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# **CREATING THE HARMONIOUS CITY IN SHANGHAI: Promise and Peril**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this paper is to discuss sustainable and non sustainable cities within the context of China. The development and modernization of China can be viewed within the long historical tradition of dialectics, connecting the I Ching (Yijing) (Translation Richard Wilhelm 1977) the three thousand year old Book of Changes to On Contradiction by Mao Zedong (Mao 1965), and the contemporary dialectic between socialism and the market. Even the idea of Harmony (Zhang 2002) implies a set of relationships, a coordinating relationship, and not a fixed or static condition. Change has been at center of Chinese thinking for thousands of years. Thus the promise and peril of harmonious development, of creating a harmonious city, suggests a philosophy of thinking that is dissimilar to the linear or positivist view of development in the West.

One of the most striking metaphors for both the promise and the peril of the Chinese model of modern development (Cao 2005) is the Three Gorges Dam. (Hvistendahl 2008; Clifford 2007). As with so many features of China today, it is the world's largest dam. Three Gorges provides an opportunity to consider the complex interplay between social and ecosystem development. The promise of the dam includes reducing the catastrophic consequences of flooding, the production of electrical power (eight times the megawatts of the U.S. Hoover Dam), (reducing the need for coal burning power production) and the powerful example of Chinese engineering prowess. The perils include the economic and social costs of resettling of one million people, loss of cultural heritage, and a variety of environmental hazards (silt production, damage to river flow, pollution issues and weather changes, among others). It is not necessary here to discuss such dramatic developments in detail to recognize that the Three Gorges is symbolic of the very difficult contradictions (Mao 1965) facing a just, participatory, sustainable and peaceful path to development and modernization, or a harmonious society. How market socialism (Wu 2005) responds to these contradictions will determine not only the course of China, but profoundly affect the global social and planetary ecosystem.

This paper seeks to get beyond the unprecedented instances and indicators of Chinese economic growth to examine some of the systemic endogenous and exogenous contradictions driving Chinese development and the impact on cities.

Such questions are particularly complex with regard to China. Both because of the unique scale and speed of modern Chinese development and the history of colonialism and

imperialism by Western Powers. This has been most evident with the United States, a the country that refused to recognize and allow China into the United Nations from 1949-1971 (a period roughly equal to that in which it has been admitted to the United Nations), threatened China with nuclear annihilation during the War in Vietnam, and continues to present a portrait of China that perpetuates the myth of the “Red Peril”, and now the “Green Peril” (Environment and Dollar accumulation).

Finally, it must be stated that I cannot speak Mandarin (my apology to our hosts and colleagues) and am at best a student of China, not a China Scholar. Thus these observations are offered with the hope that they may be of some modest interest for those that pursue a harmonious society.

### **1.sustainable and non sustainable development**

For all but the last few hundred years the human impact on the environment has been negligible. The long process of globalization that began with the human exodus from Africa changed particular ecosystems and affected particular species, but the issue of global sustainability did not exist. The ideas that gave birth to non sustainable development are rooted in the Abrahamic religions, and can be found in Genesis, “thou shalt have dominion over every living thing...” The human species is the only species to occupy, dominate and threaten the well being of virtually every other species and ecosystem on the planet.

The capitalist nation state system is the mother of non sustainable development. The dramatic change in human impact on ecosystems became evident with the rise of European exploration, colonialism, capitalism, imperialism and to some extent, Soviet socialism. The first major public alarm about the human impact on the environment in the West was pioneered by Rachael Carson’s 1962 *Silent Spring*. In 1969 Barry Weisberg argued in *Beyond Repair, The Ecology of Capitalism*, (1969) that the global system of production, distribution and consumption was incompatible with ecological and environmental balance (See Utube 1975). The first 1972 United Nations Conference on the Environment, in Stockholm, did not consider the idea of sustainable development. The idea of that day was that “environmental problems are caused by under-development.”

