1989

Urbanization in the People's Republic of China: Continuity and Change

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URBANIZATION IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty

of the Graduate School of Loyola University of Chicago

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

September

1989

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my thesis committee, Dr. Kathleen McCourt, Dr. Richard Block and Dr. Philip Nyden, for their patient help and guidance in my writing this thesis. I would like to thank Lauree Garvin who helped correct my faulty English. All the shortcomings will be my responsibility. I am indebted to Dr. Kirsten Gronbjerg, Dr. Kenneth Johnson, Dr. Marilyn Fernandez, and Dr. David Fasenfast for their encouragement and suggestions at different stages. I am also grateful to the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and the Graduate School at Loyola University of Chicago for their financial support in my graduate study. Finally, I would like to thank my family back in China and my husband for their concern and constant support.

VITA

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In 1985, Ms. Zhang applied to study in the graduate program in Sociology at Loyola University of Chicago in hopes of better understanding and explaining society from a broader perspective. In August, 1986, Ms. Zhang was granted with an academic research assistantship and began her graduate study in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Loyola University of Chicago.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Urbanization has been viewed as a major indicator of a nation's level of development and as a process that leads to social, political, institutional and ideological change. Since World War II, newly developing countries began to implement economic development programs, which have had an inevitable impact on the level of their urbanization. During the same post WWII period of time, China has also implemented modern economic development programs, which have had an enormous influence on the country's urban development.

Sociologists have studied urbanization in the developing countries from different perspectives. They usually address urbanization in the developing countries from one of four different perspectives -- modernization, overurbanization, urban bias, or a dependency/world system theoretical approach. Sociologists tend to contrast one theoretical perspective with another in their study, but I argue these different theoretical perspectives reflect four important aspects of the urbanization process in developing countries. Social researchers from different disciplines, such as sociology, geography, anthropology and demography, have studied China's urbanization both before and after 1949, but few have done any research in a theoretical framework.

Therefore, in this thesis, I intend to examine how we can understand China's urbanization from a theoretical framework, that is, how these four different schools of urban development can help explain urbanization in China. In the following chapters, I first present the four theoretical perspectives on urbanization in developing countries. Then, using this literature, I examine China's urbanization in order to understand how these theories might be applied to China's urbanization, how China's urbanization is similar to and different from that of other developing countries, and what accounts for the similarities and differences. Finally, I try to evaluate the pattern of urbanization in China.

CHAPTER II

MAJOR THEORIES OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Modernization, overurbanization, urban bias, and dependency/world system are the major theoretical perspectives which have been developed to analyze urban development in the third world countries. After World War II, theorists in the western developed countries had expected the newly developing countries would follow the same modernizing pattern that the developed countries had. Modernization, therefore, become a dominant theoretical perspective in studying third world urban issues during the 1960s and early 1970s.

Overurbanization, urban bias, and the dependency/world system theoretical perspectives were developed around the same period of time or later to challenge the point of view of modernization theorists. The overurbanization perspective argues that urbanization in those newly developing countries, unlike that in the developed countries, did not generate economic growth sufficient to absorb the rapid urban population growth. In addition, urban growth tends to be concentrated in only one or two major urban places, and medium and small sized cities do not experience development. The urban bias perspective examined the internal causes of urban problems of the developing countries. According to this perspective, policies in the developing countries are biased

to the urban classes, regardless of the fact that these countries are overwhelmingly rural. Dependency/world system perspective views the external factors such as the capitalist penetration and the inferior position of the third world countries in the world system as causes of the urban problems in the third world.

To my understanding, these different theoretical perspectives have provided a general picture of the developing countries' urbanization and revealed the constraints that these countries have confronted in their urban development. However, because of historical, geographical, or political reasons associated with any particular developing country, usually one or two of these theories will better explain its urban situation. In this chapter, I present these major theoretical perspectives on developing countries' urbanization, try to identify the major issues these theories have addressed, and argue that each of these four theoretical perspectives contributes to helping us better understand recent urban change in China.

Modernization Perspective

The most significant feature of the modernization perspective is the assumption that all countries will experience modern development according to the same pattern that the already developed countries have experienced. Modernization theorists argue urbanization is a general

phenomenon of modern development. Ledent (1983:507), for example, indicated that urbanization is a finite process experienced by all nations in their transition from an agrarian to an industrial society. Modernization theorists view levels of urbanization as reflective of the degree of economic development. Ledent (1983:507) suggested the more developed countries, which had experienced industrial revolutions, had about 65 percent of their populations living in urban areas in 1975. While in the same year, the economically poorer and less developed countries which had recently reached significant levels of urbanization, had only 28 percent of the population living in urban areas.

Modernization theorists usually concentrate their studies on demographic transitions and national economic growth.[1] Urban population concentration is viewed as the consequence of industrialization. Because industries seek to overcome the friction of space in the interchange of goods, they locate in contiguous areas, and therefore create the demand for labor

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[1.] Some sociologists do mention the cultural and social change that urbanization will bring to a nation. For instance, Eisenstabt (1973:23-24) indicated during the process of urbanization, fundamental changes are brought forth. Economic, professional and civic activities, and enterprises become concentrated and expanded. Some of the more traditional ascriptive criteria of status -- whether tribal, estate, or regional -- are broken down. Urbanization generates the development of more flexible and variegated social strata; the upsurge of social mobility through diversified economic, occupational, and educational channels; and the development of a great variety of social organization ranging from various functionally specific economic enterprises to various civic and voluntary associations, professional groups and so forth.

in concentrated spatial areas. In order to attract the needed labor, industry will provide higher wages. Therefore, the urban/rural wage differential results in urban growth (Firebaugh, 1979:199).

The theorists see it as natural that at an early stage of industrialization and urbanization, migrants overcrowd some urban places. But the movement of labor motivated by economic benefits will eventually bring forth an equalization of migration between regions as well as between urban and rural areas, that is migrants will weigh "the costs and benefits" of moving to certain urban centers. If the cost of moving is larger than the benefit, migrants will continue to move to other urban places or return to the countryside. Therefore, the phenomenon of overcrowding of certain urban places will eventually disappear.

They also view as natural the process of development occurring in certain central places and then decentralization occurring. Berry (1971:141) indicated that at the early stage of urbanization, the advantages generated from development lie with the developed center. The large cities of the national heartland, or the centers of colonial penetration, enjoy the existence of overhead facilities, external economies, political power, special preference of the decision-makers, immigration of the more vigorous and educated elements from the underdeveloped regions, and flows of funds. When the development of transportation, universal education

and standardization of all aspects of life, permit an integration of the space-economy, there will be a tendency toward decentralization and equalization. The discrepancy between urban and rural regions will eliminated. Some researchers, such as Kelley and Williams (1984) and Preston (1979), predict that urban growth will slow down and become stable by the year of 2000 in the developing countries.

Some demographers have analyzed the role of the demographic transition on urban growth.[2] Ledent (1982:509) indicated that urban growth is attributed mainly to rural/urban migration rather than to the rural/urban difference in natural increase. That is, although the aggregation of crude birth- and death rates indicates that rural natural increase exceeds urban natural increase, the difference between the two amounts to only a few points except for Latin America and Oceania. Yet, urban areas are growing much more rapidly than rural areas: the urban growth rate of

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[2]. Natural increase is the difference between fertility and mortality, both of which are generally lower in urban areas than in rural areas. Ledent (1982:30) summarized Zelinsky's demographic conclusion about the process of modernization (1971). According to Zelinsky, this process includes five phases. Initially, in pre-modern traditional society, there is little genuine migration from the countryside to cities. In the second phase (early transitional society characterized by a decline in mortality), massive movements take place from rural to urban areas. They tend to slacken in third phase (late transitional society characterized by a decline in fertility). They are further reduced in absolute and relative terms in the forth phase (advanced society with slight to moderate natural increase), possibly to totally disappear in the fifth phase (super advanced society).

the major regions of the world exceeds its rural counterpart by rates ranging from 13 percent in Oceania to 40 percent in East Asia. Migration not only directly but indirectly effects urban population size, because migrants are likely to be of child bearing age.

According to modernization theorists, urban growth and development resulted from the force of "urban pull". Some other theorists in this framework have argued for the effect of "rural push". They view the increase of natural growth of population in the rural areas and the shortage of rural land as factors which "pushed" the rural population into the city. The developing countries have experienced more serious rural push than the developed countries did.

Firebaugh's research (1979:202) indicated that the third world countries are characterized by an agricultural structure which generates and perpetuates inequality. The plantation economy in some Latin American countries and the land tenure structure in some Asian countries promote the use of capital-intensive techniques and permit the use of large proportions of a nation's land for food and non-food export crops. This has accelerated the process of land scarcity and rural surplus labor. Firebaugh (1979), in his study of 27 Asian and Latin American Countries, proved urbanization and agricultural density are closely related. Economic development has the greatest effect on urbanization, but agricultural density, prior urbanization and plantation agriculture also have

significant positive effects on urbanization.[3]

Overurbanization Perspective

Most newly developing countries began to modernize after World War II. This raises the question: will their experience be the same as the developed countries? The overurbanization perspective raised questions about the process of third world urbanization.[4] However, theorists in this perspective are still influenced by the modernization theorists, because implicit in this perspective is the assumption that successful national development involves replicating "modern development" (Smith, 1987:271).

The overurbanization theorists suggested that, like the developed countries, the newly developing countries have experienced a rapid rate of urban growth. Kelley and Williamson (1982:396) estimated that by the end of the century, cities in the developing countries will reach an unprecedented size: Mexico City at 31 million, Sao Paulo at 26 million, and Cario, Jakarta, Seoul, and Karachi each

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[3] Firebaugh's study (1979) also suggested that the effect of agricultural density on urbanization is greater in Asia than in Latin America, because migration to other developed countries has provided an outlet for Latin American countries.

[4] Overurbanization is usually defined as the rate at which urban growth (percentage of urban compared to the total population) exceeds the rate of industrialization (percentage of labor force in industrial sector) or economic growth (per capita GNP). Therefore, economic development is not sufficient to absorb the urban growth.

exceeding 15 million. However, these developing countries have not generated industrialization or economic development at a rate comparable to the developed countries. As a result, they are not able to absorb the rapid urban growth and urban crises have occurred in many of the developing countries, such as high unemployment rates, urban slums, and mass poverty.

Gugler (1982) indicated that the third world countries have shown a degree of industrialization lower than that which the first world countries had at comparable levels of urbanization in the past, and the cities in these countries had substantial surplus labor in various guises,[5] increased largely by rural to urban migration. Between one-third and one-half of the urban growth in most third world countries is accounted for by rural migration. The cities can hardly absorb this rapid growth of population, because housing, transport, garbage, sewage disposal, fuel, and staple foods are expensive in the urban agglomeration, but either cheap or not required in rural areas. Migration has exerted pressure on the existing

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[5.] Gugler (1982:177) categorized urban surplus labor into unemployment, underemployment and misemployed. Gugler cited the regional estimates by the International Labor Office for 1975 in his research. Urban unemployment was at 6.9% for Asia (excluding China and other centrally planned economies), 10.8% for Africa and 6.5% for Latin America. Underemployment is defined as under utilization of labor, for instance, it is related to fluctuations in economic activities during the day at market, for example, in recreational services or seasonal worker; workers who are continuously employed when there is insufficient work to keep them fully occupied, which is also called hidden employment. Misemployed labor is those whose labor contributed little to social welfare, for instance, begging and illegal activities.

urban infrastructure. Even in squatting centers and shanty towns the costs of land, materials and labor are substantial. Linn (1982) indicated that urbanization places a high financial burden on urban government -- a problem already acute in the third world countries due to their imperfect capital market.

