

The countryside and the culture of cities.

As you know, the title of my lecture is: "The countryside and the culture of cities". I suppose, that you were not surprised when you read this title in the leaflet, which informed you about the program of this summer course. If the title would have been: "The cities and the culture of the countryside", you would have been surprised, I think. Discussing the influence of the culture of cities on the countryside seems quite normal and almost self-evident when we are studying urban and rural relations, but discussing the influence of rural culture on cities seems to make hardly any sense to people living in modern western society.

This shows clearly how in general the cultural relations between the cities and the countryside are looked upon. They are mostly seen as almost only affecting the countryside. We see, that in an ever increasing rapidity elements of material and non-material culture, which are considered as being of typical urban origin spread over the countryside. Houses, clothes, furniture, household utensils, gardens, in the rural districts are all losing their original characteristics and tend more and more to resemble the urban of the suburban type. The closed village and neighbourhood communities of former days are opened up, or are opening up. There is an increasing tendency among the rural people to abolish the traditional organisation of their social life on a communitarian-territorial basis and to adopt an organisation on a functional basis, which has been common in towns and cities already for a long time. A typical symptom of this change in the character of the social organisation of the countryside is the rapidly growing importance of all kinds of associations, clubs, unions etc. For ages and ages, if something of common interest had to be done, the village or neighbourhood community acted as a whole, as an undifferentiated unity. This did not mean of course, that there were no differences with ⁱⁿ the village. Age, social status etc. gave people different positions in the community. But there were no organised subgroups; the community functioned as an organic entity. But nowadays for all kinds of functions, which formerly were carried out by the community as a whole and for new functions which have developed in recent years, special and functional organisations have been created and are created. The dead are not carried to their graves by the neighbours but by the employees of the burial-society. The mother and the new-born baby are not nursed anymore by the wives of the neighbours but by the maternity nurse of a public health organisation. A part of the farmers -but not all of them- will be members of a farmer's union. Sometimes -as for example in the Netherlands- different farmers' unions will have members in the same village. Some farmers perhaps will be members of a herdbook, others of an association of fruit-growers or of a co-operative dairy factory. Sometimes such an organisation will find its members within the

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village boundaries only, but often it works in a greater area, including a number of villages. More often the local organisation is only a branch of a provincial-wide or nation-wide association or federation. To a certain degree every club, association etc. splits up the inhabitants of a village into members/and mostly the membership means that part of the attention of the individual is diverted from local problems to problems of a wider scope. Formerly joining forces for certain activities always meant a strengthening of the unity of the village. Now it mostly means a weakening of the coherence of the village population and an increasing integration of the village, in a wider social system.

Formerly the public opinion of the village was a collective opinion. It did not result from loudly propagated opinions of separate groups or individuals leading to a vote in which a certain majority openly wins and a minority is openly defeated. Such a system would have been of course detrimental to the unity of the village. It was incompatible with the social organisation of the closed village. In this closed village it was not a right and a duty to stand for one's personal, individual opinion and to speak for it; on the contrary that would have been considered as improper, against the norms and the tradition. If the community had to make a decision or had to take a standpoint as to certain questions, some people, especially those who had some influence in the community would make a faint suggestion, but without committing themselves. Others would by an almost imperceptible sign or by a few vague words show some approval or disapproval, but also without committing themselves. And so gradually a public opinion would grow, without anyone voicing his opinion openly and without any open controversy. Nobody won and nobody lost and the community as a whole stood for the standpoint in question when it was ultimately formed in this collective process.

But to-day voicing or even shouting your own opinion, fighting for your own point of view, even if you know that you are representing only a minority or perhaps no one, is accepted and even looked upon as favourable in the countryside. Developing the individual's own personality, learning him to trust his own judgement and not to be disturbed by traditional opinions and a nagging social control, have become ideals in education in the countryside as well as in the cities.

So it seems, that functionalism and individualism have been brought from the cities to the countryside and that in this way basic elements of the former pattern of culture of the rural population were destroyed and at the same time the social organisation which was built on this culture and which seemed to be characteristic for the countryside.

It seems, that in all respects the city has become the norm for the countryside and that the rural people are trying to shake off their old material and

non-material culture as quickly as they can and are accepting urban culture as eagerly as possible. Local dialects are disappearing or degenerating, urban habits in eating and drinking, in education, entertaining, recreation, love making, birth control etc. are adopted.

It is hardly possible to perceive any cultural influence in the opposite direction. The so called rurbanisation, according to Fairchild, "Dictionary of Sociology": an "interaction of rural and urban, an intermediary process of rapprochement" is a word, not a socio-cultural reality. It is true, that the countryside is attracting the city-dwellers more than ever before. The number of people working in the cities who want to live in the country is increasing rapidly ^{and} for those who continue to live in the cities, the countryside as a place for recreation is of ever growing importance. But this does not mean a real interaction between the urban culture and the traditional rural culture. The interest which commuters and also many city-dwellers have for certain elements of the traditional rural culture, especially for products of folk art and other elements of material culture, is^about the same interest they would show also for similar cultural products of a savage tribe of Central Africa. What the urban man tries to find in the countryside is fresh air, space, nature, not a change of his real culture. On the contrary, this so called rurbanisation means only an intensification of the exposure of the rural population to the cultural influence of the cities.

And so it seems, that the rural population is defencelessly subjected to a wave of urban culture which sweeps the rural districts, and leaves nothing of the own culture of the countryside. Some authors have tried to show, that now already, at least in some parts of the Western world, cultural differences between cities and countryside have disappeared, that in fact rural and urban people share already the same values and the same attitudes.

It is well known to what factors, as a rule, this cultural change in the countryside is attributed. Mostly the development of modern means of transportation and modern means of communication are considered as being the most important cause. Modern means of transport made an end to the geographical isolation of the countryside and modern means of mass communication transmit day after day and even hour after hour the products of modern city culture to the countryside. The press, the radio, television are as such already cultural products, which were developed in the cities, and the ideas, the ideals, the opinions, the attitudes and the values they transmit are mostly of urban origin. But also the schoolteachers, the speakers who address rural clubs and associations, even the officers of the agricultural advisory service are representative of a culture, which is characteristic for modern urban life. Once an officer of the agricultural extension service in America said to me: "What we try to do

in fact is selling our urban middle class ~~ideals~~ to the farmers". What is mostly forgotten to mention in this context, but what is very important, is the changing ratio between rural and urban population. In the Netherlands for example, though it was already relatively strongly urbanised since the 17th century, a hundred years ago, about 40% of the population was working in agriculture. If we take in account, that the craftsman^e, the shopkeepers etc. living in the villages, who provide for the daily ⁿneeds of the workers in agriculture, must be considered as essentially rural also, the rural population of this country was then about 60% of the total population. A similar calculation for the situation in 1956 learns us, that nowadays probably no more than 20% of the population can be considered as rural. Thus about 1850 the rural population still formed the majority of the Dutch population, now it is only a small minority. At that time rural life was "normal" now it is "abnormal". It was rather easy then for the countryside to maintain its own way of life. But the change in the ratio between the rural and the non-rural population ~~as such~~ means ~~already~~ ^{now a} that ~~will~~ possible pressure of the urban culture on the rural population ^{will} ~~would~~ be much heavier than formerly and that in a struggle between urban and rural culture the position of urban culture ^{will} ~~would~~ be much stronger.

So the picture seems quite clear. We see a rapid changing culture in the countryside and we see also that this change means that many cultural traits which flourish in the cities are accepted now by the rural population. We are able to indicate a number of conditions and forces which certainly are favouring a transmission of culture from the urban to the rural sphere. So the facts not only seem to be established but explained also, and so the scientific mind had to be satisfied. The only thing which perhaps still could be expected is a prediction of the future. This prediction seems to be rather easy. The forces which seem to be responsible for the substitution of the original ~~rural~~ ^{rural} culture by an urban one, certainly will grow in strength in the future. The influence of the development of modern traffic certainly has not yet come to an end. The importance of the means of mass communication is increasing every day. The number of people working in agriculture in the Western world will certainly go down in the future not only relatively but also absolutely. So there hardly seems to be a possibility for a dispute about the ultimate results of this development. There will be no rural culture in the future anymore. And so it seems that I can end my lecture here and that you and I can go home thinking about the tragic fate of rural culture.

But you will perhaps have observed, that just this very word "seem" was rather often used in the foregoing and it will perhaps have given you the feeling that I am not quite content. Are there perhaps some holes in this seemingly so perfect reasoning which backs this popular vision of the cultural relations between town and countryside? Are there perhaps some facts which

do not fit into this theory ?