The result is that the measured footprint of humanity from 1961-2003 increased from .5 planets to 1.25 planets. The footprint has tripled in just four decades. Humanity now liquidates the ecological capital of the planet instead of living from annual yield. This is overshoot. It is parallel to a farmer that consumes more than they grown and must therefore begin to liquidate productive resources for everyday use. It is fashionable to suggest, usually as Sino phobia, that if China were to acquire a pattern of production and consumption equivalent to the United States the overshoot would be an estimated 5-6 planets, not counting the other mega population countries such as India,

Brazil or Nigeria, etc. The current rate of population growth worldwide produces 140 people a minute, or an urban area the size of Los Angeles and Chicago combined every month. Almost all of the new urban population will reside in urban slums.

How to balance human use with planetary capacity is central to progress on sustainable development. Whether or not the United States should be required to reduce its overshoot or other countries should be permitted to geometrically increase overshoot is one of the profound moral and political questions of sustainability. Currently the U.S. energy per capita consumption is 7 times greater than China.

Sustainable development is a vague idea which is generally understood to be development that “meets the needs of the present generational without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. The term became popular with the publication of the 1987 Brundtland Report, a product of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development. Since that time the term has been enlarged to include environmental, economic and social concerns related to development and modernization, from such diverse issues as agriculture to water (Wikipedia, Sustainable Development). This now includes equity, viability and impact. The Union of Intelligible Associations suggests a typology of 12 complementary strategies essential to sustainable development. It is likely that sustainable urban development is the most complex challenge ever faced by this species. It is within this larger context that the threat of climate change must be addressed.

From 1961 to 2003 the global demand for resources increased to 1.25% of the world bio capacity. Thus there is a 25% overshoot. The pattern is clear: demand and consumption is rising as bio capacity declines. But this ratio varies greatly by country. The 2006 global footprint is 2.2. The US footprint is 9.6 and the Chinese footprint is 1.6. Yet there is abundant evidence to suggest that China has already exceeded the environmental capacity for regeneration (Cai Dapeng 2005.) Moreover, the environmental hazards in China have already created catastrophic conditions, including an estimated 750,000 premature deaths from air pollution annually (Wikipedia, Environment in China; Weisberg 2006). The land, air and water contamination in China is growing more rapidly and more extensively than anywhere in the world. There is no way that such a course is rationally sustainable indefinitely. Nor is it the case that “going green, carbon offsets, technological leapfrogging,” etc., can harmonize the social and ecological systems.

The Environmental Performance Review of China (OECD 2007) offers 51 recommendations to address both domestic and international environmental concerns. To what extent such recommendations will successfully address the issues of equity, viability and bearability remains unknown.

China has attempted to achieve in 30 years what the West required 300 years to acquire. The most evident perils of rapid growth in China are in some regards, akin to the unchecked capitalist growth of England or the United States in the 19th and early 20th

century. Efforts to create an adequate regulatory system or rule of law are still in an early stage. Yet in China, both the gains and the costs are unprecedented. Thus, it may be prudent to conclude that the socialist market economy, combining elements of both socialist and capitalist development, cannot be adequately understood by measures that assume that all countries can be evaluated by a single environmental lens.

While there may exist no consensus on what constitutes sustainable development, it would definitely include considerations of equity, viability and bearability. It is thus a determination rooted in environment, social, economic, cultural and political considerations. Sustainable development must therefore provide an integrated social and ecosystem vision that is consistent with the known limitations of the planet. Sustainable development cannot be achieved with a view that argues for continuous and unlimited growth, or that technological innovation will insure the capacity for such growth. Any argument that justifies sustainability for the few at the expense of the many is politically immoral.

## **2. Non sustainable and sustainable cities**

Cities consume less than four percent of the earth's surface, but house half the human population, consume three quarters of all natural resources and produce three quarters of all human pollution and waste (Redman and Jones 2004). The urban population will double in little more than one generation. But the footprint of urbanization, the overshoot of cities, is likely to grow geometrically. This is not sustainable urban development.

Cities are at the center of any reasonable debate about sustainability. It is now commonplace to hear that more than half of the global population lives in cities, five billion people will live in cities by 2030. Cities are the battleground for the most difficult issues of sustainability: complexity, conflict, children, density, equality, gender, justice, size, scale, services, shape, waste, etc.

