

THERE IS A WORLD OUTSIDE THE CITIES

*Some are still living
Far away from the cities,
Where the night is dark,
Where soil and air and water
Are turned into life and food.*

All over the world, rural areas are abandoned, and cities grow. Already there are more people living inside the cities than outside. And more and more, the general way of thinking is centred round, is influenced by, or is even governed by, city life: City Thinking.

Tales have been written about a future where everyone lives in the City, and everything outside is a distant and unreal world that just supplies the City. Everyone is part of the City, except for a few rebels and dreamers inside or outside, and except for those living in thralldom outside, supplying the City from huge citylike units; and even their lives are governed by the City, even their fate is the fate of the City.

The world is changing because of City Thinking.

In ruthless City Thinking, the rural population must serve the cities. Oldfashioned farmers and indigenous people toil, unable to live properly on the land, unable to stand up to the conditions that are favouring citylike enterprise, unable to defend their land where it is taken by force. And others are just labour force for the cities.

And in ruthless City Thinking, nature is a source to exploit, an enemy to fight. Forests are felled for their trees or for new fields, rivers are reversed for irrigation, valleys are drowned behind dams, mountains are hollowed out to hide dangerous waste, landscapes are sunk or dug up to be stripped of raw materials, rare animals are hunted down for their rarity, unique plants are uprooted for their uniqueness, untouched places are trampled down because of their untouchedness; frost is fought with salt, and rainfall and drought are fought with air pollution.

In normal City Thinking, the needs of the cities come first. The rural populations supply the cities with goods and services, and are left behind in the general development. Nature is the setting for leisure and holidays, wildlife is for watching, not something to keep untouched.

And in normal City Thinking, food is just one among many kinds of commodities; it must be cheap and available at all times, driven, sailed, or flown, in from near and far. Children must hear stories about farming to know that it exists. Only few demand pure, natural, fresh, and sunripe, food. Many have not realized that good food produced in a good way comes at a price; so many buy cheap and blame the farmers for poor food; and if food prices rise, farmers are blamed while others are enriched.

Even in responsible and concerned City Thinking, everything is viewed from and adapted to the cities, not the rural areas. And farmers are seen as adversaries rather than allies, to be hindered rather than supported.

So every day, farmers and indigenous people give up, villages die, rural areas are abandoned, and cities grow.