

*Confucian Corrections? A Taiwanese Case for an East Asian Idea of  
Police*

**Jeff Martin**

*Department of Sociology Of Hong Kong University, Hong Kong S.A.R. – China*

**Abstract**

A growing body of research shows the idea of Police is contextually defined, differing dramatically over time and space (Bittner 1970, Klockars 1985, Carrol 2002). Add to this the postcolonial insight that West European models do not define accurate standards by which to measure the world, and it seems clear that the study of police in East Asia will progress only on the basis of models developed through empirical engagement with the history and culture of the region. This paper is a preliminary consideration of what such a model might look like. It begins in reflection on the so-called Asian Values debate, using the irresolution of that conversation to orient a considered approach to the delicate project of relativizing questions of legitimate political force. I then draw from my ongoing research in Taiwan to sketch a preliminary model of an East Asian policing paradigm. I close with some thoughts about how this approach to policing might be helpful to research throughout China, Japan and Korea.