

**Urban Crime and Social Disorganization in China:  
A Study of Three Communities in Guangzhou**

by

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## Abstract

Chinese society has experienced rapid social change. Accompanying this profound change, crime and social disorganization has increased significantly in urban China. Few empirical studies have been conducted to examine community social disorganization in China. For the purpose of my thesis I have selected Guangzhou as a research site to study the patterns of crime and social disorganization. My thesis combines methods of content analyses with ethnographic field work to overcome the difficulty of scarce data. Official data has many well-known limitations and there are no community-level data available. This research first selects 1422 crime cases reported by the influential *Southern Metropolis Daily* in 2008 to characterize the general pattern of crime distribution. The findings suggest that both spatial and demographic density distributions of criminal cases in Guangzhou show a gradient circle pattern from city center to suburb. Focusing on three selected typical communities, this thesis finds important patterns of crime and social disorganization that are very different from Western research. These findings are organized along major correlates of social disorganization, such as unemployment, marriage and family, residential stability, ethnic heterogeneity, social equality, social capital, social control, social isolation and exclusion, community cohesion, trust and fear, traditions, morals and beliefs and language. These findings extend and elaborate the Social Disorganization Theory in urban China.

## Table of Contents

List of Tables and Figures.....	vii
Chapter I Introduction.....	1
Section I Historical Scientific Background.....	1
Section II Specific Background.....	24
Section III Research Goals and Challenges.....	34
Section IV Research Plan and Organization of The Thesis.....	37
Section V Statement of Originality.....	41
Chapter II Literature Review.....	44
Section I Economic, Modernization and Crime.....	44
Section II Research Overview on Urban Spatial Disorganization and Crime....	52
Section III Research Overview on Social Disorganization and Crime.....	57
Chapter III Research Design.....	64
Section I Research Construct.....	64
Section II Basic Conceptions.....	66
Section III Research Methods.....	72
Chapter IV Urban Spatial Disorganization and Crime.....	80
Section I Punctual Distribution Pattern in Guangzhou.....	80
Section II Research Defect and Argument.....	96
Chapter V Comparative Studies on Three Types of Communities: General Description of Field-Work Sites.....	109
Section I Social Disorganized Community: A Case of Village S.....	111
Section II Community in Social Disorganization: A Case of Community T.....	118
Section III Community without Social Disorganization: A Case of Community	

Q.....	124
Chapter VI Comparative Studies on Three Types of Communities: Empirical Analysis.....	127
Section I    Village S.....	127
Section II   Community T.....	141
Section III  Community Q.....	152
Chapter VII Conclusions and Perspectives for Future Work.....	157
Section I    Conclusions.....	157
Section II   Perspectives for Future Work.....	164
References.....	169
Appendix.....	179
Author's CV.....	197

