Roles of Chinese Police Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract This article provides an overview of frontier issues of policing in China by examining the roles of police during the pandemic. It starts with a short introduction to the challenges and overall performance of China in keeping social order in the context of coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Then, it outlines four major missions the Chinese police have pursued, each with a sketch of what has been done and how law enforcement officials have managed to achieve their goals. It follows with a further insight into their strategies in social control in connection with the latest reforms on policing. Finally, it concludes briefly with features of Chinese policing.

Policing under an extreme circumstance

Since December 2019, the coronavirus swept the world and is still running rampant in some countries. As the first country to combat COVID-19, China took strict measures to lockdown cities and enforces quarantines. Wuhan, the capital city of Hubei Province with a population of over 11 million, was believed to be the possible origin of outbreak in China, announced lockdown on 23 January 2020 and called off on 8 April. The lockdown lasted for 76 days, during which public places were nearly all closed and people were ordered to stay at home to restrict the spread of the virus. Human interactions have been greatly influenced by the pandemic in every aspect. To keep order in such an extreme situation is without doubt hard work for law enforcement. As social isolation may lead to depression, anxiety, and anger, there would be high risks of riots, crimes, and conflicts (Goldsworthy and Lincoln, 2020). As the pandemic goes on, order maintenance has become of a common challenge for police around the globe (Ashby, 2020b; Biswas and Sultana, 2020; Eligon and MacFarquhar, 2020).

Under the holistic arrangement of the Chinese central government, the police at all levels took measures to stabilize the society (China Daily, Tsinghua University & Peking Union Medical College, 2020). Throughout the national

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1 https://global.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202004/08/WS5e8d06fca310aeaeed5099e.html (accessed 30 May 2020).
quarantine, no large scale riots or conflicts have been reported. As of this writing, China has basically contained the spread of the COVID-19 and is taking steps to restore production and living order. The achievement in keeping social order during this pandemic results from strict and effective social control in China, which should be dependent on a number of factors, such as the relationship with the community (Stott et al., 2020), the ability to suppress or prevent riots (Reicher and Stott, 2020), or in a more abstract concept, the way of exercising police power. These issues have been core topics of modern policing. The existing literature has rendered some useful information about policing in China, such as community policing (Wong, 2001; Zhong, 2009) and police reforms (Wong, 2011). Studies have also empirically examined police legitimacy and citizen cooperation (Sun et al., 2018), and demonstrated how officers would perceive their roles (Sun et al., 2009; Cuvelier et al., 2015; Chen, 2016). However, more aspects of Chinese policing concerning how the police achieve social control especially under the changing social context remained underresearched in the English academic world (see Scoggins, 2018). In some way, the worldwide pandemic provides an opportunity to observe Chinese policing. The performance of police during the pandemic gives a glimpse of how they function and are structured.

Enforcing the lockdown and quarantine

Before the large outbreak in Wuhan, a cluster of pneumonia cases of unknown cause had been reported but failed to attract enough public attention. It took a while for the government to awake to the gravity of the situation. Li Wenliang, the whistleblower who warned his friends and families of what he referred to as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), was even reprimanded for spreading rumours by the local police officers. On 20 January, the Epidemic Prevention and Control Headquarter of Wuhan was established. Two days later, the Hubei provincial authority officially launched the Second-level Response to major public health emergency and then upgraded it to the First-level Response 2 days later. By January 29, all the other 30 provinces followed the response. According to the Chinese National Emergency Plan for Public Health Emergencies, which was approved by the State Council in 2006, the First-level Response indicates the most critical situation or a state of war. The Chinese State Council would be directly in charge of the deployment of logistics and specialists. Under the Plan, the government could enforce lockdown and block main streams of large cities in the first-level response.

In order to cut down the further spread of disease, the government took rigorous measures to

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2 One exception is an incident of conflict between police from Jiangxi Province and Hubei Province on 27 March. It was claimed by witnesses that police in the city of Jiujiang had set up a blockade on the bridge to stop people crossing from Hubei. The discrimination triggered large confrontation of both officers and crowds. However, the incident had been dealt with very soon. The officers from the two cities ended up with apologizing and shaking hands with each other the next day under intervention of their superiors. See https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/3077393/coronavirus-police-public-clash-border-reopens-between-hubei-and (accessed 30 May 2020).

