

In this Issue

► Page 3

Rural vitalization

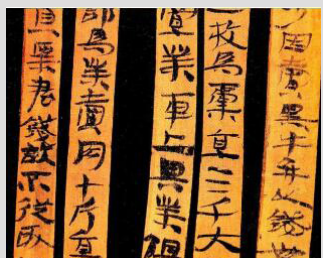
To spark comprehensive rural vitalization, policymakers need to enhance youth participation in rural governance.



► Page 5

Traditional law

Traditional law undeniably has a wealth of referential resources, but many scholars have overlooked the differences between China's governance in ancient and modern times.



► Page 6

AI calligraphy

Although AI calligraphy becomes popular as an innovative phenomenon, traditional calligraphy will not be replaced.

► Page 8

Chinese Literature

In 2020, an unusual year, Chinese writers made remarkable literary achievements.



Contacts

Tel: 0086-10-85886198
Fax: 0086-10-85886198
Email: csst@cass.org.cn

Address: 11-12 Floor, Tower 1
No. 15 Guanghua Road
Beijing 100026
P. R. China



CONTENT © 2021
Social Sciences in China Press

CASS forum celebrates centennial of CPC's founding

By WANG CHUNYAN

On Jan. 8, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) hosted a forum to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the CPC's founding.

This year marks the centennial of the CPC's founding, said Xie Fuzhan, CASS president and secretary of the leading Party members' group at CASS. Over the past century, the CPC has always kept in mind its original aspiration and mission, and led the Chinese people through difficulties and obstacles, achieving one victory after another. It has profoundly changed the direction and trajectory of the Chinese nation since modern times, and significantly altered the future and destiny of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation. It has also profoundly changed the trend and pattern of world development, and has made great historic contributions to the development of the Chinese nation and human society.

Since the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012, the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core has overcome all obstacles and difficulties, resolved crises, responded to changes, and initiated new situations, promoting the cause of the Party and the country to achieve historic achievements and undergo historic changes, Xie said.

The CPC is the largest political party in the world today, Xie con-



The CASS forum honors the centennial of the CPC's founding Photo: Yang Chonghai/CSST

tinued. To sum up its century of party-building experience, tell the story of China and the CPC's governance of China, the Chinese people have the most say, and Chinese scholars have the most confidence.

Xie Chuntao, vice president of the Party School of the Central Committee of CPC, discussed ways the century-old Party can stay young. The key is four-fold: continuing to prioritize the people and winning the people's support; facilitating theoretical innovation and uniting the hearts of the Party and the people; attaching great importance to consolidating organizations, while attracting and training Party members and officials; carrying out self-reform and maintaining integrity.

Over the past century, the Party has led the people to fundamen-

tally change the nation's destiny by relying on their own strength, completely ending the tragic history of old China, and continuously opening up a magnificent chapter in the development of the PRC, said Qu Aiguo, vice president of the Academy of Military Science of the Chinese People's Liberation Army.

Wang Jingqing, CASS vice president and deputy secretary of the leading Party members' group at CASS, pointed out that over the past century, the CPC has been able to continuously win major victories in revolution, construction, and reform, and fundamentally change the future and destiny of the Chinese people and the Chinese nation. The key to this lies in constantly strengthening Party building.

"Looking back on the century of the Party's history, I deeply feel that staying true to its original aspiration is the fundamental reason for the Party's vigorous vitality," said Pan Wei, a professor from the School of International Studies at Peking University. Saving the country from peril and rejuvenating China is the Party's original aspiration. The "mass line" has always been the lifeline of the Party over the past century. Committing to a people-centered approach marks the Party's complete theoretical and organizational independence and maturity, which is also an indication of the Party's original aspiration to lead the great national rejuvenation.

Xin Xiangyang, Party secretary of the Academy of Marxism at CASS, said that the Party's development history is a history which combines the fundamental principles of Marxism with China's reality, and one that constantly adheres to and develops Marxism. It is also a history of theoretical innovation that constantly adapts Marxism to the Chinese context.

The century-old history of the CPC is an integral part of the international communist movement and the world socialist movement, said Jiang Hui, director of the Institute of Contemporary China Studies at CASS. Socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era has opened up a new chapter in the development of world socialism.

Scholars reexamine global rankings

By CHEN YUTONG

Throughout recent decades, global rankings in multiple fields have been hypervisible in public view, which triggered extensive debates. Academics from several disciplines made their own comments on re-examining the latest wave of rankings.

Debora Malito, an assistant professor of international relations from Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, said that quantification is instrumental in guiding policymaking, but it is also political given that indicators and rankings are closely connected with the exercise of power within and between states.

"To interpret rankings in a rational way, we need to understand them in a relational way, and not as mere neutral or technocratic figures," Malito said. There is a relationship between an indicator and the underlying phenomena that it stands in for: Indicators try to rep-

resent a given reality, but they often tend to constitute or approximate a reality that is inherently difficult to measure or operationalize. Besides, indicators are based on a rank-order structure oriented to enable comparisons. This relational structure might enhance our understanding of a given phenomenon globally, but it could also reiterate certain normative preferences that are pretended to be universal.

Malito explained why global rankings are likely to appear biased using an example of corruption indicators. While represented as universal, notions of state and public interest embedded in many of the existing measures for corruption are informed by specific normative preferences, historical experiences, and understandings of governance methods. In light of this situation, where measurement has become overdependent on the opinions and perceptions of specific groups, business elites, or experts in particular, there is now

a wider consensus that many indicators based on subjective data have a limited capacity to mirror the phenomenon of corruption. To a certain extent, this subjectivity has been inclined to substitute reality under evaluation.

As noted by Malito, the comparative temptation of measuring cross-national values and variations of corruption is indeed challenged by a series of methodological shortcomings, such as data availability and country coverage. Comparing countries across a unilinear interpretation of state capacity or development might also be problematic since cross-country comparison and measurement over time require methodological precautions. Unfortunately, this remains an overlooked aspect of the political and media debate. As a result, some countries are perceived as less or more corrupt than they actually are, allowing us to also make biased comparisons.

In addition, rankings could

arouse problems at socio-psychological level, noted Elena Esposito, a professor of sociology at the University of Bologna in Italy, and David Stark, a professor of sociology at Columbia University. They said that rankings produce anxiety as they are continuously updated. The winner of a prize—for example, the Nobel Prize, one of the most prestigious—would be always labeled as the "Nobel Prize Laureate." However, an organization ranked highly on a list might fall out the top ten in the next ranking. The dean of a college, or head of an organization can receive good news about his or her institution's ranking on the day the list is announced. But on the very next day, he or she must begin to prepare for the next round. What's more, the work to gain, or at least not lose, a position in the rankings is also anxiety-producing. This is often because the criteria for the evaluations which comprise the ranking are ambiguous and the decision-making process is not transparent.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >>