life. However, ties to his former home are rarely totally abandoned, and strong viable relationships with the countryside are frequently maintained. In this chapter I will examine the manner in which the traditional corporate kinship structure has adapted to the more individualistic demands of an industrializing nation with a geographically increasingly mobile population. I propose to approach this question both from the standpoint of theoretical models dealing with changes in kinship function and in the light of specific case histories.

While organs of government and other formal imperial institutions have gradually replaced a number of the functions of kinship in the Yugoslav village during the last century, the strength and significance of traditional relationships should not be underestimated. Though the size and scope of corporate kinship groups have narrowed, much of the associated behavior and ideology has remained. Not only is extrafamilial kinship still a distinctive characteristic of Yugoslav social organization, but in response to changing conditions it has taken on new meanings in a number of areas in which it was previously inoperative. For example, increased spatial mobility has created new needs at the same time that it has placed restrictions on the types of exchange possible.

In a paper dealing with changes in the Croatian kinship system, Barić (1967a) has pointed out that the decline in the importance of the extended family corporation in rural Yugoslavia does not necessarily signify a diminution of the social significance of kinship, but rather simply a reorientation in response to new exigencies. She distinguishes two levels of organization: one is the grouping of certain categories of kin into corporate units, while the second is composed of the substratum of recognized kin that exists in every society outside the conjugal family. With the decline of the *zadruga*, the substratum of kinship organization, which encompasses not only agnatic links but also matrilineal and affinal kin, has emerged as the most significant systematic feature. Thus, what was previously a recessive level of the system has now become its dominant aspect. Barić suggests that this can be best analyzed in terms of ego-centered sets of cognatic or affinal kin providing channels for activities governed by reciprocal rights and obligations. She points out that kinship contains both an ascriptive and an achieved component. The *zadruga*, for instance, can be viewed as an institution in which ascription plays the major role. However, the less dominant the component of ascription, the more important will be that of achievement. Thus, outside the sphere of traditional corporate obligations, the element of personal choice will play a significant role in kinship exchange (cf. Bott, 1957, p. 221), and constant revalidation will be a salient feature of such relationships.

Commerç on Barić's scheme, which distinguishes the infrastructure of a general bilateral network of kinship ties from the superstructure of highly selective links which constitute corporate groups, Hammel (1969d, pp. 188–189) suggests a refinement of this theory. He proposes that kinship systems can be seen as a potentially limitless grid of relationships on which are drawn a series of culturally determined boundaries that specify the extent to which a particular kind and degree of corporacy and solidarity will apply. These boundaries connect grid points of similar corporacy and solidarity for specific social purposes. The manner in which these boundary lines are drawn will vary cross-culturally and, for example, in a society with a strong agnatic bias they will show a warp along monosexual lines. On the other hand, in a society such as ours, where most kinship functions revolve around the nuclear family, the demarcation lines will lie very close to one another near the center of the network, with a few unimportant lines of ritual corporacy lying more distant from the cluster.

One question not dealt with by Hammel's model is that of the degree of obligatoriness or latitude of personal selectivity inherent in specific kinship ties as related to specific social purposes. In other words, a culture will place greater emphasis on certain obligations and relationships than on others. For example, though there will be some cases where appropriate behavior will be considered obligatory, in others the intensity of expectations will vary. In terms of Hammel's schematic representation, the fields formed by the connecting of grid points could, through the addition of shading, also specify the intensity of associated expectations. Thus, if black were to correspond to an unequivocally morally binding contract, we would expect that a diagram of eighteenth-century Serbian society would exhibit a preponderance of extensive dark areas, if in fact traditional South Slav culture conformed to its descriptions in the ethnographic literature. Conversely, shades of grey would become increasingly evident, with the darkest areas falling ever closer to the point of initial reference, as one progressed through time to the present. What is thus indicated is simply a greater latitude of personal selectivity and breadth of application rather than a sharp decline in the significance of kinship as a social mechanism.

