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Author(s): Jing Zhang and Sharon Shavitt

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CULTURAL VALUES IN ADVERTISEMENTS TO THE CHINESE X-GENERATION

Promoting Modernity and Individualism

Jing Zhang and Sharon Shavitt

ABSTRACT: A content analysis of 463 ads examined the cultural values—modernity, tradition, individualism, and collectivism—promoted in Chinese advertising. Results indicate that both modernity and individualism values predominate in current Chinese advertising. These values are more pervasive in magazine advertisements, which target the Chinese X-Generation (aged 18–35 years with high education and income), than in television commercials, which are aimed at the mass market. In contrast, collectivism and tradition values are found to be more pervasive on television than in magazine ads. These findings reveal the role of advertising in helping shape new values among the X-Generation, as well as reflecting existing values among the mainstream Chinese market. In addition, product characteristics (personal use versus shared products) are found to affect the degree of individualism and collectivism values manifested in ads. The implications for future research on the impact of cultural values in advertising are discussed.

By analyzing a society's ads, research can infer changes in consumption and cultural values from changes in advertising appeals (Pollay 1986). This study is designed to address two issues with respect to advertising in China and its ongoing role in reshaping Chinese cultural values: the role of advertising in (1) hastening modernity in terms of consumption values and (2) promoting individualistic cultural values. In comparison with most Western or developed countries, China is generally regarded as a more traditional and more collectivistic society. Thus, a refined and special focus on China is necessary to address both research issues. Rather than examining the Chinese market as a whole, this study focuses on the Chinese X-Generation, because this is the context in which cultural change is likely to be the most rapid and in which cultural expressions deviate more from those of mainstream China.

Strolling down Shanghai's boulevards, one sees well-dressed young Chinese constantly talking on their mobile phones, switching easily between English and Chinese. They jam the city's Western-style bars and discos, even on weekday nights. They work at Internet startups or at Western firms. They are ambitious and confident. They are the models for Generation Yellow [equivalent to the X-Generation]—the rising middle-class in China, aged 18 to 35—and they are the future (*Time Asia* 2000).

As shown in this prototypical profile, the Chinese X-Generation represents a special demographic group that is becoming more culturally adapted to both China and the West (Ong 1998). The Chinese X-Generation is partly the product of Chinese modernization and global marketing. These young adults live in the cities in which there are growing numbers of international contacts, networks, and organizations (Hermans and Kempen 1998). Geographically, most of these cities are located along the east coast of China, such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Dalian, Qingdao, Nanjing, Wuhan, Xiamen, and Shenzhen. In terms of marketing strategies, Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou are generally positioned as the primary markets because of their influence on their neighboring cities. Members of the Chinese X-Generation typically work at local offices established by multinational companies in these cities, in which people from different cultural origins encounter one another. Economically, these 18–35-year-olds make more money than their parents and have more disposable income (China: X-Gen Study 1996). To be competent working at multinational companies and enhance their competitive edge, most have at least an associate's degree and a good mastery of the English language. These geographic, economic, and educational characteristics of the Chinese X-Generation put them in a position to be more

Jing Zhang is a doctoral student, Institute of Communications Research/Department of Advertising, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign.

Sharon Shavitt (Ph.D., Ohio State University) is IBE Distinguished Professor of Business Administration, Department of Business Administration, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign.

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influenced by Chinese modernization and provide more opportunities for exposure to other cultures.

In addition, an extensive exposure to mass media and advertising accounts for the Chinese X-Generation's cultural adaptation. Most multinational companies in China market their brands toward these young urban adults, and these brands tend to emphasize more Western values in their advertising (e.g., Cheng and Schweitzer 1996). Consumer research has provided evidence that these multinational companies' advertising values are well reflected in their brand users' profiles. For example, consumer profiles of eight toothpaste brands in China, including both joint venture and domestic, were investigated by International Market Insight (*Modern Advertising* 1999). The results show that the primary users of Crest toothpaste are younger and more affluent than those of domestic brands such as Blue Sky. Crest users were also found to be more career-oriented, open to different values, and less conservative than domestic brand users. In general, these young urban adults were found to be more receptive to advertising communication and to welcome Western values and ideals. They liked to try new brands, believed a famous brand could improve their image, liked to buy foreign goods even if they were more expensive, and generally regarded advertising as part of modern life (*Marketing Week* 1998). As such, these young urban adults represent the context in which cultural change is likely to be the most rapid and have the greatest long-term impact. In other words, the Chinese X-Generation exists not only as a profitable market, but also as a force that determines the cultural orientation of China's future (China: X-Gen Study 1996).

