*Law and Social Credit in China: An Introduction**

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Abstract

Social credit is a mode of governance that spurs private actors, as well as state agencies, to base their decision-making regarding others on credibility assessments. It lays out a central-level framework for creating various mechanisms, ranging from commercial personal credit ratings to compliance assessments and blacklists run by regulatory agencies, with the aim of incentivizing certain behaviors. In addition to a range of commercial pilot projects, the Chinese party-state has also embraced the use of blacklists for trust-breakers and credibility-based regulation to enhance its governing capacity to tackle a wide range of societal problems. This special issue investigates the multifaceted relationship between law as a traditional form of regulation and social credit in China. Together and from differing perspectives, the special issue's contributors argue that the SCS reflects changes in regulatory approaches that imply a fundamental transformation of how law is enforced, as well as a profound alteration of the forms and functions of law itself. In analyzing various subsystems or components of the SCS, the issue provides insight into the logic and rules underlying social credit assessments and explores their link to China's political-legal normative framework.

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