While kinship has generally been regarded as more significant in preindustrial than in contemporary societies, there is increasing evidence that it can play a salient role in the modernization of traditional peoples. For instance, Friedl (1959) describes kinship as a medium for the transmission of national culture to the Greek countryside. Similarly, Lewis (1952) cites continuing ties between migrants in Mexico City and village relatives in Tepoztlán as a factor contributing to their smooth integration into urban life. To perhaps an even greater degree than is the case in either Greece or Mexico, kinship in Yugoslavia can be regarded as a major factor in urbanization and as a medium for social mobility. In this regard, Barić (1967a) finds that in Croatia long-time urban residents and migrants alike tend to view the maintenance of rural kinship ties as advantageous, and that property in the village frequently serves as a focus for family unity. In socialist Yugoslavia, capital investment has been difficult, and land and farm economy provide urbanites a means of extending family holdings. Rural property also provides a place of rest and recreation for the town dweller. In return, the villager can profit from lines of communication and exchange with the city. Barić also notes that within the city, housing and other advantages are frequently obtained through kinship ties whose rights and obligations often override political and economic differences. Perhaps most significantly, continuing ties of kinship provide a material and psychological buffer against misfortune and failure. Similarly, Hammel (1969d, pp. 194–195) underscores the salient role played by kinship in contemporary urban Yugoslavia by pointing to the fact that from a sample of 500 Belgrade industrial workers, a fifth had found employment through the help of a relative, and as late as 1965 over half of another sample of 350 rural-born Serbian workers spent their yearly vacation in the village of their birth.

With the recognition that kinship continues to function as a major medium of social interaction and exchange in Yugoslavia, a number of questions can be posed of the Belgrade field data. Does the migrant continue to regard himself as an extension of the rural household, or does he see himself rather as a separate and independent entity newly established in the city? What advantages are gained, or perceived to be gained, in continuing rural–urban reciprocity? What variables act as a stimulant to con-

tinuing close ties and exchange with the village, and what factors adversely affect these relationships? Do ties to the hinterland die out within the migrating generation, or persist among those born in the city? What are the types, frequency and intensity of exchange? How closely do lines of reciprocity follow traditional patterns, and to what degree are they idiosyncratic?

Patterns of Rural-Urban Reciprocity

Ties to the countryside are seldom single purposed; they are rather, to draw on the terminology of Wolf, *manystranded*.¹ Land, however, acts as the single most cohesive element in rural-urban kinship relations. Thus, reciprocity, directly or indirectly, centers most frequently about joint interests in agricultural holdings. Moreover, it is difficult to regard kinship and land tenure separately, since where there are kin in the village there is almost always land as well. By way of contrast, attachment to the rural community itself is relatively weak, and where one no longer has relatives or property in the village, ties are liable to be severed.

Although many migrants retain legal title to property in the village, the folk system operates somewhat independently of official codes regarding inheritance and land tenure. Kin, most frequently brothers, often hold property jointly after the death of the former title holder, and may postpone division of the patrimony indefinitely. Informants who replied that they had "given" the land to a brother, uncle, or other kin when they migrated to Belgrade in no way meant to indicate that they had relinquished title or claim to the holdings; rather, they had simply handed over the effective control and working of the land in their absence. Even the actual transfer of legal rights does not automatically signify an end to cooperation in terms of the land and its produce. Thus, the legal status of the holding or the absence of a member of the household or family group does not bear a necessary relation to corporate rights and obligations. Land tenure still reflects much of the ideology associated with family corporacy, and individualism is the secondary feature, though it asserts itself in a person's idiosyncratic prerogative to choose to abstain from participation

¹See Wolf (1966, pp. 84-85) for a discussion of "manystranded coalitions" in peasant society.

the system and to search for other avenues of action perceived to be more advantageous.

Though in most cases cooperation and exchange, especially where property is concerned, follow traditional lines of agnatic lineage organization, affinal and uterine links may be exploited where they are found to be more advantageous, or where there has been some disruption of positive affectual relationships with patrilineal kin. The individual exercises his personal prerogative regarding which relationships will be exploited but, as will be seen, the rules governing reciprocity are quite firm and follow fairly rigid patterns.

Though attitudes regarding legal ownership sometimes appear superficially casual, rights to the land are a subject of great emotionality. While some voiced the intention of "never returning to the village to live," most of those who had interest in rural property expressed an intense attachment to the land, and a resolve to never part with their patrimony. In some cases, they regarded village holdings as an inheritance for their children, who indeed were already familiar with the locus of their rural origins.

