Beyond NIMBY: The Emergence of Environmental Activism and Policy Change in Two Chinese Cities

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Abstract

The present research article focuses on public participation in the environmental policy-making process in post-Mao China. It is a well-known fact that public administration in socialist China is highly centralised, and that public policies are initiated at the center and then locally administered under the one-party rule. In this monist political system, main stakeholders in the policy process are mainly Chinese Communist Party cadres, together with the 'authorised' groups of societies; so far participation from autonomous interest groups and society has been limited at best. In general, the 'western model' of civil society, which is characterised by a plurality of interest groups participating in public policymaking, implementation and evaluation, has – so far – been absent in China. This study aims to use environmental protection as a platform to examine the transformations that have been taking place in the environmental policy process and use it as a piece of references to revisit the current academic literature on China.

Specifically this article will compare two anti-incinerator protests in Guangzhou (Canton) and Beijing, to illustrate the dynamics surrounding the emergence of public participation in China's environmental policy process. This study plans to analyse why Guangzhou and Beijing Municipal governments have had different responses and attitudes to address citizens' grievances. Furthermore, the research will dwell on the establishment up of a Public Consultative and Supervision Committee for Urban Waste Management in Guangzhou City, a public consultative mechanism on waste management, which certainly represents a major novelty and a breakthrough for the policy making process of China. This research project demonstrates how policy adjustment is not determined solely by protests' outcomes but is also greatly affected by the response of local governments and the development of civil society. Consequently, the discussion is expected to give a new interpretation on environmental management of China.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

Chapter 1.

Introduction

Beijing and Guangzhou have experienced considerable controversy over the construction of incinerators in 2006 and 2009, respectively. In 2006, the citizens of Beijing launched several demonstrations against the plan to build an incinerator in Liulitun district. Three years later, the citizens of Panyu district in Guangzhou protested against plans to construct an incinerator near their homes. The protesters in both cases expressed concerns about the environmental and health effects of incinerators, in addition to voicing their dissatisfaction with being excluded from the decision-making process. They protested, contacted the media and sought help from experts – all to influence the government. Eventually, both municipal governments suspended the plans and relocated the incinerators, marking victories for the protesters while revealing the increasing influence of citizens' involvement in the Chinese environmental policy process. Through comparing two anti-incinerator protests in Guangzhou and Beijing, this thesis examines the linkage between environmental activism and the change of environmental policy at local level of China. More broadly, the governments' responses to these protests have changed gradually, making an understanding of the recent developments in civil society and social activism particularly important in China.

Since the economic reforms of the late 1970s, Chinese society has experienced unprecedented economic growth, becoming one of the largest economies in the twenty-first century. The crackdown following the Tiananmen Uprising leading up to the 4 June 1989 Massacre did not interrupt the country's overall development, and the economic boom of the last 25 years has improved the standard of living among the Chinese people. One of the consequences of improved material conditions and extensive urbanisation has been the pluralisation of interests and a rising consciousness in relation to human and political rights, including land acquisition, labour rights, social welfare and environmental protection. The aforementioned developments have increased China's societal complexity, creating social conflicts in urban communities. However, political reform lags behind economic development, prompting increasingly frequent protests across the country that threaten the rule of local governments and challenge the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Due to concerns over legitimacy, building a harmonious society (和諧社會) has become the top priority of the national agenda (Chung, Lai and Xia 2006:2).

Social activism (or collective resistance) has been encouraged by a lack of consideration for citizens' rights (Cai 2010:1) and the rise of rights consciousness (Selden and Perry 2009:20) over the past decade. According to one report entitled 'Annual Report on China's Rule of Law No. 12 (2014)' (中國法治報告 No.12 (2014)), there were 871 collective incidents[1] (群體性事件) such as protests, demonstrations, marches, sit-ins and group complaints – all of which involved 100 people or more – between 1 January 2000 and 30 September 2013 ('Annual Report on China's Rule of Law' 2014:271). State control over non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society's weakness in mediating between governments and citizens also explain the emergence of widespread social activism in China. After the Tiananmen Massacre, the dramatic growth of NGOs was a revolutionary development in socialist Chinese society. Domestic NGOs must register with the Ministry of Civil Affairs, and they typically work on service delivery, community development, education and policy advocacy while very rarely taking political risks. These 'depoliticised' NGOs are thus constrained in their ability to defend citizens' rights or mobilise social activism.

Partially due to the scale of economic growth and the consequent environmental degradation, environmental activism has become increasingly popular in contemporary China. Thirty-seven pollution-related protests took place between 1 January 2000 and 3 September 2013, 5 of which involved 10,000 or more participants ('Annual Report on China's Rule of Law' 2014:280). Pursuing economic growth at all costs exploits natural resources and increases the damaging effects of pollution on human health. Hence, the effects of development are difficult to ignore. Acute environmental degradation, weak ENGOs and the poor enforcement of environmental laws have spurred environmental activism across the country, threatening social stability and challenging the CCP's legitimacy. Cities are suffering under increased air and water pollution while the continued construction of polluting structures such as petrochemical plants and incinerators in urban and suburban areas has angered citizens and led to protests. Citizens willing to protest against environmental pollution are astonishingly numerous, as indicated by the protests against the anti-paraxylene (PX) project in Xiamen (2007), the anti-incinerator project in Guangzhou (2009), the copper factory protests in Shifang, Sichuan, movements against the waste-water pipeline from the paper plant in Qidong, Jiangsu and the anti-PX project in Ningbo City (2012). Such incidents have not been limited to major cities, but have also occurred as part of China's provincial and local politics (Wu 2013:89). Increased environmental awareness has

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[1] This refers to the number of collective incidents counted by news reports. Source: "Annual Report on China's Rule of Law" No. 12, 2014:271.

encouraged citizens to voice their disagreements with governmental decisions, forcing the government to bring public participation into political thought (Chang 2012). By protesting, citizens question the low transparency levels in the environmental policy-making process and highlight the poor enforcement of environmental laws.

Protests also call attention to the lack of public participation in environmental policy-making processes. Currently, the Chinese government uses environmental impact assessments (EIAs) and public hearings to encourage citizens' involvement in environmental decision-making processes, but opportunities for public participation to really affect environmental policy are limited. Not surprisingly, public participation in public policy processes are also limited, or completely excluded because the ruling elite monopolises policy-making processes in the authoritarian regime. In China, there is a general consensus amongst scholars that public administration is highly centralised, and that public policies are bureaucratically initiated and administered under the one-party dictatorship. In this monist political system, the stakeholders in the policy process are typically CCP cadres and 'authorised' social groups with little or no participation from autonomous interested groups. In general, the Western model of civil society, which is characterised by the plurality of interested groups' participation in public policy making, implementation and evaluation, is absent from China's public policy processes. However, given the growing number of environmental challenges that China faces, society – particularly its members involved in environmental groups – is calling for more awareness of environmental problems, including issues such as infrastructural over-development and conservation. Yet public participation in environmental policy-making processes remains limited. The growth of environmental activism across this authoritarian country sheds light on local governments' responses. The decentralised political structure gives conditional authority to local governments to make public policies, enact local laws and regulations and draft the budget to boost local development. However, the close relationship between local government and business groups means that local officials tend to favour economic growth over implementing the central government goal of environmental protection. In addition, the local environmental protection bureaus (EPBs) are supposed to enforce environmental laws and regulations, but their personnel decisions, leadership and financial resources are still decided by local governments (Shapiro 2012:69). Thus, the EPBs are placed in a weak structural position that renders them unable to effectively enforce environmental regulations.

In summary, this backdrop of environmental activism outcomes in China and the research covered in this work provide an analytical model to explain the behavioural patterns and dynamics between state and non-state actors in anti-incinerator campaigns in Beijing and Guangzhou. The significance of environmental degradation as an issue that provokes activism, and whether such activism affects environmental policy, provided the motivation for this work and raised the following questions: 1) How, in the context of an authoritarian regime committed to economic growth, can non-state actors influence policies related to incinerator construction? 2) Why and how did municipal governments respond to the protests studied in this work? 3) How did societally based environmental coalitions affect the overall municipal solid waste management in Beijing and Guangzhou? This work aims to answer these questions and promote an understanding of how environmental protests operate in authoritarian China. It explores an explanatory link between environmental activism and policy change at the local level in China and explains why and how local governments respond to protests while examining the conditions of concession making. As stated, protests usually target local governments rather than the central government, because the former are responsible for daily life and thus may be directly violating citizens' rights (Cai 2010:4). In the face of emerging social activism, local governments change policies to minimise political and economic costs, thus policy-abolishment or policy-innovation (Ibid) is often the response to environmental activism. When choosing their mode of policy adjustment, local governments are concerned with political and social openness at the local level. Competing groups of protesters and governmental agencies also play a role in shaping public policy, which influences local governments' policy adjustment choices.

Similar to other forms of social protest, the growing environmental activism threatens social stability, and as such the Chinese authoritarian regime is paying increasing attention to it. Unlike in democratic countries, where governments are generally more tolerant of peaceful protests, authoritarian governments usually suppress opposition. Yet evidence has indicated that the Chinese government, particularly at the local level, is becoming more tolerant and less centralised, with more diversified interests. This has made it much more difficult to control protests, unless the scale of resistance is broad and widespread across the country (Tarrow 2008:7). Protecting the legitimacy of the CCP regime is one of the central government's main concerns, as the latter represents the former's rule, and protecting the interests of the ruling party is a major responsibility. Thus, scholars are beginning to examine the relationships between governments and protesters, along with the policy responses to protests (Cai 2010; O'Brien 2008). This work also explores policy responses to environmental activism, in which protesters

seek short-term influence and maximise interests in neighbourhoods by doing such things as relocating polluting factories away from communities. In addition, governments' responses to protesters and the post-protest interactions between citizens and local governments are also discussed. Above all, the conflicts between and formation of competing coalitions on this policy issue suggest that the old Chinese policy-making models do not apply. The diversified non-state actors who wield bottom-up pressure in the policy-making process have become a new force challenging the fragmented authoritarianism (FA) model.

1.1 Background

The existing scholarly studies mainly focus on two arenas in the sphere of environmentalism in China: environmental policymaking and environmental activism. However, an explanatory link between environmental activism and environmental policy change has not been identified. Studies of environmental policy making in China frequently use the FA model to explain policy as an outcome of negotiations and compromises among the conflicting state agencies (Lieberthal 1997; Sinkule and Ortolano 1995). The FA model conceptualises the structural distribution of authority between central and local levels of government; and the public policy-making process (Lieberthal 1997: 6). In addition, the fragmented vertical and horizontal bureaucratic systems (*tiao/kuai*) demonstrate the complex features of the relationship between central and local relationships and how that affects the policy process. Vertical bureaucracies (the hierarchy from central to local) and horizontal bureaucracies (the horizontal level of authority within local levels) create challenges in policy decision-making because different levels of officials have different expectations. For example, in the field of environmental management, the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP) has produced a situation where agreement has to be made, but it is unable to rule over the decisions made by other ministries on environmental issues. In addition, the decentralisation of budgetary authority has enabled local bureaucrats to obtain external funds for their own policy preferences. Thus, local bureaucrats are subject to limited policy demands from higher levels. In addition, local bureaucratic enterprises are encouraged to compete and bargain to serve and promote their own interests or preferences in the policy-making process (Lieberthal 1992:8; Lam 2013: 146; Mertha 2009:996).

