

“The Greatest  
Common Denominator”  
for Gaining Confidence  
and Pooling Strength

“Invisible Hand”  
versus “Visible Hand”

Major Move to  
Make Farmers Rich  
and Successful

An Important Step in  
Safeguarding the  
People’s Rights

Putting Up a  
“Flyover” for Skill  
Training

Establishing a Safe  
Network for Supporting  
the Elderly

The “Selective  
Two-Child Policy”

# REFORM IN CHINA

S P O T L I G H T I S S U E S

Relying on Systems to  
Make the Sky Blue,  
Land Green and Water  
Clean

Ensuring That the  
People Feel the Reality of  
Equality and Justice

Making the System  
Framework Tight and  
Strong



FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS

SPOTLIGHT ISSUES

# REFORM IN CHINA



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## 图书在版编目(CIP)数据

改革热点面对面：英文 / 《改革热点面对面》编写组著 .

—北京：外文出版社，2016

ISBN 978-7-119-10099-9

I . ①改 … II . ①改 … III . ①社会主义建设模式 - 研究 - 中国 - 英文  
②体制改革 - 研究 - 中国 - 英文 IV . ① D616

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2016)第034684号

英文翻译：孙洪山

英文审定：Paul White 徐汀汀

英文编辑：王 琴

责任编辑：杨春燕 范淑娟

装帧设计：北京夙焉图文设计工作室

印刷监制：冯 浩

## 改革热点面对面

《改革热点面对面》编写组

出品人：徐 步

出版发行：外文出版社有限责任公司

地 址：北京市西城区百万庄大街24号 邮政编码：100037

网 址：<http://www.flp.com.cn> 电子邮箱：[flp@cipg.org.cn](mailto:flp@cipg.org.cn)

电 话：008610-68320579（总编室） 008610-68996190（编辑部）

008610-68995852（发行部） 008610-68996183（投稿电话）

印 刷：北京飞达印刷有限责任公司

经 销：新华书店 / 外文书店

开 本：787mm × 1092mm 1/16 印张：9.5

版 次：2016年5月第1版第1次印刷

书 号：ISBN 978-7-119-10099-9

定 价：88.00元

## Preface

To provide readers with fresh insights into China's reform, we have made an extensive survey and sifted every grain of information until we identified the following ten crucial issues: 1. fostering of core socialist values; 2. relationship between the government and the market; 3. reform of the rural land system; 4. reform of the household registration system; 5. reform of the examination and admission system; 6. reform of the old-age insurance system; 7. adjustments to the family planning policy; 8. system building to promote ecological progress; 9. reform of the judicial system; and 10. innovations in creating mechanisms and institutions to combat corruption. We called leading scholars together to write this book: *Spotlight Issues: Reform in China* for the general reader. In the book, we try to make abstract theories easy to understand in clear and plain language, clarifying why and how China is carrying out reforms as well as the question of what it is reforming. All views are authoritative and expressed in a lucid style.

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# “The Greatest Common Denominator” for Gaining Confidence and Pooling Strength: Fostering Core Socialist Values

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We are living in a dramatically changing era, an era in which we chase dreams but at the same time become rather bewildered and confused. Many people feel that their sense of happiness is not growing in step with the rapid development of the country and the improvement of the quality of their lives; though there is an abundant supply of information that enables them to have more choices, they seem to get ever-more anxious. How do we build a general consensus in a society in which people are increasingly diverse in their thinking? How do we enrich our inner world while entering an era of a rich material life? The core socialist values – “The Three Promotions” (the promotion of “prosperity, democracy, civility and harmony,” the promotion of “freedom, equality, justice and the rule of law” and the promotion of “patriotism, dedication, integrity, and friendship”) proposed in the report to the 18th CPC National Congress which opened on November 8, 2012 – are “the greatest common denominator” of the values of more than 1.3 billion Chinese people.

## The basic work of reinforcing the “root”

In accordance with traditional Chinese medical science, a person cannot stay vigorous or strong unless he cultivates his vitality or reinforces his root. Applied to a nation or a nationality, the “vitality” or the “root” refers to the core values of the whole society. China, a big country with more than 1.3 billion people and 56 nationalities, urgently needs common values to heighten its national vitality.

The core socialist values briefly summarize the value target of the nation, the value orientation of the society and the value code of citizens. Prosperity, democracy, civility and harmony are the value target at the level of the nation in that they express the state will and are the value ideal for all people; freedom, equality, justice and the rule of law are the value orientation at the level of society in that they express the social order and are the requirement and expectation of the people; patriotism, dedication, integrity and friendship are the value code at the level of the citizens in that they express the sense of moral self-discipline and are the basic moral codes of all members of society. These three groups of values, which are so closely connected that they are an organic unity, address the major questions about what country we are going to transform China into, what society we are going to shape, and what kind of citizenship we are going to cultivate.

At present, China is experiencing a drastic reform in its economic system, a marked change in its social structure, a

broad redistribution of interests among different social groups, and the rapid emergence of new ways of thinking. Under such circumstances, what are we going to rely on to resolve conflicts and forge a public consensus? We have to rely on the core socialist values, because they are the most appealing and influential. Not until the core socialist values are strongly promoted can we reach the broadest consensus in spite of conflicts of interest and differences in ways of thinking, and dispel ideological confrontation and confusion caused by interest redistribution, reviving a great spiritual force to get people united for the struggle. Today, the Chinese people, enjoying an increasingly wealthy material life brought about by 30-plus years of reform and opening-up, feel angry at the degeneration of morals during the social transition period and sigh with deep feeling at the huge impact of the market economy on social morals. Not until core socialist values are strongly promoted can we set off a tremendous positive force.