3 https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-china-hubei/chinas-hubei-where-coronavirus-began-eases-lockdown-idUSKBN22D4YZ (accessed 30 May 2020).

4 http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202006/05/WS5ed9dfcfa31083d21251211.html (accessed 6 June 2020).

5 https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202003/19/WS5e735a89a3101282120880.html (accessed 28 May 2020).

6 https://medcitynews.com/2020/01/report-jj-pretty-confident-it-can-develop-coronavirus-vaccine-exec-says/30-provinces-launch-the-first-level-response-to-major-public-health-emergencies-in-china/ (accessed 30 May 2020).

7 https://www.scmp.com/news/china/society/article/3047499/china-coronavirus-spreads-all-two-34-provinces (accessed 30 May 2020).
control the flow of population. On 23 January, the Headquarter of Wuhan announced that all of the city’s public transportation would all be suspended, and the citizens should not leave Wuhan without special reasons. Although cities like Beijing and Guangzhou did not block the transportation passage, a large number of check stations were set up to monitor and record every passerby’s body temperature. All neighbourhoods in rural and urban areas across China implemented the mode of ‘closed-off management’ (封闭式管理). While other cities in Hubei province allowed residents shopping out once or twice a week for one household, residents in Wuhan were strictly restricted to stay at home with food and basic necessities delivered to every dwelling. All businesses were suspended with very few exceptions such as medical equipment manufacturing. People were required to wear face masks outdoors and in public places. The government also employed a most strict door-by-door screening policy to identify the infected, commanding that ‘Not a single one should be omitted.’ Once spotted with a fever, one would be transferred immediately to medical examination or isolation. It was reported that a gang of pyramid selling in Wuhan called the community service for help as they had run out of food in their residence; and a drug dealer wandering in Chongqing turned himself into the police because he had nowhere to hide outdoors. The police also identified and arrested numerous escaped criminal suspects.

As the lockdown and quarantine are highly mandatory, coercive measures are indispensable in execution. A remarkable personnel change symbolized the significance of police authority. On 13 February, the Secretaries (the first chair of the Communist Party Committee of its level) of both Hubei Province Committee and Wuhan Municipal Committee were replaced by two new leaders, both of whom had a working experience as a police chief. As scholars pointed out, the government and Communist Party would empower the public security chiefs by incorporating them into the leadership team, for concerns of regime stability. Since China’s social transition, the public security chiefs’ political position has been promoted and strengthened (Xie, 2013). For instance, local police chiefs commonly serve as deputy city mayors or deputy county executives. Frontline police officers also played an important role. Among the units that constituted each level of Epidemic Prevention and Control Headquarter, the law enforcement force, or Chinese public security authorities (公安机关), bear the main responsibility of maintaining social stability. The police undertook the task of guaranteeing the social order during the pandemic.

It is important to note that the police did not act as the sole or the dominant role in the above-mentioned measures. The police officers in China have been embedded in a network of local governance, known as the Grid-based Model (网格化治理) (Tang, 2020).

There were a variety of governmental, commercial, and social forces...
participating in enforcing the quarantine, including neighbourhood resident committee (NRC) staff (with governmental characters), the grid-workers (网格员, frontline agents hired by the NRCs), private security personnel (保安, hired by the property management organizations), organized volunteers, and community police officers (Ren, 2020). Their duties may vary from grid to grid, whereas a typical mode works in the pattern that local NRC staff and its grid-workers visit people’s dwellings, private security personnel and volunteers guard at the gate to check and record the outgoing residents’ body temperature, as well as to take the residents’ online deliveries to their doors. Chinese police officers might take part in these jobs, but only as subsidiary roles. The main tasks for the police officers have been settling conflicts when citizens refuse to obey various quarantine rules or accept medical treatments. The NRC staff, with bureaucratic hierarchy and accountability mechanisms of the government to ensure its function, undertakes most of the responsibilities. While different private and government organizations are relatively independent of each other, they worked collaboratively. The diversity of participating roles makes the grid governance both effective and flexible.

Therefore, the police have limited involvement in enforcing mandatory quarantine. Their use of force is rigidly reserved as the last resort. The non-coercive law enforcement of officers’ has been emphasized and re-emphasized by the Ministry of Public Security (公安部). It is the tight network of joint force, rather than the use of coercive power, that has achieved the stability of social order. The NRC workers and volunteers have more direct encounters with citizens, alleviating greatly confrontations between citizens and the police officers. Generally, the police in China have withdrawn their engagement on a range of public businesses in recent years, which, however, does not necessarily mean they get less control of the community. As will be revealed in later parts of this article, the police in China have other approaches in connecting with the community.