This picture of the X-Generation may present a sharp contrast to the conventional view of China and the Chinese presented by Hsu (1953, 1981). In this view, Chinese living standards are rather low, Confucian and collectivistic values dominate society, and people tend to be humble or moderate. This still holds true for China and the Chinese in general, that is, for the mass market. The mass market in China is very large and diverse. The primary force of this market is located in rural areas, where 71% of the Chinese population lives (*China Statistical Yearbook* 1997). The great penetration of televisions in rural areas (84%; Gallup 1997) suggests that this mass market is not isolated from the influence of mass media. Demographically, it consists of all age groups, including children, youth, adults, and elderly people, and, to some extent, the Chinese X-Generation. However, the mass market is dominated by more conservative forces, such as generations of Chinese over 40 years of age and people from rural China. These differences between the X-Generation and the mass market have not been addressed in advertising studies because China is normally treated in research as a single market (cf. Ji and McNeal 2001 for an important exception). Because of the important differences between the X-Gen-

eration and the mass market in China, as well as the economic and cultural implications of the X-Generation, we examine the values that advertising to these markets reflects by comparing the X-Generation context to the mass market context. That is, the degree to which cultural values reflected in the X-Generation market deviate from those of the mainstream signifies the role of advertising in reshaping cultural values in China.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Two categories of existing literature have studied cultural values in the advertising context. One stream of literature has focused on modernity as a consumption value that has been promoted in Chinese society, and the other has applied the individualism and collectivism framework (Hofstede 1980) in content analyzing advertisements.

Consumption Values in Chinese Ads: Modernity and Tradition

As noted, previous studies of advertising in China viewed it as a single market without any differentiation, and accordingly, research on Chinese advertisements only examined consumption or cultural values at one level: the mass market. Several content analyses have been conducted to understand the social and cultural consequences of advertising in China since 1979 (Chan 1995; Cheng 1994; Cheng and Schweitzer 1996; Czepiec 1994; Lin 2001; Rice and Lu 1988; Swanson 1996; Tse, Belk, and Zhou 1989; Zhou and Belk 1993). Starting in 1979, China began its modernization under "economic reform" and "open policy" (Cheng 1994, p. 169). The Chinese advertising industry revived immediately after the enactment of these new policies, which put it in a position to play an important role in promoting Chinese modernization. Previous content analyses captured two phases in the development of Chinese advertisements between 1979 and 2001. During the first phase, they identified key utilitarian appeals in Chinese advertisements and documented the movement from utilitarian to hedonistic appeals (Chan 1995; Czepiec 1993; Resnik and Stern 1977; Rice and Lu 1988; Swanson 1996; Tse, Belk, and Zhou 1989). Utilitarian appeals involved satisfying basic physiological needs, whereas hedonistic appeals involved fun, gratification, and pleasure (Tse, Belk, and Zhou 1989). In the second phase, studies identified primary cultural values reflected in Chinese advertising at symbolic and emotional levels and described a "melting pot" of cultural values, namely, the notion of Chinese advertising incorporating Western and Eastern and modernity and tradition values (Cheng 1994; Cheng and Schweitzer 1996; Lin 2001). Modernity values in these studies usually were operationalized as the notion of being new, contemporary, up-to-date, and

ahead of the times, whereas tradition values were operationalized as respecting the past, customs, and conventions and venerating the quality of being historical, time-honored, and legendary.

The “melting pot” metaphor vividly expressed the coexistence of tradition and modernity values in advertising. However, the research did not examine factors that could explain why both tradition and modernity values are manifested in Chinese advertisements. In other words, though internal modernization and external globalization are accelerating the development of the Chinese market as a whole, the degree of such influence may vary for different market segments, including the Chinese X-Generation. Thus, it is important to examine market segments in which cultural change could emerge more rapidly to shed light on the role of advertising in shaping and reflecting cultural values.

Consumption Values in Ads: Individualism and Collectivism

Hofstede (1980, 1991) and Triandis (1995, 1996) conceptualize individualism and collectivism as cultural patterns, or syndromes, that represent broad differences among nations. In a collectivist culture, people pay attention to ingroup goals, such as family harmony, integrity, and the well-being of the ingroup. In contrast, in an individualistic culture, people pursue personal goals instead of ingroup goals, especially when there is a conflict between these goals. According to extensive cross-cultural research (e.g., Hofstede 1980; Singelis 1994; Triandis 1996), China, Korea, and Japan are collectivist societies, whereas the United States is an individualistic society.