The 'fragmented authoritarianism' model reveals the 'cellular' socioeconomic structure in central-provincial relations in the Post-Mao era, due to the fact that the central government does not have the capability to effectively control the vast Chinese nation (Li 1997:55). Through FA the cenre can only contral aggregate outcomes. Hence economic growth is the indicator by which

local leaders have their career advancement assessed. This explains why researchers argue that the current environmental policy has strong support at the central level, but weak capacity for policy implementation at the local level (Mol and Carter 2007:8; Shapiro 2012:60; Beyer 2006:207).

This fragmented state, with different priorities across government hierarchy, has given rise to multiple interests and has provided space for resistance in society. As such, the FA model may no longer explain the complicated dynamics between state and non-state actors over the decision-making process. It also stimulates a discussion in this thesis: the complicated interactions among the policy actors within the FA model on one hand; to the extent the decentralised governing structure in FA model provides autonomous governance at local level on the other hand.

Apart from the environmental policy-making process, research on social activism in China focuses on the patterns and limitations of activism and the evolution of Chinese civil society and democratisation (Mertha 2010; Yang 2008; Pei 2009; MacKinnon 2011). Regarding the study of environmental protests in China, the scholarly literature mainly focuses on the survival of 'green groups', the rise of environmental protests among citizens, environmental activism's limitations under the political constraints of authoritarian China and the inferior status of environmental authorities in the decentralised political structure (Wu 2009; Ho 2007; Shapiro 2012; Johnson 2013; Deng and Yang 2013). However, few studies address local governments' responses to environmental activism, and its consequent effects on the development of civil society in China. The focus should not be limited to the national level. Indeed, the governments' perceptions of protests differ based on the level. For example, in China, local governments offer concessions when responding to protests to minimise political and economic costs, whereas the central government aims to protect the CCP regime's legitimacy. In addition, local governments are the protesters' primary targets (Cai 2010:4; O'Brien and Stern 2008:12). All levels of local governments may directly violate citizens' rights, and thus are often held responsible for citizens' grievances (Cai 2010:4). In China's decentralised political structure, local governments enjoy conditional autonomy in legislation, policy making and local daily rule. Thus, maintaining social stability becomes their mission and concessions prove to be the ideal response to protests.

In a pioneering study examining the relationships between various governments' responses and the outcomes of collective actions in China, Cai (2010) notes that local governments react to protests in a number of ways, such as 1) providing concessions to meet citizens' grievances, 2)

providing concessions in addition to punishing the protesters, 3) tolerating the resistance but ignoring the citizens' demands and 4) suppression (Cai 2010:5). Additional reactions include policy adjustment-related concessions, such as revising or abolishing policy, or policy innovation, to meet citizens' demands (Cai 2010:13). Cai's (2010) research provides a useful analytical framework for understanding the influence that citizens' protests have on policy implementation. Precisely how the governments and protesters interacted in the face of social activism, and how that led to policy changes were not covered in his study. Thus, in this work I borrow Cai's framework to examine the relationship between protests and policy change, looking specifically at the conditions driving policy changes.

In the context of China, one way to understand policy change is through the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF). Although the ACF was developed in the context of a pluralist conception of policy making, it is relevant in the Chinese context because it addresses the emergence of a variety of actors and the bottom-up pressure from non-state actors, such as individual citizens and ENGOs, in the policy-making process (Han et al. 2014:314). The ACF shows the dynamics between policy actors who have sought to participate and influence public policy in a specific domain. These policy actors not only include the 'iron triangle' of government officials, lawmakers and interest groups, but also researchers and journalists (Sabatier and Weible 2007:192; Weible et al. 2009:122). In addition, both scientific and technical information play a role in the policy process (Sabatier and Weible 2007:189; Weible et al. 2009:122). The ACF indicates that public policy be changed through the interactions between policy actors and the use of scientific and technical information. What is particularly interesting is the focus on policy subsystems as the primary unit of analysis (Weible et al. 2009:122); that is, the broader political environment as context, stable parameters and external events all affect the behaviour of policy actors within policy subsystems (Sabatier and Weible 2007:200; Weible et al. 2009:123). The ACF suggests a basic constitutional structure, and sociocultural values and social structure, for example, are stable parameters. External events refer to changes in socio-economic conditions, such as changes in public opinion. Finally, a coalition opportunity structure mediates between stable parameters and external events to reach consensus on policy change (Sabatier and Weible 2007:199; Weible et al. 2009:123). Sabatier and Weible (2007) argue that the degree of consensus needed for major policy change is low in an authoritarian regime due to relatively low political openness (Sabatier and Weible 2007:201). The cases in Guangzhou and Beijing, however, offer a different interpretation of reaching consensus in policy change under an authoritarian regime. Thus, in this work I look at political openness and the changes in socio-economic conditions and

sociocultural values that led to the relocation of two planned incinerator plants. The ACF and its applicability in the Chinese context are clarified in Chapter 4.

Scholars have deployed coalition opportunity structures to explain how factors such as resources, institutional arrangements and historical precedents shape interactions among policy actors and variations in policy change outcomes. Although coalition opportunity structures may change over time in different policy contexts, they provide insight into the various interactions between structure and agency during the policy-making process. The interweaving of political openness and social-cultural structures is also relevant in examining policy change conditions. Political openness refers to 'the possibility for organisations to participate formally in political procedures' (Lewis 2000:108), such that a variety of actors are available to engage in policy-making processes without constraint. A fundamental socio-cultural structure reflects economic development and political culture, including countries' histories (Sabatier 2007:204; Gamson and Meyer 1996:279), identities and ideologies – all of which are formulated in society (Swidler 1995:30). As such, special attention is paid to how the ACF is applied locally under the decentralised political structure of authoritarian China by studying the responses to the examples of anti-incinerator activism that occurred in Guangzhou and Beijing.

In China, a decentralised political structure refers to a situation in which institutional arrangements at the provincial level are replicated from the central level. In addition, the local levels of government have certain degrees of autonomy for developing their economies, and they use national principles as a basis for making and amending local legislation within their jurisdictions. The degree of openness exhibited by local political systems varies in a decentralised structure. Moreover, the fundamental socio-cultural values also influence policy changes. The instances of spatial and historical divergence across the country, and the variations in social and economic developments affect the formation of advocacy coalitions and policy changes in the decision-making process.

1.2 Anti-incinerator Protests in Beijing and Guangzhou

China's unprecedented economic growth and the consequent increasing amount of solid waste appearing in cities has become a significant challenge for local governments, and while they perceive incineration technology as the most effective solution to waste accumulation, its safety remains controversial. Members of society, particularly the affected citizens, worry about the environmental impact and health effects of incineration; thus, a series of campaigns opposing the

construction of incinerators has stretched across the country. In this work, I examine two examples of environmental activism, one in Guangzhou and the other in Beijing, to investigate the emergence of public participation in Chinese environmental policy-making processes, and to review and analyse the Guangzhou and Beijing municipal governments' responses to the protests against incinerator projects. I analyse anti-incinerator activism in Beijing and Guangzhou for the following reasons. First, the activism in Liulitun, Beijing marked the first instance of an anti-incinerator protest nationwide (Greening-China.com; Hsu 2010). Other places such as Jiangsu, Shanghai, Nanjing and Guangzhou have since launched similar protests. In addition, Beijing's policies mirror national trends to some extent because it is the national capital. For example, the interactions between registered NGOs and the municipal government would reflect a country-level focus (Spires, Tao and Chan 2014:68). Second, Guangdong province is a forerunner in economic reform, as it is perceived as the seat for China's reform experiments. For instance, municipal governments implemented some of the earliest administrative reforms in Guangdong province, such as not making enterprises accountable to the CCP (1988). Third, Beijing and Guangzhou are the wealthiest cities in China (GDPs ranked second and third, respectively, in 2013), and thus they reflect the rise of environmental awareness among the new, well-off class and have become a driving force challenging the rule of government. Although protests have occurred in numerous urban areas, the different political atmospheres have been shown to influence the outcomes.

In this work, I compare the anti-incinerator protests in Beijing and Guangzhou and analyse the local governments' responses. Beijing's municipal government suspended and relocated the proposed incinerator project after the protest in 2007, in addition to organising activities promoting solid waste recycling. However, Beijing's public continue to be excluded from the environmental decision-making processes. In contrast, the outbreak of anti-incinerator activism in Guangzhou in 2009 not only resulted in the suspension of the proposed incinerator project in Panyu, but also prompted Guangzhou to set a goal of being a 'zero-waste city'. Guangzhou's municipal government has supported the zero-waste city movement by implementing a public consultative committee for solid municipal waste under the Guangzhou Municipal Bureau of City Administration and Law Enforcement. The focus has been to encourage the public to engage in municipal waste management. The activism in Guangzhou has proven to be a breakthrough in China's decision-making processes. Case studies have revealed that the power wielded by the public has influenced the monistic state's policy-making processes in this authoritarian country,

such that a more inclusive decision-making process could represent a means of strengthening the CCP regime's resilience.

Anti-incinerator activism has aroused an extensive nationwide discussion on and wider public participation in solid municipal waste treatment (SMW), providing momentum to the growth of new environmental movement sectors. For instance, the green groups in Guangzhou extend networking to peer organisations, governmental agencies within Guangdong province and trans-provincial connections with other green groups. The state is no longer the only dominant actor in environmental protection in authoritarian China, and this new dynamic between green groups and governmental agencies is addressed in the civil society literature. Although it is impossible make any generalisations about wider environmental policy or protests in China from findings based on two cases of one discrete form of environmental protest, this work does shed light on this topic and raises questions to be explored in other policy areas.

1.3 Research Strategies and Significance

After the reform at the end of 1970s, the Chinese government was in a transitional period. It faced the challenges of globalisation, but the transformation of society also created numerous social problems that influenced its legitimacy. The ruling elite faced increasing demands from citizens and thus had to implement more participatory channels to maintain the legitimacy of the CCP. The activism in Guangdong is undoubtedly relevant to other parts of China. The literature discusses environmental activism in China, largely through case studies, to explain the causes (Li, Liu and Li 2012; Johnson 2010), but it does not examine the interactions between state and non-state actors or review the post-protest changes. Thus, this work is the first to investigate the development, major features and subsequent changes related to China's policy making, with a focus on the absence of public participation in the environmental policy-making processes and on explaining the causes driving such protests. In addition, the fragmented and decentralised political structure is highlighted, providing a framework for examining the policy changes generated in response to the protests, and for exploring the conditions of public participation in the decision-making process at the local level.

There are two observations from these cases that inspired the research questions guiding this work. First, municipal waste management is a controversial issue for both industrialising and industrialised societies due to increasing amounts of waste generation and insufficient space for waste disposal and landfills. The construction of incinerators is widely regarded as the most

effective waste management solution, but the incineration process has provoked public concerns about the technology's environmental impact and health effects, prompting a global wave of anti-incinerator protests. Similar to other countries, China is facing waste proliferation and incineration is used to manage waste across the country, but anti-incinerator protests have mushroomed in response. In addition to the environmental and health risks, and the grievances raised by protesters, there has continued to be non-transparency of information and a lack of public participation in the decision-making processes. Thus, China's decision-making process for the implementation of incinerator projects, and the dynamics among the stakeholders involved are the focus of this work. The bureaucratic structures influencing environmental protection are discussed, along with the weakness of the governing structures in the environmental sphere, which has limited public involvement. Infrastructure projects such as incinerators often provoke public opposition due to an implicit belief that greater public involvement might result in superior environmental decisions or outcomes. In such cases, these people are challenging the current policy-making model in China.