**Strike hard campaign on pandemic-related crimes**

The crime types and rates have significantly changed ever since the pandemic (Ashby, 2020a; Mohler et al., 2020). As for China, statistics show that a range of criminal charges, including traffic crimes, intentional injury, creating a disturbance, affray, rape, and robbery, declined rapidly since most people stayed home. In the meantime, several other forms of crimes surged (Zhou, 2020). For instance, rumours and frauds of all kinds could easily find their way, especially in cyber communities, as people were in urgent need of information. Besides, fake medical devices and equipment were manufactured due to large consumptions and the shortage of supplies. The government is aware of the fact that these crimes would induce serious panic and turbulence in time of the nationwide quarantine (Gradoñ, 2020), when the atmosphere of anger and depression caused by social isolation is gaining extra momentum. In response, the police have taken every effort to strike the pandemic-related crimes.

The criminal justice system in China reacted timely to the changes in crime rate. On 6 February, the Ministry of Public Security, jointly with the Supreme Procuratorate, the Supreme Court, and the Ministry of Justice, issued a notice that ordered hard strike on pandemic-related crimes.
crimes that would impact social stability. The Supreme Procuratorate and the Supreme Court also released 10 batches (so far as of the writing) of typical cases as guidance. It was reported that China’s procuratorates at all levels approved the arrest of 3,751 suspects and prosecuted 2,521 for criminal offenses related to the COVID-19 outbreak from February to April. Among all, the most common charges have been telecom fraud, price gouging, spreading rumours, manufacturing and selling fake medical equipment, as well as disrupting public services.

Special Units with focused missions were set up within the police departments to deal with these crimes speedily. For instance, the police departments are widely open to citizens’ reporting on rumour spreading. When getting a clue, the officers from Cyber Security units would trace the rumour back to its origin in an expeditious manner, followed by immediate investigation and either criminal charges or administrative punishment. Meanwhile, the police would make public the cases and publish authorized information as a deterrent through television, radio, government websites, and official accounts of various social networking services (SNS).

The quick response of police may be considered as a heritage of the ‘Strike Hard’ (yan da; 严打) of China, which was first initiated in the late 1970s when the reform and opening-up policy started and severe violent crimes stayed at a high level (Qu, 2005). The government and criminal justice system applied expedited investigation and trial processes and meted out strong punishment on the criminals, making the Strike Hard a household name. Even though the Strike Hard campaigns are often criticized by scholars from home and abroad as campaign style that had very limited impact on crime in the long run (Chen and Kurland, 2020) and could cause systematic social injustice (Yan, 2004), they have not been abolished but reserved a place in the current policing. The reason could be that these campaigns did serve other functions, such as raising people’s awareness of crime, gaining public support for crackdowns, and strengthening the fading moral boundary (Liang, 2005). This style of criminal justice with decades of practice has shaped the structure and mechanism of the policing in contemporary China. The government still adopt nationwide operations to deal with outstanding problems of a period, such as the ongoing operation of ‘Cracking Down Gang Crimes’ (Sao Hei Chu E; 扫黑除恶), a 3-year campaign that has been deployed since 2018 (Peng et al., 2020). Another example is the strike of wildlife-related crimes during the pandemic. As the coronavirus had been believed to originate from the bats, hunting and trading wildlife crimes were among the top concerns of the public, calling for the crack-down such trading to restore the public’s confidence in public health and social security. Therefore, the quick response within the Strike Hard has also been a move of gaining social support and restoring government legitimacy.

The special operations during the pandemic are obviously problem-oriented. Compared with measures that are designed to have a long-term effect, these operations aim at generating immediate effects on dealing with urgent issues, thus being an important component of policing in China.

