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RURAL URBAN RELATIONS IN PRE-MODERN INDIA: TRENDS AND PROSPECTS

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Approaches to the study of urban and rural society in pre-colonial India have led mainly to the juxtaposition of rural and urban societies. Just as village studies tended to deal with intra village structures and institutions, urban studies tended to deal with intra town structures and institutions. It is necessary to go beyond such juxtaposition and to study the structures and institutions that link the two - supra village and supra town, or the networks linking the two.

Historians have already written about extraction of surplus from the villages by the urban-based ruling class, supply of food grains and raw materials to the towns, primarily a one-way traffic of goods and services, while villages receiving not much in return! This view fits into the village self-sufficiency theory of Indian village community propounded by such influential scholars as Thomas Munro, Charles Metcalfe, Henry Maine, Karl Marx and some of their modern followers including Mahatma Gandhi, Vinoba Bhave and Jay Prakash Narayan. This view however, needs to be examined more carefully.

Based on the study of archival sources as also a host of secondary sources pertaining to Eastern Rajasthan, the present article arose in the context of increasing attention paid by historians

1 There is now an extensive debate on this issue. For an earlier statement from sociologist, one can see M.N. Srinivas and A.M. Shah 'Myth of Self Sufficiency of the Indian Village', 'Economic and Political Weekly 12(1960) pg. 37. Also see Eric Stokes, 'Return of a peasant to the South Asian History', South Asia (old series) (1976) and Ravinder Kumar, 'The Changing Structure of Urban Society in Colonial India, in Ravinder Kumar (ed) *Essays in Social History of Modern India*, Delhi, OUP, 1983'. Philip Abrams and E.A. Wrigley ed. *Towns in Societies: Essays in Economic History and Historical Sociology*; and Dipankar Gupta & K.L. Sharma ed. *Country - Town*

Nexus (Studies in Social Transformation in Contemporary India), Rawat publications 1991, also provide a fresh insight in Rural Urban Relations.

to study inter- regional trade with relatively lesser emphasis on its intra-regional trade. This was partly due to paucity of historical sources and partly also due to the unstated assumption of intra-regional uniformity. However, as a matter of fact, there was a great deal of geographical diversity within North Indian States, on account of specialization of agricultural production of different commercial crops, such as indigo, cotton, tobacco, sugarcane, spices and oil seeds, together with food crops such as paddy, wheat and barley. Such specialization in agricultural production encouraged trade between one agricultural tract and another. Frequently the rural dignitaries like zamindars, jagirdars, and also artisans and cultivators, having substantial marketable surplus, themselves carried their produce on head, on back of animals or in carts to sell directly to rural market centers. Moreover, they also sold a great deal of produce to traders in a nearby town (qasba), in a weekly market (hat), or in a fair to retailers, who in turn marketed it to other towns and villages.

Because although the old "theory of self-sufficiency" of each individual Indian village has virtually died, it has been substituted by the theory that the rural sector as a whole was self-sufficient². In the present article, we will attempt to examine the validity of this concept of rural self-sufficiency, with special reference to qasbas³ during 17th – 18th century, to study the

²Tapan Ray Chaudhari and Irfan Habib ed. *Cambridge Economic History of India*, pg. 83, 247, 248 and 327.

³For our study, we have primarily relied on the information available from the qasbas of Sawai Jaipur / Amber : Chatsu, Malarna, and qasba Sanganer.

theoretical concept surrounding the discussions on rural-urban relations.

Historiographical construct

The value and importance of urban history has already been recognized among historians and sociologists alike. But the nature of work done in the field till independence was hardly substantial. However since Independence, interest has certainly been increasing and some extremely important studies have been undertaken in this field. Prof. Grewal and Prof. Indu Banga⁴, undertook study of Batala in which they had thrown light on the problems of urban history. Among the earliest scholars to take up the study of growth and classification of towns during this period is Dr. I.P. Gupta, who started his work under the guidance of Prof. Satish Chandra. Soon after that came the work of H.K. Naqvi. Prof S. C. Misra literally and metaphorically exposed new avenues of research where he took up with his colleagues the excavation and the interpretation of the ruins of Champaner. Prof H. C. Verma's Perspectives on Urbanization in Early Medieval India threw interesting insight in urbanization in the Sultanate period, while R. Champalaxmi's Trade, Ideology and Urbanization in South India explored urban dimension in South India. B. L. Bhadani in his work Peasants, Artisans and Entrepreneurs (1999) has given fresh arguments on formation of towns / qasbas in 17th-18th Centuries. A few other scholars have published interesting studies of medieval India. Though these are excellent works, yet this is a field which requires a far more intensive study than has been undertaken so far.