Meanwhile, rural to urban migration entails some loss of potential agricultural output in the countryside, where additional land can still be cultivated. As a consequence, many developing countries have become dependent on food imports because most of them are also under the severe pressure of population growth and mass poverty.

Wellisz (1971) notes that the increasingly large urban areas compete with villages and towns for resources, and the provision of productive equipment needed to give employment to the rapidly growing labor force and to increase the productivity of labor. Yet, despite the considerable resources devoted to urban areas, living conditions in major cities have still deteriorated over the past several decades.

Some of the researchers in the overurbanization perspective have concentrated on analyzing the cost of urbanization and the impact of developing big cities on overall economic development. Kelley and Williamson (1982) analyzed the effect of overurbanization on overall development. They indicated that the cost of living in the city may impose a natural limit to development, because of

raising urban unproductive investments, such as inelastic urban land supplies and housing investments. The rise of unproductive investment in the city will diminish the rate of productive urban capital accumulation and new urban job vacancies. Furthermore, modern sectors tend to be relatively intensive in both skills and intermediate inputs, especially imported inputs. The bottleneck of technology and skills may also place important constraints on the capacity for expansion in the modern urban sectors, and retard the rate of growth in urban employment demand.

City primacy theorists claim that in highly developed countries, the size distribution of city structures is relatively well integrated with large, medium and small sized cities. While in less developed countries there are only one or two huge "primate" cities and too few intermediate ones. With progressive increases in urban size, the advantage associated with an expanding labor market, expanding access to a variety of suppliers and banking facilities and an expanding number of near-by costumers diminishes. The city's ability to support educational, health, and recreational facilities grows with size, but as the city continues to grow, the marginal utility will diminish and the per capita cost of providing water, sewage, urban transportation, and other urban facilities will rise.

Urban Bias Perspective

While the overurbanization perspective has identified some of the problems of urbanization in the developing countries, urban bias perspective has examined some of the internal causes of urban problems. Compared to the other three theoretical perspectives, this perspective may be less known among sociologists, but it is nonetheless important for understanding the process of urban transition, especially that in the developing countries and in China as well.

According to this perspective, government policies in the developing countries are manipulated by and biased toward the urban classes, in spite of the fact that these countries are overwhelmingly rural. This leads to excessive rates of urbanization and worsens the distribution of income. Lipton in his works Why Poor People Stay Poor (1977) and "Urban Bias Revisited" (1984) argues that the most important class conflicts in the poor countries are not between labor and capital, nor between foreign and national interests, but between the rural classes and urban classes.

> The rural sector contains the poverty and most of the low-cost sources of potential advances, but the urban sector contains most of the articulateness, organization and power, so urban classes have been able to "win" most of the round of the struggle with the countryside, but in doing so they have made the development process needlessly slow and unfair (Lipton, 1977:13; Byres, 1979:214).

As a result of the policy bias, growth and development in most poor countries has done little to raise the living

standard of the poorest people. Scarce lands are used to produce costly calories from meat and milk which only the urban rich can afford. The rural elite will often join the urban elite for their own interest, therefore, most of the cost of this uneven development has been transferred to the rural poor.

According to Lipton, the major evidences of urban bias are reflected in allocation of resources, price twist and taxation. Lipton (1984:40) argues that although the rural population is larger than the urban, some 70 percent of the work-force is engaged in agricultural production and agricultural production accounts for a large share of GNP (some 40 percent), the rural sector receives only 20-25 percent of capital investment from the government. And the proportion of skilled people who support development -- doctors, banker, engineer are much less in rural areas than in urban areas. Meanwhile the rural areas have experienced a severe skill drain with migration to the cities (Lipton, 1977:86).

Such an inequitable allocation is also inefficient -- investment per-person is smaller in the agricultural sector than in the non-agricultural sector; and the incremental capital/output ratio is lower in the agricultural sector than the non-agricultural sector (Lipton, 1984:41). Other major evidences of urban bias are farm-non-farm terms of trade, or price twist. That is, rural workers are underpaid, because

the export or sale prices are much higher than the rural people can actually earn when they sell their products. A recent study of 16 commodities and 29 counties from the developing regions shows average producer prices are over 30% below export prices (Lipton, 1984:145). The surplus extracted through pricing guarantees higher re-investable surpluses to the urban areas. Rural people earn less and they are overtaxed in comparison to urban people.

Recent researchers, such as Johnson (1982), have examined rural and urban discrepancies in areas not examined by Lipton. These researchers indicated that poverty in the countryside produces malnutrition and higher death-rates among rural people. In addition rural people's lack of power means they usually loose the "battle" of land use which in turn contributes to increasing rural to urban migration.

Dependency/World System Perspective[6]

Dependency/world system perspective agrees with urban bias writers who point to the key role of urban elites and the state in determining policies in controlling the speed and form of city growth. However, unlike the previous theories, they argue that to simply classify the situation as "urban"

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6. Dependency theory emphasizes the dependency relationship between the developed and underdeveloped countries and development based on this dependent relation. World system theory stresses the status of a country in the world economic system. The world system is composed of core, peripheral and semi-peripheral countries.

versus "rural" is misleading and fails to reveal the true nature of political domination in these societies. Urban elites in the third world and international capital often overlap, therefore producing a triple alliance of local business, political leaders, and international capital (Smith, 1987:279). "The misemployed" and "the underemployed," as defined by overurbanization theorists, are laborers employed in informal sectors which are subordinate to and exploited by the formal sectors in ways that may be analogous to international dependency relationships.

Contrary to modernization theory, dependency/world system theorists argue that the penetration of international capital in third world agriculture has led to transformations which involve large-scale, capital-intensive agribusiness (Chirot, 1977; Murdoch, 1980). This type of enterprise has caused rural poverty and dislocation. Therefore, the problem is by no means demographic, but a basic conflict of material interest between an urban elite with international capital versus both the urban and rural masses (Smith, 1987:288).

Earlier dependency theorists, such as Frank (1972), emphasized that economic interaction between rich and poor countries tended to consist of the exploitation of natural resources and other primary products of the latter by the former. This kind of relationship can only promote the growth of agribusiness instead of industrialization in the city. According to Frank (1966:4), underdevelopment is largely the

historical product of past and continuing economic relations between the satellite underdeveloped countries and the developed metropolitan countries.

The privileged positions of large cities in the third world countries was thus created by the core countries to serve their own development. These metropolis-satellite relations are not limited to the imperial or international level, but penetrate and structure the economic, political and social life of the developing countries. That is, the major cities in the developing countries have functioned as satellites of the metropolis of the world system, and as national metropolis which drain capital or economic surplus out of its own satellites and channel part of this surplus to the world metropolis.

Frank (1972) found the most underdeveloped and feudal-seeming regions today are the ones which had the closest ties to the metropolis in the past. They are the regions which were the greatest exporters of primary products to, and the biggest sources of capital for, the world metropolises and were abandoned by the metropolises when business fell off. The satellite countries experience their greatest economic development when their ties to their metropolises are weakest.

Recent theorists in this framework have studied industrial development in the peripheries, but they have indicated this development has not generated an even and healthy development of urban structures and urban sectors.

This is often described as dependent development. Kentor (1981) argued the preeminence of one or two urban areas in a country and the growth of informal and tertiary sectors of urban economy, accompanied by inhibition of growth in the industrial labor sector. This has caused overurbanization in peripheral countries. Similarly, Timberlake and Kentor (1983) indicated that an excessively large and rapidly growing urban population and excessive employment in service occupations (relative to manufacturing occupations) characterize social structural change in the developing countries. This structural imbalance impedes economic growth and is likely to accompany further economic dependence on foreign capital from the core regions.

According to these theorists, because foreign firms, including those producing manufactured goods for the domestic market, tend to use capital-intensive technology developed in their headquarters' country, the economic growth occurring in peripheral countries cannot expand industrial employment. Since developing countries did not experience an industrial revolution of their own and since industries transferred from the developed countries are only of limited scale, development does not expand employment as rapidly as earlier industrialization in the core countries.

Limitations and Possibilities

Theorists then have examined third world urbanization from four different perspectives. Despite the expectations of the modernization theorists and policy makers, the developing countries have not experienced the same pattern of urban transition as the already developed countries. As overurbanization and urban bias theorists suggest, the developed countries experienced a period of overurbanization during their early stage of industrialization. However, this period was much shorter for these countries than it is for the developing countries and urban/rural inequality was much less serious.

These theorists criticize third world countries for not effectively controlling the growth of big cities, for failing to balance the development of big, medium, and small sized cities, and for uneven urban and rural development. Therefore, economic and industrial growth is unable to absorb the rapid urban growth, and solve the problem of mass poverty and urban crises. Conversely dependency/world system theorists, in challenging these previous theories, have attributed the urban problems of developing nations to the development of the developed countries.

These different theories of urbanization have addressed very important issues, but the theories were constructed in analyzing the developing countries with free market economies.

China as a developing country in terms of its low GNP, large proportion of rural population, and low level of modern technological development, had different experiences from most of the developing countries, both in terms of its history and its current political and economic system. Because of these differences, some may argue these theories do not apply to China. For instance, since 1949 China has been more independent of western industrialized countries than many other developing countries; therefore, dependency/world system theory might not apply as well to China's urbanization. However, the relationship of China with Russia in its early stage of development and its connection with the Western world both before 1949 and after the 1970s have had a tremendous influence on its urbanization. The dilemma of striving for efficient modern development along with the ideology of "equality" adopted after the 1949 revolution, or of allowing more diversified economic development but insisting on a totalitarian political system, deserve even more discussion.

China has striven hard for industrialization and modernization. On its way to industrialization and modernization, it has nonetheless been wrestling to balance three relationships: the relationship between urban growth and industrialization and economic development; the relationship between industrialization and economic development and urban costs or improvement of the urban living standard; and urban and rural development. Therefore, I

believe these four theoretical perspectives could help us to better understand the process, or different aspects of, China's urbanization. In the following chapters, I examine how the four theoretical perspectives might be used to explain China's urbanization.

CHAPTER III

HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDS

China's urban development is distinct for its long history and different patterns. The historical evolution of Chinese cities has had an inevitable influence on modern urban structures, thereby, contributing to the way in which today's urban development differs, from what existing theories of urban development have suggested. China's cities in the pre-modern period can be characterized as under imperial control. Their development reflected both agricultural production and administrative expansion of the central government. In early modern times before 1949, a number of coastal cities developed as a consequence of foreign penetration. However, the effect of foreign penetration did not have the same impact on the Chinese as it did on some other developing countries, because of the immense land mass and strong traditional influences. After 1949, urbanization was back under the central government's control, although more influenced by modern industrial development and reflective of changes in economic policy of the central government.

Imperial Cities

Chinese cities have a long pre-modern history. The first urban settlement of ancient China, the city of Ao, was built

near the present site of Zhengchou in Hounan Province in the sixteenth century B.C. by Chung Ting, the tenth King of the Shang Dynasty (Chang, 1963:110). Given its immense size in area, population and its civilization, China had a number of cities larger than any country in the West before the advent of modern industrialization. Xian, Kaifeng, Changzhou, Nanjing and Beijing had each in their time been the largest cities in the world,[7] with populations of a million or so a thousand or more years ago (Murphey, 1984:186-197).

