Abstract Reference Number: 121

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Title

Land Development Models and Labor NGO-Government Relations: A Tale of Two Regions

Abstract

This article tries to explain variations of labor NGO development in Yangtze River Delta and Pearl River Delta. By introducing the variable of land development models to the analysis, we found the different processes of land development can deeply affect the government’s wills and capacity of NGO governance. In the Yangtze River Delta, the economic development is principally led by municipal and district-level governments. The governments requisition land and establish economic developmental zone. In contrast, in the Pearl River Delta, village cadres take the lead in economic development instead of their higher-ups. The former model of land development is conducive to the up-to-down regulation over labor relations. It enhances the governments’ capacity to handle labor conflicts and thus enterprises in this region generally implement labor standards in accordance with the laws. In the latter model of Pearl River Delta, villages have more autonomy in economic development. Due to their shared interests, local political elites are closer to the economic actors than they are to their higher-ups in the government. The collusion between local political elites and enterprises lead to a larger number and scale of labor conflicts in Pearl River Delta. In the circumstances, governments of higher-levels allow labor NGOs to operate in order to relieve the severe problem of rampant labor right violation and to maintain the social stability.

Keyword