⁴ J. S. Grewal and Indu Banga ed. City in India H

An in depth studies of urbanization of medieval India would in fact significantly improve our understanding of medieval Indian economy, society and culture. As Prof. S. Nurul Hasan has rightly pointed out 'The medieval civilization was pre-eminently an urban civilization in the sense that its cities were the expression, the chrysalis of its heritage'. Though we have an idea of the society, the upper-class culture that came into being, yet we have little understanding of the dynamics of a medieval town, distinctive growth of its urban centers, specializing in craft industries, in trade and in pilgrim traffic. In fact, our knowledge of smaller towns of medieval India is negligible as compared to our knowledge of large towns and urban centers. In his account '12 Subahs', of Abul Fazl refers to 2737 qasbas. However not much work has been done on these townships although it is a recognized

fact that these were vital links between a village and the medieval metropolis - Our study in fact is a response to this need for studying and exploring the medieval townships- qasbas .

Any discussion on the qasbas would necessarily revolve around two parameters, that are ;

- (a) The origin of qasbas.
- (b) The nature of rural-urban/village-qasba relationship, i.e. were the qasbas actually urban and parasitic - based on the exploitation of a relatively self-sufficient rural sector?

We briefly analyze the historiographical trends surrounding these two issues

(a) Regarding the origins of towns, the French traveler Bernier had stated that medieval town or urban centers suddenly expanded when the imperial camp was established there and became deserted when the emperor left. However many modern scholars who instead have satisfactorily proved that the Indian stable did not accept this concept of Bernier that Indian cities were merely 'military campus'.

Another interesting conclusion that emerged from the studies of urbanization was that the extent of urbanization in India during the 17th Century. It is considered to be higher than what it was in British India at the beginning of 19th century. In fact, according to a thesis referred by Satish Chandra, the percentage of urban population in Northern India worked out to be over 15%. Professor Irfan Habib⁶ has estimated it to be 12.5 to 15% of the population of Mughal India.

Not only Bernier's statement, but also unfortunately,

the repetitions of the idea by Marx in his

⁵Travels in Moghul Empire by Francois Bernier, 1656-68, ed. Vincent Smith

⁶"Potentialities of Capitalist Development in the Economy of Mughal India", Enquiry, NS, Vol. III, no.3 (1971), pg 1-56.

letters, that the cities in India were mere military campus, has for long become a barrier in the growth of urban studies in India. Even now, some of our notions rest on the models of economic and urban growth put forward in Europe in the 1940's. The model of development of medieval Europe put forward by Henri Pirenne⁷ believed that towns grow with the growth of trade, and secondly that the entire growth of a new social order, the capitalist order is predicated on a kind of a division of labour between the cities and the towns, industries/handicrafts being concentrated largely in the towns, countryside merely supplying raw materials and the foodstuffs. In other words, it postulated what might be called a kind of internal colonial structure where the dynamic developmental factors were concentrated in the towns and the peasants merely were, as Leon Trotsky once observed, 'the pack mules of history'. However, the role of agricultural production was largely ignored in this model. In fact, it was virtually assumed that agricultural productivity remained static during the medieval age. And demographic factors were also not taken into account.

With much greater information on medieval times, both the agricultural and the demographic factors have been woven into the new studies. Writers such as

⁷ Henri Pirenne, "Medieval cities, their origins and revival of trade"

Guy Bois have shown that demography and prices and a direct effect on expansion of land under cultivation with productivity declining on account of cultivation of marginal lands. When population, outstripped production, famines reduced population, land fell out of cultivation and production and production rose. This cyclic movement had a direct impact on urban population and urban industry.

It's interesting to note in some of the early western writings on India, the fact that the towns were not the foci of industry had been emphasized. That the towns in India did not have a separate juridical entity, like the towns in Europe, was used as another argument to prove that the towns in India were merely exploiters and thus to underline that the totally stagnant oriental society as a whole was incapable of developing. When we look at the processes of development of our society, we have to first discard these ideas and models, which have been discarded in the west but unfortunately continue to influence thinking in our country.

