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Analysis of Governance Modes in the Chinese Context - On the Adaptation of a Western Concept
Theory and Practice

- Theory generalises the experiences of practice
- Practice applies and adapts theories to reality

How big should the gap between theory and practice be?
Aim of the German Research Foundation’s Priority Programme 1233:

Better understanding of the reorganisation of spatial, social and institutional relationships in mega cities

Mega cities: defined by size

Characteristics of mega cities:
- Size
- Dynamic
- Diversity

Problem of governability

Infrastructure provision, urban services, security, housing, development control, law and order, ...

Is there a point from which on size reduces efficiency of the city as a system?
Case study: Pearl River Delta
Pearl River Delta:
Spatially differentiated governance

- Special Administrative Regions
  - Photo: HK SAR boundary

- Special Economic Zones

- Export Processing and Development Zones

- Fenced factory compounds
  - Photo: Fence of a factory compound
Pearl River Delta: Spatially differentiated governance

- Commodity housing estates
- So-called “urban villages”

Photo: Gate of a commodity housing estate in Panyu (Guangzhou)

Photo: Gate between urban village and Sun Yatsen University
Spatial differentiation of governance modes

- Different rules, laws and regulations are applied.
- Different policies are implemented.
- Power is divided differently among all the levels of state, the private sector and public.
- The extent to which self-organisation and informality are tolerated or used differs.

Aims: Identification of governance modes, analyses of purposes and of (unintended) consequences of differentiated governance
Urban governance interaction model
(DiGaetano/Strom 2003)

Integrates structural, cultural and actor-oriented approaches

Best understood in the context of institutional change

Figure: DiGaetano/Strom 2003 p. 372 (modified)
Application of the concept in China

The Chinese context is to be considered, concerning e.g.:

- understanding of governance;
- concept of informality;
- importance of the Communist Party of China;
- socialism with Chinese characteristics.
Case study

Guangzhou Development District (GDD)
Case study

GDD’s Development

• Sectoral Establishment
• Differentiation
• Management Reform
• Administrative Reform
• Comprehensive Urban Management Approach
Identification of governance modes

Structural Context
• general context: reform measures towards market-oriented economy;
• case study: competition between zones is increasing.

Political Culture
• Cantonese culture to be considered;
• socialism with Chinese characteristics.

Actors / Stakeholders
• Guangzhou Municipality, Administrative Committee of the GDD;
• Companies, Developers;
• Workers, Villagers.
Identification of governance modes

Preliminary findings for the GDD

- Rather growth-oriented modes of governance can be found – as expected.
- Besides, the co-existence of different modes and fast changes in the modes can be identified. E.g. from case-to-case decisions towards managerialism.
- These changes in the modes also reflect the changes in the structural context.