Some weeks ago in Istanbul a working party on urban-rural sociology of the International Sociological Association was meeting. To this conference a number of papers of Turkish rural sociologists were submitted. One of the most essential points they made in these papers was that the Turkish rural population seemingly does not want to be urbanised, a fact, which was clearly regretted by these sociologists. Even if people from the countryside are working for a rather long period in Turkish industrial enterprises in the cities, they hardly show any tendency to assimilate. They are longing for their villages and if they return they will fit in without difficulties in their old traditional rural surroundings and they show no desire to educate their fellow-villagers to the cultural level of the cities.

So it is not self-evident that the rural population is eager to accept the culture of the cities, as it seems to be the case in the western countries and if rural people do not want to accept urban culture they seem to be able to develop, be it consciously or unconsciously, an effective defence-mechanism against cultural influences of the cities. Perhaps you will remark, that Turkey, in a certain sense, still has to be considered as an underdeveloped country. That may be true, but that does not alter the fact, that there are cities^{in Turkey} and that rural people come into contact and even into close contact with urban culture, but do not accept it.

We can conclude, that with the rural people in the Western countries, there must be a certain willingness to accept a new culture, quite different from their traditional one, at least ^{some} a certain receptivity for it. Why this receptivity ? What does it mean in fact ?

There must be

Let us try first to analyse what this cultural change which is going in the countryside really is, what it really means. If we do so, we have to emphasize that the adoption of certain elements of the material culture of the cities and of urban habits by the rural population is as such only of secondary importance. It influences the life of this population only superficially and is not characteristic for the recent period, even if this process may be intensified in the last few decades. Much what is often considered as characteristic for the traditional rural material culture is in fact, what the Germans call "gesunkenes Kulturgut", elements of culture which have come down socially. Often these elements of material culture were first the exclusive possession of the urban upper classes or even of the nobility or the royal court. Gradually they were taken over by the urban middle and lower classes, while the upper classes replaced them by other ones. Often they ended their way down in the countryside, where they sometimes were preserved for so many years, that in the end they were looked upon as original product of the rural culture.

The most essential cultural change which is taking place in the countryside is the change in the way of thinking. This change in the way of thinking did not begin everywhere at the same time and did not proceed at the same speed. But nowhere in the Western world it is lacking. It is the change from a traditional way of thinking to a way of thinking I shall call, for lack of a better word, the modern way.

In a culture which is characterized by the traditional way of thinking the norms for human behaviour are found in the past. As it was formerly it was right and things have to be as they always have been. Change is considered as being fundamentally wrong. If changes occur in a traditionalistic society they will mostly come gradually and imperceptibly, so that people can continue to believe that things remain as they always have been. If, by certain circumstances, people in a traditionalistic society are forced to accept an innovation consciously, they often will try to explain to themselves and to others, that in fact it is not an innovation but a restoration of the original situation, which because of neglect or ^{for} other reasons had disappeared. In mediaeval and also in more recent charters and other documents in which measures for the improvement of a certain situation are announced, in the introduction often the following measures are justified in this way. Traditionalism is more than conservatism; it does not consider the pro's and con's of a certain change and chooses against change then, but it does not even consider the possibility of change. In a totally traditionalistic society, change is not even given a thought. If in a still predominantly traditionalistic society innovators launch plans for change, the society feels endangered and reacts emotionally hostile against these innovators. Traditionalism is incompatible with experiment, with real science and with the application of the findings of science in daily life. It was traditionalistic thinking, not religious principles as such, which clashed with the ideas and the findings of people like Copernicus and Galilei.

For ages and ages this traditionalistic thinking dominated the Western world as well as the rest of the world. And we must emphasize here that it dominated the cities as well as the countryside. It is not until the Renaissance, that the first beginnings of a fundamental change in the way of thinking occurred. But in the next few centuries this gradually developing new way of thinking influenced only relatively few. It was not until the 18th century and especially in the second half of this century that it began to penetrate the minds of ordinary men and that it began to show its influence upon the daily social, economic and political life.

It is a wellknown fact of course, that during the last two centuries the Western world has shown a fundamental change and many historians, economists, sociologists and philosophers have tried to understand, what really happened and what are the backgrounds of the birth of what is now generally considered

as being the characteristic pattern of culture of this modern Western world.