Intelligence gathering and analysing

Information technology has greatly strengthened China’s capacity of fighting against the COVID-19 pandemic with modern characteristics. As the mayor of Wuhan introduced in a news conference, 5 million people fled the city Wuhan between 10 January and 23 January 2020. This was a
comparatively accurate number calculated based on big data technologies. Data companies such as Baidu also conducted analyses of the direction of the five million that have outflowed, showing that 60% ~ 70% people withdrew to other cities in Hubei Province and 30% ~ 40% people to other provinces and abroad. These statistics provided important references for decision-making in planning and implementing lockdown policies. Throughout the combat, China has made full use of intelligence of various accountable sources. In the early phase of the prevention, local governments retrieve information from the health, telecommunications, and transportation departments to identify individuals’ close contacts over a 14-day period for the purpose of epidemic prevention and control. In later phases of restoring order, Health Code Apps were developed (Shaw et al., 2020). These Apps require input of authentic personal identity and feedback with a QR code in a certain colour depending on the risk level computed from various types of background data. The Health Code system is built-in with three colours, as the colour green stands for the lowest risk, red the highest, and the yellow in between. People have to exhibit their QR code before entering public transportation and public places such as hospitals and hotels.

While the police are not the only stakeholder, they have played the leading role in providing and using intelligence. With professional staff and working mechanism, they are privileged in integrating the data from other departments and enterprises. The first Health Code App was developed jointly by Alibaba Group, Hangzhou Police Department, and other governmental departments (Zhang and Tang, 2020). The system was then widely adopted across China. Other police departments also came up with databases and predicting models to identify the infected. Handheld devices were designed and put into use to check individual identification and their history of contacts. The police in Shanghai city install a sensor box in the house door of people in quarantine and a camera in the corridor. When the door is opened without permission, the box would send alarm to the police station and the camera would capture snapshots as evidence.

The use of data and intelligence against the pandemic has been described as Smart Epidemic Prevention. Smart constructions, such as smart policing and smart cities have gained fair popularity in domestic governance in China. The ideal of smart policing is to include information of population, goods, events, places, and other elements in a model with which to predict what is about to happen. This intelligence-led style of governance is realized through a number of aspects. The government has devoted major effort in integrating information from other public administration affairs which could be used as basic data. The government has also applied real-name policies to telecommunication, mobile payment, public transport, express delivery, and other related activities, which lays the foundation for information gathering.

The application of big data was not a secret to the public. As Li Lanjuan, a top epidemic expert in China, stated in a telephone interview with Central

20https://news.cgtn.com/news/2020-01-27/5-million-people-left-Wuhan-before-the-lockdown-where-did-they-go-NACCu9witW/index.html (accessed 28 March 2020).
21https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202008/31/WS5f4c49c7a310675eafc56642.html (accessed 16 September 2020).
22https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202008/16/WS5f392226a3108348172609a5.html (accessed 16 September 2020).
23https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/15/asia/china-coronavirus-gr-code-intl-hnk/index.html (accessed 30 May 2020).
24http://k.sina.com.cn/article_6145283913_m16e49974902000zmvo.html?from=news&subch=ones (accessed 30 May 2020).
25http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2016-05/26/content_25470359.htm (accessed 30 May 2020).
26http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2017-08/30/content_31332906.htm (accessed 30 May 2020).
27https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202003/23/WS5e781d8ba310128172812c3.html (accessed 30 May 2020).
28https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201803/19/WS5aa5f381a3106e7dccc1427e0.html (accessed 30 May 2020).
Television, the big data made a significant contribution in tracking the infected. A noteworthy phenomenon is that the mass in China shows a high level of tolerance towards the intensive use of personal information. Although privacy matters would sometimes be brought up by legal scholars, it did not stop the expansion of information collecting. It is possible, as some would argue, that security concerns have an overwhelming priority over privacy for the Chinese public. As new technology is adopted in the name of safety, it has been generally accepted in the Chinese society and even won a fair amount of support. Meanwhile, it is also possible that the mass has not realized yet what the data owners were able to do with their personal information.

Social mobilization

Chinese people have demonstrated great power and passion in fighting the pandemic. People responded positively to the government’s calls. In the beginning of traffic control, villagers in Henan Province, a northern neighbour of Hubei, dug up big holes in the road as barriers to block access. Although this was stopped and declared illegal later by the Ministry of Public Security, it showed people’s willingness to participate in public affairs. While the lockdown and quarantine were initialized during the Spring Festival, the most important festival in Chinese societies when families would gather, people were generally persuaded into abandoning the traditional way of celebration and switching to sending wishes through texts. This has been a significant change in lifestyle of the mass.

