

# Analysis of Why Liberalism Are Popular in China: Reform and Opening up, Globalization and Technology

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## ABSTRACT

The research is to explore the reasons for the rise of liberalism in China. This phenomenon has been observed in recent years, and liberalism changed people's thoughts. The research uses the case study method. Through the case study of China, this research hopes to reveal broader causes of liberalism as a global phenomenon. As a result, this research has found out several reasons liberalism is popular in China. There are reform and opening up, globalization, and technology. It deepens the understanding of liberalism, and also helps to understand the future of another tendency.

**Keywords:** *liberalism, globalization, China, reform and opening up, ideology change*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The research question in this article is why liberalism is popular in China. It is puzzling because Chinese youth have undergone great changes. This change has not been studied in detail. This issue is complicated and unique because under the phenomenon of liberalism rise, it has been observed that the thinking of Chinese youth is similar to that of other youths in the world. Still, it is different from the previous thinking in China. This article will take China as the research object. China is a unique example because its technology is developing rapidly. For example, TikTok is the leading destination for short-form mobile video [1]. In addition, China has become the world's second-largest economy in just 40 years. This situation in China applies to many developing countries. At the same time, the particularity of China is that, as one of the only five socialist countries in the world, China has no natural relevance to liberalism.

This topic is very important, first, because liberalism is becoming increasingly popular to shape the thinking of the young generation. Second, it can help governments decide liberal restraint policies or open policies. This article is divided into several parts. After the introduction, it will first define this term. Then, this phenomenon will be explained from a technical point of view. On this basis, this article will be analyzed from the perspective of globalization. The next part is an analysis of reform and opening up. Finally, the article ends with a conclusion and sheds light on future studies.

## 2. DEFINING LIBERALISM

Liberalism has three historical development processes: classical liberalism, new liberalism, and Neo liberalism [2]. Classical liberalism is popular because it provides a better trade environment. At the same time, the concepts of freedom of speech, freedom of belief, freedom of thought, self-responsibility and free market are first proposed by classical liberalism. Classical liberalism focuses on the free market and economy. It thinks that government intervention often hinders economic growth, so it advocates excluding the government from the economic field. However, it also leads to economic crisis, such as the great depression.

The most famous example of new liberalism is Roosevelt's new deal. The reason why new liberalism is powerful is that it overcomes the shortcomings of classicism and proposes that freedom should be within the institutional framework. It is also popular from Britain to America. However, this liberalism was opposed by many people owing to its department liberalism.

Neo-liberalism advocates the restoration of classical liberalism, and on the basis of the new liberalism, it integrates the economic system, ideology, and culture of the two. Deregulation (removal of government control of the industry) and privatization (transfer of ownership, property, or enterprises from the government to the private sector) [3].

The major criterion for judging neo-liberalism is “whether to extend the market principle, that is, the competitive logic of capitalism, to all aspects of life.” Neo-liberalism accepts the existence of state intervention, but believes that this kind of state intervention is not to confront the system, but to promote the extension of the market system in all directions of society [4].

This article will use the third definition because it is based on the current society. This paper centres on liberalism in contemporary China. The change of economic system and thought has great influence on people’s lifestyle. In recent years, the lifestyle of Chinese young people has become freer and more diversified. For example, the divorce rate is increasing. This shows that people are willing and have the right to a second choice without being influenced by traditional ideas, which is an embodiment of people’s freedom of thought. Another example is people giving up the traditional family life, living with children and parents, or even four generations together. This way of life turns to live alone in the present, reflecting the change of thought to people [5]. Similarly, the Chinese government has made many economic changes, and people’s consumption concepts have also changed accordingly. Compared with the simple and economical traditional consumption concept, young people in China are keen on pursuing fashionable and luxurious ones.

After introducing the definition of liberalism and the phenomenon of the rise of liberalism in China, the author will explain the reason for the rise of liberalism from the perspective of technology.

### **3. FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Technology is emphasized in the discussion of the rise of liberalism. The development of information technology and communication technology makes people know more about information. Technology puts different cultures together, and people can intuitively compare different cultures on this platform and explore which way is more suitable for them. For example, microblog and WeChat are very popular in China. Young people spend plenty of time on these social media platforms every day, which is likely to impact their thinking.

Social media will make people understand themselves better [6]. This is true because it sums up the fact that it shows the power of social media that exposes people to different kinds of culture, and they can choose which culture suits them best. Different people show their lifestyles, ways of thinking, and their behavior on social media. People who use social media can easily find a lot of lifestyles that are different from their physical surroundings and learned this behavior pattern.

However, there are also some limitations, because it is centered on the West and the reaction of the Chinese audience is not taken into account. Liberalism has a perfect form and development abroad. Liberalism is characterized by individualism as the core and unrestricted lifestyle.

**China’s Rising Divorce Rate Linked to Increasing Social Media Usage** The popularity of social media in China is to blame for the country’s rising divorce rate [7]. This is the significant increase in China’s divorce rate mentioned above, which is inseparable from the development of social media in China in recent years.

In addition, China is the region with the best sales volume of luxury goods in the world. “Chinese consumers were already a known force in the industry, accounting for a third of luxury spending last year” [8]. This is the same as luxury brands in social media The propaganda on the Internet is inseparable. “Many of the world’s top luxury companies have responded by promoting their brands on Chinese social media platforms such as Tiktok and Little Red Book” [9]. Luxury brands will conduct live broadcasts and advertisements on social media. Many people will follow these brands through these social media and arouse their desire to buy, even if the price of luxury goods is very expensive and unnecessary. This marketing model fully confirms Neo-liberalism.