I shall not try to give you a survey of the different theories and opinions about this deep going change and shall restrict myself to the statement that in my opinion the most important and most essential element of this change was that the Western man has become dynamic. Perhaps you will suspect me of a platitude, when I use this much used and misused word "dynamic". But when I use it, I do not want to express primarily, that the Western society is moving and changing, but that change is mentally accepted, that it is considered as normal and good. It is this mental acceptance of change, which is essential for the modern way of thinking as compared with traditionalistic thinking and which forms the core of modern Western culture. It was this development of modern thinking, which opened the way for the development of modern scientific research and for the application of this research. It is the most characteristic element in the modern economic mentality. It is essential for modern political life in which governments and political parties -even the conservative ones- compete by programmes aiming at social change. Acceptance of change is the background of the strive for better social conditions of the labour class, which is so characteristic for the recent history of the Western World. In a traditionalistic society individuals and groups consider their social position as self-evident, even as ordained by God. It was the development of modern thinking, which brought about what the Dutch sociologist Steinmetz once called the emancipation of desires. There is a clear relation between the acceptance of change as normal and good and the development of individualism and functionalism. The strong social control of the closed community hampers change. In a non-totalitarian society at least, change demands the free initiative of the individual. Functional organisations are the tools of change. They are the combined forces of those who want something done in our society, which means in fact that they want to change it in some respect.

Though the adoption of the modern way of thinking was enormously accelerated since the 18th century, it is nevertheless a process which is still going on and has not yet come to an end. Especially in important parts of the countryside the population is still fully in transition from the traditionalistic to the modern way of thinking and much what is often called urbanisation is nothing but symptoms of this transition.

It will be clear from the foregoing that it would not be right to call this transition from traditionalistic to modern thinking urbanisation. The modern way of thinking as such is neither urban nor rural, it is generally Western and as a more or less common phenomenon relatively recent. As we pointed out a moment ago, in the middle ages the urban population was traditionalistic as ~~much~~^{well} as the countryside.

It cannot be denied that in general the modern way of thinking developed earlier in the cities than in the countryside and that in that case the cities and towns often functioned as centres which stimulated its

spread over the surrounding rural districts. But not always and everywhere. There are parts of the countryside where the modern way of thinking came in existence as early or earlier than in the adjoining towns and cities. So for example with the farmers in the northern parts of this country, in the province of Groningen, already in the second half of the 18th century clear symptoms can be observed of a fundamental change in the way of thinking and of corresponding changes in their social and economic behaviour. There are no indications that the nearby towns and cities -in fact there was only one of importance, viz. the city of Groningen- had a significant influence upon this change going on in the countryside. This city certainly did not show a more modern mentality than the surrounding rural areas. The population in these rural areas in question was already essentially modern about 1850, at least as far as the farmers were concerned. Economic life had ^{received} a modern, capitalistic character, the relations between farmers and farm labourers had lost their original patriarchal traits and had become, at least from the side of the farmers, modern and businesslike. The old customs and folkways had already vanished for the greater part. The traditional costumes had given way to clothes after the fashion, the traditional style in architecture and furniture had gone. An extensive education for farmers' sons and even for farmers' daughters had become normal and there was a keen interest with the farmers in the development of science and its applications. Many of them belonged to the advocates of a radical political liberalism.

So what we see here is not a culturally defenceless rural population, but a group of farmers acting as forerunners in an almost aggressive modernisation of their culture and their social and economic life.

The history of the spreading of the modern pattern of culture in the Western world has not yet been studied so extensively as it should be studied; even in this small country we know rather little about the way in which this process developed here. But it seems that in the Western and northern parts of this country, the rural districts in general were rather early as to the acceptance of modern ideas, though most of them lagged behind, when compared with the districts in the province of Groningen, mentioned a moment ago. For the Western and Northern parts in general it can ~~probably~~ hardly be said that the cities took the lead in the fundamental cultural change. Though the Western parts of this country, as was mentioned already, were strongly urbanised since the 17th century citylife did not flourish here during the greater part of the 19th century. Urban economic life was at a rather low level, the number of inhabitants hardly increased and cultural life was more or less sleepy. It was only after about

1875 that a revival of urbanisation in the western provinces could be observed and that the social and cultural influence of the cities increased. But at that moment cultural change in many rural districts in this part of the country was already under way.

Generally spoken, in the eastern and southern parts of the country, characterized by rather poor soils and relatively small farms, we see another picture. Here the transition from the traditionalistic pattern of culture to a modern one came rather late. It was only at the end of the 19th century that definite symptoms of a coming change could be observed. Even today traditionalistic and modern elements of culture are mixed up here^{and} in many respects the rural population gives the impression of being culturally confused. Here the popular theory as to the cultural relation between city and countryside seemingly holds. Every day elements of the traditional culture disappear and elements of culture already common in the cities are accepted. The picture of the culturally defenceless countryside seems to become true here.