The enthusiasm and cooperation of the public were a result of extensive social mobilization. It includes two aspects of effort. One is to raise public awareness. The police, together with other departments of the government took measures to conduct a persuasion campaign. A loudhailer was launched in every village, or in a patrol car in the urban areas and even drones in some cities, to make announcement all day long, urging people to stay home and inspiring them to stick together through the dark times. The other form is to enhance public engagement and rouse the mass to actions. The television stations repeatedly broadcast programmes of how doctors, nurses, and the police risk their lives to save the people. This mass campaigning on heroism gave wide appeal to all walks of life to take part in what had been called a battle. Material rewards, nevertheless, as well as spiritual encouragement are also incentives of their engagement. The government of Shanghai in a press conference on 17 February claimed that volunteers who have served for certain amount of time in the pandemic prevention should be awarded extra points under the social credit system, and they would be provided with an insurance up to 500 thousand yuan. A number of provinces adopted policies of adding marks to the children of frontline medical staff in the entrance examination to senior middle school.

The Fengqiao Experience (枫桥经验), local knowledge of social governance through social mobilization, is a heated topic in current China.

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29https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-health-surveillance/coronavirus-brings-chinas-surveillance-state-out-of-the-shadows-idUSKBN2011HO (accessed 30 March 2020).
30https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/10850498/villagers-china-spears-roadblock-stop-coronavirus/ (accessed 30 May 2020).
31https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2020/03/01/805760905/chinas-red-banners-take-on-coronavirus-even-mah-jong-gets-a-mention (accessed 30 May 2020).
32https://abcnews.go.com/International/coronavirus-china-deploys-drones-cameras-loudhailers-chastise-people/story?id=68746989 (accessed 15 April 2020).
33http://sh.sina.cn/news/2020-02-18/detail-iixmyqyz3718360.d.html?from=wap (accessed 30 May 2020).
34https://www.republicworld.com/world-news/rest-of-the-world-news/china-declares-bonus-points-for-kids-of-medical-professionals-in-hubei.html (accessed 30 May 2020).
and widely applied in the pandemic prevention.\(^{35}\)

Fengqiao is a town in Zhejiang Province. It earned a reputation in 1964 when Chairman Mao Zedong gave instructions on prompting its working experience that could be summed up as the communist party’s mobilization of the mass to re-educate the four categories of people, namely landowners, rich farmers, counter-revolutionists, and evildoers, who were thought to be disruptive to the construction of socialism. Instead of handing up and eliminate them, the root organizations of Fengqiao mobilized the mass to monitor and reform these potentially hazardous people through reasoning and persuasion.\(^{36}\) The root organizations insisted on transforming those people’s mind and habits with studies and labour, which ended up with great success.\(^{37}\) This convention of changing people through means of education can go back even farther to 2,500 years ago as the Chinese Confucianism holds that all men are educable.\(^{38}\)

In early 2019, the Ministry of Public Security required the entire police system to study and practice the Fengqiao Experience, and compete in constructing Fengqiao Style police stations.\(^{39}\) The police officers are expected to be skilled in talking sense to the mass. For instance, officers and community workers made efforts to induce people to cancel their weddings and funerals during the pandemic.\(^{40}\)

Another aspect of social mobilization alludes to the connection with the public. The police have long been devoted to building good relationships with local residents. This accords with communist party’s Mass Line ideology which contends that they rely on the mass and draw wisdom from the people. When Fengqiao Experience is reintroduced in recent years, it has included citizens’ daily trivialities into police job, taking settling neighbourhood disputes as an example, so as to be closely related to the mass (Wu, 2015). While the core value of remoulding one’s mind is retained, the renewed Fengqiao Experience also makes an effort in creating a soft and caring image of the police. By engaging the police in reshaping the everyday life of community residents, the new Fengqiao Experience develops an emotional link between the police and the community, which has brought real life to community policing.

**Strategies of policing in contemporary China**

Although officers’ duties during the pandemic were different from usual, they are a sign of the approaches that the police have taken in controlling social order. As a matter of fact, the policing in China have been evolving greatly in recent years. Since China’s reform and opening-up policy in the late 1970s, the centralized administrative mode of planned economy period has been diminishing. Along with the serial revolutionary measures that the state has taken in social governance, policing in China is changing the working patterns. By introducing the following new strategies, the police and/or government gradually make social control more subtle and thorough.

First, China is building a secured and surveilled society using advanced modern techniques. The authority has promoted the construction of the Multi-Dimensional System for Crime Prevention and Control (立体化治安防控体系) throughout the past two decades as a national programme (Report of Hu Jintao to the 18th CPC National Congress, 2012). The programme includes a large

\(^{35}\)http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/m/drc/2020-01/07/content_37531506.htm (accessed 3 June 2020).

