

Town and Country in Economy in Transition*

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"The contradiction between town and country --- is the most crass expression of the subjection of the individual under the division of labour, under a definite activity forced upon him - a subjection which makes one man into a restricted town animal, another into a restricted country animal, and daily creates a conflict between their interests. --- The abolition of the contradiction between town and country is one of the first conditions of communal life". - K. Marx.

The Theme and The Approach

A word about the theme of my lecture is necessary lest it should seem 'disembodied', making you wonder what it is all about. The relation between agriculture and industry, whether in terms of the relative weights of the two sectors in national income or in terms of the intersectoral terms of trade, has been a much-debated issue in the literature on development. In fact, 'Balance between Agriculture and Industry in Economic Development' was the theme for discussion at the Eighth World Economic Congress held in India at the end of the last year. In commenting on the theme in his inaugural address, Professor V.K.R.V. Rao wondered what special importance could be attached to the question in the midst of a host of problems in the course of development. Not that Professor Rao regarded it as a non-issue but wanted it to be viewed in a wider context. He would have preferred the theme to be 'Balance between Agriculture, Industry, Environment and Quality of life in sustainable development'.¹ The title might be 'long and clumsy', as he himself chose to call it, but his suggestion for broadening and deepening the theme holds out a promise for fruitful insights in the process of social transformation under way in the present-day underdeveloped countries.

'Town and Country' is in any case a broader theme than the problem of the balance between agriculture and industry. More interestingly, both the terms 'town' and 'country' have had changing connotations and the relation

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