Because of this long history of urban development, China not only has a large number of cities, but a relatively sophisticated urban structure composed of large, medium and small sized cities, which were built up to function as agents of the imperial bureaucracy. The largest sector of the urban work-force was employed directly or indirectly in this bureaucratic administrative enterprise, as officials, clerks, scribes, garrison troops, as teachers of the Classics to aspirant generations of examination candidates, as merchants who were employed by the state in the management of official monopolies of trade, or as manufacturers. In addition, the cities were also the loci for traditional commercial activities.

The cities connected closely with the rural areas and

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[7]. These cities used to be capital cities of different dynasties in ancient times. For instance, Xian was the capital of East Chou, and Ch'in and West Han; and Kaifeng was the capital of Northern Sung (see Table 1).

were designed not only to control and tax the countryside but also to serve it. The primary responsibility of city officials was to ensure the productivity and orderliness of the agricultural countryside, since this was important to sustain the empire's, power, its cultural grandeur, and its bureaucratic structures.

During 221 B.C. to 206 B.C., Shih Huang-ti, ruler of the state of Ch'in, with an overwhelming military force, destroyed the feudal strength that had enabled the various regional Chinese kingdoms to live in independence and disunity. After the Ch'in Dynasty, urban development began to follow the traditional, imperial model until the colonial period. The tendency of southward migration from the Northern origins, together with the successive founding of provincial (sheng) cities reflected imperial control (Murphey, 1984:190; Rozman, 1973:21; Whyte and Parish 1984; Gernet, 1977). The development of cities in the South along the Yangtze River and beyond is the history of long years of civilizing the aborigines and establishing a Chinese style of agriculture. The centers of these activities were originally military outposts. As the process continued, some of the outposts were enlarged, the population grew, trade and industry increased, and some outposts became important cities either in terms of economy, administration, or both (Wright, 1977:52).

Sea Port Cities

Chinese cities experienced a long period of traditional development, during which relatively sophisticated urban structures developed as the consequence of traditional economic development and imperial control. In 1842, after the first Opium War (1839-1842), the era of Chinese treaty ports began. This lasted until 1937 when the Japanese invaded China. Treaty ports in China were a historical and geographical extension of the colonial system established earlier in South and Southeast Asia. Some of the Chinese coastal cities were built to expand foreign trade before colonial time. For instance, Fukien coastal areas were built during the T'ang Dynasty (589 B.C. -- 960 A.D.) in order to expand overseas trade, especially with Arabs (Chang, 1963:133). But most of the sea port cities were developed from the coastal sites that had been neglected when urban functions had been centripetally oriented.

Treaty port cities symbolized the disruption of and conflict with the traditional social and economic order. They became the western-style commercial/industrial centers and contrasted to the traditional Chinese cities. After the First Opium War in 1842, Guang Zhou, Fu Zhou, Xia Men, Ning Po and Shanghai became sea port cities, according to the treaties signed under the force of foreign power. Following the Second Opium War in 1856, another 11 cities become sea ports (Gong, 1985). In addition, some inland cities, such as Beijing, were

also open to the outside.

Fei (1953:105) indicated that although the sea port cities experienced foreign influence and began "modern" development, they were only a gateway by which foreign goods came in and Chinese wealth drained out, because treaty ports resulted from the impact of economies at different levels. For instance, Shanghai, which had occupied an insignificant position in the traditional economy,[8] had entirely changed and prospered after it became a gateway to the interior.

Treaty ports had a special political position as foreign settlements where Chinese power could not reach, because economically they were separate from the Chinese economy. By the end of the nineteenth century, the treaty ports had monopolized China's foreign trade, and become virtually the only centers of machine manufacturing and Western commercial institutions such as banking and insurance.

Although westerners had set up their colonial environments and started the process of "modernization" in China as they did in India and most of Southeast Asian countries, the Chinese treaty port system had not shown the same results, because of the strong traditional influence. Instead of developing along the capitalist course, China developed towards semi-feudalism and semi-colonialism. Murphey (1973) notes that the scale of traditional commerce had been

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8. Before the colonial time, Shanghai was of only zhen status, fishing and salt industries were mainstays of its economy (Yan, 1985:99).

large since the Ming Dynasty. A large sector of the economy was monetized and a number of commodities were produced for and distributed over a multi-provincial, national and international market. Regional specialization and transportation networks had to some extent developed. Because of a long history of traditional development, the ideology of self-sufficiency is deeply rooted. As a result of a long tradition of an integrated national state with a prosperous cultural heritage, a vigorous self-conscious, cultural nationalism and a national identity had not been lacking. The treaty port system refocused and sharpened the traditional Chinese self-sufficient and self-satisfied identity.

In addition, because the traditional Chinese society was overwhelmingly rural, foreign domination and the alliance of foreigners with the urban ruling classes led to a series of peasant uprisings. Dinh (1987:146) notes that following the First Opium War (1839-1842), several treaty ports were opened and Hong Kong was ceded to England. This humiliating defeat led to the Taiping Uprising (1840-1863). The disastrous Sino-Japanese War (1894-1863) which was followed by a scramble for Chinese concessions by European powers, led to the Boxer Rebellion (1900).

China's urbanization before 1949 can be characterized as hierarchical, reflecting imperial control. After the First Opium War in 1842, the growth of coastal cities followed a western style of development, in contrast to those interior

traditional cities and vast rural areas. Koshkizawa (1978: 3-4) classified the old Chinese cities before 1949 into three categories. The first was feudal consumer cities with a long history, for instance, Beijing, Xian, Kaifeng. These cities did not have any modern industry. In the second category were semi-colonial cities, for instance Shanghai and Tianjin, in which foreign settlements formed independent kingdoms. The third category consisted of colonial cities, for instance Changchun, Dalian, Harbin and Qingdao. Japan, Russia and Germany deliberately constructed these cities for the purpose of colonial management.

Impact of 1949 Revolution on Urbanization

After the 1949 revolution, China's urbanization showed a different pattern of development, reflecting a central plan for economic development. During this period, three distinctive stages can be identified -- more centralized development in the early time, decentralized development since the break-away with Russia, and more rapid development of medium and small sized cities and towns from 1979 to 1989.[9] Urban change has been strongly influenced by economic policy changes which are often influenced by changes in internal or external political situations.

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[9]. The crack-down of democratic movement in June, 1989 might change the direction of development for some years in the future.

During the early period, especially the period of the First Five-Year Plan (1953-1957), the Chinese government closely followed the Soviet model of growth which emphasized development of heavy industry. Urban development occurred mostly in large economic centers, which sometimes were also important administrative centers. After the break in the relationship between China and the Soviet Union in the late 1950s, and the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) which resulted from the power struggle within the Communist Party, urban development almost came to a stand-still, and a large number of urbanites were sent to the countryside to receive "re-education" from the peasants.

After 1979, with the end of the Cultural Revolution, a more open economic policy was adopted, and urban change witnessed a more diversified pattern. While the big cities are still major centers of industrial and economic activities, increasing attention has been paid to the development of medium, small cities and towns. Urban development depends not only on central and local government but also on private foreign investments.

Urban development since 1949 reflects industrial modernization rather than expansion of agricultural production and territories. Unlike the colonial period of time, contemporary urban development reflects a central economic development plan under the control of the government.

CHAPTER IV

APPLICATION OF THEORIES TO CHINA'S URBANIZATION

China's urbanization since 1949 has been shaped by the urban structures established long before that date. Urbanization reflects the experiences of imperial control and the disparity between "modern" sea port cities and "backward" inland traditional cities and vast rural areas. China's post-1949 urban development has been strongly influenced by central economic development plans. Therefore, the pattern of urban change differs from those of other developing countries with market economies. In this chapter, I examine urban change in China since 1949 according to the major issues which the theories of urban development have addressed.

The theories discussed in Chapter II looked at the relationship between urbanization and industrialization (or economic development), the growth of urban sectors, and the function of rural to urban migration on the urban process. For instance, modernization theories suggest that urbanization is the result of industrialization and economic development, during which country to city migration motivated by urban/rural and regional discrepancies plays an important role. And dependency/world system theorists suggest that dependent urban development of the third world happens only in one or two large cities dependent on industrialized

countries and in service and informal urban sectors, thereby causing third world countries' overurbanization. Here, I examine the relationship between China's urbanization and its economic development, looking especially at urban labor patterns, and their relationship to migration patterns.

The theories have examined the ability of industrial or economic development to absorb urban growth. For instance, overurbanization theory suggests that the cities in developing countries grow rapidly and industrialization and economic development are not sufficient to absorb the new urban growth. The increase of urban unproductive costs such as urban housing and other facilities which cannot generate productive growth have therefore impeded economic development. I examine accordingly the costs in Chinese cities. The theories of urban bias and overurbanization also analyzed the relationship between urban and rural regions in the process of urbanization. I will discuss how China has handled the relationship between urbanization and rural development during the time of urban transition.

Definition of Urban Places

The Chinese definition of urban place differs from that of the West and has changed several times since 1949; this has caused some inconsistency in statistics and difficulties for researchers studying China's urbanization. Therefore, in order to understand urbanization since 1949, it is necessary

to clarify the definitions of urban place and urban population.

Two types of urban places have been officially identified in China. The first is city, which includes municipality (shi);[10] and the second is town (zhen). The designated cities are at the top level of the urban hierarchy in terms of administration and economic significance, and the more numerous designated towns at the lower level.

Cities include not only those administrative centers such as the provincial seats, but also modern large, medium and small sized industrial and commercial centers. Cities are classified into three tiers. First there are the three major metropolises directly under the central government: Beijing, Tianjin and Shanghai. Second in rank are cities of all the provincial seats directly under the provincial governments, and thus equal to the prefectural tiers. Almost all these second-order municipalities have been promoted at some stage of their development from third-order status cities, according to their size of population or importance as administrative and economic centers in the region, which is often described as sub-prefectural or county-equivalent (Kirkby, 1985; Chan and Xu, 1985).

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10. According to another Chinese standard, cities are categorized into extra-large city with population of 1 million or over, big city with population of 500,000-1 million, medium city with population of 200,000-500,000, small city with population of 200,000 or below (Sheng Zuren, Sept. 18, 1987, People's Daily).

The town forms the lowest level in the urban hierarchy. Some towns are county seats and some were developed from rural market places. Of the 2,000-odd county seats, only around 400 are formally designated as towns. In addition, there are several hundred places which are not county seats but nevertheless are sufficiently important to merit incorporation as zhen (towns) (Kirkby, 1985:61). At the end of 1982 the number of towns amounted to 2,819. According to the 1982 Chinese Census Statistics, among the total city (Shi) and town (zhen) population, 70 percent lived in 236 cities and 30 percent in 2,664 towns (Kirkby, 1985:83).

The definitions of urban places and population have changed several times. According to Chan and Xu (1985:592-593), when China released the 1953 census statistics which included the number of urban places and the size of urban population, there was no clear indication of what criteria the authorities had used in demarcating urban areas. This census only indicated that the minimum population size for urban designation was 2,000.

In 1955, a set of revised criteria for urban designation was announced and an accompanying note by the State Statistical Bureau suggests the criteria for town designations were seats of 2,000 in population of which at least 50 percent had to be non-agricultural. Only a small number of the 920 towns with a population below 2,000 in 1953 were seats of county government, or had grown to a size of 2,000 by 1955.

Using these guidelines smaller places of between 1,000 and 2,000 persons could also be counted as urban, provided 75 percent of their populations were registered as non-agricultural.[11]

According to Kirkby (1985:74), the 1982 census noted that all people living in municipalities and towns were included as urban regardless of their occupations. The criteria for the establishment of zhen and shi was announced by the State Council. A town was defined as center of industry, commerce, or handicrafts with a population over 3,000, of which more than 70 percent were non-agricultural; or a place with a population of 2,500 to 3,000, of which 85 percent were non-agricultural people, which was under direct administration of county government.

