

Authoritarian policing with Chinese characteristics: A case study of motorcycle bans in the Pearl River Delta

Jianhua Xu

Published online: 20 November 2013
© Springer Science+Business Media Dordrecht 2013

Abstract Despite unprecedented economic and social changes over the past three decades, China remains an authoritarian regime. However, the current authoritarian regime differs in many ways from that under Mao. Since the nature of a police force reflects the character of the political regime within which it operates, this paper explores current police practices in China. It argues that policing in China is neither completely authoritarian nor democratic, but best understood as soft-authoritarian. The case study examines policing of a motorcycle ban that was implemented to prevent motorcycle snatch theft in the Pearl River Delta. The police remained authoritarian and used many coercive strategies to push for the motorcycle ban. However, their hard-line strategies were matched by some soft-line persuasive tactics. I argue that changing state-society relations are leading to resistance to hard-authoritarian policing and contributing to soft-authoritarian policing in China.

Introduction

In March 2011, China's top legislator, Wu Bangguo, announced that a socialist system of laws with Chinese characteristics has been established in China. Wu regarded it as a major milestone in the history of the development of a Chinese socialist democratic legal system [1]. Indeed, during its transformation from a planned to a market economy over the past three decades, China has made a great effort to change its legislation. For example, the Police Law of the People's Republic of China was enacted in 1995 as an effort to modernize and establish rule of law for the police. However, how these laws are implemented suggests a different story [2, 3]. Like police forces in many other authoritarian regimes, the main tasks of the Chinese police remains to protect the Chinese Communist party-state and maintain its power [4]. While it is premature to claim that China's police force has been transformed into one that emphasizes professionalization, rule of law, and

J. Xu (✉)

Department of Sociology, University of Macau, PG45, Pearl Jubilee Building, Av. Padre Tomás Pereira, Taipa, Macau SAR, China
e-mail: ajianfly@gmail.com

accountability [5], the actual effects of police reform on policing practices in China remain largely unexplored. Although political scientists have widely explored how the Chinese party-state adapts to challenges and survives through time, to what extent these adaptations have affected its police force has been neglected. This paper examines the nature of contemporary Chinese policing by asking how it differs from both Mao's authoritarian model and the models of policing in Western democracies.

In this paper, I analyze macro-structural factors shaping current Chinese policing by examining a particular policing strategy, that of banning motorcycles to prevent motorcycle snatch theft in the cities of the Pearl River Delta. I found that the police resorted to many hard-line strategies to implement the motorcycle ban, including authoritarian law enforcement, extra-legal motorcycle confiscation, and a reward and punishment system for citizens. However, such coercive strategies were matched by soft-line persuasive tactics, such as media propaganda, mass mobilization, policy consultation, legislation, buy-offs, and lenience. Based on this case study, I argue that Chinese policing is currently neither completely authoritarian nor democratic, but could be best understood as a soft-authoritarian model. It remains authoritarian at the core, but its authoritarian policing strategies are mitigated with the use of some soft tactics. I further argue that changing state-society relations have resulted in increased resistance to hard-line policing and the rise of soft-authoritarian policing in China.

Democratization and democratic policing in a global context

Since the 1980s, with the spread of "third wave" democratization in formerly authoritarian Asian and Latin American countries, a small but growing literature has examined how political regime affects policing and how police reform may contribute to establishing or sustaining democracy. Scholars working in this sub-field of democratic policing debate what should be regarded as democratic policing [6–8]. David Bayley emphasizes that democratic policing should: (1) "give top operational priority to servicing the needs of individual citizens and private groups;" (2) "be accountable to the law rather than to the government;" (3) "protect human rights, especially those that are required for the sort of unfettered political activity that is the hallmark of democracy;" and (4) "be transparent in their activities" [7: 14]. Peter Manning summarizes several scholars' writings on democratic policing to suggest it should: (1) be constrained in dealing with citizens and fair in procedure; (2) react to citizens' complaints; (3) use the same amounts of coercion amongst all populations being policed; (4) hire and treat its police fairly; (5) be competitive in an environment that includes other types of policing; and (6) support individual and organizational accountability and responsibility [8: 65–66]. In a nutshell, Manning [8: xii] argues that democratic policing should be an agent for the redistribution of life chances in a population. Although different scholars emphasize different aspects of what constitutes democratic policing, they generally agree that democratic policing differs from authoritarian policing in being politically neutral and accountable to law rather than a particular party or government.

The theoretical debate about democratic policing has inspired empirical research on how the democratization process affects the formation of democratic policing in any society. Although the police force is sometimes criticized for inefficiency in the

new democracy of Taiwan, it has successfully transformed its function from protecting one party-state to serving a multi-party democracy (see Jeffrey Martin's article in this issue). However, the relationship between democratization and democratic policing proves complicated. For example, two decades after Russia's democratic transition, researchers found that its officers were repeatedly forced to police political actions, even though the police were declared politically neutral [9]. While the strict control of the Communist party was gone, new forms of accountability had not yet become effective in Russia. As a result, the public felt insecure and unprotected and had a very negative and untrusting attitude toward the police [9]. Democratic policing in Russia is far from mature [10]. Similarly, despite the establishment of democracy in South Korea, the police have been used by various ruling regimes to seize and maintain political power; they remain politically oriented and frequently violate constitutional and human rights [11, 12]. A similar problem of very limited democratic policing exists in Hungary, the country that has moved closest toward democracy in East Europe [13].

Some researchers found that democratization not only failed to install democratic police forces, it made police even more authoritarian. Although democracy is taking shape in post-communist Ukraine, the politicization and corruption of the police has become more blatant than before; the country is becoming a new police state that threatens the rule of law and democracy [14]. Indeed, as Manning [8: vii] argues, police in democratic societies can and do carry out non-democratic policing practices sometimes seemingly designed to increase inequality, while police in authoritarian societies can also act democratically. A good example is Hong Kong, where democracy is not yet in place, but its police force operates fairly democratically [15]. Let us now turn the focus to Mainland China.

Authoritarian regime and police reform in China

Although economic reform over the past three decades has turned China into the second largest economy in the world, forecasted by some to become the largest one in the near future [16], capitalism has not brought the democratic changes. On the contrary, Chinese authoritarianism has proven resilient [17, 18]. Nevertheless, today's China is significantly different from Mao's and even Deng's China [19]. The rapid economic and social changes have altered the regime so that it has become less repressive and more inclusive [20–22]. Some scholars suggest a soft-authoritarian regime has arisen [23, 24].

Unprecedented social transformation since the 1980s has also had a great impact on the police. The Chinese government has actively reformed its police force along with its economy. There have been dramatic changes in the roles and functions of police, their core values, leadership, organization and structure, management philosophy, and operations [25, 26]. One change was the establishment of rule of law [27].

Implementing this change has been difficult since the police cannot be politically neutral in an authoritarian regime where their primary task is protecting the power monopoly of the Chinese Communist Party [4]. The authoritarianism of Chinese police is reflected in how they go about controlling crime. Since the 1980s, there have

been several rounds of nation-wide *yanda* (“hard-strike campaigns”) against crime, including countless *zhuanxiang douzheng* (“special struggles”) against particular types of crimes. During these campaigns, harsh punishments, ignoring due process, and abuse of human rights have become routine aspects of police work [28–30]. These policing tactics have not only aimed at reducing crime, they have been part of a political mission to remind the public that social order is still under state control [31, 32].

In the 2000s, following greater effort to install rule of law, authoritarian *yanda* style policing became less popular and community policing started to emerge [33, 34]. Characteristics of current Chinese policing can be uncovered by observing policing strategies such as the motorcycle ban in the Pearl River Delta. The data for this paper came from a large project on the motorcycle ban policy and its effect on motorcycle taxi drivers in the Pearl River Delta. Multiple methods were employed to collect data, including field observations in the Pearl River Delta from 2006 to 2013, extensive in-depth interviews with police, motorcycle taxi drivers, and ordinary citizens, and a systematic review of newspaper articles related to the snatch theft crime and motorcycle ban policy from 2000 to 2013 [32, 35–38].¹ I next introduce the reasons for the motorcycle ban.

