



Understanding Chinese Society

Norman Stockman

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This new book provides an accessible and wide-ranging introduction to the main features of Chinese society. Drawing on a wealth of material, the author offers a fresh understanding of a unique society that has undergone continuous transformation and upheaval throughout the twentieth century.

Understanding Chinese Society looks in all its richness at the society with the largest population on earth. In order to explore long-term change and continuity, the book examines China from pre-revolutionary times to today's rapidly modernising society, although the focus is on recent change. Particular attention is paid to China's cultural traditions and hierarchical relationships in familial and wider social settings, and their fate in the modern world. Successive chapters investigate changes in the relations of rural and urban sectors of society; in the structure of families; in political and economic power; in cultural hegemony, education and the media; and in patterns of social inequality. A final chapter asks whether Chinese society is becoming more complex and differentiated in the course of modernisation and considers recent debates on the growth of civil society and democratisation.

This book will be indispensable for anyone studying Chinese society, Asian societies and comparative sociology.

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