PART TWO

EXCEPTIONS IN EVERYDAY SPACES
CHAPTER FIVE

PARA-POLICE FORCES

Arrest robbers, and execute them on the spot.*

This chapter surveys the genesis and powers of public security joint defense teams, private security companies, and urban management officials and outlines the links between them and public security organs. Community policing organs have been seen under a favorable light. Aside from descriptive¹ and comparative analyses,² the emerging scholarship on this topic conceives of community policing as a social resource,³ stressing the role inclusion processes play in crime prevention,⁴ and highlighting continuities with Confucian heritage.⁵ Inclusion, self-help, and empowerment have thus become the new buzzwords employed in relation to para-police forces. Noticing that a rigorous definition and theorization of this new paradigm of policing are still lacking,⁶ mainstream scholarship is somewhat less optimistic. Some scholars have observed how bottom-up approaches to policing still result in the rounding up of the usual suspects.⁷ The extent to which communities have been empowered⁸ and marginalized groups addressed has been questioned.⁹ A partial explanation may be provided by the inherent incompatibility between the bottom-up philosophy

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¹ Chen 2002.
³ Wong 2009.
⁴ Zhong 2009. However, Zhong and Grabowsky have noticed how abuses of power persist. See Zhong and Grabosky 2009. Earlier studies have found that the relationship between citizens and the police is marked by a low level of trust. See Cao and Hou 2001; Du 1997.
⁵ Advocating the use of a bottom-up and empirical approach to the matter, Kam C. Wong writes: “If we should look at China from bottom’s up and empirically, we will find that ‘policing’ as a function starts with self and ends with the family/community, i.e., “self-governance” and then takes a turn to traditional Chinese culture: “Kongfu [Confucius] household is an ideal type of self-governance and informal social control.” Wong 2007: 122.
⁶ See Williamson 2008, part 1.
⁷ Crawford 1997.
⁸ Friedman 1994.
⁹ Skogan 1990.