Motorcycle ban in the Pearl River Delta

In the late 1990s, thieves on motorcycles began snatching objects from pedestrians in the cities of the Pearl River Delta. This crime became rampant in the early 2000s, posing a great threat to people’s sense of safety. A survey conducted by the Guangzhou Public Opinion Research Center in 2004 revealed that only 21 % of citizens felt safe in Guangzhou; more than 80 % of citizens regarded snatch theft and robbery as the most dangerous issue threatening their sense of safety [39]. Although local governments made many efforts to stop the crime, including having plain clothes police officers patrolling areas where the crimes were taking place, allowing police to shoot offenders at the crime scene, and introducing the death penalty for motorcycle thieves, the crime did not diminish. Finally, the police decided to ban all motorcycles from the streets. This policy was called “cutting the legs” of motorcycle snatch thieves since they could no longer use motorcycles to flee after committing the crime [32]. Shenzhen started the ban in its central cities in 2004 and expanded it to all the areas within the Special Economic Zone at the end of 2007; it was later expanded to most areas in the Bao’an and Longgang district (a non-Special Economic Zone) in 2009. Guangzhou banned motorcycles from the roads of all eight of its old districts in 2007. Dongguan banned motorcycles from its entire central city starting September 2007 and expanded the ban to all of its 24 towns or districts in January 2009. According to this policy, violators would be fined, their motorcycles impounded or confiscated, and drivers ran the risk of up to 15 days of detention if they did not cooperate with the police.

The policy was controversial as it caused many difficulties for the lower classes. Many citizens depend on their motorcycles for everyday transportation, particularly

¹ News articles were found by searching WiseNews, a database containing most Chinese newspapers, accessible from the library of the University of Hong Kong.

where the public transportation system is not convenient or efficient. The policy particularly affected tens of thousands of rural-to-urban migrant workers who relied on motorcycles to make a living. Before motorcycles were banned in Guangzhou in 2007, there were 700,000 ordinary users as well as 100,000 motorcycle taxi drivers. An overwhelming majority of motorcycle taxi drivers were migrant workers [40]. They were usually members of the first generation of Chinese internal migrant workers following economic reform. Lacking urban *hukou* (“household registration”), these rural-to-urban migrant workers were excluded from the social welfare benefits (e.g., housing, health care, education for their children, and pensions) enjoyed by local people [41, 42]. When they became considered “old” at 35 to 40 years old, they were further excluded from employment, since most labor-intensive factories in the Pearl River Delta require young laborers. Facing a dim future in the cities, some of them tried to make a living in the informal economy by driving motorcycle taxis. The motorcycle ban policy added a new dimension to their social exclusion and ability to survive [36].

Despite the controversy, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, and Dongguan banned motorcycles one after another, mainly as an attempt to prevent snatch theft.² Let me now turn to the strategies used by the police in promoting and implementing this policy and the implications of these strategies for understanding current Chinese policing.

Authoritarian policing in banning motorcycles

The police in the Pearl River Delta cities were allowed nearly unlimited power to implement the motorcycle ban. Their coercive strategies, violations of due process, and even abuse of human rights demonstrate that the police maintained an authoritarian approach in which they were accountable only to the government instead of the law.

1. Authoritarian law enforcement

Several authoritarian law enforcement strategies were adopted by the police. First, police undertook joint action with various branches of government to implement the motorcycle ban. Usually, only traffic police have the right and responsibility to deal with those who violate traffic regulations. However, traffic police mobilized other police branches, the traffic administration department, the city administration department, and even agencies such as the street administration committee to work together to enforce the policy. This was especially the case during the initial stage of policy implementation. For instance, in March 2009, Longgang (Shenzhen) police mobilized police forces from the municipal police bureau, criminal investigation police, public security police, and traffic police along with staff from street committees, the transportation administration, and the city administration department for joint-action law enforcement. Altogether, 1,200 personnel participated in confiscating 121 motorcycles within 3 hours [43]. The first day Dongguan started

² I have discussed the political significance of the motorcycle ban and its effectiveness in reducing snatch theft elsewhere (Xu 2012).

to implement the ban, traffic police mobilized 700 personnel including patrol police, special police, and traffic administration personnel to confiscate motorcycles [44].

The second authoritarian law enforcement strategy involved special motorcycle capture campaigns. As soon as the ban was enforced, the overall use of motorcycles declined sharply, especially on main streets. Some people simply confined their use of motorcycles to urban villages, however, where police had a harder time catching them. Others played cat and mouse games with the police by only using their motorcycles when police were off duty [35]. The police launched many special campaigns to find the motorcycles still being used on the sly. In March 2007, Guangzhou police launched a one-week campaign to find motorcycles hidden in urban villages. Three hundred traffic police raided Kanglecun, a famous urban village near Sun Yat-sen University that was *zhong zaicqu* (“severely afflicted area”) with motorcycles. Special police armed with machine guns joined the campaign [45]. Some motorcycle drivers would flee as soon as they noticed uniformed police and police vans drawing near, so plainclothes police officers joined the campaign to catch them [46]. One hundred and twenty motorcycles were confiscated in a single day [47].

The third authoritarian high profile law enforcement strategy was parading the achievements of the police by publicly demolishing confiscated motorcycles. Public sentencing rallies are frequently used in China to show the government’s determination to fight crime, blame and shame criminals, and educate the public about criminal activities [31]. Police adopted a similar strategy to show the public its determination to implement the ban. Tens of thousands of motorcycles were demolished in public to demonstrate how much the ban policy had accomplished. In November 2003, Shenzhen demolished 40,000 motorcycles in public. One of Guangdong’s provincial leaders who attended the event declared that Shenzhen’s experience can expand to other cities in the Pearl River Delta [48]. In September 2007, Shenzhen demolished another 4,363 motorcycles in public. The police argued that the purpose of these large-scale demolitions was to show their determination in strengthening comprehensive traffic administration, cracking down on illegal taxis, and enlarging the scope of the motorcycle ban policy [49]. In November 2008, as many as 30,000 motorcycles were destroyed at eight demolition sites in Shenzhen [50]. Up to 230,000 motorcycles and electric-bicycles were destroyed within five years in Longgang district alone [51]. The same strategy was adopted in Dongguan [52]. Newspapers reported these events under big headlines and published large photographs of the demolition scenes.

2. Extra-legal means

The police also resorted to many extra-legal methods to implement the motorcycle ban. This makes sense since their power usually emanates from the particular tasks they need to accomplish, rather than by following the letter of abstract laws [4: 3]. In Guangzhou, all gas stations within the motorcycle ban area were banned from selling gasoline to motorcycle drivers. Some Shenzhen police even sent security guards to gas stations to prevent motorcyclists from obtaining gasoline, a strategy called “banning motorcycles from the source” [53].

Other extra-legal means have also been used. Police and security guards have often confiscated motorcycles without following due process. In January 2008, security

guards from Shenzhen's Longgang district brought large iron cutters with them as they searched for motorcycles in car parks near residential communities, shopping malls, and hotels. They cut off locks and took away all the motorcycles they found without notifying the owners [54]. Although this method was widely criticized for being overly harsh and lacking due process, the police continued using it. In February 2009, Shenzhen Longgang police launched the "cleaning the nest" campaign to confiscate motorcycles hidden by migrant workers in their rental units. Four hundred police and security guards equipped with anti-riot dogs and tools for breaking down doors raided migrant workers' flats to locate and destroy their motorcycles [43]. One month later, Shenzhen Bao'an police used the same "cleaning the nest" method; they checked all the flats rented by migrant workers within the Yousong police jurisdiction area. Police broke into three houses to confiscate motorcycles. In two cases, the owners were absent, but in the third case, the owner was wounded when she tried to prevent the police from taking the motorcycle away [55].

3. Reward and punishment

In their determination to fully implement the ban, police began rewarding and punishing people who were not necessarily motorcycle owners. They rewarded informants who told them about policy violators and punished those who did not support the police. As Dongguan underwent rapid industrialization, many peasants lost their means of making a living. Like migrant workers, these former farmers resorted to driving motorcycle taxis. When they became unemployed again following the motorcycle ban, the police (supported by the local government) offered a one-time 5,000 *yuan* stipend to each motorcycle taxi driver who possessed a local *hukou*. These stipends were withdrawn if they were found driving motorcycles again. Their annual dividends from collectively-owned enterprises were also suspended, even though these enterprises had no power and responsibility to enforce the ban policy [56, 57].³ The police used their ability to control people's finances to punish those who did not support the motorcycle ban policy.