Fortunately, we are now moving away from excessive dependence on long distance trade as a vehicle of social and economic change. This point has been brought in the Indian History Congress in 1984. Dr. Nandi has pointed out that the towns in India started reviving in the 11th Century and that feudalization in early period did mean a considerable growth of agriculture. Feudalism, according to S. Chandra implies a society in which cultivation is exploited by extra economic means by a class that does not work on the land itself.

However according to Prof. Satish Chandra exploitation could not have increased without production growing simultaneously. So when we try to understand the process of growth of towns, the growth of agricultural production, the manner in which agricultural surplus is distributed, the structure of village society, the development as well as the inhibiting factors all becomes important," What precise role the growth or decline of long distance trade play in the process needs detailed examination?

Professor R. S. Sharma has argued in his extremely valuable work Indian Feudalism about the growth of feudalism in India, that growth of localism was linked on the one hand with the process of giving grants of land to the Brahmins and political decentralization and on the other with the decline of long distance trade. He has further traced the absence of gold coins in North India between 9th and 10th Century to the decline of long distance North South trade

⁸Satish Chandra, Some Aspects of Urbanisation in Medieval India., City in Indian History Ed.

Indu Banga, J.S. Grewal

In India. perhaps this theory would have been fully accepted in case of decline of town life all over India during this period.

While some of the bigger towns declined, the extent of the decline of town life all over India is still a root question.

In his address, Dr. Nandi has emphasized the decline of coins of small value. Quite obviously coins of small value had much greater implication for the smaller towns, for local trade and local transactions rather than for long distance trade.

Some historians have a tendency to link political divisions too closely with the process of growth of towns. Thus, the arrival of the Turks was seen as helping in the process of political integration by breaking down localism, and in opening over land commerce between India, Central Asia and West Asia. These were important factors in the process of growth of towns in India in the 13th and 14th Century. However the process of the revival of towns starts not in the 13th Century but in the 11th Century, the entire matter would have to be reconsidered. The argument that the period the arrival of the Turks in India was a period of political disintegration and one during which the growth of towns was not possible, can be equally applied to the period after the fall of the Tughlaq rule in the 15th Century. It is in general a period of political disintegration, especially in Northern India. But S. Chandra is somewhat doubtful of its also being a period of the decline of towns. The Sultanate of Delhi shrank to half its former size under Feroz Shah Tughlaq. Yet there is no shrinkage of towns. The period witnessed, in fact, the establishment of many new towns. It's clear that the entire growth of towns during the time of Feroz Shah Tughlaq is closely linked with agricultural expansion, with canal network and improvement of horticulture and the establishment of large numbers of gardens all around the towns.

In fact, according to Prof. Satish Chandra, the role of Afghans in the agricultural expansion also needs to be rethought. The very fact that the Afghans as distinct from the Turks settled in the countryside suggests that they must have had something more to do with agriculture, not merely as people who in one way or the other extracted surplus. So, if we were to broaden our earlier understanding and to link the growth of towns not only with the growth of agriculture, the so called period of decline and disintegration would perhaps emerge in a new light.

Professor S. C. Mishra in his article "Urban History in India: Possibilities and Perspectives" too

states a similar viewpoint. For him "The social transformation which brought the town into existence was of course due to the surplus which was created by sedentarisation. Urbanization, thus, is contingent on a relatively advanced mode of production, on a relationship between the economic urbanization of society and the level of technical theory, which in turn determine the rate, the volume and the direction of resource utilization.

It would be relevant at this point to observe the evolution and functioning of qasbas

established during this period. We can classify qasbas into five types as follows :

- i. Qasbas that were large villages originally and continued to be state Headquarters after becoming qasbas. eg Qasbas Lalsot, Qasba Chatsu
- ii. The qasbas that were once villages and later became new headquarters of parganas, replacing the previous pargana headquarters.
- iii. Qasbas, which were a market town with the suffix of 'ganj'. There were two types of market towns, one originally established as a qasba and the other, which developed into one from a market village. e.g. qasba Sanganer.
- iv. The fourth type of qasba was a town with a fort. It may be said that a village, which was attached to the fort, became a qasba but not the fort to a qasba. The reason why the village became a qasba must have been that the village developed its economy under the protection of its fort.
- v. Yet another type of qasba was the most common during this period. They were neither pargana/administrative headquarters nor fortresses but had commercial/industrial character. From their revenue records we know that here resided many merchants and artisans beside agriculturalists. The 'chak' of qasba (town area) was very large as compared with other types of qasbas already mentioned. For Example, qasba Sanganer & qasba Sawai Jaipur.

