

## **The New Acquaintances Society in Community-Building: Enlightenment of a Local Governance Practice**

**Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences, China.**

**Dr. ZHANG Xuemei**

### **1. Aim**

This paper examines China's local innovations of community-building and manages to put forward a path of social governance that Association is deeply engaged in.

In 1940s Dr. Fei Xiaotong gave the concept of *Acquaintance Society*, he pointed out that the Chinese traditional society is a society of acquaintances which is based on small-scale peasant economy, people take self as center and link through geographical relation and kinship to set up Difference Preface Pattern, local governance depends more on human relation and customs instead of on law. This concept for a long time is regarded as evidence that traditional Chinese society lacked the legal rule while left behind the modern world, *Acquaintance Society* should to be improved and even gotten rid of due to its rule less. However, after China's reform and opening up, the *Strangers Society* established by market orientation brought thing going to another extreme, it destroys community base before set up new pattern, people's social life becomes to atomized and fragment, their capacity to participate into public affairs and local governance is extremely short.

Since 2013 China government has started some local practices to explore the way to establish a modern social governance system, particularly based on grass-root and community-building. What and how this kind of innovations work is the purpose that this article intended to investigate.

### **2. Data & Methods**

For this purpose, the author followed up a practice in S street in 2 years, collected materials through participatory observation and oral-depth, and analyzed the case based on the theory of State-society Embedding.

### **3. Results**

We found that in the new movement of community-building in local China, governments have shown great interest in fostering and working together with civil social organizations. They introduce civil social organizations into S street to work on public service so as to explore the ways of SOs supporting on governance. As a result, the innovation fosters grass-roots and association in those communities, improves residents' self-management and self-empowerment, and to some degree integrates the fragment and atomized personal life through community life.

### **4. Conclusion**

The practice enlightens a feasible way of community reconstruction and Social Integration in China, that is to promote organic society integration through Association, and create a so-called New Acquaintance Society, different from Dr. Fei's concept of Acquaintance Society, which are linked by social organization, engages in people with common interests and needs, and reforms the community belonging and participation.

### **5. References**

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