Previous research has demonstrated that this individualism and collectivism framework has important implications for the content of advertisements. Content analyses of magazine ads suggest that Korean ads tend to use more collectivistic appeals, whereas U.S. ads tend to use more individualistic appeals (Han and Shavitt 1994; Kim and Markus 1999). A similar result is found by Javalgi, Cutler, and Malhotra (1995) when comparing Japanese ads with U.S. ads. In summary, cultural values in ads tend to reflect the dominant cultural orientation of the country in which the ads are run. In addition, product characteristics moderate cultural manifestations in ads (Han and Shavitt 1994). For personal use products, purchased and/or used individually, individualistic appeals were equally prevalent in Korea and the United States. For shared products, purchased and/or used with others, which could be viewed in terms of either individualistic or collectivistic goals, Korean ads tended to use fewer individualistic appeals than did U.S. ads. Because of its potential moderating effect on the cultural values reflected in ads, product type (personal use products versus shared products) was included as a variable in the present study.

Linking the Two Theoretical Frameworks

As has been discussed, two frameworks have been employed in studying the cultural values reflected in ads. One is the tradition versus modernity framework, in which the extent to which Chinese ads reflect tradition and modernity values is studied. The other is the individualism versus collectivism framework, in which the influence of a nation's chronic cultural values on the content of ad appeals is studied in cross-nation comparisons, especially between East Asian countries and the United States. These two frameworks are not unrelated. Triandis (1995) argues that shifts from collectivism to individualism are influenced and mediated by affluence, exposure to mass media, and modernization. Individualism and modernity reinforce each other at both cultural and psychological levels. Hofstede's (1980) data provide strong evidence for linking individualism with national wealth, gross national product, and other factors related to modernization. For example, Japanese responses collected a few years apart, during which Japan experienced dramatic economic development, demonstrated that Japanese values shifted toward greater individualism. At an individual level, this parallel view of modernity and individualism implies that modernization leads to changes only in individually oriented psychological attributes that are specifically functional for modern life (Yang 1988; cf. Triandis 1995). Specifically, Yang (1988) identifies 20 characteristics found in modern societies and notes that 12 overlap with individualism. These include an emphasis on personal efficacy, low integration with relatives, openness to innovation, sexual equality, and self-reliance.

THE X-GENERATION MARKET

A New Context to Examine the Shaping Roles of Advertising in China

The differentiation of the X-Generation from the general mass market provides a new context for understanding the existing theoretical frameworks and for examining the reflecting and shaping roles of advertising with a closer lens.

Operationalizing the X-Generation Market

To examine the differences in ads aimed at the X-Generation market and the mass market, media type—magazines versus television—was employed as a proxy variable on the basis of segmentation principles in media planning (Aaker and Myers 1987). Current Chinese media data provide a context for understanding these media choices. At the national level, advertising share-of-voice data by medium indicate that television accounts for 51%, whereas magazines take up only 2% of total ad spending (Statistical Administration for Industry and

Commerce P.R.C. 1998). This suggests that magazines tend to have highly selective audiences, and television tends to have broader audiences in China. Most advertisers that tend to advertise on television do so to reach as many audiences as possible, regardless of whether their brands have specific target audiences (ACNielsen China Media Index 1997). The high percentage of ownership of televisions in both urban households (94%; *China Statistical Yearbook* 1997) and rural China (84%; Gallup 1997) certainly enhances advertisers' confidence in and reliance on the television medium. In contrast, for some brands that are specifically targeted to young urban adults, lifestyle magazines are favored over mass media such as television. An internal document, *1998 China Media Scene*, prepared by MindShare (a joint venture of the Ogilvy & Mather and J. Walter Thompson media departments), argues that lifestyle magazines with national coverage have a selective target: highly educated, 18–35-year-olds with high incomes. A recent interview with Jane Zhao (2001), Megavision Director from Zenithmedia Beijing, reveals a similar perception and usage of lifestyle magazines and television in Zenithmedia's media planning practices. Readership surveys indicate many high quality magazines in China appeal overwhelmingly to a young professional demographic category (ACNielsen Readership Survey 2001; China Market and Media Study 2001). For example, ACNielsen's readership survey (2001) reveals that *Elle* is read by a lucrative market of educated women aged 20–34. They typically work in professional occupations, focus on their careers, and earn personal and household incomes substantially higher than average.

