

On Traditional Chinese Culture and Core Socialist Values

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Abstract: Under the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, cultural confidence has emerged as an essential cornerstone of national development. Traditional Chinese culture, with its profound historical legacy and rich heritage, provides a fertile ground for nurturing the Core Socialist Values. This paper takes Traditional Chinese culture and Core Socialist Values as its research subject, aiming to deeply explore the connotations and characteristics of Traditional Chinese culture while enhancing understanding of the essential principles of Core Socialist Values. Through a systematic analysis of the intrinsic connections between Traditional Chinese culture and Core Socialist Values, the study proposes effective strategies for practicing these values, seeking to promote traditional Chinese culture, integrate Core Socialist Values into work and daily life, and inject powerful momentum into the realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

Keywords: Traditional Chinese culture; Core Socialist Values; Mutual Integration; Era-Driven Innovation; Implementation Strategies

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I. Introduction

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China introduced the Core Socialist Values, General Secretary Xi Jinping has emphasized that cultural confidence plays a pivotal role in strengthening national beliefs and fostering consensus. In recent years, scholars both at home and abroad have shown great interest in the relationship between Traditional Chinese culture and Core Socialist Values. Domestic researchers have explored how traditional culture provides theoretical foundations and practical pathways for these values, stressing the importance of inheritance and innovation. International scholars, adopting cross-cultural perspectives, have analyzed the global significance of Chinese cultural heritage. These studies have significantly enriched our understanding and provided valuable guidance. However, against the backdrop of rapid social transformation, effectively implementing Core Socialist Values in daily life remains a crucial task.

II. Traditional Chinese culture

Traditional Chinese culture, with its time-honored history, serves as a spiritual treasure of the Chinese nation and constitutes an integral part of China's cultural soft power.

2.1 The connotations of Traditional Chinese culture

From a philosophical perspective, Traditional Chinese culture encompasses its philosophical thought and value systems, which continuously shape the Chinese people's ways of thinking, codes of conduct, and value orientations (Wang, 2023). Its profound connotations center on Confucianism while integrating diverse cultural elements from Daoism, Mohism, and other schools. Confucianism emphasizes moral concepts such as propriety, righteousness, and trustworthiness, advocating the ideal of "benevolence" (ren) and prioritizing harmonious relationships. The core Confucian categories of "benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness" (ren yi li zhi xin) exhibit epochal nature, class character, universality, and transcendence of time and space. For instance, while "benevolence" (ren) originally referred to compassion for others in Confucius' era, it has evolved in the primary stage of socialism to include new dimensions such as love for students. Additionally, "righteousness" (yi) denotes loyalty and moral integrity, "propriety" (li) encompasses etiquette, politeness, and modesty, "wisdom" (zhi) signifies intellectual acuity, and "trustworthiness" (xin) embodies credibility and honesty. These interconnected ideals collectively constitute the foundation of Traditional Chinese culture.

2.2 Characteristics of Traditional Chinese culture

The characteristics of traditional Chinese culture are mainly reflected in the following aspects:

First, it has strong vitality and cohesion, passed down for thousands of years with a profound impact.

Second, it demonstrates a stable agricultural cultural mentality rooted in practicality, emphasizing agricultural life

and pursuing stability and harmony.

Third, it features a clan-based collectivist culture that emphasizes family values and collective interests.

Fourth, it includes a political culture of "respecting rulers and valuing the people," which is complementary—respecting both the authority of rulers and the rights of the people.

Fifth, it breaks free from the dogmatic beliefs of theology, advocates rational thinking, and pursues pragmatism.

Sixth, there is an academic tendency to prioritize human relationships over nature, emphasizing research on interpersonal connections while neglecting the development of natural sciences.

III. Core Socialist Values

The Core Socialist Values serve as a spiritual banner that coalesces societal consensus and guides social ideologies. Far from being a spontaneous concept, it maintains close interconnections with moral principles, legal frameworks, and national policies while preserving distinct boundaries and overlapping elements (Bai, 2022).

3.1 Characteristics of Core Socialist Values

The formulation of Core Socialist Values was a necessary response to China's socialist economic and political systems and the flourishing of socialist cultural development. During the historic process of reform and opening-up and socialist modernization, diverse value systems emerged among the population. However, faced with this complexity and diversity of values, society required a unifying framework to guide and shape social ideologies. It is precisely in this context that Core Socialist Values came into being.

3.2 Core Content of Core Socialist Values

Integrating individual value standards, social value orientations, and national value objectives, the Core Socialist Values serve to regulate individual conduct, foster a positive social atmosphere, and provide spiritual impetus for economic and political development (Zhao, 2021). They encompass three hierarchical dimensions of value pursuit: **National level:** Prosperity, Democracy, Civility, and Harmony. These values embody the country's developmental goals and value orientations.

Social level: Freedom, Equality, Justice, and The rule of law. These values reflect society's value aspirations and orientations.

Individual level: Patriotism, Dedication, Integrity, Friendliness. These values constitute fundamental moral norms and behavioral guidelines for citizens.