A year after Dongguan banned motorcycles from its city center, motorcycle taxis could still be found everywhere. In order to crackdown on the motorcycle taxis, the police started a new policy in September 2008 to encourage citizens to report all motorcycle users to the police, whether they were implicated in snatch thefts or not. Informants were rewarded 200 *yuan* for each case reported. The Dongguan Traffic Administration Bureau also established a special hotline, an email address, and a reporting center to receive intelligence on motorcycle users. Each town in Dongguan set up similar reporting centers [58]. Police also started a joint-responsibility system to punish landlords who rented rooms to migrant workers with motorcycles. In 2008, Shenzhen Bao'an police started to punish landlords if they did not inform the police about any of their tenants who owned motorcycles or if they continued to rent to migrant workers they knew owned motorcycles [55].

The strategies used by police to enforce the ban on motorcycles does not follow a democratic policing model [7]. Police in the Pearl River Delta remained highly authoritarian and gained nearly unlimited power to implement the ban. They organized joint actions with other agencies and branches of law enforcement to

³ The annual dividends varied from several thousand to tens of thousands of *yuan* per person per year.

enforce the ban, even broke into people's home to confiscate motorcycles, demolished motorcycles in public to demonstrate their determination, and even made landlords socially and criminally responsible for not reporting on their tenants. They did not only rely on such coercive strategies, however. Their iron fists were sometimes covered by velvet gloves. I next examine the soft-line approaches used by police.

Taking a softer line in banning motorcycles

Soft-authoritarianism relies more on persuasion than coercion [59]. Police adopted several softer strategies in their attempts to persuade a skeptical public of the importance of the motorcycle ban. The potential for coercion remained in the background of such soft tactics, however.

1. Controlled media propaganda

A free and independent media is a watchdog for governance by rule of law in most democratic countries. Media in authoritarian regimes are usually controlled by the state and function primarily to support and advance state policy. Despite increasing marketization in China, state-controlled media still largely work as the mouthpiece of the Chinese Community Party (CCP) generating the propaganda of the state government [60]. The government mobilizes the mass media to defend the policies it intends to implement.

Media propaganda around banning motorcycles mainly took two forms: educating the public about the importance of banning motorcycles and celebrating the achievements of the ban. An example of the first type occurred when Guangzhou planned to ban motorcycles in 2004. The *Yangcheng Evening News*, a Party newspaper supervised by the Guangdong Provincial CCP, quoted a government official who pointed out the “seven sins” of motorcycles: noise pollution, air pollution, traffic accidents, motorcycle snatch theft, illegal business operations, habitual violation of regulations, and damaging the city's image [61]. Two days later, both the *People's Daily* (CCP's mouthpiece) and *Yangcheng Evening News* defended the Guangzhou government in concluding that the motorcycle ban was absolutely necessary [62].

The second category of propaganda highlights the success of a policy after it has been adopted. For example, Guangzhou started banning motorcycles from some of its main streets on 1 May 2004. The next day, the *Nan Fang Daily* (another Party newspaper controlled by the Guangdong Provincial CCP) quoted a citizen saying “it is much safer” in the city because of the motorcycle ban [63: 02]. Local governments also repeatedly reported reductions in snatch theft crime to legitimize the motorcycle ban. In April 2007, three months after Guangzhou began banning motorcycles, *Yangcheng Evening News* reported that snatch thefts and robberies had dropped by nearly 50 % and motorcycle snatch thefts had dropped by 76 % compared to the same three-month period in 2006 [64]. The *Shenzhen Special Zone News*, a newspaper controlled by the Shenzhen Municipal CCP, praised “Shenzhen's public security [for] continuing to get better” after noting that motorcycle snatch theft cases declined from 29 cases per day in 2003 to 1.4 cases

in 2007 [65].⁴ In Dongguan, the *Nan Fang Daily* lauded the “successful” motorcycle ban as an example of “the good cat that can catch mice” and the ban itself as “cutting [off] the legs” of criminals [66].

2. Mass mobilization

Although authoritarian regimes rely on coercion to control society, they must also seek cooperation and support from the masses. In order to convince ordinary people to support the motorcycle ban, the police from the Longgang district in Shenzhen organized people in 2007 to collect 20,000 signatures demonstrating their support of a “no-motorcycle community” [67]. Many organizations were mobilized in Dongguan to promote the government’s motorcycle ban policy in 2007. The Guangcheng district involved over a thousand people from women’s groups, the youth league, community cadres, police, and security guards handing out 70,000 pamphlets to promote the policy on the streets [68]. New organizations were also established to promote the policy. In Dongguan’s Hengli town, a “traffic safety promotion team” made up of members of the police force and the Communist Youth League was established by the police to promote the ban policy. On the day it was founded, all 30 members promoted the ban on the streets [69].

Government officials usually took the lead in mobilizing the public or were required to model the implementation of the policy. Government officials from city to town levels were all involved in the implementation of this policy in Dongguan, which was regarded as having taken the most extreme measures in banning motorcycles. The Party Secretary of Dongguan instructed government officials that “no hesitation should be allowed in thinking; no different voice should be heard in speaking; no negligence can be tolerated in action” [70: A32]. The Party Secretary and other city leaders went to the streets to supervise the implementation of the ban on the first day (1 September 2007) it was implemented in Dongguan’s central city [71]. On 1 January 2009, the ban was extended to all 32 towns and streets of Dongguan. City and town leaders again handed out “persuasion letters” to citizens on the streets, asking them to support the policy. The deputy Party secretary and deputy mayor of Dongguan joined the campaign. An article in the *Nan Fang Daily* vividly described the participation of city leaders and reported that the deputy mayor had stopped a woman on a motorcycle to give her a persuasion letter, then asked her to persuade her entire family to support the city’s anti-motorcycle policy [72, 73].

Persuasion duties extended to other people who worked for local governments. In 2006, the Bao’an district required that Party members, civil servants, cadres from neighborhood communities, and cadres and workers from state-owned enterprises should behave as role models by persuading their own family members not to use motorcycles. If government officials were discovered using motorcycles, their motorcycles were confiscated and they were publicly criticized and otherwise punished by the government [74].

3. Policy consultation

⁴ The news report stated that motorcycle snatch thefts had declined by 32.3 % in 2004, 61 % in 2005, and 41.4 % in 2006 and that no snatch thefts had been recorded by police in the former hotspots of Luohu and Futian in 2007.

Recently in China, government officials have begun holding meetings to listen to opinions from different civic groups regarding prospective policies. Such consultations have become a new form of institutional input as the Chinese authoritarian regime adapts to an increasingly assertive civil society in which citizens demand to have a voice in governance. The consultations that followed introduction of the motorcycle ban exemplify this process. Police were criticized for not listening to the people's wishes and arbitrarily instituting the ban. Police agencies in other areas responded by holding meetings in their communities. Shenzhen organized the first motorcycle ban policy consultation in China in September 2003. During the meeting, citizen representatives expressed opposition to government officials from the Traffic Police Bureau, Traffic Administration Bureau, Environmental Protection Bureau, Justice Bureau, and the Bus Company who supported banning motorcycles within the Special Zone of Shenzhen. Government officials argued that there were many problems with motorcycles, including the existence of illegal motorcycle taxis, violations of traffic rules, and a tendency amongst drivers to use violence to resist law enforcement. The citizen representatives argued against implementing the policy by pointing out that most motorcycle-related problems were caused by motorcycle owners who had not acquired official motorcycle licenses and certificates or were using non-local or fake ones. They contended that the government should not "give up eating for fear of choking," as the Chinese proverb goes. That is, it should not sacrifice the interests of legitimate motorcycle owners for the sake of administrative convenience [75].

Guangzhou held a meeting on the motorcycle ban policy in January 2004. The Guangzhou government had planned to start banning motorcycles in 2011, but decided it could not wait, and wanted to implement the ban in 2007.⁵ In the meeting, a government official listed the "seven sins" of motorcycles mentioned earlier in this paper and stated that banning motorcycles was absolutely necessary. As in the Shenzhen consultation, citizen representatives expressed their concerns about directly banning motorcycles [61]. Guangzhou went ahead with the ban, so the concerns of citizens are not necessarily taken into account when the government has already decided to implement some policies. Instead, policy consultation meetings show the public that local governments are not completely arbitrary and make the public feel they have some influence on local policies [17]. Consultations may actually help change the public's perceptions of the legitimacy of such policies.

4. Legislative efforts: legalizing the motorcycle ban

The effort by police to establish a legal basis for the motorcycle ban constitutes another soft strategy. No law banning motorcycles existed in the Pearl River Delta, so implementation of the policy was heavily criticized as illegal. Local governments wrote the policy without establishing legislation for it. Many legal scholars criticized the ban as contradictory to China's Property Law, since it infringed on rights of citizens to use their own property (i.e., motorcycles).