For the purposes of grain distribution and residence control, the Chinese household register distinguishes between the agricultural and non-agricultural populations. Designation determines whether or not there is an entitlement to receive commodity food grain rations from the government. However, this distinction may not reflect an individual's occupation or residential location. For example, rural commune members working in non-agricultural jobs are classified under the household registration as "agricultural", because they are still tied directly to the rural areas and as such are not

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[11]. This definition of urban places followed the Soviet practice of mixing size and population composition characteristics.

eligible for commodity grain or other urban rations (Chan and Xu, 1985:585-586).

Because of this classification of urban places and distinction between agricultural and non-agricultural populations, researchers sometimes have difficulties in accounting for the actual urban and rural populations and employment in different industrial sectors. The urban population will sometimes be underestimated because an increasing number of rural people have left the farm land but cannot permanently move into the city.

Since 1949, the government policies for industrialization and economic development have significantly influenced urban change. Nevertheless, the city is still reflective of bureaucratic central administrative control. The city structure, with provincial capitals and county seats, and the relationship of these urban places to the central government is inherited from the traditional urban structures from the central government control to the lowest rural setting (see Table 2). However, quite a number of cities have become modern industrial centers, some of which were developed as sea ports during the colonial time.

Urban Growth and Industrialization

As noted, the relationship between urbanization and industrialization has been examined by both modernization and dependency/world system theories. According to modernization

theorists, industrialization leads to rapid urban growth, and the level of urbanization reflects the level of economic development. The overpopulation in certain urban places caused by rural migration will eventually be absorbed by industrialization, or regulated by regional and rural/urban wage differences. According to the view of dependency/world system theorists, because of the dependent relationship with the developed countries in the third world countries, urban growth is over concentrated in one or two big cities. The big cities' development is linked to the metropolis of the developed countries and has done little to improve interior smaller cities and rural areas. Furthermore, dependent development does not generate sufficient industrialization and employment, because the technology was developed in the now developed countries through excessive employment in informal and tertiary sectors of the urban economy.

The process of urbanization in China, according to most of the literature, results from the process of industrial development, especially in the earlier period. But this process is influenced by central government plans and central allocation of resources rather than being automatically regulated by "supply and demand of the market" as modernization theory suggested, or caused by dependent development as the dependent/world system theories argued.

As early as August, 1954, at the first National Urban Construction Conference, the guidelines for urban development

during the period of the First Five-Year Plan (1953-1957) were decided,

> New China's cities must serve socialist industrialization, urban construction must be advanced on a priority basis in order to serve the basic tasks of the First Five-Year plan. Cities were divided into four categories according to the degree of industrial construction: first, new industrial cities; second, cities to be enlarged in proportion with industrial construction; third, cities with little industrial construction where public facilities exist; fourth, medium and small cities. New industrial cities received priority (Sun, 1954 in Koshizawa, 1978:4).

Such city development principles indicated that the speed and pattern of urban development would be determined by the rate and need of industrial growth (Berry and Horton, 1970:67-75). Chen (1973:69) noted that industrial build-up and the construction of additional transportation facilities gave major impetus to urbanization in China during the 1960s. Not only have existing cities grown larger, but many new cities have sprung up. Urban growth has been most obvious in the new industrial and communication centers (see Table 3).

The growth of Paotow (Capital city of Inner Mongolia) is an example of the impact of industrialization on urban growth. In 1938, the city of Paotow had only 55,536 people and was basically a collecting center for livestock products (especially wool) from the provinces of northwest China. Part of the foodstuffs produced in the adjacent irrigation areas were also channeled through Paotow. Because of the existence of mineral resources and its central position in administration, Paotow grew into a large urban center and

became the third largest steel producer in China, after Anshan and Wuhan.

Tapping mineral resources has added many new urban places. Taching, for instance, is a new petroleum center, 160 kilometers northwest of the city of Harbin. Before its development in 1958, the area was prairie and swamp land. Since it has emerged as the most important petroleum-producing center, Taching has become a city with an output of about seven million tons of crude oil and a population of some 120,000 by 1970 (Chen, 1973:69).

The central plan for economic development not only influenced the rate and location of urban growth, but also reflected a pattern of even regional development, which was determined by an ideology stressing self-reliance, self-sufficiency and equality. That is, regions should be self-sufficient so as to reduce the cost of transportation and narrow the gap between the rich and poor regions. This ideology not only has economic significance but political implications, that is, the goal is to stabilize the political situation.[12] Further urbanization since 1949 has purposefully been spread away from earlier colonial costal areas such as Shanghai and Canton (Sit, 1984:13).

In 1953, six of the nine extra-large cities (with

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12. In addition, according to some researches, such as Kirkby (1985), the regional development is also intended to prevent the possible attack from Russia, since the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relationship.

population of over 1 million), were located in the coastal provinces, and four along the Yangtze River. By 1981, 37 extra-large cities were relatively evenly distributed within 24 provinces (Chang, 1968:131; Sit, 1984:13).[13] In comparison, the growth rate of large coastal cities has declined. For instance, the largest city, Shanghai, accounted for 11 percent of the total urban population in 1949 (a population of 6 million), but its share of total urban population declined to 3 percent in the 1980s (Parish, 1987:75).

If city development experienced a southward movement during the pre-modern period because of expansion of territories and agricultural production, city development since 1949 has experienced a westward movement as a consequence of the efforts made to develop "backward" areas and open up new industrial bases. In addition to this planned regional development from east provinces to the west and other remote areas, there has been a constant flow of technology and capital in the same direction through the channels of the centralized government.

> Since the late 1950s, there has been a central-provincial revenue sharing mechanism. Tibet, Chinghai, Nighsina, Sinkiang, Kansu, Inner Mongolia, Yunnan, Kwangsi, and Kweichow have been beneficiaries and contributors have been Liaoning, Kiangsu, Szechwan, Heilangking, Chekiang, Shantung,

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13. In China, there are 29 provinces, autonomous regions and three metropolis directly under the central government. The five provinces which do not have extra-large cities are those in the west part of the country, relatively sparsely populated. They are Tibet, Xingjiang, Qinghai, Ningxian and Guangxi.

> and Hopei. Government subsidies to the less developed areas have been more instrumental in stimulating urban development and in reducing regional differences than the policy of regional self-reliance which has been afforded greater publicity (Chang, 1973:405).

As a result of central planning, the emphasis on equal development of regions, and the already existing sophisticated urban structure, China has developed more large cities at different locations than many other developing countries. According to the World Development Report (World Bank, 1987), in 1960, China had 38 cities of over 500,000 persons, and in 1980, this number reached 78. In comparison, India which also has a long history of civilization and a huge population similar to China's, had 11 cities of the same size in 1960, and 36 in 1980. From 1953 to 1981, the number of large cities (with populations of 500,000 to 1 million) in China increased by 1.6 times, and the medium sized cities (with population of 300,000 to 500,000) by four times.

Because urbanization serves and is linked to industrialization, the industrial sector has experienced the highest growth rate in recent years. According to the 1988 Chinese Statistical Year Book (abbreviated as ZTNJ), in 1952, agriculture accounted for 57.7 percent of total national income, industry 19.5 percent, commerce 14.9 percent, transportation 4.2 percent, and construction 3.6 percent. In 1982, industry increased to 45.7 percent, agriculture declined to 33.8 percent, commerce declined to 10.7 percent, construction increased to 6.6 percent, and transportation

dropped to 3.7 percent (see Table 3a and 3b).

Similarly, employment in the industrial sector has also experienced the quickest rate of growth compared to other sectors. According to the Chinese Statistical Yearbook (ZTNJ, 1988), in 1952, 83.5 percent of the total labor force were engaged in the first industry, 7.4 percent in the second industry, and 9.1 percent in the third industry.[14] In 1987, 60.1 percent of the total labor force were engaged in the first industry, 22.3 percent in the second industry, and 17.6 percent in the third industry (see Table 4). Between 1952 and 1987, the annual growth rate for the first industry was 1.7 percent, for the second sector 6 percent, and for third industry 4.7 percent. Employment in the second industry experienced the highest growth rate, and the first industry experienced the lowest.

As Sit's and Parish's studies (1984; 1987) indicated, Chinese cities became the centers of manufacturing and industry. For instance, the 15 largest cities with about 5 percent of China's total population, contributed 36.5 percent of the country's total gross industrial output value in 1981. Industrial output includes mining and forestry, the processing of farm products, manufacturing, the repairing of

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[14]. The first industry refers to agriculture which includes fishery, husbandry, forestry, irrigation; the second industry refers to industry which includes manufacturing, transportation, construction etc.; and the third industry refers to eduction, commerce, insurance, and other service sectors.

manufacturing and transport equipment, and the production of electricity, water and gas. In the 15 largest cities, an average of 52.78 percent of the employed were engaged in industry. Township enterprises showed a similar pattern (ZTNJ, 1988). In 1987, 60 percent of township labor forces were engaged in industry and manufacturing.

In the past three decades, the Chinese government has made great efforts to industrialize and modernize its country, and the industrial sector has experienced the highest growth rate. However, according to some research, the urban population growth rate in China is much lower on average in comparison with that of most developing countries. "In China, the proportion of urban population increased from 10.6 percent in 1949 to only 13.9 percent in 1981. The much larger percentage since 1982 is due to the definition change of urban population. The average annual rate of increase is 2.8 percent, smaller than that of many other developing counties' over the same period" (Sit, 1984:10).[15] The small proportionate change of urban population over 33 years is often said to reflect a slow process of urbanization. While, according to some closer observations, the slow urban growth rate ocurred only in the 1960s and early 1970s. Both before and since, China has been similar to other developing countries in urban growth rate (Parish, 1987:74).

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[15] The annual growth rate of the urban population for the entire developing world was 5.3 percent from 1960-1970 (Sit, 1984:61).

Chan and Xu (1985) and Parish (1987) showed that in the 1950s, that is during the First Five-Plan (1953-1957), city growth was rapid, nearly 8 percent a year. During this period of time, China followed the Soviet pattern of economic development, which was characterized by developing publicly owned large scale industry, especially heavy industry. Therefore, most newly developed cities were concentrated in those industrial centers which possessed mineral resources. In the 1960s and early 1970s, after China had broken its relationship with Russia and further stressed the ideology of "equality", strict migration control was in effect and large scale movements of "sending down" occurred[16]. During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1978), urban growth slowed down and even showed a negative growth rate (see Table 5). Since 1979, with the relaxation of urban controls and the promotion of small towns, urban growth has accelerated to over 5 percent a year (see Table 5). This trend in urbanization suggests that urban growth rate is influenced to a large extent by the change in economic plans due to some political reasons.

Unlike many of the developing countries, where the most

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[16]. According to Kirkby (1985:118), for the great majority of the 17 million young people who were sent to the villages and small towns between 1966 and 1976 (the period of the Cultural Revolution), their urban registrations were automatically relinquished. Not so for the tens of millions of old people (Party cadres, members of intelligentsia) shifted from cities and towns. Their stay in May 7th Cadre Schools, on farms were not usually to be permanent. Some researchers, for instance, Sit (1984), Kirkby (1985) Parnnel (1981) have classified this period of urbanization as "urban convergence".

developed urban sectors are the "informal" and "tertiary" sectors instead of industry and manufacturing, China has experienced its highest growth rate in industrial employment. And for several periods in its history it has experienced "isolation" from the outside world as dependency/world system theory suggests. But this does not mean that China has experienced a process of urbanization similar to what the modernization theorists suggested.