3.3 Formative Causes of Core Socialist Values

The Core Socialist Values embody distinct scientific, contemporary, progressive, practical, national, open, and noble characteristics. For instance:

Scientific nature: Guided by a scientific worldview and methodology, they reflect the essence of socialist ideology.

Contemporaneity: Focused on contemporary developments and demands, they grasp the pulse of the times and reflect current trends.

Progressiveness: Rooted in Marxist fundamental standpoints, they align with Marxist core tenets and possess progressive traits to guide social ideologies.

Practical relevance: Representing the long-term interests of society and humanity, they chart future development directions while inspiring continuous advancement.

IV. The relationship between Traditional Chinese culture and the Core Socialist Values

Traditional Chinese culture and the Core Socialist Values are profoundly interconnected. In the new era, they integrate and reinforce each other, forming an organic whole within the socialist culture with Chinese characteristics.

4.1 Traditional Chinese culture serves as the historical foundation for cultivating the Core Socialist Values.

Traditional Chinese culture, with its long history and profound depth, embodies a wealth of values and spiritual pursuits. In the process of inheriting the essence of China's outstanding traditional culture, the core socialist values draw rich wisdom and strength from it, thereby continuously enriching their own development (Song, 2022).

Among these, *ren* (benevolence)—the central tenet of Confucianism, emphasizing love, mutual aid, and tolerance—resonates profoundly with the principle of 'friendliness' in the Core Socialist Values."

Core Confucian concepts such as *ren* (benevolence), *yi* (righteousness), *li* (propriety), *zhi* (wisdom), and *xin* (integrity) have provided essential philosophical foundations for the formation of the Core Socialist Values.

Notably, ren --- the cornerstone of Confucian thought, which emphasizes love, mutual assistance, and tolerance---directly resonates with the principle of “friendliness” in the Core Socialist Values. Moreover, President Xi Jinping has stressed that “We must earnestly absorb the intellectual essence and moral quintessence of China’s outstanding traditional culture, making it a vital source for nurturing the Core Socialist Values.”

4.2 The Core Socialist Values epitomize Traditional Chinese culture in the new era.

Core Socialist Values were formulated in modern times, while Traditional Chinese culture has endured for thousands of years without interruption. The former does not represent a crude inheritance of the latter, but rather a creative transformation that incorporates new elements aligned with contemporary characteristics (Guo, 2023).

For example, The Core Socialist Values ---- prosperity, democracy, civility, harmony ----epitomize both the traditional Chinese ideals of national flourishing and social concord, while incorporating contemporary developmental objectives and value orientations distinctive to the new era.

Meanwhile, at the individual level, the values of patriotism, professional dedication, personal integrity and social amity maintain dialectical continuity with traditional Chinese self-cultivation(xiuyang) and moral principles(daode), while embodying the elevated expectations for civic ethics in the new historical epoch.

4.3 Traditional Chinese culture and the Core Socialist Values constitute an organic whole in the new era.

Traditional Chinese culture and the Core Socialist Values are mutually integrated and reinforcing in the new era. As scholars have demonstrated, "There exists a profound synthesis between Traditional Chinese culture and the Core Socialist Values." These elements collectively constitute the organic whole of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, delivering both spiritual nourishment as its foundation and cultural luminosity as its guiding principle for national development.

V. The implementation of Core Socialist Values in the contemporary era necessitates multi-dimensional strategies

5.1 Integration into Holistic Education

Integrate Core Socialist Values into national education, spiritual civilization development, and the entire process of cultural creation and production, ensuring their widespread dissemination and deep implementation across all societal sectors. Utilize school-based education, family guidance, and community outreach to enhance public awareness and commitment to these values.

5.2 Demonstrative Practice and Universal Engagement

Leverage the demonstrative and guiding role of Party members, cadres, and advanced models to inspire practice. Strengthen education and ideological guidance for youth to solidify their convictions. Embed Core Socialist Values into daily life through practical actions, fostering universal participation and collective adherence.

5.3 Institutional Strengthening and Implementation Assurance

Institutional development serves as a critical safeguard for the realization of Core Socialist Values and an essential pathway for their rooted implementation (Lyu, 2023). Establish and improve institutional mechanisms for practicing these values, while refining relevant policies and regulations to provide strong guarantees. Concurrently, strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure effective execution and tangible outcomes of all implementation measures.

VI. Conclusion

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the proposal of Core Socialist Values represents not only the inheritance and innovation of traditional Chinese culture but also a clear guidepost for China's societal development in the new era. Facing new challenges and opportunities in this contemporary phase, we must continue to explore the relationship between traditional Chinese culture and Core Socialist Values. This endeavor constitutes both a pivotal task in advancing the cultural development of socialism with Chinese characteristics and an indispensable pathway to strengthening cultural confidence and achieving the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Through in-depth analysis of the primary contents of traditional Chinese culture and Core Socialist Values, this paper identifies a relationship of great integration between them. Therefore, we must vigorously promote traditional Chinese culture, earnestly practice Core Socialist Values, and inscribe a more splendid chapter on the new era's journey toward ultimately realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

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