Land and other property (houses, equipment, livestock, etc.) are often retained in the village when there are no resident members of the family present to exploit the holdings. In such cases the land is either given to sharecropping (*napolica*—literally, division in half) or rented outright. Sometimes a member of the family will reside on the property for part of the year without actually working the land, so as to fulfill legal requirements regarding the amount of land which can be held by absentee landlords.²

While many informants expressed fatalistic attitudes about the future, and regarded life as extremely insecure and unpredictable, those who held rights in rural property or maintained close ties with village kin expressed the idea that these connections with the hinterland acted as insurance against misfortune and as a possible avenue of retreat. Not a few informants stated their intention to return eventually to their native places, and viewed their stay in the city as a temporary expedient. Some continued

²The maximum amount of land which can be legally held by an absentee landlord is reportedly 3 hectares.

to keep a number of their personal possessions and even furniture in the village. Not only the migrating generation but also those born in the city frequently thought in terms of dual residence and closely identified with their parents' village. This tendency was reinforced if both parents came from the same place; and where the mother and father were from separate villages, loyalties often showed a three-way division (to Belgrade and both villages). Dual residence is quite common, especially among those past the prime years of productivity. Aged parents, for example, may spend part of the year with a son in the village and the remainder in the city with another, helping with child care and household chores.

Visiting patterns between rural and urban kin may be quite intense, with almost weekly exchanges, or may be limited to a trip home during the yearly summer vacation (*godišnji odmor*). Perhaps the most common visiting pattern consists of the exchange of children. Urban parents send their sons and daughters to spend the summer with village grandparents or other kin. Children on a "vacation" in the village are fully incorporated into peasant life, and are expected not only to participate in agricultural labor but also to conform to village norms. Teenagers who dance to "beat" music and contemporary rhythms in Belgrade join in the village line dances (*kola*) with equal enthusiasm. Thus, a law student may pasture stock and work in the harvest while sojourning with his rural kin. On the other hand, village children enjoy becoming acquainted with the city while residing with urban relatives during their school holidays. Such exchanges tend to act as a leveling device in the society, reducing the differences between urban and rural culture and acting as channels for the dissemination of new ideas and modes of behavior. Children who spend months, or in some cases even years, away from their parents in no way appear to suffer from feelings of rejection or alienation. They are still in the circle of the family, a family in which there is a high degree of substitutability of members.

In terms of rational economic motivation, rural-urban exchange can be profitable to both segments of the population. For those who remain behind in the village, city kin are a source of cash for taxes and material improvements, the bearers of gifts of manufactured goods, the providers of a place to stay while receiving treatment at a city clinic, and a pipeline for excess mem-

bers of the household who must seek their fortunes off the land. For the city resident, the village not only provides a free site for rest and recreation, and security against the unforeseen, but also a continuing source of agricultural products in a cash-poor economy. Most urban families spend at least 70% of their net income on food, and at that find it difficult to make ends meet (see Appendix II for a comparison of wages and prices). Urbanites may be seen arriving daily in Belgrade by bus and train, returning from visits with rural kin laden with boxes and sacks filled with eggs, meat, cheese, vegetables, and other farm produce. Conversely, one never visits the village without gifts for the members of the household in which he will stay: candy for the children, shirts for the men, headscarfs for the women, coffee, sugar, and sometimes more expensive contributions, such as television sets or farm equipment.

The following cases have been chosen as instances of what may be regarded as relatively intense expressions of rural-urban reciprocity. These examples conform to traditional patterns of corporacy based on patrilineality and agnatic ties.

*My father and mother live in a village near Mladenovac. We have holdings there and we give out the land for sharecropping (**dajemo zemlju u napolicu**), and we take half of the produce. My father divided the inheritance while still living, and I share it with my three sons, who live with me here in Belgrade. Our kitchen is always full of potatoes and other food from the village, enough to last us all winter. We go back and forth to the village whenever we can. It's a good place for the children in the summer, and I like visiting around with the neighbors, having coffee with this one and that.*

*I miss my native place even though my parents are dead. My uncle [**stric**—father's brother] and his children are my family. My uncle is not doing too badly but he is still poor. I go home about three times a year. I took 18 days vacation in October, and spent it working with my uncle on the land. I can't act like a big shot when I'm not (**ne mogu da budem veliki gospodin kad nisam**). When I go to the village, I always take gifts, and I also send them money to pay the taxes. When I return to Belgrade from a visit, I bring all the food I want. The land belongs to my brothers and me, as*

well as my uncle. I will never sell my share, and when I can save enough money I will build a nice house there and return every year for my vacation.

