

08 文明回眸 | Civilization Glimpse

A Trip to Ningxia: Trace the Roots of Grassland Culture

In the early August, we set out for Ningxia, reputed as the abundant place outside the Great Wall. There we visited Helankou and Zhongwei Damaidi, where there are home to the well-known petroglyphs; the Western Xia Tombs, which shelter the dead imperial families of the northwestern tribe of Dangxiang; Guyuan, an ancient military town; Yanchi, the hometown of Tan Sheep and licorice. It was a trip to pay tribute to the rich history of Ningxia, a place in the Yellow River Watershed that boasts hundreds of years' grassland culture in the steppe of agriculture and pasture, and great success of 17-year complete ban of grazing since 2003, which has contributed to the huge transformation of herders' production pattern and life style.

40 特别策划 | Special Focus

The Three-North Shelterbelt Forest Program: A Showcase of Harmonious Man-Nature Relationship

Three North Region refers to the northwest, the north and the northeast of China. As an important birthplace of the Chinese civilization, it was blessed with dense forests, mild climate. The vast arable land, Yellow River and grassland there provide favorable conditions for men to grow crops, irrigate land and farm animals. However, human activities and interventions in the hundreds of years had taken a heavy toll on this region. It is imperative to reconstruct the man-nature relationship for the sustainability of human development and the longevity of the Chinese civilization. Therefore, in 1978, the CPC Central Committee and the State Council launched the Three-North Shelterbelt Forest Program, an ecological improvement effort to plant windbreak so as to combat desertification, conserve water resources, protect farmland and grassland and improve livelihood. Thanks to the strenuous efforts of several generations, the program has made remarkable achievements in building a green culture and a Green Great Wall that holds back the deserts from encroaching the Three North Region.

56 美丽乡村 | Beautiful Countryside

Longwangba Village at the Foot of Liupan Mountain

A task force of university students has transformed Longwangba Village at the Foot of Liupan Mountain by tapping the cultural & natural resources of the mountain terrace and Loess Plateau. They run a vocational training base for local farmers and an innovative poverty-alleviation project that integrates forestry, agri-tourism, agritainment and rural Airbnbs. With their help, the village has built acres of high-latitude greenhouse garden for sightseeing, 1,000-mu peony-growing base, a homestay-themed street, a ski resort and a cave-style hotel. Through the integration of primary, secondary and tertiary industry, it now embraces changes and walks out of poverty as a model village of poverty eradication in Ningxia.

Tuanjie Village Resting in the Arms of Helan Mountain

Helan Mountain, straddling Yinchuan Plain and Alxa Plateau, is known as the throat of deserts. Tuanjie Village at the foot of Helan Mountain resembles a baby wrapped in the arms of father. Established 24 years ago with the help of Huaxi Village of Jiangsu Province, it is a village where both Han and Hui immigrated from elsewhere and settled down. The two groups of people have been working and living together, fostering a harmonious culture of solidarity. They have embarked on a new path of rural revitalization by growing and processing specialty gojiberryes (Lycium barbarum), which has become the mainstay of local industries.

72 理论视点 | Theoretical Views

Nomadism, A Way of Life that Protects Grassland

The undulating Inner-Mongolia steppe is like a vast ocean of green grass, with no limits in sight. It is beyond a grassland; it is a green shelter that protects the agriculture civilization and nurtures a livelihood that herders depend on. It carries culture, the memory and the strength, as the bond between the grassland, the herds and the herders is unbreakable.

78 特别策划 | Special Focus

Revealing Pictures for a Rivetingly Dangerous Trip to Bear's Den

Polar bear is an indicator species of the Arctic ecosystem. To understand its living condition, I have been to the Arctic and sub-Arctic region for many times. During the Covid-19 outbreak, from February 25 to March 22, I went to Churchill Town of Canada, the polar bear capital, for polar bear viewing. It was a trip full of life-threatening dangers, as the photos taken there vividly show the hostility of the environment. My journey back home was also filled of twists and turns.

90 文化采撷 | Cultural Highlights

Petroglyphs of Helan Mountain

The hinterland of Helan Mountain stretching 200 kilometer is home to thousands of ancient petroglyphs. The petroglyphs document some aspects of ancient northern tribesmen's life, such as herding, hunting, sacrificing, fighting, dancing, etc. A multitude of animal images and abstract symbols is a treasure trove to study the histories of ancient culture, religion and art, as they offer a glimpse into ancient nature worship, reproduction worship, totem worship and veneration of the dead.