

The Contradiction and Balance Between Cultural Value and Economic Value in Cultural Policy: Taking the "Creative State" of Victoria, Australia as an Example

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ABSTRACT

Cultural policies and the creative industry policies included in them have long attracted widespread attention in the academic and industry circles. However, the government and scholars have big differences in their perceptions of its value orientation. The government pays more attention to short-term economic value, while cultural scholars pay more attention to long-term cultural value. In this context, seeking a balance between the two has become a new argument. This article selects the "Creative State" in Victoria, Australia as a research case, and analyzes the value orientation and cultural cognition embodied in the policy from three aspects: aim, the factors driving its development, and potential consequences. This article believes that the policy includes the concepts of glocalism and instrumentalism, which emphasizes economic value as well as cultural value. However, its consideration of cultural value is still insufficient. For the formulation of cultural policies, the government should take a more comprehensive consideration of emerging culture as its goal.

Keywords: Cultural policy, creative industries, cultural industries, creative cities, glocalism, instrumentalism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since cultural policy was put forward as an academic concept, the discussion on its value orientation has never stopped. Specifically, policy makers pay more attention to the economic value brought by cultural policies, while cultural scholars believe that its essential purpose is to create cultural value.

In this context, this article selects the "Creative State" in Victoria, Australia as a research case. As "the next four-year creative industry strategy of the Victorian Government" [1], it can directly reflect the value orientation and cultural cognition of the policy makers.

This article uses text analysis to analyze the policy from three aspects: aim, the factors driving its development, and potential consequences. In conclusion, the document is a product of "instrumentalism", it overactivity takes the economic value of cultural policy but its combined "glocalism" approach has driven the development of local culture. On the one hand, it adopts the concept of Florida's creative city, which is more

focused on economic development, which may lead to cultural harm; on the other hand, it draws on the concept of "cultural cluster" to vigorously develop Melbourne's creative industries, which is likely to widen the cultural gap between big cities and small cities. Nevertheless, cultural policy does not operate in a vacuum, it must consider practical factors such as politics and economics; the policy focuses on the protection of local culture as a feature to attract investment, this policy can prevent the invasion of foreign and emerging cultures, play a role in protecting traditional culture. Overall, it can be said that the document is objective while emphasizing economic value the local culture is protected. But it should be noted that the document almost ignores the protection and development of emerging cultures. Today, with the continuous development of Internet technology, it is still necessary to note that emerging cultures such as video games, short videos and movies are more easily affected by capital operations. Considering the increasingly complex business competition environment in the creative industry, how to promote the development of the

industry on the premise of protecting the culture is very important.

2. AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

"Creative State" is inseparable from the creative industry, which itself is a pun on culture and economy. Today, the combination of culture and industry is no longer new. The two are respectively related to people's spiritual activities and economic activities and are of great significance to human society. It is also called the creative industry; in simple terms it is an industry that sells "creatives" (intellectual property) [2]. This means that the government's encouragement of the development of this emerging industry can not only stimulate innovation in the cultural field, but also solve employment and increase taxation. As the Creative State 2025 says, "this strategy aims to engender stability, create opportunity and stimulate growth for Victoria's creative workers, businesses and industries." [1]. Obviously, the aim of the document is reducing the unemployment rate and stimulating economic growth. It can be said that it emphasizes the economic value he can create.

The document clearly states that its goal is "More and better job opportunities and pathways, innovative creative products and experiences, industry stability and growth, equitable access to the creative industries and new audiences and markets" [1]. These objectives point to the emphasis on the economic recovery.