It will require non linear thinking to understand the interplay of cities and sustainable development for two reasons. First, "merely to think about cities and get somewhere, one of the main things to know is what kind of problem cities pose...Cities happen to be problems in organized complexity." (Jacobs 1961). Second, "Roughly, by a complex system I mean one made up of a large number of parts that intersect in a non simple way. In such systems, the whole is more than the sum of its parts, not in an ultimate, metaphysical sense, but in the pragmatic sense that, given the properties of the parts and the laws of their interaction, it is not a trivial matter to infer the properties of the whole." (Simon 1962).

The challenge is to understand the complexity and causes of urban sustainability. Discussions of "ecological urbanization" (Environment & Urbanization Brief #13) and ecological cities have been explored in depth in cities such as Hong Kong (Boyden, Millar et al. 1981) and Tokyo. But one can find no assistance in understanding the cross

cultural challenges faced by the two dozen megacities of the world. For example, *The Endless City* (2008), the *Urban Age* project of the London School of Economics, studied New York, Shanghai, London, Mexico City, Johannesburg and Berlin but offered no insight into the character of a sustainable city. A draft model of megacity infrastructure is presented in the Appendix.

The common approach to sustainable cities is to promote better or “best practice” efforts in a variety of domains such as shelter, governance, management, construction, waste disposal, pollution control, resource efficiency, etc. Such approaches offer no integrated accounting of city systems within the regional, national or global context; offer no parameters by which to assess issues of justice and equity at the community, city, country or global scale; offer no vision of how to integrate the demands for development, modernization and environment; and generally offer no vision by which to steer the ship of sustainable urban development. Complex issues such as energy and transportation require an integrated social and ecological system approach. Nor can one find discussion of how the nation state system will evolve in such a manner as to maximize the prospects for sustainable cities.

The challenge of creating a sustainable city is not simply a matter of ecology or environment, but the interaction between a variety of sectors. These are best understood as contradictions that will find unique expression in particular cultures, not universal fixed indicators. What might be appropriate for China is not necessarily appropriate for other countries in the developing world with different cultural, political and economic systems. Thus, the tradition of universal standards or law may be inadequate to address the complexity of sustainable development. Moreover, sustainable development, or sustainable cities, must be understood within some type of closed system accounting that balances independence and interconnectedness, centripetal and centrifugal, exogenous and endogenous forces – embracing the interactive flows of citizen, community, city and country.

The literature on Chinese cities is impressive and far too extensive for review in this article. (Friedmann 2005; Wu 2006; Wu 2007; Wu, Xu et al. 2007). The urbanization level has increased at an unprecedented pace, from 17.9% in 1978 to 40.5% in 2004. There are no shortages of superlatives to describe what has happened in the coastal cities. One commentator suggests that while two new high rise buildings have been built in Los Angeles in the last fifteen years, five thousand have been built in Shanghai, or an average of twenty seven each month. This author first visited Beijing and Shanghai in 1971 and has seen the dramatic changes.

But is this speed and scale of urbanization sustainable? Can this trajectory of growth be harmonious? What are the principles of development and modernization that direct urbanization? How does market socialism urbanize? Has market socialism in China demonstrated a capacity to adequately balance development with sustainability? How will

this occur when an additional 500,000,000 rural migrants enter Chinese cities in the coming generations?

Currently the US has a 5-6 times greater per capita carbon emission than China. But the evidence seems to mount daily that the current market socialist course of development is not sustainable. Previous energy efficiency programs in China have not succeeded, and there is little evidence to suggest future programs will succeed. China has already surpassed the U.S. as the largest emitter of greenhouse gases. But perhaps more important, unchecked future growth of emissions in China, due to the scale, will clearly overcome any gains made by emission reductions of richer nations under the Kyoto Protocol. (BBC April 15, 2008). The taste for mega events, such as the Beijing Olympics or the Shanghai World Exposition, will escalate energy consumption and carbon emissions. No sustainable alternative to coal and automobile use has yet been implemented. It is unlikely that Western technology, even if it were provided to the Chinese on terms that are acceptable to both sides, will not solve the problem. Thus, a sustainable China will not be achieved by reproducing Western consumption patterns or importing Western technology. What then, is to be done?