In China, as urbanization is not based on free competition of industrial enterprises but on a centrally planned economy and government support, overall industrial growth does not fully suggest economic development in terms of GNP. As some researchers, such as Johnson (1982:10) indicated, one important reason for the rapid growth of industrial output in China over the past three decades was the high rate of accumulation or investment that was achieved most of the time.

> During the First Five-Year Plan, the rate of accumulation, that is the proportion of the national income that is invested is 24 percent. From 1958 to 1960, the rate increased to more than 30 percent. The rate of accumulation was reduced to 25 percent and raised again to more than 30 percent for 1970 onward (Johnson, 1982:10).

China has experienced a higher rate industrial growth and has stood among world leaders in some items of heavy industry such as coal, oil, steel, and cement. However, China is still a low-income country. A recent study of 128 countries with populations of 1 million or more revealed China was the

70th in level of development (People's Daily, April 13, 1989),[17] which is consistent with the World Bank's statistical results. The indicators used for socio-economic development in this study are 16 variables, such as GNP per capita, agricultural output, the third industry, exports, the proportion of education budget of GNP, and urban population.

According to the World Development Report (World Bank, 1987), while the average annual growth rate of industry was 10 percent between 1965 and 1980, and 11.1 percent between 1980 and 1985, which is higher than the urban growth rate, and much higher than that of many developing countries, China's GNP per capita was only $310 in 1985 (with a 4.8 percent annual growth rate between 1965 to 1985).

Control of Migration

Modernization theorists view migration as playing an important role in urbanization and economic growth. Industrialization and the urban/rural disparity in wages and opportunities "pull" the rural population into the city. The overurbanization perspective has questioned the modernization perspective's argument and suggested that in developing countries, migration has a much larger and long term impact

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17. According to this analysis, Belgium is the first and the fist ten nations are Holland, USA, Canada, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Swiss, France and Japan. The World Bank and other international agencies also categories China as a low-income country.

on urban growth than natural population growth. Uncontrolled migration from country to city and therefore too rapid urban growth creates an increase in urban costs, which in turn impedes overall economic development. The dependency/world system theorists suggest that the development of an uneven urban structure and labor patterns cause overurbanization and urban crises in the developing countries.

In China, since urban growth is influenced by a central planned economy, a large scale rural/urban migration occurs only when developing new cities and expanding old cities is a part of the plan. For instance, the expansion of the territory of municipalities resulted in an increase of 25-30 percent in municipal population, which was mainly a population engaged in agricultural activities. Otherwise individual migration is strictly controlled.

Like many other developing countries, China has been facing tremendous pressure and the "potential" of urbanward migration because of its huge rural population and large proportion of infertile land. Blencher (1988:10) indicated:

> In much of rural areas, a high level of population density prevails, which leads to unemployment, depressed incomes and standard of living. Other parts of the countryside suffer from poor natural conditions or sheer remoteness, and interrelated problems of low population density and poverty. People tend to move away from both kinds of rural places.

Added to the rural "push" are the factors of urban "pull": the higher standard of living, "the locus of political power, and the relatively greater opportunities for social and

economic mobility" Considering both urban and rural populations are huge, even a small percentage of the massive peasantry moving to the already heavily populated cities could cause an urban population explosion (Blencher, 1988:110).

However, as early as the 1950s, the government worked out a set of specific principles in order to control migration. These principles indicated that first, rural-to-urban population movement must be strictly controlled. This applies especially to movement to Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin. Second, movement from town to city, from small to big city, from rural places to suburbs must be properly limited. Third, movement between places of similar size does not need control. Fourth, movement from large to medium or from medium to small urban places, or from urban to rural places should be encouraged (Goldstein, 1984:98).[18]

Meanwhile, several mechanisms in the central planned economic system itself have facilitated the implementation of the principles for migration control. The household register system is the basic and also earliest mechanism. In China,

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[18]. Also according to Goldstein (1984:99), because of migration control, individual peasants can only obtain an urban household register in the following three ways: first, enrollment in a university carries with it urban household registration, which sometimes is then retained. Secondly, if cities expand and take over farmland, or if factories or the railroad takes over the land, peasants displaced in the process may become entitled to urban household registration. Thirdly, permanent employment in an urban place leads to urban registration, but in such cases family members of the employee must generally retain their rural household register, even if they in fact live in the city.

each individual has an official place of residence, the record of which is maintained at the brigade level (now village) in rural areas, and at the neighborhood level in urban places by the Public Security Bureau. To effect a permanent change in residence, permission must be granted by the appropriate authorities in the place of origin and/or destination (Goldstein, 1984:98).

The resident permit is directly related to employment. Industries and work units which came under government control and developed according to the plan, were prohibited from bidding freely for labor. All new positions have to be approved and allocated by the government labor bureau. Even if an individual is hired, he cannot stay in the city without a resident permit. In 1958, the government passed a migration law which forbade people to enter cities unless they had a residence permit. The permit could be obtained only by persons who had secured state jobs, and even then the employee's spouse and children could not accompany the new employee but had to remain in the countryside (Parish, 1987:73).

The system of rationed goods also provided restraints against any migrations without registration. The list of rationed goods includes basic necessities, such as grain, meat, cooking oil, sugar, cotton cloth, bicycles, sewing machines, major pieces of furniture etc. It is almost impossible for migrants to stay in the city for long without these basic supplies to which only registered urban residents

are entitled.

The ideology of "equality" which was been constantly emphasized during Mao's era was another factor against free migration. From the 1960s to the mid-1970s, service sector jobs, such as house cleaning or baby sitting, were considered by the government to reflect unequal social relationships, a relationship of "exploitation" between individuals. According to this ideology, urban residents should be engaged in formal labor force and peasants should cultivate the farm, where they work for the public benefit and therefore are the "master" of their own labor.

This government-imposed ideology, as well as the assumption that uncontrolled migration would increase urban costs and reduce agricultural production, served to legitimate the government policies to control rural/urban migration. By means of this legislation, the Chinese government is often said to have effectively solved one of the most pressing problems facing third world countries -- the migration of large numbers of peasants from their own villages into overcrowded urban slums where they seek largely nonexistent jobs (Chance, 1984:51). However, the government has done this at the cost of the restriction on freedom of movement.

Despite government policies and the imposed ideology, the city nevertheless appeals to the peasants. City officials frequently have to clean out the squatter camps and send their occupants back to their registered dwellings. In Shanghai

alone, by the end of 1956, at least 60,000 people were living in the city illegally. This flow again reached 20 million in both 1958 and 1959. Massive efforts were made to restrict urban growth and even to roll back city population totals to a manageable level (Murphy, 1980:42). Various political movements, such as the Cultural Revolution, had this effect to a large extent.

Before 1979, that is before a more open economic policy was carried out, rural householders were employed exclusively by their rural collectives, and the urbanites were predominantly employed in publicly owned enterprises. During 1979 to 1989, because of the more flexible economic policy and agricultural policy, an increasing number of rural people have been flowing into the cities, looking for temporary jobs. In urban places, because of the growth of diversified economic activities, including private businesses, and an increasing amount of foreign investments, the service and informal sectors have been growing such as hotel, restaurant businesses, urban construction, and family services such as baby-sitting and house cleaning. These secondary jobs in the city provided employment opportunities for the rural surplus labor.

However, because of the continuing control of migration, peasants cannot obtain urban residential status and therefore become a "circulated" urban population who fill in these secondary jobs without a permit from the State Labor Bureau.

The existence of private sectors, the free market, and more ideological tolerance of inequality have weakened the effectiveness of the previous mechanisms of control. However, some of the rural to urban "circulation" is still managed through formal organized channels, for instance the village contracted construction workers and village collectively run shops in the city.

Thus, unlike what the theories suggested, urban growth in China, on the one hand, is the consequence of natural population growth, and on the other, is the result of "planned" rural to urban migration under the influence of central planned urban and economic development. In consideration of the rapid growth of a great number of large and medium sized cities since 1949, the impact of rural to urban migration on urban growth has nonetheless been small.

Urban Cost -- Urban Congestion and Housing Density

Although urban development in China is largely decided by a central economic development plan and migration is strictly controlled, the actual impact of migration is nevertheless significant. According to overurbanization theory, in most third world countries, rural/urban migration accounts for one-third to one-half of the urban growth (Gugler, 1982). It is unclear how much migration accounts for urban growth in China, yet statistics show the expansion of the territory of municipalities often results in an

increase of 20-30 percent of the municipality population. Differing from most developing countries, urban growth in China was not concentrated in one or two "primate" cities, but dispersed throughout a number of cities of different size and in different locations. The costs of dealing with a large number of big cities for the Chinese government are by no means small.

As Murphy (1980:43) indicated, the rapid increase in urban population was well beyond the cities' ability to house, feed, or provide jobs for them. The largest cities with a longer history of development usually inherited the worst conditions and were more likely to encounter barriers to further expansion. Urban Shanghai, for instance, has an average population density per square meter around 5 times that of Paris, London or Moscow, and almost 3 times greater than Tokyo's. According to China Daily's news (March 30, 1988), among the ten largest polluted cities in the world, two are in China, including the capital city of Beijing.

The most often studied issue of urban congestion in China is urban housing. In China, since 1949, the floor-space per capita has declined. In 1949, the average per capita floor-space in cities stood at 6.25 square meters[19]. With the urban population more than doubling in the 1950s, by 1962 this figure had shrunk to around 3 square meters. Only with massive urban building in recent years did housing reach a new per

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[19]. One square meter equals to 1.1957 square yard.

capita of 4.6 square meters in 1983 (Kirkby, 1985:165; Parish, 1987:80).[20] Compared with 6.3 square meters per person in Singapore public housing areas (1970) and 7.8 square meters in Soviet Union's urban housing (1971), China's urban residential quarters are much more crowded (Ma, 1981:248).

According to Lee (1988:389), in 1978 the number of households with insufficient floor spaces was 6.89 million, which accounted for 35.8 percent of the total number of urban households. Despite investments in housing in recent years, insufficient housing is still significant. Not only are individual families crowded, but they often have to share toilet and kitchen facilities with other residents in the same building. This sharing continues to be a frequent source of tension between families (Zhao, 1984; Parish, 1987).

Between 1979 and 1986, because of increasing investment in housing construction, total urban residential housing reached 660 million square meters which exceeded the total of the preceding 29 years. However, despite such increases, the problem of housing shortages can still hardly be solved. In 1980, the 160 million apartment units which were built, satisfied only about 46 percent of the estimated demand for

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[20]. This average concealed variation according to the size of the cities. In a smaller city such as Yantai (eastern Shandong Province), there were still 8 square meters on average by the end of 1978 (Kirkby, 1985:165).

the year.[21]

If the planned economy worked as it was theoretically intended, housing construction should have kept up with the rate of urban growth. However, a survey of 192 large and medium-sized cities in 1978 suggested that while these cities had a population of 76.82 million, an increase of 83 percent over that of 1949, their total floor space for housing was 277.18 million square meters, an increase of only 46.7 percent over that of 1949. Therefore, despite an increase in the number of houses, the floor space per person was reduced by 0.9 square meters (Ye, 1982:2).

The reasons for the existence of housing problems are various. First, policy changes have contributed to the urban housing shortage.[22] In the early 1950s an attempt was made to clean out major slum areas and erect new apartment buildings in their place, but in the mid-1950s, housing was declared a consumption good, undeserving of major new investment. During the 1960s and most of the 1970s, because of the deterioration of Sino-Soviet relationship and the political turmoil of the Cultural Revolution, investment in urban housing was even

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21. It is said that the government aims to expand the living space to 8 square meters per capita and provide a housing unit for each family, a total increase of the living space to 700 million square meters by the end of this century. A three member family will have a two bed room apartment, and families with over four members will have three to four bedrooms.