In this work, I explore coalition opportunity structures, particularly political and socio-cultural openness, to determine how they shape policy change. Exploring the variations in policy changes and the possibility of public participation in decision-making processes in authoritarian China allows me to re-examine our understanding of China's environmental policies.

1.4 Organisation and Anticipated Problems

In Chapter 2, I review the politico-economic development in the Post-Mao era and China's policy process. Then, I explain the environmental situation and its management in China, focusing on public participation in environmental policymaking. I refer to the contributions of scholars, which are further discussed in Chapter 3. Chapters 2 and 3 provide the background for the anti-incinerator activism discussed in this work. Specifically, these chapters provide the foundation needed to understand why the Chinese citizens studied were against the incinerators, what their political limitations were and how the dynamic between the protesters and their local governments influenced the resultant waste management policies.

In Chapter 4, I discuss the use of the ACF in environmental policy-making processes to outline the constraints of public participation in the decision-making processes of China's fragmented and decentralised political structures. I also highlight the features of coalition opportunity structures, particularly political openness and socio-cultural values, to illustrate the conditions

supporting policy change. The applicability of these theories to China's practices is also examined.

Chapter 5 introduces my methodology. I state why I chose an in-depth qualitative research method, discuss the processes of selecting the cases and the interviewees and provide details about the fieldwork. In this way, the relationship between protests and policy adjustment is explored through empirical case studies.

In Chapters 6 and 7, I present the detailed findings from the field trips and in-depth qualitative interviews, which also serve as a review of the incinerator projects in Guangzhou and Beijing. I outline how patterns of public involvement in environmental issues have emerged in China, and identify the dynamic driving the public interactions between state and sub-national actors, which pave the way for models of public participation in environmental policy-making processes. I also evaluate change and continuality in provincial government (the relationship with NGOs), the organisational transformation of NGOs and the governing structures in environmental areas.

In Chapter 8, change and continuity in public participation in China's environmental governance are treated in the case comparison. This chapter also provides a discussion of the theoretical implications of this work that highlights the use of the ACF in China's decentralised political structure. Two municipal governments adopted policy changes in response to the protests in Guangzhou and Beijing, and the Guangzhou case, wherein environmental activists participated in anti-incinerator demonstrations, is also discussed. These governments changed their strategies from contentious politics, establishing an ENGO for policy advocacy and environmental education, all supported by Guangzhou's government, to the implementation of a public consultation committee – a significant breakthrough in the Chinese policy-making process. The changing patterns of environmental activism, the dynamics of the various parties' interactions with their governments and the networks supporting social organisations in other areas, the media and cross-border ENGOs also receive attention in this work.

Finally, Chapter 9 revisits the key research questions and discusses how the ACF reveals the emergence of policy coalitions in environmental realms with diversified policy beliefs even as increasingly pluralised policy actors challenge a decision-making process dominated by state actors.

Chapter 2.

The Big Picture: Political-economic Development in Post-Mao China

The rapid economic development in China has generated massive change and unprecedented environmental pollution, both of which affect domestic society and the global environment. The highlights of the environmental situation in China are as follows. More than 92% of China's cities have fine particulate matter (PM2.5), a major air pollutant, and thus fail to meet both international and national standards.[2] China is the world's largest producer of greenhouse gas – the source of global warming – and currently emits 7-9.5 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO2).[3] Almost 60% of China's underground water is polluted and only 3% of the underground water in urban areas is classified as 'clean'.[4] These figures reflect country's rapid economic growth inevitably causes environmental degradation. However, the speed of political reform in China is far outpaced by that of economic growth, such that public participation is absent from the environmental policy-making processes of this authoritarian regime. Thus, environmental protests have emerged as a way of expressing grievances across the nation.

Since the economic reforms of the late 1970s, China's economic boom has accelerated, along with the living standards among the Chinese people. Likewise, the growth of diversified interests in the society has given rise to new forces, some of which may challenge the CCP's rule (Selden and Perry 2010:27). Various social issues such as labour rights, land acquisition and environmental protection have led to conflict, and the expectation of public involvement in decision making has been increasing. Citizens are questioning the quality of government and making their voices heard through protests and environmental activism. Pursuing economic growth at all costs results in the exploitation of natural resources and damage to people's health, and poorly enforced environmental laws result in dissatisfied citizens who turn to environmental activism. As such, before examining policy change as a response to environmental activism, China's political-economic development in the Post-Mao era is provided in this chapter to clarify how economic achievement causes environmental exploitation, and how limited acknowledgement of public concerns about

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[2] Tan, M. (2014). "Bad to Worse: Ranking 74 Chinese Cities by Air Pollution", *Greenpeace*, 19 February. Available at: <http://www.greenpeace.org/eastasia/news/blog/bad-to-worse-ranking-74-chinese-cities-by-air/blog/48181/> (Accessed 14 August 2014).

[3] Szabo, M. (2014). "China Plans to Cap CO2 Emissions Seen Turning Point in Climate Talks", *Reuters*, 3 June, Available at: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/03/china-climatechange-idUSL3N0OK1VH20140603> (Accessed 14 August 2014).

[4] Kaiman, J. (2014). "China Says More Than Half of Its Groundwater is Polluted", *Guardian*, 23 April, Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2014/apr/23/china-half-groundwater-polluted> (Accessed 14 August 2014).

environmental policy has triggered the emergence of environmental protests. This chapter is divided into two parts: a brief introduction to China's political-economic development, followed by a discussion of public participation in Post-Mao China. The aim is to show that constraints on public participation in policy-making processes have led directly to the recent protests in authoritarian China.

2.1 Political-Economic Development in Post-Mao's China

China's emergence has been a popular topic at the international level since mainland China implemented an open door policy in the late 1970s. Following the open market of the late 1970s, China's steady economic growth has occupied a global spotlight as it had become the world's second largest economy after the United States. In addition, China's growing economic power has come to play a key part on the international stage. The rise of Socialist China can be traced back to the civil war between the Nationalist (Kuomingtang, KMT) and Communist (Chinese Communist Party, CCP) parties (1945-1949).

The war ended with the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, which began China's transformation into a socialist country. Several political movements, such as the Great Leap Forward in the mid-1950s, resulted in starvation that left millions of people dead. During the Cultural Revolution, upheld by Chairman Mao Zedong from the mid-1960s to the late 1970s, all political opponents were eliminated and society was chaotic. The country has changed since the implementation of the Open Door policy in 1978 after Chairman Mao's death in 1977, with the mixed economic model and 'Four Modernisations'. Under the CCP's rule and the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, economic development has improved rapidly. In the early 1980s, the Chinese government implemented the 'household responsibility system' to de-collectivise the land. Households were allowed to contract land from the commune and decide on agricultural production independently, with surplus production exceeding national and collective quotas disposed of freely. Special economic zones (SEZs) were established in four cities in 1980, all in Southern China: Shenzhen (Guangdong province), Zhuhai (Guangdong province), Xiamen (Fujian province) and Shantou (Guangdong province). The development of SEZs is intended to promote a favourable economic environment by reducing tariffs, encouraging foreign investments and deploying export-oriented economies.

The privatisation of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) to increase managerial autonomy and incentives has been a significant aspect of the 'opening up' reforms (except for important and strategic SOEs, such as energy, communications, armaments and natural resources, which remain

in the hands of central government). The number of large-scale SOEs (such as petroleum and telecom) was reduced to fewer than 150 in 2013.[5] A further series of reforms was implemented in the late 1990s, including banking, labour markets and social security, allowing the country to be more market-driven. The decentralisation of political structures allows provincial governments to be economically efficient in the open door reform situation (Landry 2008:5). The central government grants conditional autonomy to provincial governments regarding economic and administrative power while preserving its supremacy. As such, local governments pursue GDP growth as the priority for maintaining the CCP's legitimacy (Landry 2008:3; Cai 2008:411). Economic reform has resulted in great achievements, including GDP growth of about 10% per year and more than 500 million Chinese lifted from poverty.[6] China joined the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 2011 as the second biggest economy in the world after the United States, and both economic and political development in this socialist country suggest that China has become a global hot-spot.

China's economic achievements have improved the livelihoods of its people. Civil liberty, however, is still constrained by the government. For instance, freedom of speech, petitions, associations, press and strikes are restricted by the PRC government, although all are written into the Constitution. The newly formed non-government organisations (NGOs) must register under the Ministry of Civil Affairs and an attached organisation. Thus, most grassroots organisations are registered with the Business and Commerce Administration to prevent a complex registration process.

The death of former CCP General Secretary, Hu Yaobang in April 1989 accelerated the student movement that led to the Tiananmen Massacre on 4 June 1989. The movement not only asked for more anticorruption measures and political reforms, but also sought faster democratisation, which threatened the CCP's rule. The Tiananmen Movement ended in tragedy and democratisation stagnated, replaced by further economic modernisation. Despite the re-emergence of civil societies in the 1990s and the blossoming of a variety of organisations in recent years, human rights in China are often criticised by international society. For example, 2010 Nobel Peace Laureate, Mr Liu Xiaobo, who was one of the founders of 'Chapter 08', appealed to the Chinese government for more liberty and freedom, and was incarcerated as a political prisoner.

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[5] "China's Observation: Doubt of State-owned Enterprises", Nikkei (Chinese edition), Available at: <http://zh.cn.nikkei.com/columnviewpoint/column/7130-20131125.html> (Accessed 25 August 2014).
[6] China Overview, World Bank. Available at <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/china/overview> (Accessed 25 August 2014).

Compared with its meaning in democratic countries, 'civil society' in Post-Mao China refers to the power relationship between state and society. State power extensively controls Chinese society (White 1993:65), but civil society's intermediate role has diversified the representation of social interests in the changing society. Unlike the NGOs in democratic countries, which may launch or mobilise people in protests or monitor the government, the Chinese NGOs rarely directly confront the government at the central or local levels. The NGOs' very existence is in the hands of the Chinese government. Thus, Chinese NGOs only play a role in education and as service providers, collaborating with the government and lobbying but never really confronting the government. As such, China's NGOs, including environmental NGOs, are often criticised for being disconnected from the communities they represent.

2.2 Public Participation: A New Era in Post-Mao's China

As noted, China's social organisations entered a new phase of development following the Tiananmen Massacre in 1989. Although the Chinese government has implemented measures to manage social groups that require them to be registered, their legal status has been legitimated, which has helped fuel their expansion. This mix of social groups has played an intermediate role in providing society with social services such as elderly care, education and labour issue support. In addition, new groups have emerged in forms such as networks, centres and projects, and their backgrounds cross different spheres of social status (academics, professionals and ordinary citizens) while their interactions strengthen the development of civil society in China. The Chinese government has also encouraged 'small government and big society' by buying services, such as education and elderly services, from social organisations since 1995. The first such system emerged in Shanghai. Social services include poverty reduction, public health, disability support, job training and public security (Lui 2013:154). Social organisations also play a significant role in disaster relief. For example, hundreds of charities, activists and donors under an umbrella NGO coordinated the earthquake relief in Sichuan in 2008.[7]

The Chinese government has further reformed the management of social organisations to adapt to the changing society. They implemented the 'Plan for the Institutional Restructuring of the State Council and Transformation of Functions Thereof' in March 2013 to simplify the registration of

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[7] Boehler, P. (2013). "China NGOs Turn to WeChat to Aid Quake Rescue", *South China Morning Post*, 24 April. <http://www.scmp.com/news/china/article/1222049/china-ngos-turn-wechat-aid-quake-rescue> (Accessed 24 February 2014).

social organisations. Social organisations can no longer 'attach' to larger, registered organisations – a measure that has led to growth in social organisations.