Hypotheses

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the cultural values reflected in Chinese ads, specifically, the degree to which advertising to the Chinese X-Generation reflects individualism and modernity values. Because of the extensive influence of internal modernization and global marketing efforts in China, a hypothesis regarding the ads overall (both magazine ads and television commercials) was established.

H1: Modernity values appear more frequently in Chinese ads than do tradition values.

Our research interest also pertains to the prevalence of individualistic and collectivistic values in Chinese ads overall. Previous research suggests there will be congruity between the cultural values reflected in ads and a nation's cultural orientation. Because China is a collectivistic country, collectivistic values thus may be expected to appear more frequently than individualistic values. However, individualism is generally associated with increasing modernity. The hypothesis that

modernity values predominate (H1) suggests that individualistic values should appear more frequently than collectivistic values. Thus, a research question is formulated as

RQ1: Which values, individualistic or collectivistic, appear more frequently in Chinese ads?

As has been discussed, cultural values in ads may be manifested differently to different markets. More Western and modern values may be communicated to young urban adults than to the Chinese market as a whole. The previously described "melting pot" findings (Cheng 1994) would therefore suggest that more Eastern and traditional values are communicated to the mass market. Thus, at the operational level, the effects of media type on advertising values are hypothesized.

H2a: Modernity values are more prevalent in magazine ads, which are targeted toward the X-Generation, than in television commercials, which are aimed at the mass market.

H2b: Traditional values are more prevalent in television commercials than in magazine ads.

H3a: Individualist values are more prevalent in magazine ads than in television commercials.

H3b: Collectivist values are more prevalent in television commercials than in magazine ads.

Previous research has demonstrated that product characteristics moderate the prevalence of individualistic and collectivistic values in ads (Han and Shavitt 1994). Personal use products, which offer predominately individually experienced benefits, are more likely to be convincingly promoted in terms of personal goals than collective goals. Thus, such products provide little opportunity for Chinese collectivistic culture to be reflected in advertisements. Shared products, however, can be convincingly promoted in terms of benefits to both the individual and the group; their cultural appeals may thus be largely influenced by China's dominant cultural value, collectivism.

H4a: For personal use products compared with shared products, individualistic appeals are more likely to be used.

H4b: For shared products compared with personal use products, collectivistic appeals are more likely to be used.

In addition, an interaction between product characteristics and media type on individualism and collectivism is expected. As a proxy for the Chinese X-Generation market, the lifestyle magazines were hypothesized to use more individualistic appeals. As a proxy for the Chinese mass market, television was hypothesized to use more collectivistic appeals. In that ads for shared products have been found to reflect cultural differences more than personal use products do, two interactions are hypothesized:

H4c: Magazine ads tend to use more individualistic appeals than do television commercials for shared products, whereas there is no such media difference for personal use products.

H4d: Television commercials tend to use more collectivistic appeals than do magazine ads for shared products, whereas there is no such media difference for personal use products.

METHODOLOGY

Sample of Advertisements

Magazines. On the basis of an extensive interview with a media planner from J. Walter Thompson Beijing (Xu 2001), the top 11 lifestyle magazines in China in terms of readership and printing quality were identified: *Auto Magazine*, *Bo*, *New Sports*, *Sanlian*, *Esquire*, *New Weekly*, *Woman's Day*, *Elle*, *Hope*, *Ray*, and *Cosmopolitan*. The readership of these magazines overall was well balanced in terms of gender. Professional media monitoring data demonstrated that these magazines are well targeted to the Chinese X-Generation. For example, approximately 90% of the *Cosmopolitan* readers are 20–35 years of age, according to the China Market and Media Study (2001), and more than 93% of them have at least an associate's degree. In addition, of *New Weekly*'s readers, more than 82% are 18–35 years of age and typically work in fields related to trade and commerce, information technology, telecommunications, and electronics. Therefore, the selection of these magazines is appropriate as a proxy for ads targeting the Chinese X-Generation audience. Ads that appeared in these magazines between January and July of 2001 were sampled.

Television Channels. Three channels from China Central Television, CCTV1, CCTV2, and CCTV3, were selected to represent the mass media. Controlled by the Chinese central government, they are the best media vehicles to represent mainstream values. Also, they are national television networks and enjoy broad popularity across different age and geographical groups. For example, CCTV's eight channels captured approximately 600 million to 1 billion viewers in 2000, an increase of between 4 million and 90 million from the previous year (*Media* 2000). Commercials between 10:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M. were recorded in July 2001 for this study.