22. In China, because of the imperfection of the political system, any political turmoil or will of an individual in power may interrupt or change the direction of economic plan.

further reduced. It was not until after 1976 that planners once again chose to provide major resources for housing construction.

Secondly, the centrally planned economy is facing the more serious problem of generating and allocating funding in different industrial sectors and regions. Some researchers have indicated industrial development, especially heavy industry, is more rapid in China, which is usually at the cost of lowering the living standard of the people. Therefore, the government has to turn to high accumulation and "ideological education" to constantly reinforce the ideological principle of "working hard and living plainly." Even though urban housing has never been a problem for those who are higher in the bureaucratic hierarchy, because floor-space of housing tends to go up with person's position in urban bureaucratic structure.

Thirdly, like other socialist countries, the Chinese government adopted a low rent housing policy. Rent averaged only 1.4 percent of 1984 urban family income; expenditures for rent, electricity, water, cooking and heating fuels totaled only 4.2 percent of monthly income, less than the 10 percent typical of other developing countries. As a consequence of the low rents and the inadequacy of state budgets to make up the difference, many existing buildings deteriorated (Parish, 1987:81).

With the implementation of a more open economic policy

since 1970s, the housing experts have proposed commercializing the urban housing sector. That is, rents should be gradually readjusted upward from their present low level and the sale of housing to individuals should be officially sanctioned. The sale of urban housing received official blessing in June, 1980 when the State Council announced that urban residential units should gradually be commercialized. From the mid-1982 to the end of 1983, 1,746 residential units allocated for individual purchase were sold at prices lower than their building cost. Each individual pays one third of the total construction cost of a residential unit, the government and the individual buyer's work unit providing an equal share of the outstanding balance.[23] In this way, one-third of the government initial investment can be recovered to build more new houses.

By August 1986, the subsidized sale method had been extended to more than 160 cities and 300 counties. But the government has not attempted to adjust or restructure the rent subsidies. The argument is that whereas the sale of a limited number of new housing benefits some well-off households and provides an alternative to the hardiest-hit households, the rent should be kept stable, because stable rent like stable food are considered paramount in preserving the overall

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[23]. In China, usually the work unit is responsible for providing housing for its worker. The work unit either obtains some of state budget to build housing or is allocated certain units of housing invested by the state or local government. The position of the work unit in the urban bureaucratic hierarchy will decide its ability to provide housing facilities for its employees.

economic well-being of the population. The concern for inflation has also played a role in keeping rents low (Lee, 1988:403-404).

Finally, the government has to build new houses not only to cope with a growing urban population, but to replace old housing. Many Chinese cities inherited a large stock of dilapidated housing. A survey conducted by Chinese housing experts revealed that substandard housing was an extremely serious problem in the mid-1950s. In 1955, 50 percent of the residential housing in 166 cities was too old or otherwise unsafe to be occupied and in 1956 alone, a total of 580,000 square meters of private dwellings collapsed in 175 cities (Ma, 1981:230).

Although overurbanization might be considered a less serious problem in China compared to other developing countries because its urban development and migration are planned, the great number of large cities in different locations is nonetheless a burden on the urban government. In a central planned economy the government has to provide most of the funding for urban facilities, and this burden of urban costs as well as the costs of industrialization and urbanization have actually been transferred onto the urban and rural masses.

"Urbanizing" Countryside

As urban bias theory suggested, China is overwhelmingly

rural and some evidence of urban bias, such as allocation of resources, price twist and over taxation, also exits in China. However, unlike what the theory suggested, urban classes have little influence on the policy. Rather the aim to industrialize and modernize the country, to build a strong powerful nation specified by the government, has created the policies for development that are often biased toward the urban.

In 1949, about 89.4 percent of the total population lived in the rural areas and 83.5 percent of the total population engaged in agricultural production. During the process of industrialization and urbanization in the last four decades, China has been constantly struggling to balance the development between the urban and rural. How does the Chinese government balance the relationship between urban and rural development, while it strongly emphasizes modern development and industrialization? Where do individual peasants go when they are "pushed" out of farm production since rural to urban migration is controlled? And how do these issues influence urban settlement and urban structure? These are the questions I intend to explore in this section.

Political Implications

Since the rural population in China is overwhelmingly large and agricultural production plays an important role in the national economy, and since the government implemented a

policy of controlling migration, the "urbanization" or "industrialization" of the countryside is a product of modern development in the centrally planned economy of China and has its political and economic implications. Control of migration and "urbanization" of the countryside through government policies has created a fundamental departure of the Chinese urban experiences from what urban bias and other theories have suggested.

As discussed in Chapter III, because of China's immense land mass and deeply rooted traditional ideology and means of production, the foreign influence of modern development on agriculture during the colonial period was minimal. The prevalent form of agricultural production is still feudal-like. Landlords and rich peasants constituted fewer than 10 percent of the total population but owned 70 percent of the land. They rented out this land in small lots and those lots were split up further by the families farming them into a number of widely scattered strips. Consequently output per person and per acre were very low (Wheelwrignt and McFarlane, 1970).

The transformation of small scale to large scale agricultural production in China was realized by land reform and a collective form of production. Between 1949 and 1952, land reform enabled over 300 million peasants to benefit from land redistribution, but some peasants living in poverty lacked sufficient means of production and therefore were

unable to cultivate the land.

Collective production was regarded by the government not only as a means to eliminate the inequality between the rich and poor peasants, but also as a way to increase agricultural productivity. In 1955, in his "Question of Agricultural Co-operation", Mao encouraged mutual aid teams to develop into cooperatives and reduce the role of the private peasant. Agricultural cooperatives, by the impetus they gave to public work projects, would be able to achieve larger crops than those produced by individual peasants and mutual aid teams. Mao concluded,

> ... If our agriculture cannot make a leap from small scale farming with animal drawn farm implements to large-scale mechanized farming, including extensive state-organized land reclamation, by using machinery, then we shall fail to solve the contradiction between the ever-increasing need for marketable grain and industrial raw materials, and the present generally low yield of staple crops, we shall run into formidable difficulties in our socialist industrialization and shall be unable to complete it (Wheelwright and McFarlane, 1970:37).

Thus, early agricultural policy, on the one hand, made clear the role of agriculture in supporting and sustaining industrialization, and on the other hand, provided the principle of collective agricultural production which was based on the ideology of "equality", that is, the poor peasants were not to be left behind.

The period of the First Five-Year Plan (1953-1957), which was designed and implemented with a great deal of Soviet assistance, witnessed intensive development of heavy

industries centered mainly in the large cities. By 1958, it was clear to the Chinese government that Soviet technological assistance would not be forthcoming as a result of increasing ideological conflict with the Soviet Union. At that time China had not yet resumed its relationship with any of the Western countries. Consequently the government proposed the policy of "walking on two legs", meaning simultaneously developing industry and agriculture, heavy and light industry, national and local industries, large and small enterprises, and modern and indigenous methods of production (Woodward, 1978).

In 1958, a larger scale of collective production organization -- the commune system -- emerged in the countryside to use nonwage labor in cultivation, in water conservation and irrigation, in indigenous and small industries, such as iron and steel, and in fertilizer and food processing factories (Wheelwright and McFarlane, 1970:52). According to Wheelwright and McFarlane (1970), the development of rural industry was intended to release the pressure on foodstuffs and reduce the inflationary potentiality inherent in rising money wages confronting a short-run inelasticity in the supply of food and consumer goods. The "peasant workers" would be paid by wage goods rather than money wages which would only encourage them to move to large plants in cities.

While other third world industrializing countries, just as urban bias theory suggested, experienced severe drains of educated and productive labor from rural areas, and a shortage

of the facilities in the countryside that urbanites enjoy, such as health treatment and education, the Chinese government has frequently "sent down" educated youth, intellectuals, and cadres to the villages and the remote interior for the purpose of narrowing the gap between urban and rural populations, and stabilizing the nation's political situation.[24] However, one of the side-effects of these movements was to push urban technology, industry and skills into the countryside.

The rural industrial sector in China consists of enterprises which vary in size and degree of technological sophistication. The largest category consists of the very small brigade-level repair and manufacture shops, of which there may be several hundred thousand. The second largest category is likely to be the small mines. There are also small hydroelectric stations, food processing plants, rural heavy industry, such as small iron and steel plants, cement plants, chemical fertilizer plants and other chemical plants, and machinery plants.

These small industries were first developed to meet the needs of local rural production and to sustain economic development when insufficient state budgets could be

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[24]. It is clear since the democratic movement in 1989 that each large scale "sending down" is the consequence of political turmoil. Other examples are Anti-rightist Movement in 1957 and the Cultural Revolution in 1966. One of the major purposes of sending the urbanites to the countryside, especially the intellectuals is to achieve a more nationwide stabilized political situation.

generated.[25] According to Sigurdson (1975:530), the total number of industrial units within the rural industrial sector is likely to be 500,000 or more. Kirkby (1986:510) estimates rural enterprises employed around 31 million people, two-thirds of them in manufacturing and processing. Three years later, the village and township enterprises work-force had doubled to 60 million.

Sigurdson (1975:530), in his study of Chinese rural industry argued that the social and political benefits of decentralization are worth the cost. However, if decentralization were taken to mean pushing industry directly into villages, the cost would be great, both in terms of material and human resources required and in terms of cost efficiency. The cost would be less under a decentralization policy focused on intermediate cities and towns, because the social overheads are lower in the intermediate towns. In addition, creating dispersed centers of intermediate places is likely to more effectively speed up the development of the country as a whole.

If from 1958 to 1976, the policies adopted in China functioned to push industry and technology to the countryside,

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[25]. The extreme budget constraint was caused by several reasons during this period. China had to pay a large amount of debt owed to Russia since the relationship between the two countries deteriorated, at the same time it suffered from three years of natural disaster (1959-1961). Besides, economic development of First Five-Year Plan mostly occurred in heavy industry which could not generate quick returns for reinvestment.

support agricultural production, and narrow the gap between the urban and rural so as to stabilize the political situation, since 1979 and up to 1989, the tendency has been for rural industries to expand their market beyond the rural areas and the region. But the most serious problem facing the rural industries today is that they are less efficient in competing with urban industries, especially with those run by the state in gaining resources and markets. Therefore, in recent years, both the growth rate for total output of township enterprise and township employment rates have declined.

The year of 1984 witnessed the highest growth rate of township employment -- 61 percent higher than that of 1983. The growth rate was 22 percent in 1985 and 24 percent in 1986, and in 1987 it fell to 11 percent (see Table 6a). During the same period (from 1983 to 1986), the growth rate for total township production output was 68 percent, 60 percent, 30 percent, and 34 percent respectively (ZTNJ, 1988; see Table 6b).

Thus, the government's realization of the significance of agriculture in national economic development, and its attempt to narrow the gap between urban and rural residents decided the "urbanization" of the countryside. The international situation also influenced this choice, because "isolation" led to shortage of funding for large-scale industrial development in urban places.

Releasing the Pressure of Land Shortage and Rural Surplus Labor

"Urbanizing" the countryside is considered functional in reducing the pressures of land shortage and rural surplus labor. Arable land shortage is a much more serious problem in China than in other countries of the same size. While China has over 20 percent of the total world population, its arable land accounts for only about 2 percent of the world total. In the first few years after 1949, the area under cultivation rose markedly. The main reason for this increase in arable land was the cessation of the war and chaos of the preceding years. Between 1949 and 1957, the area of cultivated land rose by 14.3 percent. In the years after 1957,an area greater than the entire province of Guangdong (214,000 square kilometers) was added to farmland stock.

