Abstract

This thesis is an attempt to identify, analyse and reflect on some of the doctrines and discourses that governs the rule of law promotion. Specifically, it seeks to search an answer to the following question: is there any possibility of the cooperation between the EU and China in the area of the rule of law, which may satisfy the EU policy concerning the rule of law promotion, substantively assist the rule of law process in China, and contribute to the building of an international rule of law. The structure, the approaches and the analyses in the thesis contain a proposal for such cooperation.

The proposal is presented in three steps: conceptualising the transnational rule of law promotion, understanding the EU rule of law promotion abroad, and considering the EU rule of law promotion in China. Part I contains analyses of the core issues within the worldwide rule of law promotion. It is argued that current rule of law promotion reflects a lack of study, compared with the expanding practices. Part II represents a thorough analysis of the EU activities for promoting the rule of law abroad. It is demonstrated that unlike the external dimension of the human rights policy that has special strategy and instrument, EU activities for promoting the rule of law are contained in various geographic and thematic programmes.

Finally, Part III attempts to propose a framework for opening the way to bilateral cooperation between the EU and China in the area of the rule of law, against the background of the building of an international rule of law. Basically, it is proposed that the cooperation between the EU and China in promoting the rule of law at the national and international levels may be possible based on the following three changes in the strategy: from promoting 'the rule of law' to promoting 'a rule of law'; from unilateral promotion of the rule of law to bilateral cooperation on the rule of law; and from promoting the rule of law at the national level to promoting the rule of law at both national and international levels.

Declaration

I declare that the thesis here submitted is original except for the source materials explicitly acknowledged and that this thesis as a whole, or any part of this thesis has not been previously submitted for the same degree or for a different degree.

I also acknowledge that I have read and understood the Rules on Handling Student Academic Dishonesty and the Regulations of the Student Discipline of the University of Macau.

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