According to Bhadani, "judging from an examination of the creation, function and character of these five types of Qasbas, we can say with fair certainty that their appearance and formation of new Qasbas of this period was mainly due to economic developments"

A. M. Shah has highlighted three basic factors all of which according to him played varying roles in making of an urban center in pre-industrial India. There were economic (trade and commerce), political (court and administration) and religious (pilgrimage). He has further argued that although there could be one dominant factor-economic, political, administrative or religious-in making of a town, other factors co-existed with it in a dynamic relationship. Any attempt to define a city or trace its origins in terms of a single factor is a futile exercise. In retrospect thus while analyzing the origins of qasbas or small towns of medieval period, a great deal depends upon--- as Dr. Satish Chandra has stated---"the basis upon which a city or a town was first selected, or emerged as an administrative center, whether it had an agricultural hinterland or the advantages of communication and transportation. and so on and so forth"

Another significant point that relates to the origin of small towns is their regional basis, for the pattern of small towns differed from region to region. The growth of qasbas in the 16th and 17th Centuries especially emphasized by most medieval historians working on this field. However, whereas in the Sultanate period a qasba was a

9A.M. Shah in his article 'Rural-Urban Networks' in K.L. Sharma and D. Gupta ed. Counry Town Nexus, Rawat Publications 1991.

Village with a fort, in 16th and 17th Century, a Qasba was a village with a market. Thus the entire concept of qasba itself kept on changing.

As far as the historical trends of rural-urban relations are concerned in fact, social scientists over the years have largely studied urban and rural area as 'discrete objects of social analysis acting autonomously as causal forces'. In fact, the town country distinction and the differentiation of the 'urbane' and 'progressive' from the 'rustic' and 'backward' provided the conceptual basis for the 'Whig Theory of History' in which an ascendant, civilized, urban, particiate, operating from dynamic capital cities is at the center of cumulative social progress¹⁰. The separation of town and country in the commercial stage of civilization became the benchmark for the proponents of the new and revolutionary 'conjectural' history of 'civil society' (J. Merrington.....). Karl Marx for instance defined the town and country relations either in terms of an 'undifferentiated' unity as observed in Asiatic history or as an 'opposition' or separation' which became the foundation of social division of labour in the western societies.

The same line of argument recurred in the Maurice Dobb - Paul Sweezy debate on the the origins of capitalism wherein the town country opposition was seen as an

10 J. Merrington 'Town and Country in the Transition to Capitalism' in Rodney Hilton ed. 'The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism, NLB, London 1976.

Opposition of economic-corporate spheres of sovereignty¹¹. For Henri Pirenne and Max Weber on the other hand, the town and country were opposed as spatial and structural forms and as cultural patterns only in feudal societies, the opposition being obliterated in industrial societies.¹²

The town and country relations have also been seen as one of the dominance of the town¹³. The dominance, it is variously argued, emanates from the capitalist control of production that subordinates the country to urban capital. It may also result from political hegemony or arise from a concentration of decision-making or bureaucratic crowd in urban centers (F. Braudel, J. Merrington) the classic objective of revolutionary socialism hence becomes the abolition of the anti-thesis between town and country (G. Hoppe and J. Langton, Countryside and Town in Industrialization).

The success of this idea of 'rural-urban divide' prompted its exportation to certain European and Third World Countries. This varied application however proved the inadequacy of these concepts and by the end of 1960's the nation of rural urban differentiation was considered.

¹¹Maurice Dobb 'Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism.

¹²According to B. R. Grover, the concept of village self-sufficiency has been well exploded. In fact in a vas country like India, with a great diversity of geographical and topographical conditions and varying degrees of socio-economic development, its basically incorrect to talk of an Indian village in sgeneral terms for the stage of economic development of a village may differ from one Subah to another and may even vary from one region to another within a Subah.

¹³According to F. Braudel, "the towns were all seats of political power and in that sense represented a particular characteristic of "domination", which according to him was esential to the town, In addition to their position as political centers, these towns were often places where the presiding deity of the state resided. The political power and religious authority thus came to be concentrated in what was in reality the solitary town in the kingdom.