From the naming of the "Creative State", it can be found that it is closely related to the concept of "creative cities". In fact, there is still controversy about the concept of "creative city", and the document is closer to the concept of "creative city" represented by Florida. Florida believes that the creative industry policy must focus on attracting talents from all classes of society, using "technology, talent and tolerance" to promote the opening of the regional labor market and creative industries, and promote economic growth [3]. As Jim McGuigan said, "Florida is more concerned with economic development than cultural development" [4]. In this context, policy makers pay more attention to the economic value of cultural policies. This means that the development of culture is only a means to promote economic growth, and economic growth is the real goal. The phenomenon inspired by this is that policy makers believe that creative industries development must be iconic, only concentrated and eye-catching creative industries can attract global investment to promote the cultural and economic development of surrounding areas; this concept is called "creative clusters"[5]. Under this concept, the policy will tend to have a certain cultural foundation city, because this will reach the "cultural cluster" sooner. More creative talents and some resources will be gathered there. It can be said that under this circumstance, big cities will become the main force of cultural production; while small cities will be ignored because they have no cultural

foundation [6]. This will further widen the gap between large cities and small cities at the cultural level. Creative State 2025 focuses on creative clusters, highlighting Melbourne's culture based on Australian culture. "Build Melbourne's reputation to deliver major, world-class screen events, experiences and venues" [1]. It can be said that Creative State 2025 also has the same problem as mentioned above, that is, excessive focus on big cities.

The document, like most cultural policies, focuses more on the economic damage to the creative industries caused by the spread of COVID-19 in its aims, objectives and scope.

3. THE FACTORS DRIVING ITS DEVELOPMENT

The developmental factors that drive cultural policy are inseparable from the circumstances that governments and people face. Covid-19 has dealt a big blow to the state's creative industries, and the creative economy has been more severely affected. "While some sectors, such as visual effects, animation and digital games were able to continue to operate remotely, physical production, festivals, events and exhibitors were brought to a standstill" [1]. In the COVID-19 era, the ever-decreasing employment rate and economic index remind the state government to formulate some policies. It can be said that the economic value that Creative State 2025 can create is the main factor driving the policy development.

In fact, "The increasingly dominant forms of justification that are demanded by governments are, firstly, economic and, secondly, social in orientation" [7]. Whether economic or social, vigorously develop creative industries achieve their goals. The development of creative industries means more jobs. It not only allows creative workers to return to employment, but also provides employment opportunities for more people. On the economic side, the increase in the unemployment rate means that consumption is stimulated; on the social level, the unemployment rate can ensure social stability and harmony. This is equally important under the spread of Covid-19.

On the other hand, the policy was formulated in consultation with the state's creative industry stakeholders [1]. This means that at the stakeholder level, creative workers have also promoted its development. Creative workers have been facing the risk of unemployment during the spread of COVID-19 [8], and they need a sound cultural policy to ensure that their interests are not affected. Especially for the industrialized creative industry, it is the most urgent need for it to be supported by policies under the spread of COVID-19.

It can be said that although the factors driving its development are both economic and social, the urgent

need for economic recovery by stakeholders and the government is the main factor driving its development.

4. POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES

The policy's main purpose is to recover the economy, which means that the expected result is that the state's economy will be fully developed. However, the document mentioned "The policy vigorously develops the local cultural infrastructure" [1], which means that the state may form a larger cultural cluster. As mentioned earlier, the creative cluster will cause small cities to be ignored. Its most direct consequence will be the lack of development of creative industries in small cities outside of Melbourne. This means that it will deviate from the goal of promoting cultural development throughout the state.

On the other hand, the development of creative clusters means the expansion of the local labor market [9]. More people will get jobs and promote economic growth. At the same time, world-class creative industry infrastructure, open creative industry market and equal access to the market will attract more foreign investment for the state [1]. Obviously, this cultural policy will promote the state's economic recovery under the influence of COVID-19.

Although the document will help promote economic growth in the state, its excessive emphasis on economic value is a form of "instrumentalism". Instrumentalism emphasizes that "it must be demonstrated in terms of culture and art for its effectiveness to donors" [7]. This will cause the cultural policy to deviate from the cultural purpose and cause the economy to harm culture. Belfiore provides an example of this point of view that a TV show called "My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding"; this "successful" creative product has attracted many people's attention and gained financial benefits, but its reports on the gypsy lifestyle are false; this provoked protests from the Gypsy community [10]. This kind of creative industry that pays too much attention to economic interests does not help people understand the culture of the Gypsy community, nor does it help the development of the Gypsy culture. The reason is that economic interests dictate what cultural products the creative industry should produce.

In the context of the above, the possible consequence of the document is an economic recovery, but it is not comprehensive. Also, cultural and economic disparities between large and small cities will increase. On the other hand, culture has the potential to be compromised.

