

Value changes in transforming China

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Abstract: The People's Republic of China (PRC) is back on the global agenda. In the late 1970s, the process of modernization (reform and opening up under Deng Xiaoping) brought enormous changes to the economy, society and cultural landscape. China has rapidly emerged as a major world power, despite the current global economic crisis. This article explores the changes in Chinese values caused by the expanding economic and cultural exchange processes within the country. Of specific theoretical interest is the role played by the mass media and information and communication technologies (ICT), and their bearing on modern Chinese society. Empirically, we first examine China's placement on a global map of values (based on the World Value Survey), noting recent value shifts. We then offer a comprehensive view of attitudes of Chinese managers, drawing on a quantitative study from Beijing and Shanghai, to highlight the importance of cultural differences deeply rooted in Chinese society. Finally, implications for cultural relations between West and East are discussed.

Keywords: value change, modernization, cultural proximity, Beijing and Shanghai, identity and lifestyles

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