Following this brief introduction to the current development of civil society, I now focus on public participation in Post-Mao China. It may be difficult to understand how the public participates in the daily affairs of an authoritarian state with limited individual liberty, where the regime exercises its authority regardless of popular consent. However, with the reforms of the late 1970s, the Chinese government recognised that opening up its affairs and promoting greater citizen participation were essential in maintaining the legitimacy of its rule. Thus, the government promulgated a policy and legal framework that would achieve this goal.

Since the 1990s, the Chinese government has introduced participatory mechanisms at the village level to respond to the complex interests generated by rapid economic and political development (Cai 2004:428; Horsley 2009:3). In 1998, the Chinese government allowed the election and formation of villager committees designed to facilitate self-government. The villagers then had the right to directly elect committee members.

Since the 2000s, the Chinese government has implemented a series of measures promoting public participation in government decisions, which was first mentioned and guaranteed by law in 2002. That law stipulates that local governments must listen to a wide array of public opinion, through written comments and public hearings, before drafting their administrative rules. In addition, the 'Outline for Promoting Law-Based Administration in an All-Round Way' introduced by the State Council in 2004 emphasises public participation in government decisions through public hearings and seminars. In 2008, the Chinese government promulgated the 'Regulation of the People's Republic of China on the Disclosure of Government Information' to further promote the transparency of government affairs and citizens' right to request and supervise the disclosure of government information. The Chinese government appeared determined to diffuse power among the citizens across a wide range of public policies, such as environmental protection and water tariffs, involving them in decision-making processes.

Upon seeing that the Chinese government has implemented several laws encouraging public advocacy and civil society's participation in the policy process, scholars have pointed out that the abovementioned measures are strategies in response to societal challenges that actually lengthen the CCP's rule (Dickson 2010:24; Mannheim and Perry 2011:8). Fewsmith (2013) argues that

there is no evidence that these changes to 'the rules of the game' have made the CCP's leadership more liberalised (Fewsmith 2013:6). Yet the gradual transformation of the rules shows that the CCP is adapting to both the domestic and external environments. Adaptation has become a ruling principle for CCP leaders in the Post-Mao era.

China's economic growth has been expected to lead to political transformation since the implementation of the economic reform. It was believed that liberalising political institutions would balance economic growth and social unrest (Heilmann and Perry 2011:1). However, the Tiananmen Massacre in 1989, ethnic riots, 'mass incidents' and the suppression and arrest of dissidents have challenged the CCP's leadership. To ensure continuous economic success and societal stability, CCP leaders have initiated several measures. For example, former PRC President Jiang Zemin invited private entrepreneurs to be party members in 2001 and granted them access to policy-making processes. In addition, there has been growth in private business, trade and professional associations that attempt to influence policy through informal and formal channels (Teets et al. 2010:17). There has been a blossoming of NGOs in various areas, including environmental protection, poverty reduction and rural development. These groups have been playing the role of services collaborators with the government (Shieh and Brown-Inz 2013:16). Social issues such as pollution and land acquisition have received more attention as society diversifies, prompting more public participation in public affairs. Nevertheless, environmental protection remains a controversial topic in China given the outcomes of rapid economic growth in the last four decades, which have aroused dissatisfaction among Chinese citizens with limited involvement in environmental policy processes. Before the constraints on public involvement in such processes can be fully understood, it is important to outline the environmental deterioration in China and how it manages pollution.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter provides a general background for my work by identifying the causes of social conflicts in Chinese society. The politico-economic development in Post-Mao China has driven profound changes in social structure that have created social tensions among stakeholders. China's double-digit growth and rising per capita income has been the envy of the world since the 'reform and open' (改革開放) policy of the late 1970s. The country joined the WTO, hosted the Olympics for the first time and has become one of the world's most impressive emerging economies. These stunning economic achievements have improved the citizens' livelihoods, but they have also generated social tensions such as growing social inequality, environmental

degradation, ethnic unrest and floating migrant labour, resulting in an increasing number of social protests. These problems are viewed as the consequence of decentralising China's political structure.

Political reform, however, has been outpaced by economic reform, with economic actors actively using their powers to influence governmental policies and maximise their own interests in this transitional country. This has resulted in corruption and social inequality between citizens and the privileged elite (Jing 2014:308). In addition, civil liberties such as the freedom to speak, assemble and strike have remained limited despite the government's decision to relax NGO management after the Tiananmen Massacre. The emergence of non-state associations in Chinese society represents diversified social interests. The social groups act as educators, policy advocators and service providers in dimensions such as elderly care, education, poverty reduction, environmental protection, disaster relief and labour issues. However, the growth of non-state associations has not increased the opportunities for public participation in policy-making processes. The central government has implemented several measures for increasing transparency and public participation opportunities, which has saved the CCP's image and allowed it to maintain its resilience. The openness of public involvement in decision making is gradually improving, but an independent judiciary and separation of powers are absent, which places growing pressure on the CCP in managing long-term social stability. When facing disputes of interests in Chinese society, the state does not have effective mechanisms for solving these problems under the CCP's domination of and monopoly in resource allocation (Ibid:315-316). Facing governmental suppression, the Chinese citizens target local governments in most forms of collective resistance, because they are responsible for daily governance and the protestors wish to maintain their belief in the central government and the ruling party. In general, public participation in decision-making processes remains limited as they have no formal participatory mechanism for expressing their grievances. Thus, examples of collective resistance emerge, showcasing the citizens' anger.

Chapter 3

Development of Environmental Management and the Rise of the Environmental State

> Instead, we saw half a decade of widespread disputes and protests over
> environmental interests. In 2011, the number of environmental protests
> increased 120%. Last year brought demonstrations in Ningbo, Shifang,
> and Qidong. […] Large projects that ignore environmental and social
> impacts, as well as the public's right to participate, are the root of social
> unrest. But the MEP seems to consider this none of its business. The
> public's right to know and participate are key to resolving conflict (Liu
> 2013).

> The past few years have been as significant as any: new technologies
> have taken citizen engagement to new heights online while government
> action has brought public participation into mainstream political thought
> (Chang 2012).

China is the second largest economy in the world, and the largest carbon emitter. Its impressive economic development, however, is accompanied by an inconvenient truth; that is, a set of nationwide environmental challenges including severe air and water pollution, soil erosion, desertification, overpopulation, degradation of forests and grasslands, scarcity of water, exploitation of energy and the extinction of species. A strong dependence on the manufacturing industry has increased energy-related pollution, with irreversible environmental effects such as air and water pollution. Hence, the Chinese government has tried to bring environmental challenges into the mainstream of national policy since the early 1990s. In the early reform era, environmental protection was one of the national policy priorities in the Five-Year Plan (FYP) (the sixth of its kind, spanning 1981-1986). In 1992, the government participated in the Earth Summit in Rio. In 1994, it implemented 'China's Agenda 21: White Paper on China's Population, Environment, and Development', which aimed to 'draw up medium and long-term plans on economic and social development' (The Administrative Center for China's Agenda 21 1994). Hundreds of domestic environmental laws and regulations have since been enacted and international environmental agreements have been ratified or signed. Nevertheless, environmental deterioration presents a continuing challenge to the Chinese authorities.

Some key facts illustrate the serious environmental problems associated with steady economic growth in modern China. Energy demands are inevitably closely linked to economic development. For example, the total energy consumption in China in 2000 was 1.3 billion tonnes, but this number rose to 3.48 billion tonnes in 2011. Coal remains the main source of energy consumption in the country as a whole.[8] Moreover, the rapid growth of industrialisation, combined with serious air and water pollution, have been detrimental to both people and the ecosystem. The government has implemented a set of environmental laws and regulations, including Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and public hearings, but the mentality of 'pollute first, mitigate later' remains prevalent among local government officials. Environmental indicators for assessing local official performance, such as the Urban Environmental Quality Examination System and the National Economic Model City, have been introduced. However, such mechanisms have been criticised because the decentralisation of power in terms of these legal and fiscal developments has encouraged competition between provinces, with local leaders prioritising economic development over environmental considerations (Beach 2001:25). Although China's decentralized political structure provides conditional authority to local governments to make public policies, enact local laws and regulations, and draft budgets to boost local development, the close relationship between local government and business groups means that local officials tend to favour economic growth rather than achieve the central government's goal of environmental protection. In addition, although local environmental protection bureaus (EPBs) are supposed to enforce environmental laws and regulations, local governments continue to determine their personnel decisions, leadership, and financial resources.[i] Thus, the EPBs are placed in a weak structural position and cannot effectively enforce environmental regulations.

Moreover, public participation in environmental policy processes is either limited or completely curtailed, and the ruling elites monopolize the policymaking processes of the authoritarian regime. The Chinese government has established an environmental impact assessment (EIA) system, providing public hearings for citizens involved in environmental decision-making processes. However, its effect on environmental policy has been limited. These protests reflect the persistent lack of public participation in environmental policymaking processes also highlights the model of "fragmented authoritarianism" no longer fully explain the growing diversity in this authoritarian country.

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[8] "Total Energy Consumption and Composition 2011 and Consumption of Energy by Sector 2000",
National Bureau of Statistics, People's Republic of China,
<http://219.235.129.58/reportYearQuery.do?id=1600&r=0.9558526350020105> (Accessed 20 May 2013).

The conflict over this policy issue shows that the model of fragmented Chinese policymaking no longer applies. A fragmented authoritarian (FA) model has been adopted since the economic reform in the late 1970s, but conflicts between the public and government over environmental policy have recently arisen. However, in light of China's growing environmental challenges, society is calling for a greater awareness of environmental policy agendas, such as those that address air pollution. Thus, an increasing number of requests for higher levels of public participation in environmental policymaking have been made. As such, the FA model may no longer sufficiently explain the complicated dynamics between state and non-state actors over the decision-making process. Under the decentralised political structure and fragmented authoritarianism, local governments enjoy conditional autonomous authority and are responsible for managing daily local governance, such as local legislation and public policymaking. As such, local governments may have flexibility in adjusting public policies.

In this section, China's environmental management is introduced and reviewed aims to show how the Chinese government manages the growing diversified demands in the society; as well as to reveal the change of the notion about public administration and public policies are bureaucratically initiated and administered under the one-party dictatorship, autonomous interest groups are excluded from the policymaking process. Hence, the section is divided into three parts: First, a brief introduction of the 'Chinese economic model' provides a background for understanding the causes of environmental deterioration and the recent environmental incidents. An overview of environmental management in China is provided to identify the characteristics of its governing structures since the reforms of the late 1970s. Second, the relaxation of control over social organisations in the early 1990s, which encouraged the rise of civil society (particularly ENGOs), is discussed. In addition, the work of ENGOs, to a large extent, has inspired popular environmental consciousness and stimulated further action. Finally, I discuss how the economic actors also play an important role in environmental governance in China. Politically, the Chinese government has used economic instruments such as taxes and subsidies to achieve sustainable development. Economically, the trend of green consumerism, the pressure of ENGOs and the push to expand international markets have also driven companies to build 'eco-friendly businesses'. This chapter sets out a key message: the change to environmental management in China has not halted urban environmental activism. Without reforming environmental policy, citizens cannot become involved in policy making, and thus the tension between state and society increases when environmental issues are concerned. Policy changes are local governments' response to environmental protests in their effort to maintain the legitimacy of the regime, and thus they are discussed further in subsequent chapters.