### **3.Marxism, socialisM, market socialism and CITIES**

China must be viewed within its modern historical context. (Mitter 2008). This at least includes the period since 1949, placing sustainable development within the context of Marxism and Mao Zedong Thought, socialism and market socialism, as it has evolved in China. This is a particularly appropriate time for this exercise, since one can now compare the first thirty years of socialism with the last thirty years of market socialism.

It is not possible in this paper to either summarize Marx or review the teachings of Marxists about nature, cities, and related questions. Nor is it possible to review the political economy of Marx in order to shed light on sustainable development. For the purpose of this paper, the question is to identify what it is in Marxism that is most relevant to achieve a just, participatory, sustainable, peaceful city. The central principal for understanding or achieving sustainable development is justice.

For Marx, standards of justice are both specific to particular modes of production and the standard by which that mode of production should be judged. (Geras 1985). Thus the challenge would be to both identify the particular standard of justice and equality in the socialist market mode of production, and then to evaluate the extent to which that standard has been achieved.

Engels, in *The Housing Question*, was clear about the central place of justice. "Justice which is the organic, regulating, sovereign basic principal of societies, which has nevertheless been nothing up to the present, but which ought to be everything-what is that if

not the stick with which to measure all human affairs, if not the final arbiter to be applied in all conflicts.”

Therefore a sustainable, or harmonious city must be a just city (Fainstein 2006, 2004). There is little if anything in the literature on utopian cities, socialist cities or communist cities that would offer insight into the practical creation of a just city today, in China or elsewhere. Some have argued that Curitiba, Brazil, (Mello 2003) or Amsterdam, in the Netherlands, (Fainstein) offer examples of the just city. Even if such a claim were justified, there is nothing in the existing literature on city planning that suggests such developments could be scaled up to a megacity, or applied to Shanghai.

It is clear in Marx that a just city is not a city of mere commodities. It can be nothing other than a city in which “the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.” (Marx and Engels 1848) This would necessarily include the fulfillment of basic human needs and human rights for virtually every urban resident. It is evident that such a state of affairs has not occurred as a result of either the capitalist relations of production or market mechanisms.

There is no single socialism but only socialist traditions (Newman 2005). Thus it was not the case that socialism in China followed any single model, even though the Soviet model had a profound influence in the early years of the Revolution. The first half of the Chinese Revolution was led by Mao Zedong, who applied Marxism to the conditions of China. While the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution have become most closely associated with Chairman Mao, the first thirty years of the revolution was built on “two legs.” First, were urban concentrations that included large factories and the second was small rural based industry. Mao and his colleagues were faced with the monumental challenges presented by feudal conditions, poverty, the U.S./UN blockage, and the split with the Soviet Union.

The planning and development of cities was a secondary concern. In this context the issues of ‘sustainable development’ or ‘sustainable cities’ were not considered. But it was in this period that the leadership capacities of the Party and the ability for centralized planning were developed, laying the foundation for the success of market reforms after Mao’s death.

The last thirty years added the market to the conception of socialism. These were the ideas of Deng Xiaoping. In essence, this is a system in which a market economy, driven by both endogenous and exogenous factors, is managed by State and Party planners. David Schweickart (2002) has called this “Economic Democracy.” The core components of economic reform are described by Jinglian Wu (2005). A provocative discussion of market socialism is contained in *The Chinese Model of Modern Development* (Cao 2005). Furthermore, “The construction of a distinctly socialist form of urbanization is as necessary to the transition to socialism as the rise of the capitalist city was to the sustenance of capitalism.” (Harvey 1989, 58). However, this remains to be elaborated.

