

Issues on the legitimacy of social organisations

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Issues on the legitimacy of social organisations Over the past 20 years, China's social organisations have displayed a complex relationship with the social order. Drawing on theories on legitimacy put forward by scholars like Max Weber and Jürgen Habermas, this article elaborates on a set of operational concepts that analyse the formation and operation of these groups. It attempts to explain how certain social organisations, despite their incompatibility with the law, can still exist 'normally' and perform usual functions. This phenomenon is examined from three different angles, namely, that of social, administrative and political legitimacy. Lastly, the article discusses the possibility of using civil non-enterprise registrations and governance ordinance as a basis for establishing a legitimacy around which all the others would gravitate and which they would gradually integrate, in order to compel social organisations to acquire a full-fledged legitimacy.

Keywords: legitimacy, social organisation, social order, recognition

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