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**CAPITALISM OR NOT CAPITALISM, THAT IS A
QUESTION: A *TOUCH OF SIN* AND CAPITALISM**

by

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Capitalism or Not Capitalism, That is a Question
***A Touch of Sin* and Capitalism**
HUI Chit Pan

Introduction

After Deng's economic reform and opening up policy, the Chinese Communist Party introduced the concept of market economy from the western capitalism and led to the birth of "Socialism with Chinese characteristics". This action was a really important turning point in Chinese history. Since then, Chinese economy had an obvious progression. According to the World Bank (2014), China's GDP growth consistently increased about 10% per year since the market reform in 1978. Deng claimed that some people should become rich first. However, time flies and three decades have passed, it seems that it is the time that everyone should have the opportunity to enjoy the achievement from the reform. Is it real in contemporary china? In the following essay, I am going to use two main points, with the aid of "A Touch Of Sin" and some real cases, to argue that it is difficult for the working class people to enjoy the fruit of the rapid economic development.

"A Touch of Sin" and Capitalism

In the film "A Touch Of Sin", it uses four real cases that happened in China as a blueprint, repackages them into four different scenes to deeply reflect the hidden and core problems in China. These four scenes seem to be independent incident. In fact, all of them carry out the same message that most people overemphasize the benefit that economic progress supposedly brings. Apart from the economic development, there are so many hidden problems within the society that people underestimate.

Also, the film has a close relationship with the week theme that how the rise of

capitalists influence China. It shows how the rise of capitalism leads to social decay and strengthens the inequality. Many situations turn to violence at the end. For instance, in the first and fourth scene, it shows how successful the capitalist of the mine field is and how workers being exploited in factory. In the second and third scene, it shows how people are repressed under capitalism and they chose to use violence to relieve their anger.

Unfair Justice System

The first reason why working class people can't gain benefit from the development is because of the unequal justice system in China. It is a common scene that there is collusion and corruption between government officials (Cadres) and business people in China. Business people make good use of the connection to get the land that is taken away by the government from working class people and farmers and gain profit from reconstruction. However, the law tends to protect the benefits of the government. When people strike for their own rights and benefits through the legal system, mostly the officials will reject it or even treat them as defendant with an irrational reason. It is not a surprise that nearly 80% of the respondents of a research survey claim they lack confidence toward the Chinese justice system (Dai and Hu, 2013). It seems that they do not trust the system which is supposed to help them to fight for their own benefits. Such a situation can be seen in the first scene. The boss of the mine field engages in corruption with the official for monetary gain. The leading man wants to report on them through related unit. However, no one even tries to help. The law cannot help him so he chooses to use violence to deal with it.

How about in the real world? The Wukan protests in 2011 was a remarkable incident. The villagers' committees and local government transferred 3,200 acres of agricultural land to a developer. Originally, it was a win-win reconstruction if local residents could

get the appropriate compensation and the government can earn profit as well. However, each household only received a 550 yuan subsidy. The residents have tried more than 10 times for petition, however, the government did not respond (Lau, 2012). This incident obviously shows the problem of justice in China. The existing law is absolutely protecting the officials since they have the right to decide how much to pay for the compensation. Even though there is rapid development, working class do gain nothing.

Unfair Hukou System

The unfair Hukou system is also another significant factor that makes those working people cannot enjoy the benefit from the development. The general public may think that once people in the rural areas come to the city, they can enjoy welfare and find a well-paid job. However, it is not the case. The Hukou system (Liu and Kuang, 2012) creates a big gap and inequality between rural and urban people. Fan (2004) also claims that the Hukou system creates a platform to exploit migrant workers. Even though the economy develops in a rapid way, only those capitalists, sometimes maybe people with urban Hukou, can enjoy the benefit. However, those working class with rural Hukou, can only get nothing.

In the film, the fourth scene show how the factory worker from the rural area is being exploited. In his first job, his friend accidently got injured. However, the factory had no healthcare and he had to give all his wages for his friend as compensation. In his last job, he even could not get wages for the first few months since he was not a formal worker yet.

In fact, such scenes happen in China every day. Many people with rural Hukou come to the city for a well-paid job. However, they only have a low educational and skill level and they can only choose to work in the factory. With a low protection Hukou,

the workers have no choice but to work under serious exploitation.

Film Criticism

The film can reflect the capitalist rise of China to a large extent. More importantly it shows many problems that are ignored by most people. However, the film repeatedly uses violence and bloody ending for every scenes. It may give audience an idea that Chinese is likely to use sanguinary to strike for rights

Conclusion

To put it in a nutshell, there is not doubt that rapid economic development do bring lots of benefits for some Chinese. However, because of lots of constraints, some people are blocked to enjoy the fruit of the economy. Especially those working class people, the efforts they give never equals what they get in return. But it does not have to be like this. Although it takes long time for the CCP to change the idea, at least we can try to change people's mind right now.

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