But is it really true? Is even here the contrast between countryside and town as such really dominating the situation? Let us try to consider the facts more closely. When I mentioned the early development of the modern way of thinking in the countryside of the northern parts of the country, I spoke deliberately of the farmers and not of the rural population as a whole, because this statement does not hold as far as the farmlabourers are concerned. Notwithstanding the example of the farmers, the pattern of culture of the farm labourers remained essentially traditionalistic until the end of the 19th century; only then the idea of change began to take an important place in their conception of the social world. It has to be emphasized here that the farmers in the northern districts of the province of Groningen are the most well-to-do, the biggest farmers in this country. So it seems that here a clear difference between the social classes can be observed as to the period in which they developed the modern way of thinking. In a perhaps somewhat less pronounced way, we see the same in the other rural districts in the western and the northern parts of the country; the farmers took the lead in the development of the modern way of thinking, the farmlabourers lagged behind. And are not the cities showing the same picture? There also the lower classes showed a considerable timelag, as to the acceptance of the modern way of thinking. Even now there are amongst the lower classes in towns and cities many who in different aspects still show a typical traditionalistic way of thinking.

If we ^{now} are conscious of the fact that in the 19th century the greater part of the farmers on the sandy soils in the Netherlands -and the same holds probably for the majority of rural population of the Western world- were very poor peasants who had to work hard and long to provide in their very simple

needs and that even now many of them belong~~ing~~ to the lowest income groups, it will be clear, that from the point of view of acceptance of the modern way of thinking, they must be compared with the lower classes in other parts of the country. So the phenomenon that these rural districts in the eastern and southern parts of the country make the impression that they are lagging behind ~~or at least were lagging behind~~ in the acceptance of modern western culture, must be explained for the greater part by the fact, that well-to-do middle and upper classes which could be the forerunners in the acceptance of the new pattern of culture were almost lacking here; the picture was dominated here by the lower peasant classes which were backward in this respect. On the other hand, in those areas where the socio-economic structure was dominated by a rather numerous class of more or less well-to-do farmers or by an urban middle-class, which were rather early in the acceptance of the modern way of thinking, the area as a whole made the impression of being advanced in this respect notwithstanding the lower classes were lagging behind here as well as elsewhere.

Notwithstanding the modern way of thinking is spreading now very rapidly also amongst the lower classes in the Netherlands and the Western world in general, sociological research as for example carried out by the department of rural sociology of this university shows clearly, that even now there is a considerable difference in the degree in which the modern way of thinking has been accepted by the operators of farms of a different size in the same district. But on the other hand we must emphasize that research also clearly indicates that class differences in this respect are gradually vanishing.

The great moving force in this gradual spread of the modern way of thinking in our society is education. Since the Renaissance educational agencies in the Western world have been penetrated to an increasing degree by the modern way of thinking and when in the 19th century educational activities reached the lower classes, the modern way of thinking began to penetrate here also. Not only formal teaching in schools, but also all other forms of education like agricultural advisory work in its different aspects, activities of all kind of associations and clubs in the educational field etc., all tend to strengthen the modern way of thinking.

So our main conclusion is, that the most important element of the so-called urbanisation of the countryside is not the substitution of an essentially rural by an essentially urban culture, but only a certain aspect, a certain phase perhaps of the general spread of the modern way of thinking in the Western world as a whole in which cities and countryside are equally involved. If many rural districts seem to show a considerable time-lag in the acceptance of this modern way of thinking, then we have to explain this primarily by the fact that the lower classes in our society accepted this modern way of

thinking much later than the leading classes. As a result areas dominated by a poor peasant class showed a time-lag not primarily because they were rural, but because they were poor. The rural areas do not accept this modern way of thinking and its enormous social, cultural and economic consequences because those are forced upon them by the cities, but because, as a consequence of an ever increasing education, the traditionalistic way of thinking gives way to modern thinking.

What is going on in the Western world is not a struggle between two cultures, one fundamentally rural and the other fundamentally urban, but the last phase in the restoration of the basic unity in the way of thinking, which was disrupted when the higher classes in our society began to accept the modern way of thinking and the lower classes were not yet able to follow them. That the groups, as for example the peasant group, in which only relatively recently the process of the change from the traditionalistic way of thinking to the modern way of thinking became of real importance, show symptoms of a certain cultural confusion, is quite understandable and even normal. That they sometimes make the impression of being at a loss, certainly does not mean that they will not find their own way again. The farmers in many parts of the northern and western districts of this country have demonstrated that the rural population is able to do so.