My firm recently built a glass factory in Czechoslovakia, and I was able to work there at a much higher salary. I saved a good deal of money, and my trip helped my family in the village because I was able to send them 500,000 OD [\$400] to finish the house. I thought about buying my mother a television set but she is old, and people would come from all around to watch it, and she would have no peace. I look at my work in the city as a cooperation with the people at home. I go home four or five times a year. Why shouldn't I? I like to see my family and the place where my ancestors were born. I am going home next on the 29th of November [Day of the Republic]. My brother and his wife have visited me a number of times in Belgrade, but the trip is too hard for my mother. Half of the land belongs to my brother, and we hold it together. I will never sell my part, and I don't want to see the property divided. I think it would be perfectly natural to return to the village to live in my old age. This is where my strongest sentiments lie.

I visit my village as often as possible. When I go home I stay with my father and married brother. I also try to visit the rest of my kin. I never write, but just arrive when it suits me. Our village is not far from Belgrade, and relatives often visit me here. When I go home I take a present for every member of the household and also for two married sisters and their families. In return, I am given food and drink to bring back to Belgrade. We have not divided the land, and have no plan to do so. When I receive my inheritance I will turn over my share to whomever in the family needs to work it. I will never sell it, God forbid, the land is for my children.

I left the village when I was only 3 years old, but I still have roots there. My three grandparents are there. I have visited Rosići all my life. During the last 3 years, even though it is far away, I have been six or seven times. People from the village are always coming by our place. This year alone we have had a lot of guests: my mother's brother (*ujak*), my father's sister (*tetka*), two of his brothers (*stričevi*), and two of our sons-in-law [husbands of the informant's father's brother's daughters—*zetovi*]. My mother and father go very often to the village. My father gives his mother

and brothers money, and my parents always return from Rosići with *rakija* [spirits], *kajmak* [clotted milk], and sometimes even a pig.

Evidence that the migrant often remains part of the rural corporate group and regards himself, at least partially, as an urban extension of the village household is strengthened by activities and ideology surrounding the *kršna slava*, a Saint's Day celebrated by those who recognize patrilineal descent from a common eponymic ancestor. Commemoration usually takes the form of religious observances and feasting in each independent household. Thus, if brothers have divided their patrimony and maintain separate residences, each will hold a festival on the day of their common clan saint. The following examples suggest that many migrants, at least initially, do not regard the city as their actual (spiritual) locus of residence, and still identify strongly with the rural household. However, none of the informants cited have been in Belgrade over eight years, and those in the sample with longer residence did not report similar behavior. The case materials, though limited, suggest that perhaps 10 years of domicile in Belgrade is generally the maximum length of time necessary for the immigrant to identify solidly with his new locus of residence.

*I won't celebrate our slava here in Belgrade as long as my father is alive. We sons will take over when he dies. There must be one slava while there is one estate (*mora biti jedna slava dok je jedno imanje*). I don't have my own icon, but we keep our image of St. Steven (*Sveti Stefan*) at home in the village.*

I don't celebrate the slava but my mother and brother in the village do it for me.

*My mother and brother celebrate our slava of St. John (*Sveti Jovan*) for me in the village. I don't have much idea about religion and I leave it up to them.*

I am a member of the Party and don't have much use for religion. I don't celebrate our slava, but my father does. When he dies, my older brother in the village will probably take it over for us.

Even among recent migrants there appears to be some individual variation as to whether a separate celebration will be held. In the case of one family, for example, a festive meal is prepared on the occasion of the *slava* though they consider the most important observance to be that in the village. This somewhat abridged commemoration has been their custom since migration. It should be noted that, although the Yugoslav government does not carry on overt persecution of religion, there still exist some subtle pressures, usually through one's employment, which might act as deterrents to open religious observances in the city. Given the tradition of ritual corporacy, it may be convenient to let one's village kin, who are in effect independent peasant entrepreneurs or subsistence farmers, carry out family religious obligations.

While corporacy in the traditional Serbian village was based on the patrilaterally extended household, cooperation between uterine kin and affines was not uncommon. Such reciprocity was, however, often limited by distance, since patterns of residence were patrilineal and agnatic exogamy was strictly observed. Residence in the city, on the other hand, frequently places a married couple equidistant from both the wife's and husband's kin. While women almost never retain interest in land, they nevertheless may develop intense patterns of reciprocity with their families. The following case provides an example where exchange is carried on with both the husband's and wife's village kin.