However, over the same period, the growth of cities, the building of roads, railways, canals and reservoirs, along with the expansion of villages to accommodate the rising rural population, have eaten up greater areas. The gross loss in farmland between 1957 and 1979 came to 335,000 square kilometers -- equivalent to one third of the total land available in 1957 (Kirkby, 1985:181). In comparison with countries of similar size, Canada's per capita cultivated land is 17 times that of China, the USA's is 8 times, and Russia has 7 times as much cultivated land per capita.

As a consequence of the introduction of technology into the rural areas in the earlier time, the introduction of the responsibility system in 1979, and the relaxation of the controls over the price of farm products in 1985,[26] the previously "over-employment" of farmers under the quota system[27] become surplus labor and China now has experienced a serious dislocation of its rural population. It is estimated that about 200 million peasants will be displaced from farms by the year 2000. In addition, about 20 million rural youth are entering the labor force annually (Tan, 1986; Goldstein, 1984; and Kirkby, 1985).

Although the number of rural surplus laborers is increasing, they cannot move into the city because of migration controls. Chance's study of a rural community near Beijing (1984:51) indicated,

> Most young people begin their working lives in the field. Some prefer to find a job in Beijing, but are restricted from doing so by a government policy that effectively limits anyone from moving away from their established residence and work-place unit without official approval... What are the prospects of commune youth getting a factory job? ... One of the most likely places to obtain such a position is

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[26] The responsibility system is a contract system. Under this system, individual peasants agree to provide a certain amount of farm products to the state and peasants can produce according to their own wish as long as they fulfil the contracts. The relaxation of price of most agricultural products enable the peasants to produce according to the market price.

[27] Under the quota system, the commune and brigade organize peasants to produce according to the state plan, that means the living of the peasants depends on agricultural production only.

in the two-year-old jade carving factory owned by the district.

The pressure from land scarcity, rural surplus labor, control of migration, and the goal for overall economic growth to a large extent have contributed to the development of rural industry.

Zhen towns and rural market towns became potential places to absorb the surplus rural labor force and expand rural industries in the last decade when another boom of economic development occurred. Most of zhen towns were traditional centers of rural society and economy with an average population of 23,389 in 1982, but the majority of them was not larger than 2,000 where the township (xiang or a former people's commune) or village (cun or a former production brigade) administration is located. Zhen towns accounted for 34 percent of the urban population in 1982.

Small towns are regarded by the government as places to release the pressure of "rural push", because it is directly accessible to surplus rural labor. Relocation involves minimal socio-economic change, because it can be gradual, initially only part-time employment in a town without a shift of residence, avoid the need of immediate construction of housing and municipal facilities, and allow the relocated individuals to remain in close contact with relatives and to be available for agricultural tasks, even after residence is shifted to a

town.[28] By the end of 1984, small-town enterprises employed an estimated 33,000,000 rural surplus laborers in industrial construction, transportation and service jobs (Tan, 1986:171, 273).[29]

Urban/Rural Discrepancy

Despite the idiology and efforts the government has made to narrow the gap between rural and urban in the process of industrialization and urbanization, China has not industrialized without a price being paid by the rural population. Like urban bias theory suggested, although China's rural population is larger than its urban population, and although the agricultural sector accounted for 33 percent of GNP in 1985, agriculture has received much less government investment than the urban sectors. Official statistics indicated that over the period of the First Five-Year Plan (1953-1957), the gross output value of agriculture increased

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[28] These worker-peasants may be divided into three categories: persons for whom agriculture was the principal task and industrial employment, normally doing piecework at home was part-time; persons whose time was spent equally in agriculture and industry with needs of the busy farming season determining schedules; individuals primarily in commercial, service or industrial employment with part-time agricultural participation confined to weekends (Tan, 1986:171).

[29] According to Tan (1986:273), for each year between 1984 and 2000, 12.5 million rural persons would shift to small towns. Peasants are encouraged to settle permanently in zhen towns, but they have to provide their own grain and give their contracted plots to the rural collective. The current policy is to concentrate land for specialized farming household.

by 247 percent and the output of food grains increased by 19.8 percent at 1952 prices. As population increased by about 11 percent, this would present about a 9 percent increase in per capita food grain production, or an annual rate of about 1.5 percent per year. However, the agricultural sector received only 6.2 percent of the total investment allocated by the state budget.

The gap between rural and urban is also reflected in consumption patterns. Kirkby (1986:508) indicated that from the mid-1950s until the late 1970s, the relation between levels of agricultural and industrial prices did not show much overall improvement in rural per capita consumption. Parish (1987:21) noted that the gap between urban and rural incomes has remained considerable throughout the past 30 years. The new leaders since 1979 raised the prices paid to farmers, and rural taxes declined, but at the same time, rural resources were siphoned off through the high prices farmers had to pay for industrial goods because of inflation. Parish (1987:74) cites official statistics which shows the average consumption ratio of the nonagricultural to agricultural population to be 2.2:1. China therefore seems to have suffered some of the same results of urban bias that are found in many other developing societies.

According to the Chinese officials (Johnson, 1982:8-9), for over 20 years the ratio between the living standards of the workers and the peasants has basically stood at about 2:1.

It has dropped a little where agriculture has developed faster and has risen where agriculture has made little progress. It stood as high as 3:1 in some areas. Some research suggests that living standards for the rural people have increased two or three times in recent years, while that for urban residents has increased one time only, because peasants could have other alternatives than working on land. However, even these improvements are based on the inferior opportunities and treatments of the rural people (Blencher, 1988).

In addition, migration control is often said to have solved the problem of overurbanization, but this solution is at the cost of the rural people's freedom of movement. Many rural people would like to work and live in the city. As indicated above, rural and township industry has provided the potential to absorb rural surplus labor, but the township and rural industries are disadvantageous in competing with the urban publicly owned enterprises in obtaining resources. The "circulated" rural population in the cities obviously experiences a lower social status and fewer opportunities than the urban residents.

As modernization theory suggested, urbanization is an inevitable consequence of economic development (or industrialization). Any country on its way to modern development will have to deal with the problem of balancing the interests of urban and rural populations. Unlike some other developing countries, China has to some extent made

ideological or political efforts to narrow the gap between urban and rural. However, because the government aims to build a strong modernized nation, the policies for development are biased toward urban industrial and other modern sectors. Therefore, evidence of urban bias is still obvious.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

My study of China's urbanization shows that the process has differed in many ways from what the theories of urban development would have suggested. These theories originated in attempts to explain the urbanization of developing countries which had experienced a long period of colonization, were mostly characterized by a free market economy, or had only limited urban experiences during pre-modern time. Specifically, dependency/world system theory was first developed to explain urbanization in Latin American countries, and then in Southeast Asia and countries with a historical colonial relationship with the developed countries. Urban bias theory looked at developing countries which are overwhelmingly rural and traditional, such as India and some African countries. Modernization theory was an attempt to understand urbanization in countries with a free market economy.

China, by contrast, had a long history of relatively "isolated" urban development because of imperial administration and expansion for thousands of years. The penetration of foreign influence was limited compared to some other developing countries. Since 1949, China has operated under a centrally planned economy which has had a great influence on its urban development. However, as China is also

a developing country in terms of low GNP per capita, a large proportion of rural population, and lack of experience in modern technology, the major issues and problems these theories addressed have also occurred during China's process of development and urbanization.

The Chinese government, like other developing countries', has made great efforts to industrialize and modernize since 1949. As a consequence, numerous cities of different sizes have been added to China's urban structure. However, unlike the scenario modernization theory suggests, these cities, their economic sectors and labor patterns, were built up or expanded according to a central economic development plan, rather than through free competition among private industries and enterprises.

This pattern of urban development also differs from the major argument of dependency/world system theory, because China's urban development is not based on close ties with metropolises of the developed countries, and the most rapidly developing urban sectors are industry and manufacturing rather than service and tertiary sectors. Nevertheless, during most of the time since 1949, China maintained connections with the outside world and obtained foreign aid for its economic and urban development. This connection with the outside world has played an important role in urban change in China since 1949.

In the 1950s, because of its relationship with Russia, China received a great amount of support from that country for

its economic development. A great number of large and medium sized industrial cities were built and industry witnessed rapid growth, especially in heavy industries. This pattern of urban development not only suggested that new China needed to construct an infrastructure, but also reflected the influence of the Russian model of development which emphasized industry, especially heavy industry, and evenly distributed large urban centers.

This early relationship with Russia had shaped the basic urban pattern as well as the economic structures in China since 1949. But in the late 1950s when China's relationship with Russia deteriorated and no further resources came in, urban development came almost to a stand still. In 1979, China re-opened itself to the Western developed world and began to absorb foreign investments. Its urban construction has resumed with rapid and diversified development. For instance, Hainan Island and Shenzhen in the South have been developed to a large extent based on foreign investments. During this period of time, the service and informal sectors also began to show some growth.

Unlike the dependency theorists' argument that in most developing countries economic and urban growth are concentrated in limited urban places without trickling down to develop the interior, China has purposefully developed cities of different sizes in its interior and at the same time has strictly controlled further expansion of these major

modern industrial coastal cities, such as Shanghai and Canton. Consequently, new industrial cities grew up and were relatively evenly distributed in different regions. This pattern of urban change, on the one hand, is still in the shadow of the traditional influence, that is imperial central bureaucratic control; on the other hand, it reflects the political ideology of regional self-sufficiency and equality.

China's urban development since 1949 has shown a strong independence of foreign influence. The central government, guided by a totally different ideology is able to control and manipulate the patterns and directions of urban change. However, direction of urban development tend to be vulnerable to internal turmoil caused by instability or change in the political establishment or in the will of powerful individuals. Therefore, although China strives to modernize economically, politically it still remains traditional, influenced by charismatic authority.

Because both urban and rural populations are huge and arable land is scarce, the Chinese government is facing an even more serious pressure of "rural push". However, instead of allowing rural people to move into the city, the central government has implemented strict migration control policies. The government believes that an increase of migration will only worsen the pressure to provide urban commodities, such as food rations and urban housing, as well as employment. The structure of the centrally planned economy has provided

mechanisms for this control, such as the urban residential registration system and the urban commodity food rationing system. Rural/urban migration has been realized largely by the expansion of old cities and the growth of new cities under the guidance of a central economic development plan.

Overurbanization theorists argue that in the developing countries urban growth is too fast. Therefore the urban costs become larger, which in turn influences overall economic development. China has also been burdened with the costs of urban growth. However, in China the pattern is different from that in most developing countries where there has been the overgrowth of limited "primate" cities. The burden for China is how to sustain a great number of large cities at different locations. That is how to provide urban facilities like housing, transportation, education, and job opportunities to the urbanites, and transportation between the cities and between the cities and the countryside.

China's urbanization and economic development policies are based on the notion of a strong national state. Therefore they are guided by an ultimate goal -- to build a strong modern industrialized nation. In order to reach this goal, the government usually gives priority to investments in industrial and economic construction and curtails the budget allocated to the sectors of consumption and agriculture. As a consequence, although there are no squatters and shanty towns in China's urban places as the theories have suggested, the

majority of urban people are living in insufficient and low quality housing.

The large cities, especially old modern coastal cities such as Shanghai, contribute greatly to the national GDP and industrial growth, but their housing conditions are the worst. This is especially so in old factory areas where there are still no basic sanitation facilities. They are overcrowded with several generations living together. Thus, in this centrally planned economy, although industry has experienced a more rapid growth than the urban population, it is not reflected in the growth of GNP per capita and it has not solved the problem of overurbanization either.