I am conscious of course of the fact that I gave you only a rough outline of the process of cultural change, which takes place in the countryside and I know also, that, perhaps too exclusively, I have drawn your attention to the aspect of class differences in this change. There are of course other factors also, which played a more or less important role in this phenomenon. So I shall not deny, that geographical isolation has something to do with the time-lag, rural districts showed in the acceptance of the modern way of thinking. As was mentioned before, the general force by which change was brought about, is education; education always means social contacts and social contacts have something to do with geographical isolation. But geographical isolation is not only a cause, it is also an effect. It can be overcome ^{whether} ~~if~~ it will be overcome or not it for an important part dependent on those who are isolated. The early development of the modern thinking in some parts of the countryside shows that geographical conditions are not of primary importance in this respect.

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What should be mentioned too is, that, in the recent period, the Western world as a whole shows a fargoing levelling of the regional differences in material culture and in patterns of behaviour. The causes of this levelling are well known, the most important being mass production and increasing social contacts as a consequence of better communications. Indirectly there are of course causal relations between the development of the modern way of thinking and this levelling of ~~these~~ superficial cultural traits. But theoretically it

would be possible, that two different groups showed fundamentally the same way of modern thinking, but would show at the same time important differences in material culture and in patterns of behaviour. But our world seems to have become too small to make it practically possible. In this levelling of superficial cultural traits in the Western world, the countryside is also involved. Often this process is indicated as one of the aspects of urbanisation of the countryside. But those who do so, seem to forget that the same process is demonstrating itself in the urban world also. Once Paris, London, Amsterdam and Rome were essentially different, but today they have already lost their typical characteristics for an important part. If you awake in an hotel room in one of these cities, you hardly know where you are and the so called typical souvenirs you buy, differ only from the typical souvenirs of other cities by the crest of arms they show.

But does not the spread of the modern way of thinking over the countryside on the one hand and this levelling out of the differences in the superficial cultural traits on the other, mean that in the future there will not be left any typical traits of the culture of the rural population as compared with the culture of the cities? I think we must suppose there will be some difference indeed. Surely, the basic elements of the rural culture will be the same as those of the culture of the western world as a whole and the daily life of the rural population will be characterized by the use of objects of material culture and by a behaviour, which will be in many respects the same as in the cities. But on the other hand, the conditions in which the rural population is living, will show, also in the future, many important differences from those in the cities. Without trying to be exhaustive I mention the following differences: 1) The dominant economic activity in the countryside is almost completely organised in small family enterprises. The function of hired labour is not important and even declining. Economic life in non-rural areas is for the greater part organised in big and very big enterprises. The importance of the family enterprise is declining, ^{here} the function of hired labour still increasing; 2) For an important part the farming population is living in detached farmhouses. As far as farmers and the rural non-farm population are living in settlements, these are small ones, often far away from other settlements. The non-rural population is living in big units with an ever increasing number of inhabitants. The process of urban growth is not really influenced by the development of suburbs and urban fringes; 3) The dominance of agriculture as a means of existence, makes the composition of the working population of the countryside rather one-sided. This again makes the thinking of the rural population about economic life and all what is related to it also much more one-sided than in the cities, which show generally a

much greater variety of enterprises, professions and interests; 4) Notwithstanding all changes agriculture has already undergone and will undergo in the future, agriculture as an economic and technical activity shows very typical aspects which makes it different from all other economic activities and this too makes the countryside different from the cities.

These very concrete ^{of} and real differences between the conditions of life of the city-dwellers and the country population have, and must have, an influence of some importance on the way of life, the attitudes and values of the rural population. They will make that the rural population, also in the future will more or less differ from the urban population in the way they think about property and income, about labour and leisure, about recreation and entertainment and about human relations in general. The needs and wants of the rural population as to housing and clothes, transportation and communication, eating and drinking, will not be the same as those of the urban population. One can speculate about the relative importance of these remaining differences between town and countryside. Surely they are less important than the fundamental unity in the way of thinking we may expect, but partly they are more important than the superficial unity in material culture and ways of behaviour we mentioned before.

Our conclusion may be that the culture of the cities and that of the countryside in the future will be fundamentally the same, because both will be modern and western, but that both rural and urban culture will show their own finishing touch, which will give an element of diversity in our world which threatens to become too small and too monotonous.

Wageningen, 22 juni 1958.

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