### **Holding to the “root” to influence people by means of traditional culture**

“The newborn are all good by nature, but they change radically by nurture....” It is under the influence of traditional Chinese culture that every Chinese begins to acquire knowledge. From a babbling baby to the end of life, the culture, tangible or intangible,

will be part of their way of thinking. The outstanding Chinese traditional culture, in which the aspirations of the Chinese people are deeply embedded, is good nutrition for the Chinese nation to exist and develop and also fertile soil for the core socialist values.

Chinese culture has been evolving in one continuous line and advancing with the times. This is especially true of the nation's underlying values, which have always exerted a subtle influence on the way of thinking and behavior of the Chinese people. Let's take some essentials of Chinese culture as examples: "The people are the foundation of the state," "Man and nature are harmonious," "Cooperate with others while leaving aside minor differences," "In line with Heaven, which moves perfectly, a gentleman should make unceasing efforts to improve himself," "When the Great Way is adopted, the whole world should be taken as one community," "Everyone is responsible for his country," "Rule the country by morality, and improve the people by culture," "The gentleman understands what is moral," "A true gentleman is calm and at ease," "The gentleman takes righteousness as his basis," "What is said must be done, and what is done must be carried to fruition," "No one sees what use a man can be put to if his words cannot be trusted," "A man of moral integrity is never alone and helpless; he will always have friends," "The benevolent person loves others," "Do things with good intention towards others," "Don't do to others what you don't want others to do to you," "Look for friends when one comes in and goes out," "Neighbors should help one

another,” “Respect your parents and extend that respect to other people’s parents; love your children and extend that love to other people’s children,” “Rescue the poor and help those who are in difficulty” and “Inequality rather than want is the problem.”

These convictions had and still have distinctive Chinese characteristics. It may well be said that the most fundamental nature of a Chinese is that he has an inner world that is peculiar to Chinese people, and has values that have been passed on for thousands of years.

To cultivate and foster core socialist values, we should keep ourselves based on the outstanding traits of traditional Chinese culture. First, we should adopt a scientific attitude toward the traditional culture. We should adhere to the standpoint, views and methods of historical materialism, bringing forth the new through the old to make the past serve the present. Second, we should assimilate and promote the outstanding parts of traditional Chinese culture. We should systematically tap into the resources of the traditional culture, absorb the essence and discard the dross, tap and define values that fit the times, and enhance people’s confidence in China’s traditional culture and values. Third, we should creatively transform and develop the traditional culture. We should, in accordance with the features and needs of the times, reform, supplement, expand and refine the content and form of expression of the traditional culture to arouse its vitality and enhance its capacity of influence and appeal.

## Putting down roots by “infiltration”

The entrance of traditional Chinese houses is usually decorated with couplets or plaques, on which are written or carved such aphorisms for moral guidance as “The whole world should be taken as one community,” “Aspirations should be high and noble” and “Honesty is the best family heirloom.” These aphorisms, which are easily accessible to people as long as they open their eyes, infiltrate into their hearts and take root there in the course of time. Likewise, values cannot be truly accepted or put into practice until they are made readily accessible for people to assimilate in their daily social lives. To cultivate and foster core socialist values is also to expose people to their influences anywhere and anytime.

First, making the core socialist values part of the people’s daily lives. “As there is no such thing as an ossified custom in a country, moral values will alter with education.” Lei Feng as a role model in China has been an inspiration to people for generations. This is a vivid example of how to cultivate and foster core socialist values. The new era requires us to bring out new ethical models and commend them through various activities, to give full play to their exemplary role. CPC members, especially officials, should set themselves as examples in fostering moral values to set in motion positive trends with unshakable faith, noble character and effective action.

## Link: Lei Feng

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Lei Feng (1940-1962), a native of Wangcheng in Hunan Province, was a PLA soldier and a role model. He served the people wholeheartedly, helped others eagerly and loved whatever he did. But, unfortunately, he died from an accident at his post. In 1963 Mao Zedong called on the Chinese people to “learn from comrade Lei Feng,” initiating a campaign. Since then, March 5th every year has been a day to remember and learn from Lei Feng.

Because people acquire their values mainly in childhood, children are the most easily molded. Therefore, we should make core socialist values part of education in schools, enabling people to acquire them as children.

As works of art are important media, we should use all forms of art to create more excellent works fostering core socialist values in vivid images to promote the true, the good and the beautiful, and to denounce the false, the evil and the ugly.

Second, putting the core socialist values into practice. For values to be fostered effectively, the practice and participation by all members of society are indispensable factors. Therefore, we should make full use of major anniversaries and traditional festivals to carry out theme-oriented activities, helping people to grasp the gist of the core socialist values. We should encourage people to learn from Lei Feng through various activities, improving their moral standards and cultivating civilized trends, as they seek happiness for their families, offer good services to others and make direct contributions to society.



Thirdly, embedding the core socialist values in policies and laws. “A perfect circle cannot be drawn without a pair of compasses.” Policies, systems, regulations and laws must all embody core socialist values, contribute to their cultivation and never deviate from them. We should improve rules and regulations in all walks of life and adhere to the correct value guidance in social management, having good conduct encouraged and praised and bad conduct restrained and punished.

### **Link: Laws are made to protect the rights and interests of the aged.**

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- A supporter should perform the duty of paying an aged person’s living expenses, look after him/her, comfort him/her mentally and give consideration to his/her special requirements.
- Family members who do not live together with the aged should often visit or telephone the aged.
- A supporter shall not refuse to perform his/her duty to support an aged person on the grounds of waiving the right to inheritance or for other reasons.
- The aged have the right to dispose of their own property in accordance with the law. Their children or other relatives shall neither interfere with the disposal of property nor extort money or gifts from them.

— Quoted from Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Aged