

## Taking What Each Needs - The Basic Logic of Everyday Practice in State-backed Cultural Infrastructure in China

**Authors :** Yiling Shao, Megan Dai

**Abstract :** This paper attempts to explore whether the cultural infrastructure supported by the Chinese government is still subject to a logic of "strict regulation". Previous studies have pointed out that the "paternalism" tendency of China's cultural policy always leads to excessive government intervention in cultural development, while Chinese cultural practitioners can only seek cultural autonomy in the cracks of supervision. This can also explain why Chinese cultural policies sometimes have different effects than the official expectations. But this only reflects one aspect of China's cultural policy. In fact, the welfare cultural infrastructure funded by the government seems to highlight the principles of "safeguarding citizens' cultural rights" and "citizens' voluntary" rather than "indoctrination" and "enlightenment". What new features of China's cultural policy are reflected behind this policy orientation that is completely different from the logic of "regulation", which has also become an important issue in this paper. Based on the field survey of a cultural infrastructure (Gao ming District Cultural Center) in Gao ming District, Fo shan City, Guangdong Province, China, for nearly one year, the authors have obtained many text and picture materials. The paper discusses the dual role of cultural centers in China's cultural policy -both as a formal commitment by the state to protect citizens' basic cultural rights and as a social space for citizens to use preferential policies to obtain cultural capital. All in all, the author have concluded three operational logics of the cultural infrastructure currently supported by the Chinese government (at least in developed areas): first, the cultural center has become a versatile cultural space; second, grass-roots cultural cadres can be described as "policy entrepreneurs"; third, ordinary citizens will use the officially supported cultural infrastructure to increase cultural capital. This paper argues that, in comparison to the common "regulatory hand" in the field of cultural industries, in cultural infrastructure supported by state, the authorities and citizens are not in conflict. On the contrary, authorities must adopt a de-regulatory "pleasing" strategy to gain the support of citizens.

**Keywords :** cultural infrastructure, cultural capital, deregulation, policy entrepreneur

**Conference Title :** ICCCS 2023 : International Conference on Contemporary Cultural Studies

**Conference Location :** Barcelona, Spain

**Conference Dates :** August 10-11, 2023