\(^{36}\)https://www.sohu.com/a/255788184_268098 (accessed 30 May 2020).

\(^{37}\)http://www.shaoxing.com.cn/p/77692.html (accessed 30 May 2020).

\(^{38}\)Confucius said: ‘With education there would be no distinction between classes or races of men.’ See *The Analects of Confucius Weiling Gong*. (子曰：有教无类。《论语·卫灵公》).

\(^{39}\)http://special.cpd.com.cn/2019/xsdqjy/tt_18096/201907/t20190701_844978.html (accessed 30 May 2020).

\(^{40}\)https://www.voanews.com/science-health/coronavirus-outbreak/china-urges-no-weddings-short-funerals-contain-coronavirus (accessed 20 March 2020).
scale establishment of closed-circuit television (CCTV) system that intends to cover every accessible public spaces, known as ‘zero-blind-spot’. Combined with technologies like facial recognition and big data analysis, these programmes would impair individuals’ anonymity in both real and virtual communities (Sun and Zhang, 2020). As a consequence, China witnesses a rapid drop in violent and on-street crimes year by year. In the consensus of pursuing security, the government is taking measures to monitor the society extensively. In some sense, the ubiquitous CCTV and deep application of information technology would turn the modern society into what Foucault called as a panopticon.

Secondly, the police have empowered themselves through the socialization of policing. In the process of professionalization, the Chinese police have once suffered from overly extensive duties. Having realized that they were hardly able to bear all responsibilities, the police began to incorporate commercial and social roles into the network of governance, such as security staff and well-organized volunteers. The police have transferred part of the non-core functions to the society. In such a centralized political system, this form of autonomy was not an effort of decentralization, but to achieve self-governance instead. Nevertheless, the police and government still reserve a firm control of society while making use of the resources. With the participation of community-based civil groups and commercial organizations from the market, the police power has been strengthened and thus better at keeping social order.

Thirdly, the police are exerting proactive intervention in the community in a subtle way. The police seek to improve their image by making good connections with the community. This is done by multi-measures such as solving community problems and providing convenience services. Under Safe Community Construction programmes, the police generally refrain the use of force while engaging themselves in everyday life of the community. With a tradition rooted in the Confucian thought, the police in China take every opportunity in their work to communicate with the mass. They act as not only crime fighters but also educators. In the meantime, community officers are encouraged to establish intimate links with the residents to keep informed of the community situations. By settling disputes and conflicts of the community, the police capture information with which they could generate intelligence and prevent social risk in advance.

Conclusion

The roles of police during the pandemic reflect the comprehensive approach that has been taken to strengthen social control in China, including the use of technology, partnership building with the community, and incorporation of commercial forces. The police employ a sophisticated strategy, incorporating into their daily work the philosophies of community policing, problem-oriented policing, zero-tolerant policing, intelligence-led policing, situational crime prevention, and consent-based policing. It is indicated that China and western countries share much in common in

41https://ipvm.com/reports/sharpeyes (accessed 30 May 2020).
42https://baike.baidu.com/item/雪亮工程/20838233?fr=aladdin (accessed 30 May 2020).
43http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1063755.shtml (accessed 30 May 2020).
44The panopticon is an architecture consisting of a ring of cells around a central watchtower. It was a design of Jeremy Bentham for prisons, where everyone’s every action can be easily observed at any time. Michel Foucault viewed it a sign of modern disciplinary power, which punishes less but can achieve more effective control. See Foucault (1977).
45A number of jurisdictions in Zhejiang and Guangdong provinces, for instance, contract professional law service to help the police in settling civil disputes, which would otherwise be handled by police officers or has go to the courts. Other personnel contracted by the government, like the aforementioned grid-workers, would undertake the responsibility of patrol and fire control in the community, reducing the burden of the police.
the mode of modern policing, while the Chinese express it in their own discourse, such as the Fengqiao Experience and Strike Hard Campaign. Grounded in their social and historical traditions, these strategies have contributed to substantial progress in keeping social order in China. The performance of Chinese police during the pandemic has served as fresh evidence. It remains uncertain, however, where they would lead Chinese policing to, since issues like citizen privacy and boundaries of state power have not been given enough consideration.

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