Sampling. For magazines, all ads from the issues sampled that were equal to or larger than A4 size (8.5 × 11 inches) were eligible for inclusion in the sample. This was to ensure the creative quality of the print ads so value coding could be executed. Television commercials from the sampled period, regardless of length, were eligible for inclusion. Each magazine ad or each complete commercial was treated as one unit.

Any duplicate ads (same or similar creative work) for the same brand were excluded. As a result, 370 magazine ads and 283 television commercials were eligible, with 240 magazine ads and 223 television commercials randomly chosen for inclusion in the main study and the rest used for coder training.

Coding Scheme

A four-category coding scheme was developed on the basis of the refined theoretical framework discussed previously. The key value categories are individualism, collectivism, modernity, and tradition. The content of the coding scheme was based on a synthesis of several content-analysis studies (Cheng 1994; Han and Shavitt 1994; Mueller 1987; Pollay 1983; Tse, Belk, and Zhou 1989) and cross-cultural studies (Markus and Kitayama 1991; Triandis 1995). Thus, individualism was represented by an emphasis on being independent, self-reliant, and distinct from others. An ad message such as "be nice to yourself and love yourself" reflects this value. Collectivism was represented by an emphasis on individuals as an integral part of a family or in-group. A message such as "a good mom should choose A+ brand milk for her kid" reflects this value. Modernity was represented by the notion of being new or revolutionary, contemporary, up-to-date, or ahead of the times. A relevant ad message would be "create your new-style office—a mobile office—by using HP Jornada pocket computer." Tradition was represented by a respect for the past, customs, and conventions. In addition, closeness to nature was also viewed as tradition-oriented (Mueller 1987) because its contrasting concept, modernity, implies domination and manipulation of natural resources. A relevant ad message would be "A natural way of beautifying skin through Chinese traditional herbs." Detailed descriptions of the four values in the advertising context are in Table 1.

Coding Procedure

Two Chinese students (in the United States) were recruited to code the ads. Coders were blind to the hypotheses. They were extensively trained over several weeks to apply the coding scheme in a large set of practice ads (130 magazine ads and 60 television commercials). Coders were instructed that one ad could convey multiple cultural values. However, to encourage discrimination among ads, coders were to identify a dominant value, using the same three-point scale to rate ads for each of the four values (0 = this value is not implied or expressed at all, 1 = this value is addressed somewhat, and 2 = this value is addressed strongly [or exclusively]).

Coders worked independently of each other. Inter-coder agreements of at least 80% for each value category were achieved during training before coders moved to coding the test sample of ads. Disagreements were defined as one coder

TABLE I
The Coding Scheme for Values of Individualism, Collectivism, Modernity, and Tradition in Advertising

Values Element (sources)	Descriptions
Individualism	
–Self (a–e & g)	Self-decision or choice of product. All is up to you. Individual pleasure or enjoyment (hedonism-oriented). Satisfy consumer's (your) own specific needs. Be nice to your self, self-improvement or self-realization. Attention focus or look cool.
–Being different from others (b, c, d, g)	Leadership; ambition. Personal success or personal goal achievement. Unique personality or individuality; being independent. Risk-taking.
Collectivism	
–Relationship focus (a, c, d, g)	Take care of family. Concern about others or support of society, group goal. Harmony with others, enjoying goods with others. Enhance relationship or group well-being.
–Conformity (a–e)	Product enjoys certain popularity. Following social consensus.
–Other focused (a, c, d)	Others' happiness. Pay attention to the views of others.
Modernity	
–Technology (a, b)	Provides you with "good quality product" (as claimed in the ads), such as reliable, effective, trustworthy, and safe. Empowers you to control your surroundings. Provides you a convenient and easy lifestyle. Laboratory ingredients or chemical elements showing scientific evidence (e.g., it can enhance xx by 57%).
–Revolution (d, e, f)	Revolutionary force, challenges or changes old perceptions, values, stereotypes, and customs. Things change quickly. Keep up with what's new.
–Professional (d)	Professional resources to get recommendation for product or brand, such as from dermatologists or dentists.
–Fashion (f)	Changing style or updated model. Stay young forever.
–Leisure (b, d)	Freedom to have more leisure.
Tradition	
–Long history (a, b, d, e)	Enjoy the heritage since long ago. Enduring or timeless; being historical and legendary.
–Closeness to nature (b)	Natural ingredients in product. Close to natural environment.
–Traditional elements (a, b, e, f)	Long-respected traditions, such as "adapted from ancient prescription."