In response to such criticism, Shenzhen police made an effort to legitimize the ban. In 2004, Shenzhen police attempted to add an article to its Penalty Ordinance for

⁵ Guangzhou stopped issuing licenses for newly purchased motorcycles in 1998. Since motorcycle licenses had a thirteen-year limit, all the motorcycle licenses were going to expire in 2011.

Road Traffic Administration that would ban motorcycles. Revisions to the Ordinance must be approved by the Shenzhen People's Congress, which gives it a legal basis. The Standing Committee of the Shenzhen People's Congress denied the proposed revision, however, arguing that although banning motorcycles was good for city administration, the legitimate rights of motorcycle owners had to be considered and protected. The committee asked the government draw up a feasible compensation plan before implementing the policy [76]. Although the revision to the Ordinance was denied by the Standing Committee of the People's Congress, Shenzhen continued banning motorcycles. Police meanwhile continued trying to get a law passed that would legitimize the policy. In 2007, the Shenzhen police again pushed for revision to the Ordinance, which they regarded as one of their most important goals [77].

Dongguan police also tried to legislate the motorcycle ban. In China, the People's Congress and its Standing Committee from municipalities directly under the Central Government, provincial capitals, and relatively big cities each have the legislative power to revise local regulations. Dongguan has no such powers since it is not classified as a provincial capital or big city. In 2008, Dongguan attempted to apply to the State Council to become classified as a "relatively big city" although it failed to do so. The main purpose of this application was to gain enough legislative power to resolve the problem of not having a law banning motorcycles [78].

The ban on motorcycles was only based on local government documents rather than legislation. Police were aware that the ban lacked a solid legal basis. The effort to get it legislated is an example of a relatively soft approach to policing, since it implies that police prefer to conform to rule of law when possible.

5. Buying off: compensating motorcyclists for loss

The fifth soft strategy involved buying off the victims of the policy. The motorcycle ban affected the interest of two groups, namely ordinary motorcycle owners and motorcycle taxi drivers. In order to reduce opposition from ordinary motorcycle owners, the police provided some compensation to those who discarded their motorcycles before the expiration of their motorcycle licenses. Although the compensation plan varied city by city, the general rule was that the owners would receive the remaining value of their motorcycles after depreciation. The police also encouraged owners to change the registration of their motorcycles to cities where there was no motorcycle ban policy. Official statistics show that from January 2005 to November 2007 as many as 62,048 motorcycles were discarded by the deadline and 1,950 motorcycle owners changed the place of registration [79]. Other rewards encouraged owners to scrap their motorcycles. Motorcycle owners in Dongguan's Dongcheng Street received bus cards valued at 200 *yuan* in addition to cash compensation if they scrapped their motorcycles [80].

The strategy of buying off motorcyclists was also used to solve a problem that only emerged after the ban was implemented. In Shenzhen, a motorcycle taxi driver died from crash caused by being chased by police during a campaign to ban motorcycles. The accident led to public outcry and a riot. In order to pacify the rioters, police gave 200,000 *yuan* to the victim's family to compensate for his death [81].

Other mostly symbolic efforts were made to assist motorcycle taxi drivers. There were an estimated 100,000 motorcycle taxi drivers before Guangzhou banned motorcycles in 2007[40]. One major criticism of the motorcycle ban policy was that

it deprived motorcycle taxi drivers with the ability to make a living. Motorcycle taxi drivers who lost their jobs after motorcycles were banned were offered the same privileged treatment as laid-off city workers, including free job training and priority in arranging new jobs. Self-employed former motorcycle taxi drivers could even apply for loans of up to 30,000 *yuan* [82]. The government promised to find jobs for them within 1 month, assuming they were not picky [83]. To encourage companies to hire unemployed motorcycle taxi drivers, Guangzhou's Tianhe district government rewarded employers 1,000 *yuan* for each motorcycle taxi driver hired [84]. In addition, the Guangzhou government organized several job fairs exclusively for unemployed local motorcycle taxi drivers. Over 1,300 positions at 56 companies were offered at the first job fair for former motorcycle taxi drivers in November 2006 [85]. However, these privileges applied only to the 4,000 taxi drivers who possessed Guangzhou *hukou*. The migrant workers who made up the overwhelming majority of motorcycle taxi drivers in Guangzhou did not enjoy such privileges.

6. Showing lenience

Another soft policing strategy was showing some lenience alongside the more coercive law enforcement practices. For example, police established grace periods for compliance with the ban before punishing violators as a way of reducing resistance from motorcycle users. Guangzhou had a fifteen-day grace period before it started confiscating motorcycles and fining users in January 2007. During the grace period, violators were educated about the policy but did not face punishment. Dongguan set up a similar sixteen-day grace period when it started the ban in its central city in September 2007 [86]. Dongguan had planned to expand the scope of the motorcycle ban to all of its 24 towns starting 1 January 2009. Seeing that a riot had been triggered by the death of a motorcycle taxi driver in Shenzhen at the end of 2008 [81], it announced an extra three-month grace period ending 1 April 2009 to forestall resistance from motorcycle taxi drivers in Dongguan. The Dongguan government explained that the three-month grace period showed the humanitarian side of the motorcycle ban policy [87].

To sum up, in banning motorcycles, police working in the Pearl River Delta remained authoritarian and used many hard line strategies to achieve their goals. Their coercive strategies were mitigated by softer ones intended to reduce resistance from society. I have argued that the style of policing used to enforce the motorcycle ban should be categorized as soft-authoritarian rather than as purely authoritarian (hard) or democratic (soft).

It remains to be asked why police combined hard and soft strategies to enforce the ban. In the next section, I describe various forms of resistance to the controversial policing strategy of banning motorcycles to prevent snatch thefts. I argue that a fragmented Party-state, increasing rights consciousness, less rubber-stamping of governmental policies, divided interest groups, and outbreaks of violent resistance from desperate victims of the ban all contributed to a soft-authoritarian approach to policing in China.

Resistance to the motorcycle ban

1. Petitioning the central government in a fragmented Party-state

The authoritarian Chinese Party-state has never been monolithic. The central and local governments have always held different goals and concerns about the regime's legitimacy. These different perspectives provide social activists opportunities to obtain support from the central government for problems stemming from local governance [88, 89]. For example, activists pressured local governments to rescind or alter the motorcycle ban by petitioning the central government. In September 2005, three university students from Hunan Normal University sent a petition titled "The discriminative policy against motorcycles and smaller motorized vehicles should be revoked in building a conservation-oriented society" to then Premier Wen Jiabao. In the letter, the authors argued that the motorcycle ban not only lacked legal grounds for implementation, it also caused problems such as increased environmental pollution, energy consumption, and travel costs for people forced to use automobiles instead of motorcycles. The authors argued that motorcycles should not be banned while China was developing, as rescinding the ban would support the building of an environmentally sustainable, legally accountable, and harmonious society [90]. The three students received a formal reply from the National Development and Reform Commission within a month. The Commission agreed that the motorcycle ban was contradictory to current laws and regulations and the spirit of building a conservation-oriented society. The Commission also remarked that this problem had caught the attention of leaders from the State Council and they would instruct relevant departments to investigate and solve it [91].

Local governments and their police agencies failed to take the central government into consideration when they instituted the policy, so the petition to Wen Jiabao and the formal reply from the National Development and Reform Commission were widely reported in the mass media. Although the bans were not rescinded, these communications were used to criticize the motorcycle bans throughout the Pearl River Delta.

2. Increasing rights consciousness leads to suing local governments

With the rising awareness of legal rights, many activists have begun manipulating China's legal system to sue local authorities [92–94]. The emergence of *weiquan* ("rights protection") lawyers has facilitated this type of resistance [95, 96]. Official statistics show that administrative litigation has increased 228-fold, from 527 suits in 1983 to 120,312 in 2009 [97]. Since the legitimacy of the motorcycle ban policy was widely challenged, some motorcyclists took the police to court after they were fined or had their motorcycles confiscated.

Motorcycle users resorted to administrative review or litigation for two types of cases. One was to question the methods used by the police in enforcing the ban. For example, after police broke into migrant workers' homes to confiscate their motorcycles in Shenzhen, a migrant worker named Li Caixia appealed to the Bao'an Police Bureau to conduct an administrative review of the case and threatened further litigation if it was not looked into [98]. The other type involved challenging the legality of the motorcycle ban policy itself. In 2007, a motorcyclist surnamed Zhang took the Guangzhou police to court after he was fined 200 *yuan* for using a motorcycle and another 160 *yuan* in parking fees. Zhang maintained that the purpose of the lawsuit was not to regain the 360 *yuan* or punish an individual police officer, but to challenge the local motorcycle policy as violating Chinese law [99].