3.1 Environmental Crisis in the Post-Mao's Era

China is the second largest economy and the largest CO_2 emitter in the world.[9] The economic miracle that is China in the post-Mao era has transformed the country into a prosperous society and the so-called 'Chinese economic model' has been praised for the current economic development. Credit has been given to massive labour-intensive industries for exporting cheap products to the world, increased domestic incomes through free trade and international flow of capital and pro-business policies to stimulate further foreign investments.[10] The Chinese government plays a dominant role in the market. Before the economic reform, the PRC highly prioritised heavy industry development in Mao's era and centralised all output targets without paying any attention to environmental protection. As a consequence, heavily polluting steel and chemical industries were built across the country, and natural resources such as water and coal were exploited. Moreover, Mao Zedong encouraged population growth in the country, placing additional pressure on the environment (Lieberthal 2004:277-279; Shapiro 2012:1-3, 35-37; Economy 2010:46-57).

Urbanisation has led to increasingly massive infrastructure developments such as power plants, highways, airports and waste water treatment plants, but the country is paying the cost. Arable land diminishes rapidly every year, and there is water pollution, air pollution, pollution from heavy metals and damaged ecosystems. More than 70% of China's rivers and lakes are seriously polluted (Morton 2010:278), a third of its soil is drought-ridden and eroded and more than three quarters of its forests are destroyed (Kassiola and Guo 2010:4). Facing these environmental pressures, the Chinese government has implemented several mitigation measures and moved slowly towards the development of an environmental state.

3.2 The Rise of the Environmental State in Fragmented, Authoritarian China

The Chinese government began paying closer attention to environmental management after the Stockholm Conference on Human Environment in 1972 (He et al. 2012:29; Zhang and Wen 2008:1250). To understand environmental management in China, it is necessary to review the environmental state's transition (Mol and Carter 2007:7) from a form of command and control

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[9] "The Ranking of CO_2 Emissions Countries in 2010", *World Bank*.
<http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.ATM.CO2E.KT/countries/1W?order=wbapi_data_value_2010%20wbapi_data_value%20wbapi_data_value-last&sort=desc&display=default> (Accessed 15 October 2013).
[10] Schuman, M. (2010). "China: A New Economic Model?" *Time*, 1 March 2010,
<http://business.time.com/2010/03/01/china-a-new-economic-model/> (Accessed 15 October 2013).

regulation to a more integrated form of environmental management. Before the economic reforms, in the 1950s and 1960s, the Chinese government had implemented some environmental regulations related to water, soil and forestry conservation (Sinkule and Ortolano 1995:4). However, the central planning framework was focused on high-speed economic development during the Great Leap Forward (1958-1959), when the government emphasised heavy industry and the exploitation of natural resources. The ideology that 'human beings must win over nature' (人定勝天), advocated by Mao Zedong, resulted in natural disaster for Maoist China (Shapiro 2001). A series of environmental policy programmes was promulgated until the 1970s (Ross, 1992:628; Sinkule and Ortolano 1995:4). The National Environmental Protection Office was founded in 1974 as the first institution for environmental protection, followed by the introduction of various sets of environmental regulations and laws in the late 1970s. An environmental regulatory system was established after the promulgation of the state Environmental Protection Law in 1979. Environmental protection was first suggested as an element of national basic policy in 1984, when it was advocated that 'prevention is the main aim, then control', and that 'the polluter is responsible for pollution control', such that the state should strengthen environmental management in the context of authoritarian China.

Institutionally, the environmental protection agency has changed over the years. The National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA), established in 1988 and renamed the State Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) in 1998, was upgraded in 2008 to the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP). The MEP is the central unit addressing national environmental issues. Both the State Development Planning Commission and the State Economic and Trade Commission at the national level are also involved in environmental protection under the State Council's leadership. Nevertheless, there is also overlapping jurisdiction between the Ministry of Environmental Protection and other government departments involved in environmental protection, including the Ministry of Water Resources, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Land and Resources. For example, there has been jurisdictional overlap in building national and provincial parks, involving the Ministry of Environmental Protection, the Ministry of Land and Resources, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development and the State Forestry Administration (Shapiro 2012:62). Moreover, the Chinese government has increased financial support for environmental issues. For example, the State Council allocated the equivalent of US$450 billion to environmental protection spending in the Twelfth FYP (2011-

2015), [11] compared with the US$18 billion allocated to the Ninth FYP (1995-2000). [12] Environmental protection is also tied to the market economy. Using economic measurements, emissions discharges and fines for polluters are the result of rapid economic growth and marketisation under the open market reforms of the late 1970s. The Chinese government also engages in international environmental cooperation, and has signed and ratified several international environmental treaties, including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (1973), the Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer (1987), the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal (1989), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992) and the Kyoto Protocol (1997). Moreover, the Chinese government attends international conferences on environmental matters, such as The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio (1972) and the United Nations Climate Summits.

Domestically, bureaucratic arrangements for environmental management can be divided into four levels: national, provincial, county and town. The local environmental units or Environmental Protection Bureaus (EPBs) are mainly responsible for law enforcement and environmental policy implementation. However, the governing structure of authoritarian China is fragmented (Shapiro 2012:59), which partly explains the gap between the central and local levels in implementing environmental policy. Lieberthal (1997) provides a general picture of the governing structure that illustrates the distribution of authority over environmental policy processes in China. In terms of central government ranking, the State Council is the highest authority, followed by commissions, ministries and bureaus, respectively. The territorial government has a parallel arrangement. Provincial governments equate to ministries and provincial bureaus to their ministerial counterparts. Units of the same rank, however, cannot issue binding orders to each other. For example, the ministries cannot send binding orders to provinces (Lieberthal 1997:3; Shi and Zhang 2006:274). Functionally, *xitong* (系統 systems) with both vertical and horizontal structural elements are the main feature of Chinese politics. Ministries are at the top, with hierarchical government units placed at each territorial level. The MEP, as mentioned, is the highest authority in environmental issues and its jurisdiction overlaps with those of the ministries. Hierarchically, the MEP is the highest authority over EPBs at the township, county, city and provincial levels.

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[11] "China Approves New Plan to Boost Green Industries", *China Daily*, 26 November 2010, <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/bizchina/2010-11/26/content_11616784.htm> (Accessed 16 September 2012).
[12] Strizzi, N. and Stranks, R.T. (2000). "Asian Influence: China's Environmental Mess: Implications for Canadian Business", *Ivey Business Journal*. Nov/Dec <http://www.iveybusinessjournal.com/topics/strategy/asian-influence-chinas-environmental-mess-implications-for-canadian-business> (Accessed 16 September 2012).

The EPBs have two masters: the government at each level, and the office with the same function one level up. For example, the Guangzhou Municipal EPB is led by both the Guangdong Provincial EPB and the Ministry of Environmental Protection (Lieberthal 1997:3). There is an inevitable conflict between the 'vertical' (*tiao*) and 'horizontal' (*kuai*) aspects of authority. For instance, the EPA at each level coordinates environmental protection and the territorial government at each level coordinates the locals' needs (Lieberthal 1997:4). Consequently, environmental officials at the territorial level often respond to local officials instead of their supervisors in the central environmental bureaucracy (Shapiro 2012:59), and these territorial governments are powerful.

Given this general background for the power structures of environmental management, researchers have described the environmental policy-making process in China as being top-down, with little public participation (Harris 2004:157). The institutional arrangements and legal and bureaucratic frameworks that are fundamental to environmental policy-making in China are still strongly centralised (Shapiro 2012:60-61). Environmental management policy has a legal foundation in the Environmental Protection Law and a number of specific environmental protection and conservation laws (Beyer 2006:205).

In environmental policy making at the national level, the NEPA (now the MEP) investigated environmental issues and proposed a draft policy change for major environmental problems. They proposed select regions for pilot studies, which were then conducted by the agency. The policy was then amended, based on advice from local and central departments. Experts reviewed the amended policy, and another round of discussions was held within the agency. The final draft was submitted to the State Environmental Protection Commission of China (SEPC) under the State Council or the Environmental and Resources Protection Committee (ERPC) of the National People's Congress (NPC) for confirmation as policy (Wang and Liu 1998:376-378).

Once the NPC approves a law and formulates the general direction for the nation – such as through the FYPs – the MEP and the local EPBs execute the law. For example, the desulphurisation of coal-fired power plants was expected to reduce sulphur content to 10% by 2010 in the Eleventh FYP (2006-2010). [13] The state agencies implemented various

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[13] "The Outline of the Eleventh Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of People's Republic of China", National Development and Reform Commission People's Republic of China, <http://en.ndrc.gov.cn/hot/t20060529_71334.htm> (Accessed 10 September 2013).

desulphurisation regulations for power plants, and in 2011 the MEP promulgated a new standard for emitted pollutants in coal-fired power plants.[14] This policy was designed to take effect at the national level. However, the picture of the process in this case is too general to provide a complete understanding of institutional arrangements at the national level, as it does not allow for an in-depth discussion of the environmental policy-making process.

Due to decentralisation and growing regional autonomy, more variety in environmental policy has emerged at the local level. The legal framework clearly describes the responsibilities for environmental planning at the local level. The Environmental Protection Law requires that local governments have a city plan for environmental protection as a goal (Article 22). Within their jurisdictions, they may also establish their own environmental standards based on the national plan (Articles 9 and 10). Environmental protection regulations are implemented at the provincial level, such as Guangdong province, which is analysed in this work. All plans must be reported to the upper levels of government for approval (Article 9), including public hearings for discussion (Article 12).

As Lieberthal (1992) states, 'FA' is a better description of the relationship between the central and local governments. Lieberthal (1997) later uses this idea to elaborate on the environmental policy-making process, making two observations about China's FA. First, the power of EPBs is weak compared to that of other departments at the local level, and thus EPBs cannot enforce environmental law (Mol and Carter 2007:7; Shapiro 2012:68). Second, provincial governments give the highest priority to economic growth in the centralised political system. The central government rewards the local officials based on economic performance, thus environmental protection efforts are neglected at local levels (Liu, Zhang and Bi 2012:107). Since the implementation of reform and the opening up of the political system, provincial governments have been perceived as 'independent kingdoms' because they have significant decision-making power, are entitled to extract financial resources and are resistant to the external influence of central leadership (Ross 1988:199; Shapiro 2012:69; Morton 2010:284; Heilmann 2011:63). Nevertheless, their 'jurisdictional independence' is not strong enough to allow them to control pollution, as they are up against the financial interests of local industries and because local-level environmental bureaus are weak. Local industries are powerful political actors in terms of

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[14] "New Standards of Emitted Pollutants For Coal-Fired Power Plants", Ministry of Environmental Protection of the People's Republic of China, <http://www.mep.gov.cn/gkml/hbb/bgg/201109/t20110921_217529.htm> (Accessed 5 September 2013).

employment and financial contributions. Furthermore, local governments usually provide economic incentives to reduce the cost of production, such as tax abatements on pollution fees (Lieberthal 2004:283). Although environmental protection has been upgraded as part of the FYPs, and budgetary support for it has increased, its ministerial rank is still lower than those of other ministries, and there is a lack of power over compliance. As such, local EPBs, which are subordinate to higher levels of local governments (such as city and provincial governments), lack the financial resources to implement environmental laws and regulations. Instead, economic development remains provinces' top priority (Tang and Zhan 2008:430; Shapiro 2012:69). Weak EPBs are frontline bureaucrats on environmental issues, but they are not effective when it comes to policy implementation.

