

This version of this essay contains errors in passive voice, indirect (reported) speech, and verbals (gerunds and infinitive phrases).

**My Hopes for China**  
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The book The Light in the Forest, by Conrad Richter, told me a lot that I hadn't known about the life of the indigenous people of North America. It also reminded me of my native China, the way it used to be, and the way I perceive it now.

I used to live in a little village around by mountains. Life was simple. The people there were mostly farmers and their relationships with each other were good. There was no crime and no theft. People's doors were always open. At night, people liked gather together in the square to smoking, talking and drinking.

On summer nights, the other children and I used to like to catch lightening bugs. Also known as a firefly, the lightening bug is beautiful because its tail produces a soft glow. It flies freely around the mountains. The villagers say that lightening bugs are the souls of people who have died, and I remember that they would tell us that don't catch them because we might be catching our relatives!

The villagers have many other local and long-held beliefs. They believe that when a person becomes ill, he shouldn't see a doctor but should take some incense and a red candle to the temple, where he will pray to God. When I was living there, this is what they would do. They would bring some of the powder from the burn incense back home, dissolve it in some water, and drink it. The villagers said their illnesses disappeared after they would do this.

When I was living in this village, I never heard people said that the government was no good. Although my village did not have electricity, much graffiti wrote on the walls saying that our leader was a great and gentle man.

Now I know differently. I know that my country has many problems. Now I know that when I lived there, the government controlled people and their lives so much that they were afraid of the government and afraid to speak out. China is poor. Many long-held beliefs are beautiful, but many keep people's lives from improving.

The light of The Light in the Forest symbolizes the light of awareness. Now I have many hopes for China. I hope my native country will maintain its beauty. At the same time, I hope my country to become free and open to the modern world.

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