We do not always spend our vacations in the same place. This year we went to my husband's village in Kordun [Croatia]. We stayed with his brother, the one to whom he gave the land. The door is always open to us, and we take what we want [agricultural produce]. Sometimes we go to my relatives in Šodolovci in Slavonia [Croatia], and it's the same with them. They give us cheese, wine, and meat, and we take them gifts in return.

In cases where reciprocity with the husband's kin is perceived to be unproductive, or some event had disrupted positive affectual relationships, exchange may be shifted partially or entirely to the wife's family. The following is an illustration where ties have been severed with the informant's patrilineal relations due to unfulfilled economic expectations. The informant's feelings about

this underscore the strong moral imperatives inherent in kinship relationships:

*I was born in the village, but only because my mother and father were visiting my father's family at the time. Actually, our residence was in Belgrade. When I was young I stayed with my father's people in the village every summer. It was pleasant there and I enjoyed life in the country. Well, that has all come to an end. The last time I was there was 10 years ago. My uncles, my father's three brothers, behaved very badly, and I can never forget it or understand how they could betray us when we needed them most. After my father died, they knew we were in terrible financial condition but all they did was try to take our share of the inheritance. This is why my closest contacts are with my mother's family. My mother has a *miraz* [inheritance or dowry in land given when there are no inheriting sons] of 3 hectares. My mother received her *miraz* when she was married. It was 7 hectares, but according to the present law she can only keep 3 if she does not live on the land. She has turned her property over to the village collective to work for her in return for a yearly rent. I travel two or three times a year to my mother's village to see after the holding. The land is our only savings and security.*

The case of Čedo, an 18-year-old student, provides a striking example of intense reciprocity with matrilineal kin. Čedo's preference for his mother's lineage can be explained principally in the light of his alienation from his father and a strong, but not atypical, attachment to his mother. Moreover, the father does not have a large, cohesive kinship group into which the conjugal family could be incorporated.

My mother was born in the village of Drenovac, near Šabac. Her father was the richest peasant in the village, but he died in 1947 and this changed my mother's life. Her parents were patriarchal and everyone did what the father said without question. My grandmother was left with four children, and this was not easy. My father's sister was a teacher in the village, and my father met my mother through her. He was 16 years older than my mother, and she did not want to marry him but she was used to obeying. When my grandmother told her to go with him, my mother did so. I don't

think my parents have ever been happy together. My mother was young and wanted to have some pleasure in life, but my father would not allow it. My mother works and takes care of the house. My father never stays home, he goes out every night. He is a *vradalama* [an unpredictable person]; he doesn't treat us right. I absolutely like my mother better than my father, and my brother feels the same way. I spend the summers with my mother's brother (*ujak*) in the village. It is a very nice place. My mother's lineage (*familija*³) has eight households (*kuće*) in the village. My mother's kin cooperate a great deal. This is the way they get along, and they help us get along too. When I stay with my uncle I never pay anything, but I work with the rest of them. I always take presents when I go to the village; something for everyone in the household as well as a gift for my mother's sister (*tetka*), who lives in a village nearby. We send all of our old clothes to my mother's family, and save our schoolbooks for the village children. When I return to Belgrade I bring cheese, beans, and preserves. Every year my uncle kills a hog for us, and the meat lasts all winter. My uncle's children visit us every year during the New Year's vacation. He has three sons, and the oldest is 15. They enjoy coming to the city; it gives them status in the village. When I go to Drenovac, all the young people try to get to know me because they think it is something wonderful to live in Belgrade. Last year I went to the village four times. In the summer I went for a change of air, then in the fall I took my uncle's youngest son home after a visit with us. In the winter I went to my uncle's *slava*, and in the early spring I picked up the meat which they had smoked for us. People come from the village to visit us too, and they always bring food. My mother's mother spends every winter with us, and does all the cooking and housework. This year she brought onions, potatoes, wheat flour, and cornmeal.