Theoretically bankrupt. This dissatisfaction had stemmed from the primarily dualistic nature of formulations and from the fact that they failed to include an adequate classification of urban and rural types so essential for societal analysis (T. S. McGee, The Urbanization Process in the Third World, G. Bell and Sons, London 1971). The fallacy of using urban and rural as generic terms also became apparent when one was confronted with discordant, imperial, material collected in trans-historical, cross cultural context.

Quite obviously thus, the more recent literature on rural urban diffusion and transformation suggests that supra local linkages between the town and the country need to be deciphered or adequately understood in any serious analysis of societal process specially in the developing countries where the rural linkages both functional and spatial are in a flux.

As far as India is concerned, in the studies conducted prior to independence, it was assumed that urbanization in India was itself a new process. In fact, scholars went to the extent of branding Indian towns specially small towns and Qasbas as 'extension of villages/overgrown villages', Terms such as 'rural town', 'urban town', 'rural urbanite' and 'urban ruralite' were used to describe people in society of small towns¹⁴. Further the Indian village was considered as a 'closed' and 'isolated' system. It was characterized as monolithic, atomistic and an unchanging entity. Metcalfe describes village communities as 'Unchanged, Unshaken and self-sufficient little Republics'¹⁵ Erroneously, as in west, the autonomy of tribal/rural settlements was taken for granted in such studies to be also applicable to the Indian society, without recognizing its civilization base and institutional linkages developed over several millennia.

Subsequent years however saw the growth of urban studies based largely on the methodology of social surveys. These generated some useful empirical statistical data but without much sensitivity in respect of organic linkages among social systems within the city or between country city inter-relationships.

Further Sociological and social anthropological researches from the middle of the 1960's onwards increasingly demonstrated the concern for explorations of relationships among institutions and subsystems of society. Even the writings of European and American socialists on India can be observed to have shown this

14A.M. Shah, Rural Urban Networks in India

15 See Bernard S. Cohn, 'Notes on the History of the Study of Indian Society and Culture' in Milton Singer and Bernard S. Cohn Ed., Structure and Change in Indian Society, Chicago Aldine Publishing Company, 1968, Pg 7-23.

Orientation. Louis Dumont, Milton Singer, Bernard Cohn among many others recognized the need for a historical, comparative and systemic approach for understanding of specific institutions such as caste and kinship, town and country and economy and culture in India. These studies reinforced the work of Indian sociologists and social anthropologists who had already been using macro-sociological and comparative theoretical perspective in their studies. In most of these studies, not only the assumption of autonomy of the village/city as a social unit was challenged but doubts were also expressed on the validity of these as sociological categories. A momentum was thus created for adopting macro sociological and comparative historical perspective in the studies of social structures and cultural elements of the Indian Social System¹⁶.

In the early 1970's, the Indian Institute for Advanced Studies, Shimla organized a national seminar of sociologists and social anthropologists with theme 'The Macro Sociology of India' and its proceedings are appropriately titled 'Beyond the village : Sociological Explorations'. Though the seminar did not directly deal with the country town relations, it made consequence for the country town

¹⁶Yogendra Singh, "Country-Town Nexus: Social Transformation in contemporary Indian Society", in K.L. Sharma and D. Gupta Ed. "Country....."

relationship. In so far as underlined the dependence modern agriculture on urban industrial inputs, banks, market and pricing mechanisms etc.

However, as Indar Deva ¹⁷ has stated the existence of a relationship between peasants, villages and towns is not a new phenomenon for it is not the modern means of transport and communication that have related the peasant village to a town for the first time rather institutional, cultural, religious, political and economic ties have existed between the peasant villages and urban cultures since the beginning of historical times. In fact, cities and towns could not have come into being or continued to exist without this relationship, the urban centers had to depend necessarily on the village for agricultural products and other rural surpluses. Even for the continuance of these primary supplies, a stable pattern of rural urban relationship was a prerequisite. The basis of this relationship however was much wider. The bonds were not only economic but also political and cultural. A majority of town dwellers as well as wagers of the

adjoining regions shared one and same cultural. tradition. It would be utterly erroneous to think that tradition of folk culture was confined to villages. A

17"Country Town Nexus and the study of Rural change in India" in K.L. Sharma, Dipankar Gupta ed. "Country Town Nexus in India"

Large majority of the urban population as well were its active bearers. Apart from the stream of folk culture that bound up the rural and large section of urban population, the elite traditions have themselves not remained unrelated. They were based on a fundamentally common worldview, which resulted in essentially similar manifestations in the two domains.