There is evidence that market socialism has both increased and decreased equality and

justice. But it is clear that market socialism has aggravated environmental threats, or non sustainable development. Given Western experience, it is unlikely that markets can correct this course. Thus, it remains the challenge of the Party to chart a course that insures the continuing and expanding socialist control of the market. This perspective distinguishes a “free market” capitalism from a socialist market economy (Amin 2008). David Schweickart (2002) has proposed ten theses that describe Marxism and the Transition to Socialism. These offer a set of guidelines for studying this transition, provided they are applied creatively to the Chinese context.

#### **4.SHANGHAI AND THE HARMONIOUS CITY**

Shanghai has approximately 17 million residents with three million daily migrants in and out of the city. It is the largest city in China, functions as a province or city state, with 19 county level divisions, 18 districts and one county. The city is the dragon head of Chinese economic reform and modernization, the most important recipient for direct foreign investment and the largest contributor to central government revenues. Shanghai is arguably the laboratory in which the promise and peril of sustainable urbanization is being tested.

Shanghai has had a fabled history of foreign concessions and cultural diversity. In the first thirty years of the revolution Shanghai was under strict restraint by the central government although it became a pivotal industrial and political center for the revolution. Once economic reforms were unleashed in 1991, the economic and cultural growth of the city has been geometric. In the last few years Shanghai has been the most rapidly globalizing city in the world, accomplishing in a few years what took other cities several decades to accomplish.

The Master Plan (1999-2010) aims for an integrated regional sustainable development. A central component of this plan has been the 2010 World Exposition (World Fair), under the theme of “Better City, Better Life.” This will be the first world fair in a developing country, the first world fair to focus on urbanization, and a hallmark in the pathway of global urbanization.

A detailed examination of the Shanghai “footprint,” or even an assessment of the sustainability of this unique megacity, cannot be accomplished in this paper. The infrastructure diagram provided in the Appendix suggests some of the complexity of such an undertaking. Only a casual observation indicates that one of the prices of extraordinary growth, even planned growth, has been to increase both inequality and environmental challenges - signs that both the social system and the ecosystem are evolving in a non sustainable manner.

The name of the city immediately suggests one environmental concern. The Chinese

characters that constitute the name mean up, or above the sea. But for how long? The impact of climate change on Shanghai is already, and will continue to be, very dramatic. Over the last thirty years the sea level in Shanghai has risen by 11.5 centimeters, with another 3.8 centimeter rise over the next ten years. However, almost every environmental impact estimate of climate change in China, and worldwide, has under estimated the impact. This already affects fresh drinking water, settlement patterns, marine storms, etc. In 2006 Shanghai had the warmest year in 134 years. Such potentially catastrophic developments will not only threaten the construction of the new Dunstan Eco City, but negatively affect any attempt to curb either inequality or pollution.

A non sustainable city cannot be a harmonious city. The concept of harmony has a long history in both western and eastern philosophy and culture. The earliest conceptions of “harmony” in China contained the dual components of harmony with nature and social harmony (Delury 2008). The most common use is a state of equilibrium. Yet an additional meaning of the term is found in the ruler’s ability to balance the need for both leniency and control. Indeed, the mechanisms of “social control” (Bakken 2000) in China are pivotal concerns in charting a course harmonious or sustainable development. The official dialogue on “constructing a harmonious society” can be traced to 1989. From 2003 until, possibly 2008, “building a socialist harmonious society” has been the central party line.

In 2005 President Hu Jintao argued for a “socialist society that is democratic and law based, fair and just, trustworthy and friendly, full of vigor and vitality, secure and orderly, in which man and nature are in harmony.” (Communist Party of China Release, October, 2006.) In 2006 Shanghai adopted a fifteen year harmony blueprint that focused on better coordination of economic and social development; promotion of social equity and justice; formation of common aspirations, ideals and moral codes; strengthening social affairs management and services. (Gov.cn, 12-21-2006). In 2007 President Hu Jintao argued that a harmonious society features democracy, the rule of law, equality, justice, sincerity, amity and vitality. However, it appears that at the 17th Party Congress in 2008 the idea of “the scientific outlook on development” (kexue fazhan guan) may have replaced the concept of “social harmony” (Delury 2008, 44).