Only a few informants failed to carry on some sort of reciprocity with kin who lived outside of Belgrade in villages or provincial towns. There were, however, some differences as to the manner in which these relations were maintained. The major contrast in behavior patterns did not separate recent arrivals from those

³In Serbia proper, *familija* means "lineage," corresponding to the Montenegrin usage *bratstvo*, whereas *porodica* is the usual Serbian term for the nuclear family or immediate household. In Montenegro *porodica* is applied to a group of agnatically closely related households (i.e., an intermediate-range lineage).

born in the city, but rather distinguished the working class from intellectuals and professionals. Working-class respondents emphasized economic exchange to a significantly greater extent than did elites. Among those of higher educational and socioeconomic status, material reciprocity tended more often to be of a symbolic rather than a substantive nature. This distinction is not a firm one, and individual choice plays an important role. Moreover, a number of other variables also relate to the nature and strength of rural-urban reciprocity: the distance of kin from Belgrade; the relative isolation or poverty of the rural community; the biological closeness of the kin involved; the quality of the specific interpersonal relations as determined by individual and family histories.

The following provides an example of a type of reciprocity which is essentially symbolic, ritualistic, and nonmaterial in its emphasis. Sava is an intellectual who is well established in Belgrade with a fairly secure financial base. Nevertheless, he holds great affection for his native town, which is, however, at a great distance from the city, isolated in the mountains of Montenegro. Sava's father and stepmother still live in Plav, on a lake of the same name. Once a week his father sends him trout which he catches in the lake during the warm summer months. He gives the fish to a bus driver, who telephones from the station when he arrives. I was visiting the family one day when the call came announcing the arrival of the fish. It was a hot day, and great excitement centered around the fact that the fish might spoil, so I offered to take Sava to the station in my car. When we arrived, the bus driver presented my friend with a newspaper-wrapped package of fish. There then followed a madcap drive around Belgrade during which Sava distributed fish to his kin and affines. One fish went to his wife's brother's wife's brother (*prijatelj*), another to a patrilineal female cousin (*unuka*—father's brother's granddaughter), and several to an old lady of undetermined relationship called *baba Lena* (grandmother Helen), who in return gave Sava 20 kilos of lard. Other forms of reciprocity, in this case, center about yearly visits to Montenegro, the attendance at family crisis rites (weddings, *krsna slava*, plural of *krsna slava*; and funerals), and the exchange of small gifts and favors.

In another instance, the informant belongs to a highly

urbaniz intellectual family in which all household members are city-bor. The respondent was nevertheless able to supply genealogical information regarding 80 consanguine and affinal kin of whom only 20 were born in Belgrade. Of the total number she personally knew 30:

Our family is like many urban families; we have social contacts on an almost equal basis with both kin and friends. I have the closest association with my mother's brothers and their families. One lives in Belgrade and the other in Sarajevo. I also frequently see my maternal grandmother's brother's two children, who both reside in Belgrade. I also visit my paternal grandmother in Ivanjica [a small town near Užički Požeg] at least three times a year, and she frequently comes to Belgrade to stay with us. I am very close to her. Small presents must be exchanged on a visit. It would be a shame to go empty-handed.

The following is a case in which reciprocity with the informant's place of birth is adversely affected by distance and the poverty of his native village. Nevertheless, regular ties are maintained because of the closeness and strong affectual nature of the kinship relationships involved.

I still have my father and mother, as well as a brother and two sisters, in our village. Donji Bunibrod is far from Belgrade [in southern Serbia], and it costs us a good deal to get there. They are very poor, and we can't expect any help from them. It has been two years since we have been there, but no matter what, we see each other once a year at least. My mother is visiting us now, and is at the moment staying with my brother across the river [the Danube] in Krnjača. My father is coming on the 29th of November to join her. One must stick by his own!!

In a similar manner, Ilija is restricted as to the nature of possible reciprocity with his village because of its distance and poverty. However, a profitable exchange is carried on with his wife's family, who live in a relatively rich agricultural area:

My wife's parents live in a village near Bačka Palanka, where they settled after the war as colonists [they were relocated on

land seized from the Volksdeutsch]. *We visit them often; my wife is going tomorrow with our son to see her mother and father, and I will join them on the weekend. They have prepared preserves (zimnice) for us, and you have no idea how important this is. We spend 60,000 OD [\$48] a month on food but it should be more. They come to see us often and always bring cheese and other farm produce. We would starve without them. I visit my village only once a year. It is a question of the expense of the trip. Lipovac is far away and isolated. I usually spend my yearly vacation there. I try to take small presents when I go, and manage to send my mother a few thousand dinars a month. My mother and brother have no income except what they can get from the land. I bring almost nothing home from the village because they are so poor. I just can't ask them for anything. My mother visited us last year. This was a real luxury for her. I, of course, paid for the trip.*