Sources: (a) Cheng 1994; (b) Mueller 1987; (c) Han and Shavitt 1994; (d) Triandis 1995; (e) Tse, Belk, and Zhou 1989; (f) Pollay 1983; (g) Markus and Kitayama 1991.

assigning a nonzero value for a theme, indicating a judgment that the theme is present in the ad, when the other coded the theme as "0." For the focal sample of ads, average intercoder agreement was 87.2% across four values. The agreement rates

were 81.2%, 95.7%, 83.0%, and 88.6% for coding values of modernity, tradition, individualism, and collectivism, respectively. Disagreements in coding were resolved by discussion among the two coders and a third judge. When the coders

TABLE 2
Results and Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses	Percentage 1	Percentage 2	$\chi^2(df = 1)$	p-Value
H1: Modernity > Tradition (overall)	40.2%	8.0%	28.34	< .01
RQ1: Individualism > Collectivism (overall)	27.6%	15.1%	4.66	< .05
	Mean Magazine Ad	Mean Television Ad	F-value (1, 443)	p-Value
H2a: Modernity: magazine > television ads	.92	-.02	56.94	< .01
H2b: Tradition: television > magazine ads	-.37	-.25	11.41	< .01
H3a: Individualism: magazine > television ads	.32	-.22	18.01	< .01
H3b: Collectivism: television > magazine ads	-.37	-.02	9.54	< .01
	Mean Personal Use	Mean Shared	F-value (1, 443)	p-Value
H4a: Individualism: Personal use products > shared products	.32	-.14	6.50	= .01
H4b: Collectivism: shared products > personal use products	-.40	-.05	8.72	< .01
H4c media x products: Interaction on individualism			.01	n.s
H4d media x products: Interaction on collectivism			.02	n.s

Critical values: $\chi^2(1) = 3.84$ at $p = .05$; $\chi^2(1) = 6.63$ at $p = .01$; and $F(1, 443) = 6.50$ at $p = .01$.

assigned a different nonzero code to an ad (i.e., 1 or 2), the codes were averaged (1.5).

Product Characteristics

In this study, 21 products were designated as personal use products, such as perfumes and watches, and 26 were designated as shared products, such as soft drinks and cameras. Some product assignments were based on previous research (Han and Shavitt 1994). Other assignments were based on our survey, in which 33 U.S. students rated products in terms of (1) the decision-making process involved in purchase (1 = never discuss with family or friends, 5 = always discuss) and (2) usage pattern (1 = used mostly individually, 5 = used mostly with other members of family or friends). See the Appendix for the list of advertised products in each category.

Results

The coding decisions were standardized to avoid the reference effect within culture (Heine et al. 1995). When a subjective scale is used to rate the salience of cultural values in ads, one value (a coding decision) tends to be evaluated in comparison with other values and norms. In a collectivistic culture, for example, collectivistic values manifested in ads have less discrepancy in comparison with the cultural norm, and these values cannot be identified as easily as discrepant values. In contrast, individualistic ad appeals in such a culture may be more easily recognized because they are different from

the cultural norm. However, standardized scores will reflect whether a given value is emphasized or deemphasized by the ad coders in relation to the other three values. Thus, in this study, the mean and standard deviation of coding scores were calculated across the four value-coding decisions and media. These values were used to transform all coding scores to standardized scores for statistical analysis.

Relationships Among the Four Values

As expected, correlational analysis showed that tradition and modernity coding scores were negatively correlated ($r = -.18, p < .01$) and that individualism and collectivism coding scores were negatively correlated ($r = -.11, p < .05$). In addition, modernity value scores negatively correlated with collectivism scores ($r = -.17, p < .01$) and positively correlated with individualism scores ($r = .12, p < .05$). Although these correlations were significant, they were moderate in magnitude, which suggests that each value category can be treated as a separate dimension.