As important as tracking official discourse on the subject is to explore what a “harmonious” or “sustainable” Shanghai might require. This is not a utopian flight but the practical application of both scientific and normative measures toward a socialist market megacity. Any proposition or proposal for a harmonious Shanghai must be placed within a model that explains the complexity, infrastructure and morphology of the Chinese city. For example, it is of little value to propose (Giradet 2004) Danish Wind Cooperatives, a German Renewal Energy Law, a Barcelona Solar Thermal Ordinance, Congestion Charging, Bogota’s Urban Transport Solutions, Urban Agriculture, Eco Labeling, a Plastic Bag Levy, or other such measures unless they are placed within a Chinese context.

Similarly, the Burgess Concentric Model, the Hoyt Sector Model, the Mann Model of a Typical British City or the Multi-Nuclei Theory models of urban structure (Urban Morphology) are no substitute for identifying the particular Chinese patterns of urban morphology. Urban morphology is driven by both endogenous and exogenous factors. This constitutes the yin and the yang of urbanization. While China will no doubt maximize its endogenous resources, these will not suffice to fulfill the city consumer explosion. Thus The Economist recently produced a special report on China's global quest for resources (Economist 2008). This "footprint" has implications for such diverse concerns as commodity markets, greenhouse gases, trade relations, pollution, foreign policy, etc.

Shanghai has undergone the most rapid economic growth and structural transformation of any large city, or megacity, in the world. It has morphed from a completely horizontal city of streets and canals to an increasing vertical city of mega buildings and automobile highways. This transformation has presented Shanghai with unique challenges, such as the available space for transportation.

By all measures the carrying capacity of the city and the ecological footprint are growing geometrically more unsustainable every year. To accommodate the ecological footprint of Shanghai would require 57 times more territory than currently exists. (Yun, Sheng-Kui and Gai-Di, 2001). This deficit is provided by exogenous ecological sources that exist within China, within Asia, or elsewhere worldwide. The deficits are accounted for by a combination of resource depletion and international trade. (Liping, Zhonggzhi, 2005). Shanghai is a city with "a severe deficit both in ecological footprint (2.64 hm<sup>2</sup> per capital) and ecological carrying capacity (0.26 hm<sup>2</sup> per capita). (Zhang, Xu, Li, Zhao 2006).

It is common to hear that the construction of the Dongtan Eco City on Chongming Island will provide a solution. When complete in 2030, the project would be 75% the size of Manhattan with only 33% of the Shanghai footprint. But this innovative project offers no solution to the growing Gross Domestic Product for hundreds of millions people that already exist in cities, and will be moving into cities within the next decade or two.

Yet if this calculus seems insurmountable, it is only half the challenge. Not only must the social system be balanced with the ecosystem, balance, or equality, must be achieved within the social system. Rising inequality is certain to leave people less and less willing to adopt sustainable patterns of consumption.

Market socialism, the more it resembles the capitalist market, has unleashed a Pandora's Box of ecologically and socially unsustainable options. For example, one kilogram of beef requires 16 thousand liters of water, and one cup of coffee requires 140 liters of water to produce. The current global average water footprint is 1240m<sup>3</sup>/cap/yr. In China it is currently 700m<sup>3</sup>/cap/yr – while in the US it is 2480m<sup>3</sup>/cap/yr. (Adam 2008)

Former United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan has stated that "Our biggest challenge in the new century is to take an idea that seems abstract, sustainable development,

and turn it into a daily reality for all this worlds' people." The dual challenge is revolutionary transformation within the social system and between the social system and the ecosystem. This presents a profound moral link between the West and the East. It is unlikely that an attempt to limit coffee consumption in China will occur as long as the West continues the conspicuous consumption. Like it or not, the road to sustainable cities in China runs through Washington, D.C.