EPBs' weakness in the environmental policy-making process is further verified by Wu et al. (2012). In the ecological compensation policy for conservation of water and soil in Yunnan and Shaanxi provinces, the provincial water resources department collaborates with research institutes on the ecological compensation policy, consulting with and obtaining support from other departments such as the legislative affairs office, the price bureau, the provincial environmental protection bureau and the national Ministry of Water Resources. Wu et al. (2012) describe an instance where the provincial water resources department proposed a policy agenda to the provincial government. In that instance, the water resources department formed a coalition with other provincial departments and with the ministry at the central level to convince the provincial government to adopt the proposed policy (Wu et al. 2012:87-92). In this example, the EPB played an auxiliary role by providing the water resources department with suggestions and executing a law on the conservation of water and soil.

Alongside the weakness of EPBs in the political hierarchy, power struggles among government leaders also hinder the effective enforcement of environmental management. The formation of factions to get support from departments at the national and local levels reveals power struggles among leaders. Both Ross (1988) and Li (2010) note that factional politics present a major challenge to the CCP's status. Regarding environmental policy making in China, Ross (1988) points out that agenda setting is the outcome of powerful rivalries among CCP leaders. According to Ross (1988), the leaders choose their alignments carefully to improve their chances of winning power struggles:

When circumstances permit, however, leaders try to purge their rivals and replace them with their own supporters in an unending game of factional politics. … The process can take a long time; actually, it never ends because new factional alignments are always in the process of being formed. But once an alignment's opponents have been co-opted, bypassed, or replaced, changes can be rapidly instituted because the Communist party is the only source of legitimacy (Ross 1988:190).

The analysis above by Ross (1988) remains suitable to the current situation among the ruling elites. The power struggles among Communist Party leaders make policy implementation unstable because opponents can overthrow existing policy. Ross also noted that power struggles have extended to lower levels, particularly regarding pollution-control issues, providing opportunities for 'bureaucracies and localities to seek endorsement of their own positions, especially with regard to funding and on issues that supersede organisational boundaries and thus require interagency coordination' (Ross 1988:191). As such, factional politics have helped to shape policy-making processes in China, resulting in the unsustainable environmental policies of the post-Mao era.

However, in the post-Mao years and in the early years of economic and political reform, the domination of single factions was weakened, encouraging more public competition between factions. Experts from different professions have been invited to assist various organisations, such as the Academy of Social Sciences, and several official research organisations have been established to give advice. This advisory function has been institutionalised to 'increase the ability of factional advisers to broker ideas and mediate relations between the regime and the intellectual community, screening out heterodox proposals while attempting to shape their patron's views' (Xu and Xing 1983; Ross 1988:193). Professional groups are included in environmental issues camps to justify decisions in the power struggles, but the factions seem to merely use the groups rather than truly respecting them.

Apparently, factional politics is not the only factor in setting policy agendas in China. Both bureaucracies and local governments influence agenda setting, particularly in furthering institutional interests (Ross 1988:199). For example, Ross pointed out that the central leaders have tried to control the bureaucracies by implementing regulations and by setting up the State

Environmental Protection Commission to define rights and responsibilities (Ross 1988:199; Shapiro 2012:66). Although the establishment of the MEP has shown that the PRC's government is determined to protect the environment, the agency has several constraints. Interdepartmentalism diffuses environmental authority. For instance, the State Economic and Trade Commission is the organisation responsible for energy conservation policy, rather than the State Environmental Protection Agency (Mol and Carter 2007:9; Shapiro 2012:68-69). This situation was changed recently so that the Municipal Bureau of City Administration and Law Enforcement (rather than the MEP) is now responsible for municipal waste management and waste recycling. The policy-making processes behind environmental laws and regulations in China reflect the political interests among the ruling elite at the national and local levels, but public opinion is largely ignored (Alpermann 2010:130; Wu, Ma and Qi 2012:90).

The weakness of environmental policy making and enforcement is the result of FA. Although China's political system is a highly centralised hierarchy, decentralisation has to some extent provided autonomy at the local level. As mentioned above, local governments are entitled to determine public polices in their own jurisdictions, to approve the budgets of their administrative areas and to appoint or remove administrative functionaries. Likewise, local governments have autonomy in retaining financial resources for promoting economic efficacy, and the central government rewards local governments based on economic performance. Thus, environmental protection is never at the top of the local governments' agendas. The EPBs' weak position at each level of government is reflected in the lack of financial support received. Local governments are responsible for the local EPAs' annual budgets and personnel management, but local leaders tend to put economic growth first and neglect environmental protection because the former is linked to their performance reviews and promotion prospects, in addition to benefiting local fiscal revenues (Chen 2009:23). Environmental protection has become an evaluation indicator for local cadres attempting to strengthen their environmental protection responsibilities (Lo and Tang 2007:44). The 'Green GDP' was implemented in 2004, and the government worked out the criteria, which focus on reducing the environmental damage cost and resource consumption of the traditional GDP (Chen 2009:23). However, this was withdrawn after three years due to the opposition of local officials (Ibid), which demonstrates the reluctance of local leaders to implement environmental protection and shows how their power restricted the capacity of local EPBs and influenced their financial revenue.

In facing these financial limitations, the local EPBs retained a portion of the pollution fees and fines to support their operations (Chen 2009:24), or established affiliations with bodies such as environmental research institutes, environmental monitoring stations and environmental engineering companies to serve both governmental agencies and the private sector (Shi and Zhang 2006:280). Although such arrangements have been criticised, their financial situation has improved. The EPBs' credibility and neutrality in performing their duties might be greatly undermined by this approach (Shi and Zhang 2006:281), which might also foster corruption (Chen 2009:24). To prevent the latter outcome, the central government has also implemented a new scheme requiring all administrative departments at all levels to decouple their revenue, with all pollution fees and fines, for example, going to the local financial bureau so that the EPBs no longer receive them. In addition, the EPBs must have their own annual budgets approved by the local National People's Congress. This new system cannot solve the funding shortages, particularly in the less-developed regions, so the local EPBs have continued to keep a proportion of pollution fees to pay for their operations (Chen 2009:25). Overall, the competitive pursuit of economic growth between local governments has encouraged them to exploit environmental resources. In addition, the local EPBs' functionality is weakening, indicating that environmental protection is not at the top of the local governments' agendas. In general, the domination of economic development overrides environmental policy institutions such that the decentralised local governments, local officials and business leaders ignore existing environmental regulations (Economy 2007:56; Liu, Zhang and Bi 2012:107). This leaves the central government unable to 'motivate, direct steer and control' the local governments in making environmental protection a top priority (He et al. 2012:35). Furthermore, the public is excluded from the environmental policy-making process which, although only one factor, may be crucial in explaining the intense contentiousness of the recent environmental activism in China. Despite the transformation of environmental institutions, civil society and enterprises also play a role in environmental protection and thus are the focus of environmental management in post-Mao China.

3.3 Integrated Environmental Management in China?

3.3.1 Economic actors in China's environmental management

In the economic domain, the government and the market in China have tended to respond to environmental challenges in different ways. Under the economic instruments implemented by the central government, companies have taken on more obligations to ensure a sustainable environment. Measures such as tax reductions and increased environmental fees are the most common routes to pollution control. The 'polluter pays' principle has been adopted to control

industries or firms in terms of air and water pollution and subsidies for natural resources such as water and energy have been abandoned. Instead, firms are required to pay to promote efficient use (Economy 2007:26). Enforcement, however, is weak and ineffectively executed. As such, because these firms are one of the main sources of income for local government, officials have tended not to punish the polluting firms by allowing them to escape from making payment. In addition, bringing the market into environmental management embodies a shift of responsibilities from the state to the market. The Solid Waste Pollution Prevention and Control Law, for example, requires companies to take responsibility for preventing and controlling solid waste in their production processes.

Nevertheless, both international and domestic enterprises tend to be more actively engaged in the environmental policy-making process. SEPA (formerly the Ministry of Environmental Protection) consults with enterprises on new policies and regulations, and some new institutions have been formed. For instance, the China Business Council for Sustainable Development not only provides a platform for business exchange and cooperation among businesses, governments and communities on best practices in sustainable development, but also contributes input to the governments and assists in policy development.[15] EPBs also consult with companies, and this has become one of their sources of income (Economy 2007:26-27).

In terms of a response to environmental challenges and promoting sustainable development, one cannot neglect the increasing market demand for 'green business'. Some famous Chinese enterprises such as Huawei (an ICT solutions provider), Geely (automobile manufacturer) and Wahaha Group (beverage manufacturer) have promoted corporate social responsibility and initiated environmentally friendly production processes. For example, Huawei advocates energy-saving practices in its cooling process and attempts to meet international standards (such as the European Union Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive) in waste disposal,[16] which helps it to access the international market (Shi and Zhang 2007:286). In addition, some large subsidiaries of multinational corporations (MNCs) and local enterprises have cooperated with local NGOs to respond to environmental challenges. For example Unilever (China), a subsidiary of the UK company, cooperated with the Institute of Public and Environmental Affairs (IPE), a

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[15] "CBCSD Purposes and Objectives", China Business Council for Sustainable Development, <http://english.cbcsd.org.cn/cbcsd/purpose/index.shtml> (Accessed 18 May 2013).
[16] "Corporate Citizenship: Environmental Protection", Huawei Technologies Co. Ltd., <http://www.huawei.com/en/about-huawei/corporate-citizenship/environmental-protection/index.htm> (Accessed 18 May 2013).

Chinese ENGO, in reducing polluted water discharges from its Hefei City factory in 2007. A third-party environmental audit was used to investigate the problem, and the volume of discharge eventually complied with the law.[17] It is clear that corporations are developing a tendency to build an environmentally friendly image to enhance profit, not only in response to pressures from NGOs but also to gain the trust of domestic consumers (Shapiro 2012:111).

Finally, Chinese companies are increasingly adopting international environmental standards since China's accession to the WTO. International markets are promoting green products and environmentally friendly production processes in addition to pushing manufacturers towards higher standards. For instance, the ISO 14001 certification of environmental management is now extensively used in various Chinese companies (such as the China National Petroleum Corporation). Consequently, the Chinese government has used these international environmental standards as a reference and developed its own systems, such as labelling products containing genetically modified organisms, and the China GAP certification, which is a national standard for producing organic products (Shi and Zhang 2006:286; Mol and Carter 2007:10-11). The corporations in China may be going 'green', but progress towards emissions reduction remains insufficient among the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) at the local level. Given that these SMEs provide tax revenue and job opportunities at the local level, they have strong bargaining power with the local governments, which they can use to reduce or avoid environmental controls.

3.3.2 The Rise of Civil Society and 'Embedded Activism' in the Environmental Sphere

The relaxation of control over forms of social organisation has enhanced civil society's participation in environmental protection. In 2011, 462,000 social organisations were registered in China and 6,999 of them were environmental in nature.[18] The first ENGO, Friends of Nature, was established in Beijing in 1994. It was founded by distinguished Chinese scholar Liang Congjie and was the first registered social group formed by a citizen in China. The rise of Friends of Nature took Chinese environmental activism into a new phase, and ENGOs 'became the main organisational structure' (Wu 2009:3). Other ENGOs such as the China Environmental Fund and

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[17] For further information, please refer to: "Case Study – Using Third Party Feedback to Break the 'Business as Usual' Mind-set in an Aim to Drive Positive Change", Unilever China (Hefei) Factory, Institute of Public and Environmental Affairs, <http://www.ipe.org.cn/Upload/Case-Study-Unilever-China-Hefei-Factory-EN.pdf> (Accessed 18 May 2013).

