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NOTES ON CLASS ANALYSIS IN SOCIALIST CHINA, by Róbinson Rojas Sandford 1978

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sources:

- CC general office ( my research in Beijing -1965-68 and 1974-77, my conversations with Yao Wen-yuan in 1975, and Chen Yi in 1966)
  - Chou Enlai...notes on his interview with William Hinton 1971--- (later on published in English in China Now (London), july, september, and december 1975
  - Chang Chunchiao, 1975, "On The Dictatorship of The Bourgeoisie"
  - Excerpts from R. Rojas, "China, una revolucion en agonia", Martinez Roca, Spain, 1978
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INDUSTRIAL SECTOR 1973

URBAN SECTOR

RURAL SECTOR

CIVIL-MILITARY BUREAUCRACY

brief notes on BUREAUCRATIC SOCIALISM

brief notes on prevailing thoughts about development

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What follows are crude notes made by the author in the attempt to elaborate on social stratification, social differentiation and creation of a new ruling class in China during the period 1949-1978. Crucial to this attempt is my work with chinese scholars (all members of the Chinese communist party) during the middle sixties and middle seventies in Beijing. The latter provided the "Chinese communist" point of view about classes in "socialist China", which became the ideological justification for organizing a "revolution within the revolution" as unleashed in 1966 (the so called "cultural revolution"). (In my book **"China: una revolucion en agonia"(1978)** there is a fully developed analysis based on the notes you are going to read) The role of ideology as derived from the relations of production is underlined in the notes.

Chinese approach:

- 1) old social classes that changed their economic basis but not their ideology
- 2) new social classes as defined by new relations with the means of production

They distinguished 7 categories:

- 1.- urban bourgeoisie
- 2.- rural bourgeoisie
- 3.- petty urban bourgeoisie
- 4.- petty rural bourgeoisie
- 5.- poor and lower middle peasants
- 6.- civil servants
- 7.- proletariat

1) urban bourgeoisie:

- gradually expropriated (with monetary compensation) between 1949-1956
- accounted for 1.4% of the population in 1973
- 1.140.000 heads of units of production at the beginning
- compensation took the form of annual payments
- between 1956-1966 the aggregate payment amounted to 450

million of US\$ (1973)

in 1973: civil servants, private rentists, members of the CCP

- 2) rural bourgeoisie:
  - former landlords and rich peasants
  - their status as "intellectuals and "wise persons" didn't change when integrated to the new society. (Confucius!)
  - Some became members of the CCP.
  - their intellectual status help them to play the role of "advisers" to the rural cadres
  - accounted for 6% of the population in 1973
- 3) petty urban bourgeoisie:
  - former small merchants, retailers, middlemen, etc.
  - now they work in small cooperatives, the majority, and others as individuals (peddlers), or in units of production called "husband-wife shops". Others, shoe repairing, artisans, rubbish collectors, etc.
  - accounted for 2.65 of the population in 1973
- 4) petty rural bourgeoisie:
  - like the petty urban bourgeoisie, they work on individual or husband-wife basis, earning a living within the "pores" of the collective system
  - accounted for 15.65% of the population
- 5) poor and lower middle peasants:
  - former subsistence farmers and landless peasants
  - all of them commune members, dividing their income from collective work and private work (private plots)
  - accounted for 60% of the population in 1973
- 6) civil servants:
  - the totality of white collars workers, including professionals, scientists, artists, writers, cadres, etc.
  - they were the main body of what generally is described as the "bureaucracy"
  - accounted for 5.7% of the population in 1973
- 7) proletariat:
  - manual workers, both urban and rural, in factories
  - accounted for 8.6% of the population in 1973

The above categories need some refining to fit Chinese reality. One step in the right direction could be introducing the categories of member and non member of the Chinese Communist Party.

