ABSTRACT

Re-envisioning “Community Policing” in Post-Socialist China

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Community policing (shequ jingwu) is not only one of the most influential ideas in global policing activities, but also widely embraced by policy decision makers, practitioners, and police scholars in the People’s Republic of China. Semantically speaking, “shequ jingwu” was directly translated from the English term “community policing.” In this paper I argue that community policing in the PRC was not directly imported from the West, but built on the fundamental ideas and established practices of mass-line policing. In the market reform era, community policing was adopted to address certain problems that mass-line policing was proved ineffective. To address these problems, the discourse on community policing has also made the initiation of certain policing technologies as a necessity. To articulate what those problems are, and how they are addressed by adopting community policing, in this paper I present a case study to show how it is used to carry out social surveillance, promote order and safety in a community.