No motorcyclists have ever won a case against the police, which is not difficult to understand given that there is no independent judicial system. In some cases, police have compromised by persuading motorcyclists to withdraw the case and then compensated them privately [99]. Whether motorcyclists won or lost their suits or obtained compensation or not, knowing that there were channels for suing the police may have enabled citizens to feel they had some influence over local policies. This probably increased the overall legitimacy of the regime.

3. Less obedient rubber stamping of local government policy

National-level political decisions are made at two important meetings or conferences known as *lianghui* every March in China. The political advisory one is known as the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). The legislative one is conducted by the National People's Congress (NPC) of the People's Republic of China. Although *lianghui* have been criticized for simply rubber-stamping national Party decisions, debates over local governmental policies have become relatively active in recent years at these meetings [100–103].

For example, members of the CPPCC and the NPC have criticized different aspects of the motorcycle ban policy. In the 2003 CPPCC *lianghui*, He Shibin, president of the Jialing Group motorcycle manufacturing company, criticized the widespread motorcycle ban policy for hindering urbanization and communication between rural and urban areas in China. He argued that population density was just as high in Tokyo and Taipei, yet neither of these cities had banned motorcycles [104]. Zuo Zongsheng, also a member of the national CPPCC and president of another motorcycle manufacturing company (Zongsheng Group) submitted a formal proposal called “Lifting the Motorcycle Ban Policy in Cities” to the 2009 CPPCC *lianghui*. Zuo argued that the ban violated several laws including the Anti-Monopoly Law, the Anti-Unfair Competition Law, the Administration Permission Law, and the Consumers' Rights and Interests Protection Law. Zuo further argued that the ban put restrictions on the urban market, which violated the Chinese government's promise to the World Trade Organization that it would protect a free market. Zuo proposed that the cities which had adopted the motorcycle ban should lift it and reconsider having a policy favors the use of cars over motorcycles [105].

The policy was also debated at provincial *lianghui*. At the 2007 Guangdong *lianghui*, a member of the Guangdong Provincial People's Congress, Sun Yuling, contrasted the “seven sins” of the motorcycle ban policy with the “seven sins” of motorcycles that had been itemized by the Guangzhou government. She stated that the ban created an unjust distribution of public resources since it forced motorcycles to give way to cars, which lacked legal justification. Second, the ban caused inconvenience and deprived the urban poor and migrant workers of one way of making a living. Third, the ban did not suit China's *guoqing* (“national situation”) and violated the spirit of building a conservation-oriented society as advocated by the central government. Fourth, motorcycles were prevented from being used as part of the urban transportation system. Fifth, the ban increased the price of labour in Guangdong while decreasing the province's economic competitive power. Sixth, the ban did not solve the root causes of motorcycle snatch theft. And last, the ban could severely damage Guangdong's motorcycle industry [106].

Although criticisms from members of *lianghui* have not changed the motorcycle policy in the Pearl River Delta region, they have certainly influenced how the policy was promoted and implemented.

4. Divided interested groups: the anti-motorcycle ban league

As noted by Sun Yuling above, banning motorcycles harmed the interests of China's motorcycle industry. Facing the expanding motorcycle ban policy in cities, the motorcycle industry started planning an "anti-motorcycle ban conference" in May 2004. The Chongqing Modern Motorcycle Research Institute and the Economic and Technological Information Network for All China Motorcycle Industry were the organizers. They planned to invite main motorcycle manufacturers, motorcycle sales companies, experts, lawyers, consumer associations, consumers, and mass media to discuss how to fight the motorcycle ban. They argued that there were no motorcycle bans in any developed or developing countries outside China and that even in China, there was no law or regulation that legitimized banning the use of motorcycles. The motorcycle ban policy violated the Consumers' Rights and Interests Protection Law and the Administrative Permission Law. They further argued that the ban policy violated the companies' rights to develop the motorcycle industry and the consumption rights of ordinary citizens. The organizers planned to sue local governments such as Guangzhou for implementing the ban [107]. More than 20 motorcycle companies were expected send representatives to the anti-motorcycle ban conference scheduled for 2 July 2004.

As the date of the conference drew close, many motorcycle industry leaders who had promised to attend came under political pressure not to participate. Some of them decided only to support the conference behind the scenes. As one president from a big joint venture motorcycle company in Guangzhou said, "I am appointed by the government, how can I oppose the government motorcycle ban policy?" Private motorcycle companies also came under political pressure. The president of the Chongqing Lifan Motorcycle Company remarked that "I really support this conference from the bottom of my heart, but I cannot afford to offend [the government]" [108]. The anti-motorcycle ban conference ended up being cancelled due to political pressure. Nevertheless, members of the motorcycle industry found ways to voice their opposition to the policy.

5. Violent protest from desperate victims

Since the motorcycle ban most severely harmed the interests of motorcycle taxi drivers, some of them resorted to violent protest. Some committed violence against themselves through self-immolation, but others targeted innocent people to take revenge against society. Some of their protests turned into confrontations with police that even swelled into riots challenging the legitimacy of the government.

After Guangzhou banned motorcycles, some former motorcycle taxi drivers began using bicycles, tricycles, or motorcycles designed for disabled people to transport their clients. These taxis were also deemed illegal by the local government. In 2007, a migrant worker set himself on fire to protest the police having confiscated his third tricycle within a short period of time. The driver was seriously injured, with 70 % of his body burned [109]. In 2012, another self-immolation case occurred inside a police station when a driver protested the police's confiscation of his motorcycle. The protester died and one police officer was heavily injured [110].

Other desperate motorcycle taxi drivers attacked innocent people. In Zhuhai in 2008, a migrant worker whose motorcycle had been confiscated by the police drove a heavy truck into a crowded schoolyard, killing five people (including four students) and injuring twenty others [111, 112]. More often, the police are targeted for violence. In April 2007 in Guangzhou, three traffic policemen were attacked and hospitalized while they were checking for illegal motorcycles [113]. In Shenzhen Bao'an in June 2007, another police officer who was part of a team confiscating illegal motorcycles was attacked and injured [114]. There were 25 cases of assault on Shenzhen traffic police between January and October 2006, with 23 policemen injured. In three cases, more than ten people were involved in the attacks on officers [115].

Occasionally such violent resistance has escalated into rioting. As mentioned earlier in this paper, a riot broke out in Shenzhen in 2008 after a migrant motorcycle taxi driver, Li Guochao, died from a crash on his motorcycle while fleeing capture by police. Angry migrant workers took the victim's body to the police station. Up to 2,000 people gathered there and as many as 400 people threw stones at the police station and set several police cars alight [116, 117]. Another big riot occurred the same year in Huizhou, another city in the Pearl River Delta, after a motorcycle taxi driver was beaten to death for refusing to pay a fine (or "protection fee" in migrant workers' words) to security guards [118, 119].

These extreme expressions of migrant workers' concerns pressed local governments to soften their approach to law enforcement, such as by setting up grace periods. While these protests have not led to the policy itself being changed, they have affected police practice and contributed to a soft-authoritarian policing style in the Pearl River Delta.

Concluding remarks

This study aims to enrich the small but growing literature on democratic policing by bringing Chinese policing into the debate. Scholars have characterized police forces as either authoritarian or democratic in accordance with the nature of the political regime within which they function. Policing in the United States and most Western democracies have been regarded as democratic; policing in authoritarian or transitional countries is usually characterized as non- or quasi-democratic [8: 48]. If the nature of a police force reflects the basic character of a political regime [120: 11], then a study of policing in China should provide a window on the current nature of the Chinese Party-state.

Based on my analysis of policing strategies in the Pearl River Delta, I argue that policing in transitional China is neither completely authoritarian nor democratic, but qualifies as soft-authoritarian. In a case study of motorcycle banning as a crime prevention strategy in three cities (Guangzhou, Shenzhen, and Dongguan) of the Pearl River Delta, I explored hard and soft approaches to law enforcement. The more hard-line methods included aggressive confiscation and destruction of motorcycles and making irrelevant parties socially and criminally responsible for policy violators. Softer strategies of persuasion included propaganda, mobilizing the masses, policy consultations, attempts to change legislation, paying off violators, and showing leniency.

Given the combination of hard and soft policing strategies, I argued that Chinese policing today is soft-authoritarian. In his research on democratic policing in Western

European, Liang [121] argued that it is through citizen resistance and parallel and counter police forces that a restrained democratic form of policing is sustained. Similarly, changing state-society relations in China today permits increasing resistance to governmental policies and contributes to the rise in a soft-authoritarian approach to policing.