One of the major difficulties for the central planned government is a lack of funds, because the system itself lacks incentive and efficiency and the government has to support a large number of bureaucratic enterprises in different urban locations. In order to sustain industrialization and modern development, the government has often turned to the policy of high accumulation and low consumption. Therefore, urban housing and other facilities not directly related to production would often be neglected or put aside for later consideration. This has often resulted in a contradiction with some other principles that the government has insisted on -- to improve the living standard of the people and equality.

China is overwhelmingly rural and on its way to modern development, some evidence of urban bias can be witnessed in

its urban process. Ideally, the government aimed at narrowing the discrepancy between urban and rural, while modernizing and urbanizing the country. For instance, "sending" urban intellectuals to the village and remote interior, implementing more flexible agricultural policies to allow rural development, and speeding up the construction of medium and small sized cities or towns to absorb rural surplus labor, and expanding rural industry to some extent were aimed at narrowing the gap between urban and rural, in addition to some political backgrounds. Nevertheless, the discrepancy between urban and rural still exists.

The sacrifice of the interests of the rural masses in most cases is not because of the powerful bargaining position of urban classes and their alliance with the rural elites, but because the policies for development often give priority to industrial and modern sectors in the urban places. Bureaucratic channels from top to bottom have facilitated the implementation of this policy. According to China's overall economic development policy, the role of the agricultural sector is to support and sustain industrialization. Therefore for the last three decades, the rural people have received fewer government investments, and enjoyed less bargaining power in land use, and had fewer opportunities to receive education and to get desirable jobs than the urban population. In recent years, because of agricultural policy changes, more diversified rural production forms have brought rural people

more income, but the rural industries experience more difficulties in obtaining resources than the government owned urban industries. The "circulated" rural population often has a much lower socio-economic status in the urban places.

Ideally, since urban change in China was planned, there should not have been housing shortages in the city; if the ideology of equality was carried out, there should not have been a rural/urban discrepancy and urban housing inequalities. However, despite the ideal, some major problems addressed by the theories still more or less exit. These problems addressed by different theories appear to be universal phenomena resulting from modern development and urban transition. In different countries with different experiences, when the problems appear, they are solved and addressed in different ways.

Some sociologists emphasize the economic influence of the developed countries on urban development of the third world. They see uneven economic and urban development as the consequence of the involvement in the world system and the alliance between foreign capital and the urban elite of the developing countries. These sociologists, such as Frank, argue that the developing countries could better develop, if they break away from their dependent relationship with the developed countries and set up a strong national state.

China has an image of a strong national state and is relatively independent of foreign influence. However, although

the government has introduced foreign modern technology and has tried to narrow the gap between its own country and the developed countries, because of a not yet developed democratic political system, it does not allow changes in the realm of political institution and ideology. This makes modern development extremely painful for the masses, and more often than not presents obstacles to effective economic and urban change. In a centrally planned economy, it is also possible for the government and interest groups to ally with foreign capital. It is questionable why dependency/world system theories have neglected the positive effects of foreign capital. From the experience of China, it seems almost impossible for a nation to develop without any connections with the outside world and use of foreign supports.

Since 1949, China has implemented economic development programs much as many other developing countries did, and these have had an inevitable influence on its urbanization. However, because of the central planned economy and a different political ideology, China has presented quite different solutions to the urban problems and experienced a different pattern of urban change. It has tried in a different way to solve the problem of "rural push", that is by "industrializing" the countryside and developing small towns to absorb rural surplus labor. Therefore it is often said to have reduced the pressure of rural to urban migration and the potentiality of mass rural poverty. Although people do not

have to worry about becoming extremely poor because none of them can be rich, except a few bureaucrats who have power in the state, ordinary individual human needs have been neglected in the massive efforts to build a strong powerful modernized nation state.

The four theories considered have covered the major issues of urban development in developing countries and have provided a valuable framework to examine China's urbanization. However, as China has a long history of urban development and adopted different political and economic systems, the four theories cannot fully explain China's urbanization process. Nevertheless, China is also a developing country, and the issues and problems addressed by the theories have also occurred to some extent as China has embarked on its modern urban development.

Table 1. Chronology of Chinese Capital Cities

Year	Dynasty	Capital
B.C.		
2000		
1800		
1600		Cheng-chou
1400	Shang: -1100	An-yang
1200		
1000		
800	Western Chou: -770	Lo-yang
600		
400	Eastern Chou: -221	
200	(Warring States):221	
0	Ch'in: -206	Ch'ang-an (Sian)
	Western Han: -A.D. 8	
A.D.		
100	Eastern Han: -220	Lo-Yang
200		
300	Six Dynasties: -580	
500	Sui: -618	Ch'ang-an
600		
700	T'andg: -906	
800		
900	Five Dynasties: -960	
1000	Northern Sung: -1127	K'ai-feng
1200	Southern Sung: -1280	Lin-an (Hangchow)
1300	Yuan: -1368	Peking
1400		
1500	Ming: -1644	Nanking and Peking
1600		
1700	Ch'ing: -1911	Peking
1800		
1900	Republic: -1949	Nanking
	People's Republic: 1949-	Peking

Source: Rozman, 1973:Xiii.

Table 2.
The Administrative Framework of China's Urbanism

Number	Level of Administration
1	National capital (Beijing)
29	Provincial (sheng)/autonomous region (Zizhiqu) capitals
210	Prefectural (Zhuenqu or Diqu) or prefectural equivalent capitals
2,133	County (xian) or county-equivalent seats
c.53,000	Rural people's commune (renmin gongshe) headquarters (many of which became centers of the newly-restored xiang or 'township' administrations).
c.5,000,000	Village, many of which were sites of production brigades (shengchan dadui) and production teams (shengchan xiaodui)

Source: Kirkby, 1985:60-61.

Table 3a.
Composition of National Income (100 Millions in RMBY)

Year	Total	Agr.	Ind.	Cons.	Trans.	Comm.
1952	589	340	115	21	25	88
1957	908	425	257	45	39	142
1965	1387	641	505	53	58	130
1978	3010	986	1487	125	118	294
1987	9321	3154	4262	617	349	939

Source: ZTNJ 1988:51.

Table 3b.
Composition of National Income (Percentage)

Year	Total	Agr.	Ind.	Cons.	Trans.	Comm.
1952	100	57.72	19.52	3.57	4.24	14.94
1957	100	46.81	28.30	4.96	4.30	15.64
1965	100	46.21	36.41	3.82	4.18	9.37
1978	100	32.76	49.40	4.15	3.92	9.77
1987	100	33.84	45.72	6.62	3.74	10.07

Source: ZTNJ 1988:51.

Table 4.
Labor Force Composition (Millions)

		1st Industry		2nd Industry		3rd Industry	
Year	Total	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
1952	207.29	173.17	83.5	15.31	7.4	18.81	9.1
1957	237.71	193.09	81.2	21.42	9.0	23.20	9.8
1965	286.7	233.96	81.6	24.08	8.4	28.66	10.0
1978	401.52	283.73	70.7	69.7	17.4	48.09	12.0
1987	527.83	317.2	60.1	117.62	22.3	93.01	17.6

Source: ZTNJ, 1988:157.

Table 5. Total and Urban Population, 1949-87 (Millions)

Year	Total Pop.	Percent Change	Total Urban	Percent Change	Urban/ Total	Percent Change
1949	541.67	-	57.65	-	10.6	-
1950	551.96	1.9	61.69	7.0	11.2	5.0
1951	563	2.0	66.32	7.5	11.8	5.4
1952	574.82	2.1	71.63	8.0	12.5	5.8
1953	587.96	2.3	78.26	9.3	13.3	6.8
1954	602.66	2.5	82.49	5.4	13.7	2.8
1955	614.65	2.0	82.85	0.4	13.5	-1.5
1956	628.28	2.2	91.85	10.9	14.6	8.5
1957	646.53	2.9	99.49	8.3	15.4	5.3
1958	659.94	2.1	107.21	7.8	16.2	5.6
1959	672.07	1.8	123.71	15.4	18.4	13.3
1960	662.07	-1.5	130.73	5.7	19.7	7.3
1961	658.59	-0.5	127.07	-2.8	19.3	-2.3
1962	672.95	2.2	116.59	-8.2	17.3	-10.2
1963	691.72	2.8	116.46	-0.1	16.8	-2.8
1964	704.99	1.9	129.5	11.2	18.4	9.1
1965	725.38	2.9	130.45	0.7	18.0	-2.1
1966	745.42	2.8	133.13	2.1	17.9	-0.7
1967	763.68	2.4	135.48	1.8	17.7	-0.7
1968	785.34	2.8	138.38	2.1	17.6	-0.7
1969	806.71	2.7	141.17	2.0	17.5	-0.7
1970	829.92	2.9	144.24	2.2	17.4	-0.7
1971	852.29	2.7	147.11	2.0	17.3	-0.7
1972	871.77	2.3	149.35	1.5	17.1	-0.7
1973	892.11	2.3	153.45	2.7	17.2	0.4
1974	908.59	1.8	155.95	1.6	17.2	-0.2
1975	924.2	1.7	160.3	2.8	17.3	1.1
1976	937.17	1.4	163.41	1.9	17.4	0.5
1977	949.74	1.3	166.69	2.0	17.6	0.7
1978	962.59	1.4	172.45	3.5	17.9	2.1
1979	975.42	1.3	184.95	7.2	19.0	5.8
1980	987.05	1.2	191.4	3.5	19.4	2.3
1981	1000.72	1.4	201.71	5.4	20.2	3.9
1982	1015.9	1.5	211.31	4.8	20.8	3.2
1983	1027.64	1.2	241.5	14.3	23.5	13.0
1984	1038.76	1.1	331.36	37.2	31.9	35.7
1985	1050.44	1.1	384.46	16.0	36.6	14.7
1986	1065.29	1.4	441.03	14.7	41.4	13.1
1987	1080.73	1.4	503.62	14.2	46.6	12.6

Source: ZTNJ 1988:97-98.
Note: 1) The table includes population of 29 provinces, autonomous regions, cities, and includes persons in military service. 2) Urban population includes city and town population. 3) The figures after 1982 are based on the 1982 Census statistics and calculated according to population sampling of each year.

Table 6a.
Township Industry: Employment and Composition, 1978-87 (Millions)

Year	Total	Agr.	Ind.	Cons.	Trans.	Comm.	%TotChg
1978	28.27	60.87	17.34	2.36	1.04	1.44	
1979	29.09	5.33	18.14	2.98	1.17	1.47	2.93
1980	30.00	4.56	19.42	3.35	1.14	1.53	3.10
1981	29.70	3.80	19.81	3.49	1.07	1.53	-1.00
1982	31.13	3.44	20.73	4.21	1.13	1.62	4.83
1983	32.35	3.09	21.68	4.83	1.10	1.65	3.91
1984	52.08	2.84	36.56	6.83	1.29	4.55	61.01
1985	63.79	2.52	41.37	7.90	1.14	16.86	22.48
1986	79.37	2.41	47.62	12.70	5.41	11.23	24.43
1987	87.76	2.44	52.65	13.64	6.15	12.88	10.57

Source: ZTNJ, 1988:293.

Table 6b.
Total Township Production Output
(Millions in RMBY)

Year	Total	% Change
1978	49307	
1979	54841	11.22
1980	65690	19.78
1981	74530	13.46
1982	85308	14.46
1983	101683	19.20
1984	170989	68.16
1985	272839	59.57
1986	354087	29.78
1987	474310	33.95

Source: ZTNJ, 1988:294.

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