Introducing the new categories, the Chinese social class structure appears as follows:

- 1.1.-Urban bourgeoisie non-member of the CCP---around 1.4% of the population
- 1.2.-Urban bourgeoisie member of the CCP--- negligible
- 2.1.-Rural bourgeoisie non-member of the CCP---almost 6% of the population
- 2.2.-Rural bourgeoisie member of the CCP--- negligible
- 3.1.-Petty urban bourgeoisie non-member of the CCP --- almost 2.65% of the population
- 3.2.-Petty urban bourgeoisie member of the CCP --- negligible
- 4.1.-Petty rural bourgeoisie non-member of the CCP --- almost 15.65% of the population
- 4.2.-Petty rural bourgeoisie member of the CCP --- negligible
- 5.1.-Poor and lower middle peasants non-members of the CCP --- around 54.96% of the population
- 5.2.-Poor and lower middle peasants members of the CCP --- around 5.04% of the population
- 6.1.-Civil Servants non-members of the CCP ---around 3.51% of the population

- 6.2.-Civil Servants members of the CCP --- around 2.19% of the population
- 7.1.-Proletarians non-members of the CCP --- around 7.61 of the population
- 7.2.-Proletarians members of the CCP --- around .99% of the population

From the above percentages it follows that the presence of conservative small-producers ideology, both in the whole of the chinese population and the membership of the Communist Party was very high.

The introduction of the concept "small-producers ideology" call for further elaboration:  
 What was the significance of small production in China at the time?

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INDUSTRIAL SECTOR 1973

	ASSETS	EMPLOYMENT	OUTPUT
state industry	97%	63%	86%
collective units	3%	36.2%	14%
artisans	-	0.8%	-

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The above figures show that 37% of the industrial (manual) workers in China were small producers, either in cooperatives or individually. Furthermore, one indicator of differences in productivity is this:

Industrial Sector

Productivity of the state sector: 1.0  
 Productivity of the collective sector: 0.28%

In the commercial sector, the units breakdown as follows:

state shops	92.5%
collective shops	7.3%
peddlers	0.2%

Finally, in the rural areas, selecting the most developed region, that of Shanghai, we have that, in 1973, the income from business in the people's communes there, was as follows:

commune level	30.5%
brigade level	17.2%
team level	52.3%

A second variation introduced to our analysis, is looking at the social structure from the point of view of ownership-use of the means of production:

a) urban bourgeoisie non-owners of means of production	1.4%
b) urban small-owners (those working in cooperatives and as individuals)	2.65%
c) rural small-owners (those working in people's communes and as individuals)	81.65
d) bureaucracy (managers of industrial means of production)	5.7%
e) proletariat (non-owners of means of production)	8.6%

Thus, by and large, from here it follows that chinese society, after 24 years of building socialism ( or, better, attempting to carry over socialist revolution), was overwhelmingly a society of small-producers.

A clearer picture emerges if we look at the urban sector and the rural sector separately:

URBAN SECTOR

bourgeoisie	9.80%----	9.8
small owners	18.56%----	18.6
bureaucracy	29.94%----	29.9
proletariat	41.74%----	41.7

RURAL SECTOR

small owners	95.25%----	95.3
bureaucracy	1.66%----	1.7
proletariat	3.08%----	3.0

summary: a socialist revolution taking place in a rural society at a very low level of technology... a socialist revolution led by a political organization that was a coalition of nationalist, populist and marxist forces, the former having broader social basis than the latter...

From above: a one-party dictatorship is bound to lay the breeding grounds for the creation of a new ruling class, if the marxist ideology shows itself unable to pass its points of view to the majority of the population (goals)

By now, we can draw a draft of the composition of that new ruling class:

CIVIL-MILITARY BUREAUCRACY AS % of the POPULATION

1.- Bureaucrats members of the CCP	2.19%
2.- Peasants members of the CCP	5.04%
3.- Manual workers members of the CCP	0.99%
4.-Bureaucrats non-members of the CCP	3.51%

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TOTAL CIVIL-MILITARY BUREAUCRACY	11.73%
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That was the social group dominating Chinese society by the 1970s after defending victoriously their privileges against a popular insurrection in the 1960s (the cultural revolution).

Last, but no least, one can end up with the following crude class structure in China:

A) Civil -military bureaucracy	11.73%	
(this stratum possessing authoritarian ideology)		11.73%
B) Urban bourgeoisie (non-owners)	1.40%	
C) Urban Petty bourgeoisie (owners)	2.65%	
D) Rural Petty bourgeoisie (owners)	76.61%	
(these strata possessing small-producers ideology)		80.66%
E) Proletariat	7.61%	
(this stratum having a potential for socialist ideology)		7.61%
		(100.00)