5. CULTURAL VALUE OR ECONOMIC VALUE?

The policy is clearly a product of instrumentalism logic. However, the cultural policy of instrumentalism is

considered by some scholars to be out of its essence [11]. The resulting question is, should cultural policies pursue economic benefits or cultural development?

As Belfiore pointed out, "Cultural value does not operate and is not generated in a social, cultural and political vacuum, but is in fact shaped by the power relations predominant at any one time, and is a site for struggles over meaning, representation and recognition"[10]. If cultural policy is completely divorced from the social needs of economic development, the motivation of policy makers to protect culture will disappear, and cultural policy will also lose its feasibility completely. Today, when capitalism is prevalent, especially in the COVID-19 era, it is reasonable for any policy to serve economic growth. In this context, instead of discussing whether the policy should focus on culture or economy, it is better to discuss whether the policy objectively creates economic value or cultural value.

The key to answering this question is that the document adopts glocalism. Glocalism considers globalization and localization at the same time, focusing on "think globally, act locally" [12]. It uses the promotion of local culture to attract global investment. In its implementation principles, it clearly stipulates "First Peoples knowledge, practice, protocols and cultural authority will be at the heart of the creative industries, forging stronger and enduring partnerships with First Peoples creative communities." [1]. Australia's aboriginal culture is unique in the world, and its mysterious color will undoubtedly be favored by many people. This approach will attract investment from around the world, while also giving more attention to local culture at home. On the other hand, as McGuigan believed, "another feature of cultural policy...is its close historical association with the nation-state" [13]. At the political level, policy makers must consider the invasion of native culture by foreign cultures. This approach can make local culture more distinctive and more widely publicized. To a certain extent, it can not only increase the local people's understanding of the local culture, but also allow the local culture to be better developed. The cultural invasion of foreign cultures and emerging cultures is blocked from the root.

Cultural policy cannot be divorced from economic development and social needs, but it also cannot deviate from the essence of taking culture as its purpose. One of the best ways is to strike a balance before culture and economy. This is what the document does to protect Aboriginal culture. The distinctive Australian aboriginal culture is globally unique, which may be of wider interest and will not be replicated by other organizations. At this level, it will bring a steady stream of global investment to the state. On the other hand, it strictly stipulates the protection of aboriginal culture. Although capital is introduced into it, this approach objectively brings more attention to aboriginal culture. It can be said that while

using the culture to promote economic development, it also tried to protect the culture itself.

6. CONCLUSION

Victoria has a unique history and culture. Although Creative State 2025 is a cultural policy of instrumentalism, it promotes the development and continuation of the native culture of the state. To a certain extent, the cultural policy shows that it is trying to strike a balance between economic value and cultural value. It pays attention to local culture while using creative industries to stimulate economic growth. This not only meets the needs of society for economic growth in the COVID-19 era, but also meets the development needs of creative industries. To a certain extent, it can create a win-win situation for all parties. Its protection of aboriginal culture ensures that it will not be invaded by foreign and emerging cultures, and that it is used to promote economic development. It can be said that this is a practical approach, not limited to political correctness.

However, the policy does not have a clear text showing how they can ensure that culture is protected from economic interests. Although in the context of this document, the development of the creative economy will not actively harm local culture, but when economic and culture inevitably conflict, culture will still be harmed. For example, reports on local culture may deviate from the truth due to the needs of the audience. This contradictory solution is not reflected in this document. On the other hand, although the document strives to protect the indigenous culture of the indigenous people, it still ignores the emerging cultures that most need protection. Clearly, culture includes more than the culture of the aboriginal people. Art forms such as online literature and video games that rely on contemporary Internet technology are more easily affected by capital operations. Especially in video games, its educational significance and conveyed values are more and more valued by people because of its more realistic immersion, but factors such as players' needs for its playability and the market's restrictions on its creation have always been influenced the development of video games as a culture. How to prevent the cultural values carried by emerging media such as video games, online literature, and podcasts from being affected by economic interests, and make them to create and develop freely? This is an urgent question for all cultural policy makers and scholars.

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