While few, there exists some instances that have been identified by observers as models, where sustainable practices have been scaled up to city paradigm. They include Porto Alegre; Curitiba; Amsterdam and Cuba. In Brazil there exist eight cities within the City Culture of Peace framework. Historically there have been dozens of ideal city, or normative visions of the good city. Somewhat recent visions include: the Charter of Emerging Human Rights in a Globalized World; Charter of European Towns and Cities Toward Sustainability; Charter for Women's Right to the City; Charter of the Global Greens; Child Friendly City; Civilizing Urbanization.; Culture of Peace; Decentralization Guidelines for Strengthening Local Authority; Earth Charter; Eco-City; Eco Density Charter; Cities Charter on Rights of Citizens in Knowledge Society; European Charter for Safeguarding Human Rights in the City; Global Urban Agenda, Urban Land Institute; Glocalization Manifesto; Good City, Harmonious City; Healthy City; Human Needs; Human Rights; Ideal City; Just City; Justice Charter for New York Criminal Justice Reform; Leipzig Charter on Sustainable European Cities; Manifesto for Humane Cities; Measuring Progress toward Safety and Justice: A Global Guide to the Design of Performance Indicators across the Justice Sector; Millennium Development Goals Applied to Cities; Modular Cities; Multiplicity of Choice; Open City; Partnership Model; Participation Charter; Participatory Budgeting; Proposal for New Orleans Criminal Justice System: Best Practices to Advance Justice and Safety; Resurgent City; Right to the City; Rights of the City; Safe City; "Sidewalk Democracy; Situationist City; Social Ecology; Socialist City; Sustainable City; Utopian City; Vancouver Good Charter; Woman Friendly City; World Charter for the Right to the City; World Urban Forum 3 Working Group Papers: Capable City, Ideal City, Learning City, Livable City, Planning City, etc.

The United Nations Population Fund (NFP) (2007) has discussed the need to "unleash" the urban potential, but similar to many other such contributions (Corcoran 2050; Burdett and Rode 2008; PriceWaterhouseCoopers 2008) offers scant concrete guidance on how to turn a megacity in the developing world into a sustainable city within a decade or two, let alone how to prevent the calamities of climate change from preventing such a transformation altogether.

The prospects for harmonious cities in China, or Shanghai in particular, depend upon a complex interplay between endogenous and exogenous factors. While the potential peril is real, the promise of success is also tangible.

## CONCLUSIONS

This paper has begun to explore some of the issues involved in understanding non sustainable and sustainable development, cities, and the role that Marxism and Socialism can play in such considerations. China has now completed two great cycles, the socialism of the first thirty years and the market socialism of the last thirty years. How these cycles will be integrated into a new paradigm of sustainable-harmonious growth appears to be the next great cycle in Chinese history. The goal remains a city in which the “free development of one is the condition for the free development of all.” This is not a city without injustice, inequality, conflict or pollution, but one in which the social and ecological systems are integrated and mutually sustaining. This is the core of a “harmonious city.”

The great peril is that the endogenous and exogenous demands for escalating economic growth will increase the control of the “free market” over socialist planning, widen the gap between rural and urban development, undermine participation and the rule of law, increase inequality, undermine the unique capacity of Chinese cities to pursue sustainable development, weaken the role of neighborhood committees, and widen the disharmony between social and eco systems. The extent to which youth are removed from revolutionary values and subjected to Western consumer passions poses a major obstacle to sustainable development.

No less a scientist than James Lovelock, author of the Gaia theory, in *Revenge of Gaia* (2002), has already argued that the global ecosystem is no longer self regulating and that the threshold to repair the damage has already been lost. The accuracy of this claim is unknown. But at the very least, it is a powerful impetus to do all that one can to promote the success of China.

Moreover, the increasingly hostile attitude of the United States (and all the presidential candidates) weakens the capacity of China to pursue a course of sustainable-harmonious development.

The great promise for China is the opposite. Harmonious development is deeply embedded in Chinese history and culture. In principal it offers a guide to reconciling the social and eco systems. The socialist and market socialist infrastructure already contains many of the vital values, attitudes and institutions required for success: Marxist ideals; a peaceful foreign policy that nourishes domestic development; central planning and empowered neighborhood committees; the demonstrated capacity to lift people out of poverty; the unique powers given to cities; the large number of urban residents with strong rural ties, etc.