Long residence, or even birth in the city, does not necessarily mean a severance of ties with rural kin. For example, Gordana, who was born in Belgrade (as were her parents), was able to supply a genealogy of 116 consanguine and affinal kin of whom only 49 were born in the capital. Of those shown in the genealogy, she has had face-to-face contact with 76, and of these, 20 are residents of three separate villages. However, she tired before completing the genealogy, and did not include numerous kin with whom she was familiar in the village of Galičnik in Macedonia, where she visits yearly with her paternal grandfather's relatives. If the depth and breadth of genealogical knowledge is any measure of kinship solidarity, generations born or reared in the city show a surprising wealth of information regarding both rural and urban kin. In the case of the Djordjević family, the mother and father, who spent their formative years in the village, were able to supply data regarding 154 and 341 individuals, respectively, while their daughter, who has spent 17 of her 18 years in Belgrade, contributed data regarding 103 persons, of whom 73 were not resident in Belgrade and 16 were deceased. Of this total she reported face-to-face relationships with 79, while her father had similar ties with 103, and her mother with 158.

By way of contrast, those who had, for one reason or another, severed ties with kin or who simply lacked an extensive kinship network, expressed feelings of loneliness and insecurity. The nar-

rative an attractive university student is typical of the manner in which these sentiments are expressed, though her situation may be regarded as somewhat unusual by Yugoslav standards:

Most of my family were killed in the war. We have always been very poor and life has been a constant struggle. This is why my parents have gone off to work in Germany. I did not want to give up my studies, so I decided to remain behind in Belgrade. I live in a cheap rented room by myself. I really have no one but an old grandmother in a village about 100 kilometers south of here. I am alone in the world. I go to school and spend the rest of my time in my room. I never go out with men because I have no kin to protect my interests. I am very unhappy and wish I could join my parents.

It is interesting to note that the two most obviously emotionally disturbed informants in the sample also contributed the shortest genealogies. Twenty-one-year-old Božidar lives with his widowed mother and has no other kin closer than Bosnia. He was able to supply a genealogy of only 28 individuals, and surprised two of his friends who were present during the interview by his lack of familiarity with even the most common extrafamilial kinship terms. He freely expressed his feelings of isolation, stating: "We have no one to turn to." The second case is that of 17-year-old Radovan, who claimed to have "no kin to speak of," and refused to even try to supply genealogical material:

We are more or less alone. Everyone is out for himself, and those who have big families are ahead of the game. My parents are divorced, and I live with my mother's parents. My mother works in a small town near Novi Sad; well, I might as well tell you, she is a singer of folk songs in a cafe [tantamount to prostitution], and she comes home only once a week. My father has already gotten rid of his second wife, and has gone off to Australia. So there you are, it leaves me with no one except my grandparents.

An urban resident of at least three generations on both sides, with few ties to village kin, expressed the importance which many attributed to rural-urban reciprocity:

These migrants have it easy while we real city folk must struggle along on what we can earn. When they run out of money, they just run to the village for food; they eat like kings.

The significance of kinship both among rural migrants and long-time urban families is underscored by the intense feelings of disappointment and disillusionment when kinship obligations are not fulfilled. Moreover, statements regarding positive attitudes of respect and affect for kin and family may be taken as indicators of underlying cultural norms and expectations regardless of their sincerity. In this regard, I noted that conversations about kin and family were frequently punctuated by such remarks as: "I can't think of anyone more admirable than my parents"; "My brother is the God of Gods (*Bog Bogova*)"; "My uncle is a remarkable man"; "Our grandfather was a real hero, and can still stand up to anyone."

The evidence from Belgrade leaves little doubt as to the positive role played by kinship and its associated ideology in the Yugoslav urbanization process. The vitality of traditional values and institutions is amply demonstrated by their ability to accommodate themselves and adopt new functions in response to changing social and economic conditions stressing increased individual mobility. Continuing rural-urban reciprocity not only maintains channels for the exchange of goods and the transmission of ideas, but also acts as a positive mechanism, reducing feelings of isolation and alienation among migrants in the city; at the same time this reciprocity assures the villager of the continuing viability of those customs and relationships upon which he most depends for emotional and economic security.