

Social Conflicts in the Eyes of Police: Hong Kong Anti-Extradition Bill Movement

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This research explores the perceptions Hong Kong police officers had of the anti-extradition bill movement from 2019 to 2020. A series of protests led to direct confrontations between protestors and officers. Hong Kong Police at that time were deemed reprehensible for their violent acts by many Hong Kong people. Scrutinization and criticism brought by the public altered Hong Kong Police's social position and status in society.

Finding out their sense of moral and legal legitimacy, I aim to understand how officers configure their identity in a highly politicised society. This paper draws on the officers' explanation of their motivations, lawful duties, and mental struggles to understand social conflicts in the past two years. Reconstructing their views on the social movements in four aspects in four chapters, I illustrate a different side of the story of the anti-extradition bill movement.

During the protest, officers carried out their responsibilities and duties as law enforcers. While some of their actions to disperse protestors were considered cold and inhuman, the public seldom looked beyond the masks that officers wore at work to understand their human side. In the face of adversity, how did officers stand their ground in society?

Through conducting in-depth interviews with 15 interviewees, I probed questions I had for officers. This project served as an opportunity to get a glimpse of their personal thoughts and emotions which were often shielded away from the public's gaze. Unravelling the officers' views on social conflicts, I hope to begin a discourse for a wider imagination of the anti-extradition bill movement by incorporating officers' point of view.