Testing H1 and RQ1 at the Overall Level

H1 predicts that modernity values appear more frequently in Chinese ads than do tradition values. As shown in Table 2, across all Chinese ads, modernity was a predominant value, followed by individualism. Collectivism and traditional values were less evident in the ads. A chi-square analysis indicates that the percentage of modernity values was significantly

TABLE 3
Means of the Modernity, Tradition, Individualism, and Collectivism Values for Chinese Ads

Value	Product	Media Type		
		Magazine	Television	Total
Modernity	Personal use	.82 _a	-.09 _b	.63
	Shared	1.09 _a	.00 _b	.35
Tradition	Personal use	-.40 _a	.16 _b	-.28
	Shared	-.30 _a	-.35 _a	-.33
Individualism	Personal use	.41 _a	.00 _b	.32
	Shared	.16 _a	-.28 _b	-.14
Collectivism	Personal use	-.45 _a	-.22 _b	-.40
	Shared	-.23 _a	.03 _b	-.05

Notes: Data tabled and analyzed here are the standardized coder ratings of the ads. The higher the score, the more salient is the value reflected in the ads. Sample sizes: magazine/personal use = 152, magazine/shared = 81, television/personal use = 42, television/shared = 172. Missing value = 20, defined as product characteristics that could not be classified. In each row, means that do not share a subscript (a, b) are significantly different at $p < .05$.

larger than the percentage of tradition values ($\chi^2(1) = 28.34$, $p < .01$). Thus, H1 is supported. Although collectivism is a dominant cultural value in China, a chi-square analysis shows that this value was manifested in ads at a much less frequent rate than was individualism, addressing RQ1. This result suggests that individualism is highly associated with modernity in the Chinese advertising context. The predominance of modernity values may lead to greater use of individualistic appeals.

Modernity

It was hypothesized that modernity values are more prevalent in magazine ads than in television commercials in China (H2a). A two-way ANOVA (media type \times product) yielded a significant main effect of media type, indicating that there were indeed more modernity appeals in magazine ads than in television commercials (see Table 2). Thus, H2a is supported.

Tradition

It was hypothesized that traditional values are more prevalent in television commercials than in magazine ads in China (H2b). A two-way ANOVA produced a significant main effect of media type, indicating that television commercials used more traditional appeals than did magazine ads. Thus, H2b is supported. However, this main effect is qualified by a two-way interaction between media type and product characteristics, $F(1, 443) = 15.49$, $p < .01$. Product characteristics moderated the effect of media type in that, for shared products, there was no difference in the degree to which traditional appeals were used in magazine ads and television commercials, whereas for personal use products, television commercials tended to use more traditional appeals than did magazine ads (Table 3). This finding indicates that H2b, which predicted a

main effect of media type on the prevalence of traditional values in ads, is supported only for personal use products.

Individualism

Three hypotheses were established regarding the effect of media type and product characteristics on individualistic values in ads. H3a stated that individualistic values are more prevalent in magazine ads than in television commercials in China. H4a stated that, for personal use products compared with shared products in China, individualistic appeals are more likely to be used. H4c hypothesized an interaction; specifically, magazine ads would tend to use more individualistic appeals than would television commercials for shared products, but no media difference would emerge for personal use products. A two-way ANOVA revealed that both media type and product characteristics had significant main effects on the prevalence of individualistic values (see Table 3). This analysis suggests that the lifestyle magazine ads tended to employ more individualistic appeals than did television commercials. Thus, H3a is supported. The results also show that ads for personal use products overall tended to employ more individualistic appeals than did those for shared products. Thus, H4a is supported also. However, the interaction was not significant, so H4c is not supported. Although the results show that magazine ads tended to use more individualistic appeals than did television commercials for shared products, contrary to our prediction, there is also a significant media difference for personal use products.

Collectivism

Three hypotheses were established regarding the effect of media type and product characteristics on collectivistic values in ads. H3b stated that collectivistic values are more preva-

lent in television commercials than in magazine ads in China. H4b stated that, for shared products compared with personal use products in China, collectivistic appeals are more likely to be used. H4d hypothesized an interaction; specifically, television commercials would tend to use more collectivistic appeals than would magazine ads for shared products, but no media difference would emerge for personal use products. A two-way ANOVA produced a significant main effect of media type, which indicates that there were more collectivistic appeals in television commercials than in magazine ads (see Table 3). Thus, H3b is supported. There was also a main effect of product characteristics, indicating that shared products tended to use more collectivistic appeals than did personal use products. Thus, H4b is supported also. However, the interaction was not significant, so H4d is not supported. Although the results show that television commercials tended to use more collectivistic appeals than did magazines ads for shared products, contrary to our prediction, there is also a significant media difference for personal use products.