[18] Annual Report of Social Services Development, 2011 (2011 *Nian Shehui Fuwu Fazhan Tongji*), Ministry of Civil Affairs of the People's Republic of China, <http://cws.mca.gov.cn/article/tjbg/201210/20121000362598.shtml> (Accessed 13 May 2013).

government-based think tanks like the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Sciences have participated in the environmental protection dialogue. Both types of organisation have close links with the state, and the experts who participate in them provide valuable knowledge of environmental management. Such citizen-formed ENGOs not only play a role in environmental education and organising environmental protection projects in the community, but also become increasingly involved in lobbying the government. For example, 21 ENGOs sent an open letter to the Ministry of Agriculture and National Fishery Management seeking information about the investigation of the oil leak at Bohai in 2011.[19]

A further notable development in environmental management in China was the implementation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Law in 2003 and Measures on Open Environmental Information (for Trial Implementation) in 2008. The EIA Law provides a procedure for assessing a project's environmental influence and facilitates a scheme of public hearings to enable public involvement in the environmental assessment process. The Measures give the public rights and encourages public interest in obtaining environmental information and participating in environmental protection. For example, the public can now participate in setting water prices through a system of public hearings in urban areas (Zhong and Mol 2008). Theoretically, these laws promote public engagement in environmental issues while increasing the transparency of environmental management.

Even though environmental regulations have been implemented in an attempt to prevent protests (Alpermann 2010:139), China still lacks mechanisms for public participation and the commitment of a responsive and accountable government (Koppenjan and Enserink 2007:469). The EIA Law, for example, still has a limited effect on policy decisions in some cases (Wu, Ma and Qi 2012; Moser 2013:96-135). Furthermore, public participation in EIAs usually happens after public protests (such as in the cases studied in this work), due to the lack of EIA enforcement. The close partnership between businesses and local governments ensures better profits for both, but it also means that public interests are not properly considered. In addition, the EIA Law has been accused of non-transparency, and of denying affected people the right to be heard and

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[19] Environmental NGOs sent a letter appealing to the authorities to assess the damage caused by the oil leak in Bohai (21 *Jia Huanbao NGO Zhixin Nongyebu Huyu Pinggu Bohai Yiyou Sunshi*), *Friends of Nature*, <http://www.fon.org.cn/index.php/index/post/id/641> (Accessed 14 August 2012).

compensated.[20] Zhong and Mol (2008:911) remark that the representatives in public hearings are directly or indirectly controlled by the state, and that public hearings are held in response to state initiatives, particularly the interests of local government. In the example of the high-voltage electric towers cited above, the speakers in the public hearing were pre-selected (Alpermann 2010:140).

The use of EIAs is necessary in today's environmental policy-making processes, and is thus described as 'the cornerstone of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in the West' (Zhao 2010:90). Various scholarly works have praised EIAs for their ability to provide information that facilitates sensible decisions, reduces environmental consequences, builds trust between the public and decision makers and shapes effective environmental policies (Zhao 2010:90; O'Faircheallaigh 2010:19-27). Nevertheless, the balance of power between the public and policymakers has shifted in the EIA process (O'Faircheallaigh 2010:20) because citizens now have more power to affect the decisions about particular projects, and power is distributed more equally between the governments and the public. Public participation in environmental policy-making processes is supposed to have increased under the EIA Law, and the EIAs in turn are expected to improve law enforcement. As discussed above, in practice, public involvement is still manipulated by the government. The literature provides detailed discussions of the reasons for this limited participation, such as leaders' concerns that governmental authority will be undermined, or that groups' interests will be spoiled if information is disclosed (Zhao 2010). However, the deficiencies of participatory mechanisms should be connected to the policy-making process.

Public participation in EIAs is shaped by the dynamics between public participation in the decision-making structure and process (O'Faircheallaigh 2010:25). O'Faircheallaigh (2010) claims that public participation in EIAs should not be studied separately from public participation in other public policies, but instead that it should be connected to the political nature of public participation (Ibid:25). Such participation involves the institutional arrangements in the government and is influenced by which agencies do or do not respond to the demands of the public, and how they respond. However, in the context of authoritarian China, the bodies granting the power of public participation in the EIA process, and the EPBs (and local environmental

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[20] Tang, H. (2013). "China's 'Nimby' Protests Sign of Unequal Society", *ChinaDialogue*, <https://www.chinadialogue.net/article/show/single/en/6051-China-s-nimby-protests-sign-of-unequal-society> (Accessed 8 October 2013).

agencies) do not reflect the citizens' opinions due to those bodies' weak status. The local governments' top priority is economic development rather than environmental concern. The citizens still rely on 'power leverage', through members of the NPC and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), for example, to express their dissatisfaction. As such, the balance of power between state and citizens has not fundamentally changed, and thus still rests with the government.

Although participatory mechanisms are implemented in environmental policy processes, environmental groups remain constrained in environmental activism. Tang (2013) criticises environmental groups' inability to represent the public in recent 'not in my back yard' (NIMBY) campaigns in several Chinese cities such as Xiamen, Qidong and Shifang, listing several reasons. First, environmental groups are not allowed to represent the public in environmental litigation. Second, the current registration system for ENGOs obstructs a confrontational approach to launching any social campaign. Thus, ENGOs prefer to place themselves in a 'safer' role, such as providing environmental education and advocacy, to avoid public involvement.[21] The political status of Chinese ENGOs is unclear, and they launch non-confrontational campaigns because – as Morton (2010) explains – their campaigns often challenge local vested interests, and the Chinese government cannot tolerate any social activism that threatens the regime or resists self-censorship among green groups (Morton 2010:283). Because ENGOs do not participate in public protests, the public initiates protests through social media, as it is the only avenue through which to communicate their concerns.

Civil society is supposed to be a sector that is independent from the state, yet the situation is different in authoritarian China. Chinese ENGOs play a non-confrontational role in their relationship to the party-state, and are thus embedded within the state structure (Ho 2007:198), which means that they are seen as an example of state-centred Chinese civil society, or 'civil society with Chinese characteristics' (Alpermann 2010:125). Cai (2010) argues that protestors often target local governments because the latter 'may directly violate citizens' rights, distort the central government's policies or fail to protect citizens' rights'. In addition, local governments have the power and responsibility to deal with daily governance (Cai 2010:4). Thus, it cannot be denied that local governments play a role in limiting the growth of ENGOs and restricting

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[21] Tang, H. (2013). "China's Street Protests Won't Change the Failing System", *ChinaDialogue*, 30 June 2013. https://www.chinadialogue.net/article/show/single/en/5660-China-s-street-protests-won-t-change-failing-system (Accessed 10 October 2013).

involvement in environmental policy-making processes. As the antagonistic relationship between local governments and ENGOs is revealed in the environmental policy-making processes, the latter have launched a power-leverage strategy that they see as crucial to succeeding in environmental activism. ENGOs take advantage of the 'loopholes' in the political systems at the local level (vertical and horizontal governmental structure, *tiaokuai zhidu*) and the conflicts of interest between different administrative departments at different tiers and levels (Alpermann 2010:125; Cai 2010:5). An increasing number of ENGOs are devoting themselves to advocating an environmentally friendly, open and just society. In doing so, they struggle with local governments because the latter still play a manipulative role when interacting with the former regarding environmental policy processes. Yet, local governments are concerned with legitimacy and stability, which might lead them to make concessions for environmental activism.

Overall, the problematic participatory mechanisms and ENGOs' inferior status mean that public participation in the environmental policy-making process remains weak – it is far from a form of environmental governance that is effective, efficient, democratic and accountable (Liu, Zhang and Bi 2012:108). This also explains the emergence of intensive NIMBY protests organised by local victims and supports the theory that such protests may become more radicalised if the government does not change its position.

3.3.3 Mass Media Coverage of Environmental Issues in China

The mass media also plays a role in the transition towards better environmental management. Outlets such as television, newspapers and the Internet increasingly focus on environmental problems, stimulating the rise of environmental consciousness among the people. The Internet, in particular, is a relatively new channel for spreading information about environmental issues. Online discussion forums and the Chinese microblogging site Weibo have become the most influential channels in promoting environmental transparency and mobilising activists. Such Internet-based actions enhance the capability of ENGOs and individual groups in mobilising, organising and coordinating environmental activism (Shi and Zhang 2006:289).

Environmental journalists are good examples of the close relationship between the mass media and ENGOs. Feng Yongfeng, a well-known environmental journalist and the founder of the ENGO Green Beagle, is closely involved with environmental issues such as grasslands preservation and the deterioration of Beijing's waterways, and has launched walks, talks and free-ranging discussions intended to raise public awareness of these problems across Beijing (Geall

2013:16). This involvement is unlike that of the first generation of environmental journalists, who just investigated and wrote about the issues. Another well-known environmental journalist, Wang Yongchen, formed the biggest ENGO, Green Earth Volunteers, in 1996 and launched an influential movement against dam building in south-west China. Such writers have used their networks and formed ENGOs to disclose environmental problems and encourage public participation.[22]

Some environmental journalists have reported on politically sensitive environmental issues and made waves in society as a result. Many Chinese newspapers, whether party- or non-party-run, have now introduced environmental sections. Unlike other politically sensitive issues, such as human rights and democracy, environmental news is considered relatively less sensitive. Some newspapers, such as *Southern Weekend*,[23] report environmental news in terms of addressing rights and governance, or disclose institutional corruption and lack of transparency in policy making (Geall 2013:22). For example, one of the informants in this work, Feng Jie, who is also an environmental journalist for *Southern Weekend*, described her investigation to author Sam Geall:

> Feng Jie, 30, from the north-western province of Ningxia. Feng won the
> "Journalist of the Year" category at the 2012 China Environmental Press Awards
> for three stories written for *Southern Weekend*, including a series about the oil
> spillage and cover-up in the Bohai Sea in 2011. […] Feng Jie arrived on the
> scene of the Bohai spill on 30 June 2011, several days after the first microblog
> rumors of a leak had started to circulate and long before the State Ocean
> Administration had confirmed the accident. […] She then followed the story

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[22] "About us", Green Earth Volunteers, <http://eng.greensos.cn/About.aspx> (Accessed 8 May 2013).

[23] Compared to other newspapers in China, *Southern Weekend*, a Guangdong-based publication, 'is one of the country's most respected newspapers, known for its hard-hitting investigations and for testing the limits of freedom of speech' (*BBC News*, 8 January 2013) and 'a relatively liberal voice in the Chinese media sphere' that has managed to 'maintain a functional, if uneasy, coexistence with censors' (The Atlantics, 11 January 2013). Sources: "Support for China Censorship Row Paper *Southern Weekly*", *BBC News*, 8 January 2013, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-20942641> (Accessed 8 May 2013) and Gao, H. "A Press Renaissance? The Legacy of China's *Southern Weekend*", *The Atlantics*, 11 January 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/01/a-press-renaissance-the-legacy-of-chinas-southern-weekend/267081/> (Accessed 8 May 2013).

closely for the next six months. When a number of media reports pointed the

finger at the US company ConocoPhilips, one half of the joint venture that ran

the oil platform, she suggested that Chinese state-owned company CNOOC was

shirking responsibility. […] Her perceived professionalism seemed to earn her

the respect and trust of the regulators (Geall 2013:30-31).

Feng's investigations have clearly tested the limits of openness in China's current political environment. She has put herself at risk to give her readers the facts about mismanagement at the hands of corporate officials. Moreover, such investigations have served as sources of information for ENGOs in the realms of lobbying and environmental litigation.