[note: for the sake of a simplified analysis I grouped under the heading "rural petty bourgeoisie" the following sectors:  
former landlords and rich peasants 6%  
petty rural bourgeoisie (chinese definition) 15.65%  
poor and lower middle peasants (chinese definition) 54.96% ]  
[the inclusion of former landlords and rich peasants makes sense because they do not own land any more, and because their aspirations coincide with that of the small owners: conservative, individualistic, and constrained by

their attachment to individual property of the land]

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Another type of classification was a mix of occupational and political status:

1.- Intelligentsia

- (a) high-ranking members of the communist party -addressed as the ruling elites during the cultural revolution;
- (b) high-ranking non-communist party intelligentsia, including governmental, economic, military and cultural civil servants;
- (c) professional and technical specialists in high-ranking managerial personnel (mainly in big units of production)
- (d) the middle-ranking professional and technical personnel, the middle-ranking civil servants, managers of medium and small enterprises, junior military officers and members of the foreign office, and artists;
- (e) the white-collar workers, including accountants, clerks, bookkeepers, technical personnel;

2.- Working class

- (a) the skilled workers and workers in special industries like Daching (oil) and aerospace;
- (b) the rank-and-file workers with lesser skill grades or those whor are not politically active;

3.- Peasants

- (a) the well-to-do peasants who profit at different times either through the accumulation of greater private profit or through black marketeering. In the majority of cases, advantages are gained because of the geographical location or the nature of the crop raised, or because of some particular function they perform in the people's communes. This group may constitute about 5 per cent of the total rural population;
- (b) the average peasant with several shadings of productivity and political involvement. This includes poor peasants (about 75 per cent of the rural population) and what may be called middle peasants (10 to 15 per cent of the rural population).

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**The above description is mainly from "Some Concrete Policy Decisions on the Rural Socialist Education Movement", promulgated by the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee in 1965 (at that time I was living in China with my family. R.R.)**

\*\*\*\*\*brief notes on BUREAUCRATIC SOCIALISM\*\*\*\*\*

after the triumph of the revolution, the social aim is SOCIALIST REVOLUTION: that is a process leading to a classless society,

\* what was happening in societies like the Chinese after 1949 and the Russian after 1917, among others?

\* what happens in the process of building socialism the Soviet Way and the Chinese Way?

-new social groups with different access to economic, political and social resources develop, this process as a creator of yet another socially stratified society...ruling class, etc.

-what are the foundations here?: the social relations of production, as underpinned on the USE (management) of means of production and not on the OWNERSHIP of means of production like it was when private property of them was the rule (USE as different from MANIPULATION, etc)

-from above a new elite, ruling elite of managers is created

they are managers at  
#the social level  
#the economic level  
#the political level  
#the cultural level  
-the core of that new ruling elite is the communist party, around  
which the civil-military bureaucracy is formed  
\*for China, the environment was as follows:  
economic---rural society  
cultural---the weight of Confucianism  
political--- one-party dictatorship (here elaborate)  
historical background since 1949, permanent blockage, permanent  
state of siege as related to USA, to JAPAN, to Soviet Union

\*\*\*\*\*brief notes on prevailing thoughts about development\*\*\*\*\*  
because bureaucratic socialism did collapse, the failure of socialism  
as a "tool for development" at the technical level is declared, and  
it follows that the other tool, "capitalism", is the only one that  
has proved itself feasible...

therefore, socialism is no longer an alternative for the Third World  
societies

\*flaws in the above analysis:

-there was no failure of socialism as a tool because bureaucratic  
socialist societies never reached the stage of socialist societies  
-the failure has been the defeat of the revolutionary forces within  
bureaucratic socialist societies during the process of building  
socialism  
-that, because during building socialism new social classes and new social  
stratification arises a new class struggle appears, and, so far, social  
socialist forces have been defeated, and therefore socialism have not being  
built yet overcoming the stage of bureaucratic socialism...we don't know if  
socialism is feasible or not, what we do know, for sure, is that during the  
process of building socialism the outcome of the class struggle can end up  
in counter-revolution...but that is a political problem and not a technical  
problem (centrally planned economy versus free market economy, etc),  
therefore, the analysis must be addressed mainly as a political one...  
-People's Republic of China is my case study to prove that  
new social classes generate from within the society undertaking  
building of socialism during this century..  
-economic, social, political, cultural and international  
environments are variables in the above dynamic...etc  
( as elaborated in R. Rojas, "La Guardia Roja Conquista China",  
published in 1968, and R. Rojas, "China: una revolucion en agonía",  
published in 1978)

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