Conclusions and Discussion

This study addresses the significant role of advertising in China in promoting modernity and individualism, especially among the Chinese X-Generation. It is perhaps the first content analysis to focus on advertising to the Chinese X-Generation and compare it with advertising to the mass market. As shown here, such market differentiation has the potential to capture cultural dynamics in contemporary China. The results suggest that both modernity and individualism values predominate in current Chinese advertising. Moreover, consistent with our expectations regarding media effects, individualism and modernity values are more prevalent in magazine ads, which target the X-Generation, than in television commercials, which are aimed at the mass market, whereas collectivism and tradition values were more prevalent in television commercials than in magazine ads. Finally, the effect of product characteristics is consistent with previous research and indicates that, in Chinese ads, personal use products tend to use more individualistic appeals than shared products, whereas shared products tend to use more collectivist appeals than personal use products.

Consistent with the findings of Cheng (1994) and Cheng and Schweitzer (1996), our findings regarding the predominance of modernity values in Chinese advertising overall appear to reflect internal modernization in China and the role of advertising in promoting such change. Although this stands in contrast to the conventional view of China as a more traditional and collectivistic country, our findings are consistent with Marchand's (1985) depiction of advertising as a revolutionary force that heralds modernity. As Rotzoll (1976) has argued, the essential characteristics of advertising are to pro-

mote products and notions that are new and to encourage change rather than maintain the status quo.

Our results show that media type generally influences the prevalence of particular values in Chinese ads, regardless of the type of product being advertised. Ads in media that target X-Generation readers (lifestyle magazine ads) were more individualistic and oriented toward modernity than were ads in media aimed at the mass audience (television commercials). In contrast, ads in media aimed at the mass audience were more collectivistic and traditional than were those aimed at X-Generation readers. Because the X-Generation, as the rising middle class, represents the future of China (China: X-Gen Study 1996; *Time Asia* 2000), these ads also have the unique potential to create or shape a new set of values in China. Advertising aimed at this growing segment could have a rapid and enduring impact on Chinese cultural and consumption values. Even though China is an Eastern traditional society with a collectivist culture, social changes, such as economic growth, urban expansion, higher disposable income (especially among the X-Generation), and the influence of global marketing and mass media on affluent lifestyles, push advertising to introduce a new set of values (individualism, modernity) in China. As Hofstede (2001) argues, trade, economic dominance, and technological breakthroughs (e.g., mass media) represent the major forces of cultural change, and, for most countries, they arrive mainly from outside. In China, the key cultural recipient of these outside forces is the X-Generation. It is particularly through the X-Generation market that individualism may find its way into the collectivistic culture of China while collectivistic and tradition values continue to be reflected and reinforced to the mass market.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In summary, this study analyzes Chinese print and television advertising across 11 different magazines and 3 major networks to examine the values reflected in current Chinese advertising. Both modernity and individualism values predominate in current Chinese advertising. In addition, individualism and modernity values are more prevalent in advertising to the Chinese X-Generation compared with advertising to mass audiences; collectivism and tradition values are more prevalent in advertising to mass audiences compared with advertising to these young urban adults. These findings point to the continued role of advertising in shaping a new set of values and reflecting existing or dominant values in China.

Employing a content analysis approach, our study is suggestive of the role of advertising content in promoting modernity and individualistic values in China, especially in the Chinese X-Generation. In this approach, cultural values re-

flected in ads have been studied as public representation. Future studies are needed to explore the social and psychological consequences of this public representation. Important questions for future research include the following: How do the cultural values reflected in ads influence the cultural orientations and self-concepts of China's X-Generation? How do the cultural values reflected in ads affect the processing and persuasiveness of advertisements for this group? Data from such studies may reveal that advertisements are not only an important site of cultural change in today's China, but are an agent of such change as well.

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APPENDIX

Product Characteristics: Personal Use Versus Shared

Personal Products	Shared Products
Women's sanitary products	Wine
Cosmetics	Soft drink
Haircare products	Groceries
Lingerie	Baby products
Gift wraps	Laundry products/soap
Perfumes	Over-the-counter medicines
Watches	Insurance/banking
Electric shaver	Washer/refrigerator
Personal copier/typewriters	Camera/telephone
Jewelry	Television/VCR/DVD
Fashion or sports apparel	Computer hardware and software
Credit cards	Automobile and service
Sunglasses	Hotel/resort accommodations
Book	Home furnishing