References

1. Pang, X. (2011). Socialist system of laws with Chinese characteristics enriches world's legislative framework. *Xinhua*, http://www.gov.cn/english/2011-03/10/content_1821584.htm, accessed 14 August 2013.
2. Lee, C. K. (2007). *Against the law: labor protests in China's rustbelt and sunbelt*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
3. Liu, S. (2011). Lawyers, state officials and significant others: symbiotic exchange in the Chinese legal services market. *The China Quarterly*, 206, 276–293.
4. Bakken, B. (2005). Introduction: crime, control, and modernity in China. In B. Bakken (Ed.), *Crime, punishment, and policing in China* (pp. 1–26). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
5. Dutton, M. (2005). *Policing Chinese politics: A history*. Durham: Duke University Press.
6. Sung, H.-E. (2006). Police effectiveness and democracy: shape and direction of the relationship. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 29(2), 347–367.
7. Bayley, D. (2001). *Democratizing the police abroad: What to do and how to do it*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, US Department of Justice.
8. Manning, P. K. (2010). *Democratic policing in a changing world*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.
9. Zernova, M. (2012). The public image of the contemporary Russian police: Impact of personal experiences of policing, wider social implications and the potential for change. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 35(2), 216–230.
10. Solomon, P. H. (2005). The reform of policing in the Russian Federation. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 38(2), 230–240.
11. Moon, B. (2004). The politicization of police in South Korea: a critical review. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 27(1), 128–136.
12. Ivkovic, S. K., & Kang, W. (2012). Police integrity in South Korea. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 35(1), 76–103.
13. Benke, M. (2001). Policing in transition countries compared with standards in the European Union: Hungary—where dreams are not fulfilled. In A. Kadar (Ed.), *Police in transition: Essays on the police forces in transition countries* (pp. 89–102). Budapest: Central European University Press.
14. Harasymiw, B. (2003). Policing, democratization and political leadership in postcommunist Ukraine. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 36(2), 319–340.
15. Jiao, A. Y. (2007). *The police in Hong Kong: A contemporary view*. Lanham: University Press of America.
16. International Monetary Fund. (2011). World economic outlook: Tensions from the two-speed recovery: Unemployment, commodities, and capital flows. <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2011/01/pdf/text.pdf>, accessed 29 July 2011.
17. Nathan, A. J. (2003). Authoritarian Resilience. *Journal of Democracy*, 14(1), 6–17.
18. Heilmann, S., & Perry, E. J. (2011). *Mao's invisible hand: The political foundations of adaptive governance in China*. Boston: Harvard University Asia Center.
19. Burns, J. (1999). The People's Republic of China at fifty-national political reform. *The China Quarterly*, 159, 580–594.
20. Yan, X. (2011). Regime inclusion and the resilience of authoritarianism: local people's political consultative conference in post-mao Chinese politics. *The China Journal*, 66, 53–75.
21. Yan, X. (2012). "To Get Rich Is Not Only Glorious": economic reform and the new entrepreneurial party secretaries. *The China Quarterly*, 210, 335–354.
22. Dickson, B. (2000). Cooptation and corporatism in China-The logic of party adaptation. *Political Science Quarterly*, 115(4), 517–540.
23. Pei, M. (2000). China's evolution toward soft authoritarianism. In E. Friedman & B. L. McCormick (Eds.), *What if China doesn't democratize? Implications for war and peace* (pp. 75–81). Armonk: ME Sharpe.

24. Kurlantzick, J., & Link, P. (2009). China: Resilient, sophisticated authoritarianism. In RFERL (Ed.), *Undermining democracy* (pp. 13–28). Washington, DC: Freedom House; Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty; Radio Free Asia.
25. Wong, K. C. (2009). *Chinese policing: History and reform*. New York: Peter Lang.
26. Wong, K. C. (2002). Policing in the People's Republic of China: the road to reform in the 1990s. *The British Journal of Criminology*, 42(2), 281–316.
27. Wong, K. C. (2004). Govern police by law (yifa zhijing) in China. *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, 37(4), 90–106.
28. Tanner, H. M. (1999). *Strike hard!: Anti-crime campaigns and Chinese criminal justice, 1979–1985*. Ithaca: East Asia Program, Cornell University.
29. Dutton, M. (2000). Strike hard! Anti-crime campaigns and Chinese criminal justice, 1979–1985. *The China Quarterly*, 162, 575–577.
30. Trevaskes, S. (2010). *Policing serious crime in China: From 'strike hard' to 'kill fewer'*. London: Routledge.
31. Trevaskes, S. (2003). Public sentencing rallies in China: the symbolizing of punishment and justice in a socialist state. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 39(4), 359–382.
32. Xu, J. (2012). Drive-away policing and situational crime prevention in China: an analysis of motorcycle ban (jinmo) policy in Guangzhou. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 56(2), 239–264.
33. Zhong, L. Y., & Broadhurst, R. G. (2007). Building little safe and civilized communities: community crime prevention with Chinese characteristics. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 51(1), 52–67.
34. Zhong, L. Y. (2009). *Communities, crime and social capital in contemporary China*. Cullompton: Willan.
35. Xu, J. (2009). The robbery of motorcycle taxi drivers in China: a lifestyle/routine activity perspective and beyond. *The British Journal of Criminology*, 49(4), 491–512.
36. Xu, J. (2010). Motorcycle taxi drivers and motorcycle ban policy in the Pearl River Delta. *PhD Dissertation, the University of Hong Kong*.
37. Xu, J., Laidler, K. J., & Lee, M. (2013). Doing criminological ethnography in China: opportunities and challenges. *Theoretical Criminology*, 17(2), 271–279.
38. Xu, J. (2013). Police accountability and the commodification of policing in China: a study of police/business posters in Guangzhou. *The British Journal of Criminology*. doi:10.1093/bjc/azt038.
39. Tan, Y. (2004). Guangzhou sheqing minyi yanjiu zhongxin diaocha xianshi: jin liangcheng shimin manyi zhian zhuangkuang pianpi nejie , gongjiao chezhan anquangan zuidi. (A survey conducted by Guangzhou Public Opinion Research Centre reveals: only 20 % citizens are satisfactory with public order. Lowest sense of safety in remote lane, bus station.). *Nanfang ribao(Nanfang Daily)*, November 24: C01.
40. Fang, J. (2007). shiwan moge chulu mimang (Little hope for 100,000 motorcycle taxi drivers). *Dagong Bao (Ta Kung Pao)*, December 28:A07.
41. Chan, K. W., & Buckingham, W. (2008). Is China abolishing the Hukou system? *The China Quarterly*, 195, 582–606.
42. Cheng, T., & Selden, M. (1994). The origins and social consequences of China's hukou system. *The China Quarterly*, 139, 644–688.
43. Ma, Y., Zhou, F. and Han, R. (2009). Pinghu jiedao zhian zongzhi chuxian zhanguo (Pinghu Street public security comprehensive management attains preliminary achievement). *Shenzhen Tequ Bao (Shenzhen Special Zone News)*, March 4: A12.
44. Guo, W. and Yan, H. (2009). Jinmo shouri nan mi motuoche zongying (Motorcycles can hardly be found on the first day of ban). *Nanfang Ribao (South China Daily)*, April 2: C02.
45. Chen, X. and Jiao, X. (2007). Tejing chiqiang cha motuo (Special police check motorcycles with guns). *Guangzhou Ribao (Guangzhou Daily)*, March 10: A05.
46. Chen, J., Jiao, X. and Zhou, B. (2007). Bianyi xia liao gongjiao che zhi pu dakezi (Plainclothes police run to motorcycle taxi drivers after getting off bus). *Nanfang Doushi Bao (Southern Metropolis Daily)*, June 21: A36.
47. Chen, J. and Huang, H. (2007). Sanbai jiaojing jin cun qinmo (300 traffic policemen search motorcycles in urban village). *Nanfang Doushi Bao (South China Metropolis)*, March 21: A36.
48. Ge, F. and Gong, X. (2003). Shenzhen xiaohui 4 wan hei mo (Shenzhen demolishes 40,000 illegal motorcycles). *Xianggang Shangbao (Hong Kong Commercial Daily)*, December 24: B08.
49. Pan, L. (2007). Baoan jingfang gongkai xiaohui weifa cheliang (Baoan police demolishes illegal vehicles in public). *Shenzhen Tequ Bao (Shenzhen Special Zone News)*, September 7: Shenzhen Police.