The audience of social media is mainly young people, who do not have mature values and tend to yearn for new and free things. Under these factors, many young people yearn for a liberal life. Through social media, people will expect this form and learn this kind of liberalism. Prior to the introduction of social media, Chinese people have limited access to the liberal lifestyles in the West. Because of their ignorance of other countries, in the early days when technology connected the world with information, many people in China had a lot of self-sufficient illusions about Western developed countries. People usually think developed countries’ imaginations are beyond reality, so that they think that the lifestyles popular in these countries are trendy. In fact, one of the characteristics of social media is to show many of the best, beyond reality. People will put their best side on social media to attract others’ attention [10]. This satisfies the fantasy of many Chinese people, and has triggered a lot of people to learn the lifestyle they see on social media. In this way, people more likely to like the liberal mode of behavior. Therefore, social media is an important factor for the spread of liberalism from the west to China.

### **4. FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GLOBALIZATION**

How globalization explains the rise of liberalism in China will be explored in this section. Globalization will

bring about liberalism, because globalization will weaken national sovereignty and transfer part of national power to international organizations [11]. At the same time, liberalism hopes to have a free economic market. Globalization has expanded the scope of this market from one country to most countries in the world. In terms of living habits, globalization can be understood as the free flow of people and different ideas, such as liberalism. Liberalism does not originate in China. It spreads with globalization. For example, globalization has broadened the horizons of the Chinese people, giving them choices that are not limited to the traditional Chinese style. Many people choose to study and work in other countries. People who have this kind of experience will unconsciously become the disseminators of liberalism, because they are used to this way of life. This impact is especially strong after they come back to China, because this kind of people often have a higher status in China, which will become the learning goal of many people. Their circle of friends and public contacts are likely to imitate them.

Scholars argue that the change in world capital conversion of global capital let the risk of liberalism [12]. This explanation is advantageous because it is from a macro perspective. It tells the truth that in the process of capital expansion, liberalism was spread out at the same time. It explains the trend of liberalism. But it cannot explain individual countries. Because China is different from most countries in that China has achieved socialism, and other countries have a high probability of being similar to liberalism. The integration of the two social forms will have different spreading processes and reactions.

In addition to globalization, the acceptance of globalization by various countries should also be studied. Taking China as an example, after China's accession to the WTO, it began to globalize and improve its economy. The main part of globalization is economic globalization and trade. The purpose is to save resources, improve efficiency, and promote economic development. The same social form or similar social forms will improve efficiency and reduce waste of resources. In this situation, China needs to adapt to other social forms. The dominant players in globalization, the United States and most other countries, are liberal or similar to liberal social systems. At the same time, culture, ideology, and education were integrated into the collision and exchange of the world. Therefore, through globalization, the Chinese social system contains liberal views, and Chinese people have more choices, which encourages Chinese liberalism.

## **5. FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF REFORM AND OPENING-UP**

In this part, liberalism will be elaborated on from the perspective of reform and opening up.

China's reform and opening-up policy was implemented by Deng Xiaoping in 1978, aiming to transform the planned economy into a market economy. This policy can explain the rise of liberalism in China, because the free market is part of the definition of liberalism and can enter the social and cultural fields. China used to be dominated by state-owned enterprises. Now, the private sector is growing. Private companies have more management freedom.

Housing reform is part of the reform and opening up, reflecting more liberal policies [13]. It's powerful because it shows a great change. This is a fact. In the early days of the founding of the People's Republic of China, China implemented a highly unified management under a planned economy. Most of the houses were public housing, and there was no such large-scale private housing transaction market and system. With the reform and opening up of the housing reform, China's housing has been fully market-oriented [14]. The level of housing prices is basically determined by market demand. Except for appropriate control policies, the government will not completely influence housing price changes.

From public housing to commercial housing. It doesn't mean a change in people's attitudes, but just a policy change. Before the reform and opening up, people rejected classicism. Reform and opening up have brought about a series of policy propositions, which make people accustomed to promoting the economy and accepting the liberal way of life. The reform and opening up ideas China to a consumer society, where different companies are competing to meet new needs of consumers. State restrictions apply main to the crucial sector, such as energy, while individual companies have bigger freedom to detect the new and diverse needs of the people, and then create goods and services to meet them. In this way, the creative and diverse companies provide the creative and diverse companies provide conditions to meet the liberal needs of the society. This kind of consumerist society has brought about the invasion of liberalism. Even if China still retains the power of the government to control the economic market, it can be found that China's consumption habits have gradually become liberal. Therefore, reform and opening up is of great importance to China's liberalism.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

In summary, the paper firstly describes the impact of electronic technology. Then it analyzes the role of globalization on the spread of liberalism. After that, it narrates the consequences of reform and opening up. By doing so, the essay managed to answer the research question: why liberalism rise in China. According to this article, the answer to the research question will be the strengthening of communication and social interaction caused by science and technology, the cultural invasion

caused by globalization, and the rise of liberalism in China caused by China's reform and opening-up policy.

The essay has several limitations. There may be other reasons that incomplete, which is the individual factor. The single case provides limited explanatory power. Nevertheless, this article deepens the understanding of liberalism, and also helps to understand the future of other tendencies. It also provides policy recommendations that the government should balance between constraints and open policy of liberalism. The future research will try to study whether the government has formulated relevant policies against liberalism, or whether other countries have similar situations.

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