Apart from cultural links, the rural and urban sectors have also been related through established pattern of institutional relationship. Thus ever caste normally includes people living in towns as well as villages of the region. The kinship bonds too extended far beyond villages and most families living in traditional urban cultures had some relatives in the countryside too¹⁸.

To cap it all, village exogamy, migration, inter-village economic ties, education needs, dependence upon towns for markets, division of labour, law and order, political authority and governmental control, social and communal gatherings, religious ceremonies-all linked members of a village with other villages and towns¹⁹- Thus there have been traditionally established bonds between villages and towns in all-important

¹⁸The Rural Urban Networks in India, A.M. Shah in Country Town Nexus in India

¹⁹K. L. Sharma and Dipankar Gupta ed. article, "Country Town Nexus : A Macro view" in K.L. Sharma ed. "Country Town Nexus"

Spheres of life. It has to be clearly seen that these bonds cannot be regarded merely outside influences on the Society and culture of the village. They have been integral parts of the socio cultural system of the peasant civilization that included the rural and urban aspects as its dimensions.

In view of these vital and ever existent linkages, historians have come to reject the idea of "village self-sufficiency.

However, the theory still persists in the mind of people that the rural sector, as a whole was self-sufficient. This idea however needs critical examination, and is the core concept of our paper. Firstly, this concept assumes that the rural sector, as a whole was undifferentiated. In fact in reality it was highly differentiated.²⁰ Every village was divided into a number of castes. The specialized occupations of a number of castes required tools and raw materials and to procure all of these they had to necessarily go to the town. In view of this, thus it becomes important to study the non agricultural groups in the village society in India an idea which has been by and large ignored by most of the historians as a result of which it led to the

²⁰According to analyses of Dr. Dilbagh Singh in "Caste and Structure of Indian Society in Eastern Rajasthan during 18th Century, Indian Historical Review Volume 2 No. 2(1976) Pg 299-311 - The population of a village in 18th Century Rajasthan constituted 14.46% riyayatis and 57% raiyatis (the privileged and less privileged cultivating classes.) Such details are not available for towns, though Bailey believes that the merchant class represented 20-30% of urban population of 17th-18th Century in North India taking into account brokers, money changers and so on. these data do seem to suggest that the agrarian society was more diversified than assumed to be by most scholars.

branding of the rural society as simply an agrarian or a peasant society.

Secondly, there was a visible inequality of property in income amongst agricultural groups in the rural society and its full implications need to be therefore worked out. The richer agricultural families must have exhibited their wealth in diet, clothing, housing, pots and pans, gold and silver jewellery and so on and all of these must have involved goods purchased from the towns. Besides the differentiation of yet another kind whether rich or poor every villager's life was marked by rites of passage and other special occasions such as birth, initiation, wedding, death, festivals, religious ceremonies and so on. Such special occasions required special foodstuffs, special clothing's and many other special things. Many of these things had to be purchased from the town.²¹

Finally there were need of the village community, caste group and lineage group as collectivities; village, caste and lineage temples; festivals of village gods and goddesses; the village council house and the charitable

institution of the village, all of these involved purchase of goods and services available in the town. In other words, every

21A.M. Shah "Rural-Urban Networks in India..."

town or Qasba had something to offer to the villager for his use. The villagers either went to a town; a weekly market or a fair to purchase these things or the traders from the town itself went to villages to sell them at villager's doorstep. Thus, the rural sector in general was certainly not as self-sufficient as it is assumed to be by many scholars, because there existed multifarious and multifaceted linkages between rural countryside and its urban counterparts and thus both villages and qasbas were active participants in mutually beneficial relationships.

As is clear from the above analysis, there existed multifarious and multi-faceted link between the rural countryside and its urban counterparts, however due to paucity of time and space, we have restricted ourselves, largely to the economic linkage between the villages and Qasbas of Western India. Using the analogy of Rural-Urban grain trade, we have tried to show that the rural sector was certainly not self-sufficient and isolated, rather it had dynamic links with the Qasbas or the urban centers and both villages and Qasbas were active participants in a mutually beneficial relationship.