50. Wen, H., Wang, D. and Cao, T. (2008). Xiaohui feifa motuoche (Demolishing illegal motorcycles). *Shenzhen Wanbao (Shenzhen Evening News)*, November 19: zonghe xinwen.
51. Tao, Q. (2008). Jinnian gong xiaohui hei mo 2.5 wan yu liang, longgang lumian qiangduo anjian shao jin liu cheng (25,000 motorcycles are demolished this year and Longgang street snatch theft cases decline 60 %) *Nanfang Ribao (South China Daily)*, July 31: C04.
52. Zhu, C. and Li, Y. (2008). Shimin: Biancheng feitie tai kexi (Citizens: it is wasteful to demolish motorcycles). *Yangcheng Wanbao (quanguo ban) (Yangcheng Evening News)*, September 19: zonghe yaowen.
53. Li, C. (2006). You zhan jin mo che zhu ti tong kang you (Gas stations ban motorcycles and users take gasoline back home with barrels). *Nanfang Doushi Bao (Southern Metropolis Daily)*, November 1: A43.
54. Reader. (2008). Jinmo chache jingyong tieqian jiansuo? (Can one cut locks with iron cissors when searching motorcycles). *Nanfang Ribao (South China Daily)*, January 7: A12.
55. Yang, T. (2009). Jingfang taowo jinmo qiaomen tuozou motuo (The police break into doors to confiscate motorcycles). *Nanfang Doushi Bao (Southern Metropolis Daily)*, March 13: A23.
56. Li, S., Li, C. and Cai, Z. (2007). Fanmang luduan ban xiaoshi cai landao deshi (Waiting half an hour for a taxi in busy roads). *Guangzhou Ribao (Guangzhou Daily)*, September 13: Dongguan News.
57. Huang, L., Xu, J. and Chen, Z. (2008). Tou kai mode feifa yingyun yilv ting fa bannian fuli (Welfare will be suspended for half a year for driving illegal motorcycle taxi). *Yangcheng Wanbao (Dongguan) (Yangcheng Evening News)*, June 17: A18.
58. Li, S. (2008). Shiming jubao modi yiliang jiangli 200 yuan (Infroming one motorcycle taxi with true name will be rewarded 200 yuan) *Guangzhou Ribao (Guangzhou Daily)*, August 14: A31.
59. Fukuyama, F. (1992). Asia's soft authoritarian alternative. *New Perspectives Quarterly*, 9(2), 60–61.
60. He, Q. (2006). *Wu suo zhongguo: zhongguo da lu kong zhi mei ti ce lue da jie mi (Fog surrounding China: a study of controlling tactics of media in mainland China)*. Taibei: Li ming wen hua shi ye gu fen you xian gong si.
61. Yan, X. and Sun, C. (2004). Motuoche fen sanbu xianxing sannian hou xiaoshi (Motorcycle will disappear from the road three years later after three-step restrictions). *Yangcheng Wanbao (quanguo ban) (Yangcheng Evening News)*, January 15: Specail Report.
62. Rijng. (2004). Jin motuoche you biyao (It is necessary to ban motorcycles). *Yangcheng Wanbao (quanguo ban) (Yangcheng Evening News)*, January 25: sheqing minyi.
63. Bi, S. and Yang, Y. (2004). Guangzhou xian mo xiaoguo mingxian (Motorcycle ban has its obvious effects in Guangzhou) *Nanfang Ribao (Nan Fang Daily)*, May 2: 02.
64. Hou, Y. (2007). Guangzhou "liangqiang" jiang wucheng, xingao po wanzong (Robbery and snatch theft cases decreased 50 % in Guangzhou. 10,000 criminals cases were cleared up). *Yangcheng Wanbao (Quanguo Ban) (Yangcheng Evening News)*, April 6: 01.
65. Hu, D. (2007). Shenzhen shehui zhan chixu haozhuan (Shenzhen public security continues becoming better). *Shenzhen Techu Bao (Shenzhen Special Zone News)*, June 23: A01.
66. Liu, Z., et al. (2007). Guangdong zhi'an tansuo yanyi hao mao lilun (Guangdong explores "good cat" theory for public security). *Nanfang Ribao (Fan Fang Daily)*, May 10: A07.
67. Zhao, G., Zhou, F. and Wu, Y. (2007). Liang wan shimin qianming ju cheng hei mo (20,000 citizens sign for boycotting illegal motorcycle taxis). *Shenzhen Wanbao (Shenzhen Evening News)*, June 18: A06.
68. Liu, J. and Tang, J. (2007). Guancheng qian ren shangjie xuanchuan zhimo jin dian (Thousands of people promote banning motorcycles and electric bicycles on street in Guancheng). *Xinxi Shibao (Information News)*, August 7: zonghe xinwen.
69. Zhu, C. and Wang, H. (2009). Shiqu zhongxin qu jin qi quantianhou jinmo (Banning motorcycles in central city from today on). *Yangcheng Wanbao (Dongguan) (Yangcheng Evening News)*, April 1: A22.
70. Li, W. (2007). Yi zhi jiao ta zai motuo shang de chengshi yuanqu (The city running on motorcycles says farell to motorcycles). *Nanfang Doushi Bao (Southern Metropolis Daily)*, September 6: A32.
71. Kou, J. (2007). Dongguan shuji shangjie dudao zhimo (Dongguan Party Sectary supervises banning motorcycle on street). *Nanfang Doushi Bao (Southern Metropolis Daily)*, September 2: A07.
72. Ou, Y. (2009). 32 ge zhen jie tongyi xingdong, shizhen lingdao shangjie gongquan jinmo (32 towns and streets hold united action and leaders from city and towns go to street promoting motorcycle ban policy). *Nanfang Ribao (South China Daily)*, January 6: C01.
73. Li, T. (2009). 32 zhen qu tongyi xingdong shangjie gongquan jinmo pai 10 wan fen "quan gao shu" (32 towns and streets hold united action and 100,000 "persuation letter" are given out). *Guangzhou Ribao (Guangzhou Daily)*, January 6: A19.