The three thousand year old I Ching, or Book of Changes, offers an important guide to asking appropriate questions and finding appropriate answers. This dialectic, or the yin

and the yang, is at work on a daily basis in China. The final 64th Hexagram, Wei Chi (Before Completion), tells us that we are on the cusp of great change, a transition, that can lead us to the other shore. This is the promise of China, a promise that can benefit both China, and the entire world.

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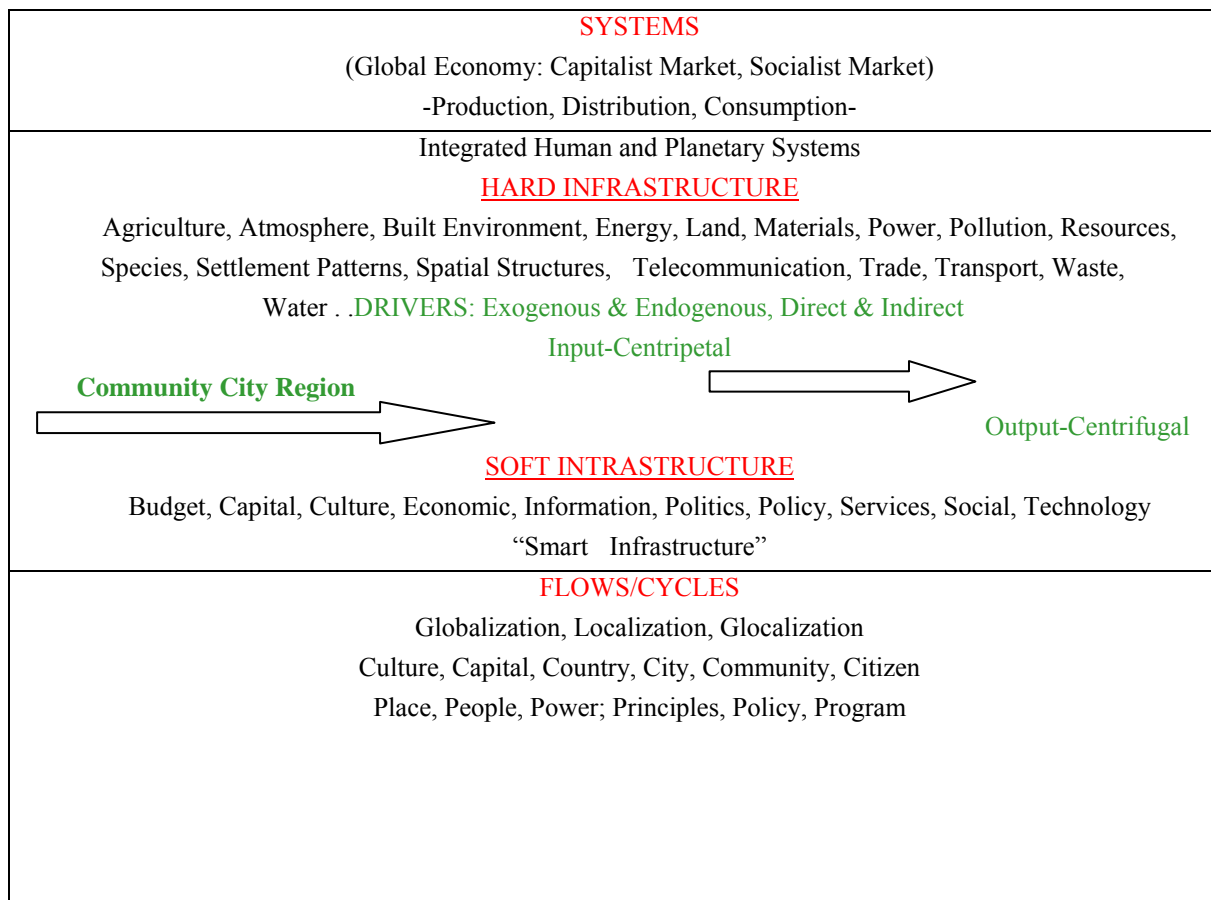
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**APPENDIX**

**MEGACITY INFRASTRUCTURE COMPLEX SYSTEM MODEL**



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