74. Feng, L. (2006). Shenzhen baoan qu jinmo ni ding xingui gongwuyuan qi motuo dangji zhengji chufen (Shenzhen Baoan makes new regulation that civil servants will be punished by the Party and government disciplines for using motorcycles). *Nanfang Doushi Bao (Southern Metropolis Daily)*, December 6: A06.
75. Zonghe. (2003). Jinmo tingzhenghui guandian zhenfeng xiangdui (Opinions conflict in banning motorcycle hearing). *Nanfang Doushi Bao (Southern Metropolis Daily)*, September 10: A07.
76. Jiang, Q. and Zhou, N. (2004). Shenzhen renda changweihui zhongzhi jin mo tiaoli shenyi (Zhenzhen Standing Committee of People's Congress suspends the review of motorcycle ban regulation) *Nanfang Ribao (South China Daily)*, September 8: A04.
77. Shenzhen Public Security Bureau. (2007). Shenzhen shi gonganju 2007 niandu zeren mubiao baipishu (Shenzhen Public Security Bureau 2007 whitebook of work goal). *Shenzhen Tequ Bao (Shenzhen Special Zone News)*, April 26: A16.
78. Guo, W. and Liu, J. (2009). Fasheng dang qishi shixing you qili (It is right time to vice out and it will benefit to have a try). *Nanfang Ribao (South China Daily)*, February 17: C01.
79. He, X. (2007). 2007 shehui jingji shi jianjian guanhu minsheng (2007 social and economic issues regarding people's life). *Xinxi Shibao (Information News)*, January 1: A06.
80. Luo, Y. and Fang, G. (2009). Baofei motuoche song 200 yuan gongjiao IC ka (200 yuan bus IC card will be rewarded for scrapping motorcycles). *Nanfang Doushi Bao (Southern Metropolis Daily)*, March 24: A07.
81. Ruiyuan. (2008). Jiashi motuoche zoutou wulu, canju ziyou shenceng yuanyin (No ways out motorcycles and tradey has deep reasons). *Nanfang Doushi Bao (Southern Metropolis Daily)*, November 9: A02.
82. Deng, Y. (2006). Guangzhou jinmo shiye ren yuan youxian jiu ye (Those who lose jobs because of motorcycle ban policy will be given priority in arranging jobs in Guangzhou). *Renmin Ribao (People's Daily)*, October 30: 06.
83. Jiang, Y. (2006). Peihe jinmo guangzhou shi laodongju dui jinmo sheji ren yuan kaizhan jiu ye yuanzhu (Guangzhou Labour Bureau helps those who lose jobs because of motorcycle ban policy). *Guangzhou Ribao (Guangzhou Daily)*, December 8: A14.
84. Zhou, J. and Liu, M. (2006). Qiye anzhi benshi motuozi you butie (Companies can get stipends for hiring local motorcycle taxi drivers). *Xin kuai bao (New Express Daily)*, December 1: 01.
85. Zhang, Y., Wang, H. and Yang, Y. (2006). Yuexin qian yuan de huo dakezai mei xingqu (Motorcycle taxi drivers show no interest in jobs with monthly salary 1,000 yuan). *Xinxi Shibao (Information News)*, November 9: zonghe xinwen.
86. Liu, Y., Tian, Y. and Wang, C. (2007). Modi si ji zhuanhang butie 5000 yuan (Motorcycle taxi drivers will get 5,000 yuan stipend for changing jobs). *xinxi Shibao (Information News)*, August 27: zonghe xinwen.
87. Ou, Y. (2008). Zhongxin chengqu mingnian quantian jinmo (Motorcycles will be banned in central city all day long next year). *Nanfang Ribao (South China Daily)*, November 20: C01.
88. Cai, Y. (2008). Local governments and the suppression of popular resistance in China. *The China Quarterly*, 193, 24–42.
89. Cai, Y. (2010). *Collective resistance in China: Why popular protests succeed or fail*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
90. Chen, S., Dai, B. and Chen, X. (2005). Jianshe jieyue xing shehui ying quxiao bufen chengshi dui motuoche, xiao pailiang qiche de qishi xing cuoshi (The discriminative policy against motorcycle and smaller motorized vehicles should be revoked in building a conservation-oriented society). *moteche xinxi (motorcycle information)*, 23, 5–12.
91. Hong, K. (2005). San ming daxuesheng shangshu guowuyuan fandui shuangjin, fagaiwei huifu (The National Development and Reform Commission replied to three university students' reporting on against two bans). *zhongguo qingnianbao (China Youth Daily)*, <http://politics.people.com.cn/GB/1026/3807849.html>, accessed 10 January 2010.
92. O'Brien, K. J., & Li, L. (2004). Suing the local state: administrative litigation in rural China. *The China Journal*, 51, 75–96.
93. Li, L. (2010). Rights consciousness and rules consciousness in contemporary China. *The China Journal*, 64, 47–68.
94. Lee, C. K. (2010). Pathways of labor activism. In E. J. Perry & M. Selden (Eds.), *Chinese society: Change, conflict and resistance* (pp. 57–79). London: Routledge.
95. Fu, H., & Cullen, R. (2008). Weiquan (rights protection) lawering in an authoritarian state: building a culture of public-interest lawyering. *The China Journal*, 59, 111–127.
96. Fu, H., & Cullen, R. (2011). Climbing the Weiquan Ladder: a radicalizing process for rights-protection lawyers. *The China Quarterly*, 205, 40–59.

97. National Bureau of Statistics of China.(2010). *China Statistical Yearbook 2010*. Beijing: National Bureau of Statistics of China, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/statisticaldata/yearlydata/#>, accessed 17 August 2013.
98. Yang, T. (2009). Taowo jinmo an guoqu yizhou, san zuke dengdai diaocha jieguo, nv zuke xiang baoan fenju shenqing xingzheng fuyi (Three tenants waiting for the investigation result after one week of “breaking into house” case, the female tenant has applied to Baoan police bureau for administrative review). *Nanfang Doushi Bao (Southern Metropolis Daily)*, March 19: A05.
99. Huang, W. (2008). Jintian wo jiang guangzhou jiaojing bumen gaoshang liao fating (I sue Guangzhou traffic police today). <http://huangwenming.blshe.com/post/5652/147007>,<http://huangwenming.blshe.com/post/5652/147010>, accessed 10 January 2010.
100. O’Brien, K. (2009). Local people’s congresses and governing China. *The China Journal*, 61, 131–141.
101. Xia, M. (2008). *The People’s congresses and governance in China: Toward a network mode of governance*. London: Routledge.
102. Cho, Y. N. (2009). *Local people’s congresses in China: Development and transition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
103. Cho, Y. N. (2002). From “Rubber Stamps” to “Iron Stamps”: the emergence of Chinese local people’s congresses as supervisory powerhouses. *The China Quarterly*, 171, 724–740.
104. Shang, Z. (2003). Quanguo zhengxie weiyuan, zhongguo jialing jituan dongshichang heshibin zhichu chengshi jinmo buliyu chengshihua jianshe (CPPCC member, the president of Jialing Group pointed it out that banning motorcycles hindered urbanization). *zhongguo jinji shibao (China Economical Daily)*, March 10: 02.
105. Zuo, Z. (2009). Guanyu jiechu chengshi jinmo de ti’an (The proposal for the lift of motorcycle ban policy in cities). *Motuo Xixi (Motorcycle Informations)*, 5, 27–29.
106. Tian, S. and Zhang, D. (2007). Zhong xiao chengshi jinmo shi genfeng (Motorcycle ban policies in medium and small cities are blindly following others). *Nanfang Doushi Bao (Southern Metropolis Daily)*, February 2: A18.
107. Bai, Y. (2004). Motuoche hangye yunnian “zaofan” zhuliu qiye jiang lia he fadong fandui chengshi jinmo yundong (Motorcycle industry plans to “rebel” and main manufactures will launch the campaign of against motorcycle ban policy). *zhonghua gongshang shibao (China Business Times)*, May 10: 01.
108. Wu, C. and Wu, X. (2004). Fan jinmo dahui yanqi xigu, motuoche hangye jiannan shengcun (Anti-motorcycle ban conference fails and motorcycle industry tries to survive). *Nanfang zhoumo (South Weekend)*, July 8, <http://finance.sina.com.cn/roll/20040708/1617858941.shtml>, accessed 17 August 2013.
109. Chen, L. and Liu, J. (2007). Poyou zifen shijian yu jiafengzhong de sanlunche buluo (Self-burning affair and three-wheel cart drivers in dilemma). *Nanfang Doushi Bao (Southern Metropolis Daily)*, July 1: A18
110. Chen, J. (2012). Mo tuo che bei yi fa cha kou nan zi zi fen shen wang (Motorcycle was detained according to law, a man died from self-immolation). *Nanfang Daily (Guangzhou)*, August 22: GC06.
111. Chen, H. and Hu, Y. (2008). Truck rage man was ‘desperate’. *China Daily*, November 7, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2008-11/07/content_7182315.htm, accessed 17 August 2013.
112. Zhang, H. and Zhang, P. (2008). Zhuhai yi nitou che chongjin xuexiao zhi 4 si 20 shang (A truck bumped into school causing 4 deaths and 20 wounds). *Xinxi shibao (Information Times)*, November 6: zonghe xinwen.
113. Chen, X. and Jiao, X. (2007). Weifa shou chuli juzhong ou jiaojing, “4-19” xijing shijian zhong 3 ming mingjing shoushang (Attacking traffic police when (they were) punished for illegal activity, three polices were injured in “4.19” attacking policing incident.). *Guangzhou Ribao (Guangzhou Daily)*, April 21: A05.
114. Zheng, Y., Chen, G. and Pan, L. (2007). Motuo che zhu baoli kangfa beiju (Motorcycle owner was detained for violent resistance). *jingbao (Daily Sunshine)*, June 20:A12.
115. Zhu, Q., et al. (2006). Shenzhen jiaojing huo dai “luyin bi” zhifa (Shenzhen traffic police might carry “digital record pen” on duty). *Nanfang Doushi Bao (Southern Metropolis Daily)*, October 19: A10.
116. Li, X. (2008). Fansi Shenzhen weidu jingju shijian de qiyin (Reflection on reasons of attacking police bureau incident in Shenzhen). *Beijing qingniao bao (Beijing Youth Daily)*, November 9: meir pinglun.
117. Lai, J. (2008). 13 arrested for attacking Bao’an cops. *Shenzhen Daily*, November 28:03.

118. Tam, F. (2008). Hundreds riot over suspicious death of taxi driver. *South China Morning Post*, 19 July 2008.
119. He, H. (2008). Motorcycle-taxi ban driving discontent. *South China Morning Post*, July 19.
120. Bayley, D. (1969). *The police and political development in India*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
121. Liang, H.-h. (1992). *The rise of modern police and the European state system from Metternich to the Second World War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.