Such experiences illustrate the relationship between state and society regarding environmental issues. The relaxation of social control has accelerated the emergence of ENGOs, which promote public environmental awareness through education, campaigning and lobbying. Some ENGOs have successfully established both domestic and international partnerships with NGOs to attract financial and technical support. They work closely with the mass media to expose pollution and lack of transparency: '[the] green groups and journalists have acted as agents of social change and begun to build the notion of public participation and grassroots action in China, and contributed to increased accountability of government' (Thompson and Lu 2006:29). In addition, the implementation of the EIA Law and Measures on Open Environmental Information has provided opportunities for both ENGOs and the public to participate in governmental decision making. The institutional arrangements, with fragmented bureaucratic structures and power struggles between governmental agencies and local business interests, have also created opportunities for ENGOs and journalists to engage in policy advocacy (Wu 2013:4). Thus, as Lu and Thompson (2006:28) remark, Chinese ENGOs are 'at the forefront of true civil society development, creating an officially accepted and recognised nongovernmental sector in a political and social system that was completely government-dominated for 40 years'. Although the number of ENGOs is now growing rapidly, and they are actively engaged in various environmental issues, their roles in social mobilisation and policy advocacy remain limited in China's current political context. Their non-confrontational strategy (Lu and Thompson 2006:29; Wu 2009:4; Ho and Edmonds 2007:333; Lu 2007:61-62; Johnson 2010:432; Shapiro 2012:124; McBeath and Leng 2006:183) and highly localised (Ho and Edmonds 2007:333; Wu 2009:4) and fragmented (Ho and Edmonds 2007:33; Wu 2009:4) nature are perhaps best suited to survival in the current authoritarian context (Yang 2005:55). In addition, no single ENGO is capable of generating and organising the

diffused public opinion into a powerful political campaigning force (Ho and Edmonds 2007:336; Wu 2009:4). Although the ENGOs actively extend their networks through environmental journalists, academics and professional groups to expose incidents of pollution and resolve environmental disputes through litigation, their work is definitely conducted within a 'mandated framework' (Thompson and Lu 2006:29). In other words, Chinese ENGOs are engaged in 'rules-based' forms of activism (Johnson 2010:432). Ho and Edmonds (2007) argue that 'embedded activism' best describes environmentalism activism in authoritarian China, meaning that it is limited by political constraints but still empowers civil society (Ho and Edmonds 2007:334). As Björn Alpermann notes, Chinese ENGOs 'co-opt' with the system instead of promoting its democratisation (Alpermann 2010:146).

3.4 The Emergence of Environmental Protests and Anti-Incinerator Activism in China

The previous section shows the constraints on ENGOs and on mass public participation in environmental policy-making processes in the context of authoritarian China, and explains the rise in environmental protests in recent years. This section focuses on the evolution of environmental protests in urban China since the economic reform of the late 1970s. Unlike in the environmental campaigns (such as those against dam building at Three Gorges) launched by the ENGOs, mass citizen groups have taken the lead in opposing polluting projects, such as incinerator construction. In this section, the patterns and strategies of environmental protests and transformation are discussed, followed by an illustration of China's municipal waste crisis and its current municipal waste management policies. The aim is not only to provide the general background of environmental activism in authoritarian China, but also to address how local governments respond to these mass protests.

3.4.1 The Mass Environmental Resistance in Post-Mao's China

As discussed in the previous section, the civic NGOs play a limited role in policy making and they avoid confronting the government (Tang and Zhan 2008:426), choosing instead to educate and provide services. Moreover, the social groups keep their distance from the citizens and foreign donors to survive in the restrictive political environment (Ho 2007:189). This also explains why citizens have found it difficult to get help from the ENGOs in the recent environmental protests.

ENGOs educate and lobby, launching non-confrontational, low-profile strategies in environmental campaigns. The three best-known environmental campaigns – save the snub-

monkey in Yunnan (1995-1997), save the Tibetan antelope in Qinghai (1996-2000) and anti-dam building in the Nu River (Nujiang, 怒江 also called Salween River) (2003-2006) – have revealed these characteristics. All of the aforementioned campaigns were initiated by ENGOs, such as Friends of Nature and Global Village, and environmental journalists. Besides, well-educated professionals with extensive personal networks, utilise mass media coverage also are the characteristics of these environmental campaigns. The campaigns were mainly concerned with protecting wildlife and conservation. Rather than challenge the regime, the activists in the snub-nosed monkey and Tibetan antelope campaigns used institutionalised methods such as petitions, and looked to the higher authorities or the central government for help. The Nu River campaign, however, took a more contentious approach in opposing the building of a dam in Nu River (Sun and Zhao 2008:151).

The work of ENGOs has enlightened Chinese citizens and changed protest tactics. For example, the concepts of 'right to know', participation and environmental justice, along with increased knowledge of environmental laws, have increasingly appeared in recent protests. However, non-confrontational and self-contained environmental activism (Ho and Edmonds 2007:332; Sun and Zhao 2008:160) in China has been changing in recent years due to the environmental situations affecting people's livelihoods and the ENGOs' weakness regarding governmental confrontation. The recent protests have mainly been led by mass citizen groups to oppose the polluting projects planned near their communities, such as chemical factories and incinerators. These protests have been local in scale, with the protesters using radical, confrontational strategies. Technology (such as online discussion forums and the use of the micro-blog Weibo) has been the main means of mobilisation. As mentioned, most 'mass protests' do not receive help from the ENGOs, and their leaders organise the action alone, contacting the mass media and upper-level government authorities while learning about the environment and environmental laws.

3.4.2 The Rise of Anti-Incinerator Activism in China

Increased amounts of municipal waste are becoming common in both industrialised and industrialising countries, and the management of such waste is a political issue that causes controversy between state and society. On the one hand, states are looking for the most efficient solution, and incineration seems to be one of the best options. On the other hand, citizens are concerned about the environmental and health effects of incineration. They fear that incineration emits dangerous and polluting substances (such as dioxins) that cause irreversible damage to people and the ecosystem (such as in water and soil). As such, campaigns opposing incinerator construction have become a global phenomenon. Anti-incineration activism is found in the

industrialised democracies such as the US and the UK (Johnson 2013:110), and in emerging economies such as China's. Unlike anti-incinerator activism in other democracies, anti-incinerator activism in China was launched in the context of an authoritarian regime and a decentralised political structure. How, then, could Chinese citizens engage in activism, and how did local governments respond to the protesters' grievances? These questions are part of the focus of this work.

Incineration, with its 'waste-to-energy' technology, will be widely adopted in the future, particularly in the European and Chinese markets. From 2012 to 2016, facilities with the capacity to incinerate 21 and 40 million tonnes annually will be developed in Europe and China, respectively.[24] This incineration technology, which emphasises the reuse of waste as fuel for generating energy, has the benefits of reducing the emission of greenhouse gases and methane caused by landfills, and providing a substitute for fossil fuels.[25] Thus, the Chinese government has turned to incineration to reduce the pressure on landfills (Lang and Xu 2013:833). The first incinerator power plant in China began operation in Shenzhen, Guangdong province, in 1994. It emphasised the deployment of moving-grate technology to meet the EU standards for emissions and treatment of toxic waste (Feng 1995 in Lang and Xu 2013:833).

However, these incinerator projects have been criticised for the negative effects they could have on human health and the environment if ineffectively controlled. For instance, the incineration process produces ash containing hazardous elements. The toxic pollutants found in the emissions include heavy metals, dioxins, furans and polyvinyl chloride, all of which harm human health and the ecosystem. People exposed to such highly toxic environments can develop cancers and reproductive and respiratory damage. Water, air and soil are polluted by airborne ash, which further affects wildlife.[26] Nevertheless, incineration is still widely deployed in various countries because the technology solves space shortage and energy generation issues.[27]

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[24] "Waste to Energy – The Boom Continues Led by Europe and China", 12 July 2012). *Eco-Business.com*. <http://www.eco-business.com/news/waste-to-energy-the-boom-continues-led-by-europe-and-china/> (Accessed 27 October 2013).
[25] "World Bank Technical Guidance Report: Municipal Waste Report", The World Bank, August 1999:59. <http://www.worldbank.org/urban/solid_wm/erm/CWG%20folder/Waste%20Incineration.pdf> (Accessed 27 October 2013).
[26] "Negative Impacts of Incineration-based Waste-to-Energy Technology, 2008". *Alternative Energy*. <http://www.alternative-energy-news.info/negative-impacts-waste-to-energy/> (Accessed 29 October 2013).
[27] For the debates on incineration, please refer to: Seltenrich, N. (2013). "Incineration versus Recycling: In Europe, a Debate over Trash", *Environment 360: Opinion, Analysis, Reporting and Debate*.

In China, according to the MEP, the volume of urban municipal solid waste was 50 million tonnes in 2011,[28] and incineration and landfills are the main methods of solid waste management (SWM). This work only focuses on incineration in Chinese cities. There were 122 incinerators in China in 2012 (excluding Hong Kong and Macau), but the Chinese government is planning to use incineration to resolve the country's long-term solid waste problems.[29] The document 'A Notice for Planning Nation-Wide Municipal Waste Facilities in the Twelfth Five-Year Plan' (十二五全國城鎮生活垃圾無害化處理設施建設計劃的通知) states that incineration was one of the strategies for managing municipal solid waste, and that national incineration was set to reach 35%, with plans to build 300 incinerators by 2015.[30] The existing incinerators in China, however, are poorly equipped and emit toxic pollutants. There is a lack of resources for managing incinerators, and most are managed by the government through staff members who have not received formal professional training in waste management. In addition, the governments provide insufficient financial resources for incinerator operation and maintenance, and the laws and regulations on SWM are out of date and lack enforcement.[31] Thus, controversies and protests surrounding incinerator construction have emerged across the country.

The case studies included in this work are two anti-incinerator projects, one in Beijing and the other in Guangzhou, that illustrate citizens' involvement in environmental policy-making processes in authoritarian China. The protests in Beijing and Guangzhou were chosen for their similar circumstances. Both projects were approved by the municipal governments but had not yet been built due to mass opposition, and both were relocated, arousing new controversies. The two cases studied here do not represent the whole spectrum of environmental protests and

<http://e360.yale.edu/feature/incineration_versus_recycling__in_europe_a_debate_over_trash/2686/> (Accessed 29 October 2013).

[28] Wang, C.C. (2013). "One-Third of Cities are Overwhelmed by Waste in 0.75 Acres Land" (我國超三分之一城市遭垃圾圍城 侵佔土地 75 萬畝)**,** *China Youth Online* (中青在線), 19 July. <http://zqb.cyol.com/html/2013-07/19/nw.D110000zgqnb_20130719_1-08.htm> (Accessed 29 October 2013).

[29] Li, B. (2013). "Government Subsidises Waste Burning Projects in Different Parts of China" (政策補貼助力各地垃圾焚燒項目大躍進)**,** *Sina.com* (新浪新聞)**,**17 July. **<**http://news.sina.com.tw/article/20130717/10162640.html> (Accessed 2 November 2013).

[30] General Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China (國務院辦公廳). (2012). "Plan of Building Municipal Waste Facilities in Nation-Wide Cities under the Twelfth Five-Year Plan" ('十二五"全國城鎮生活垃圾無害化處理設施建設規劃') *State Council of the People's Republic of China*, <http://www.gov.cn/zwgk/2012-05/04/content_2129302.htm> (Accessed 1 November 2013).

[31] "Forms and Challenges of Managing Waste" (垃圾處理面臨的形式和挑戰), solidwaste.com.cn. (中國固廢網). <http://report.solidwaste.com.cn/lajichuli/xstz.htm> (Accessed 3 December 2013).

conflicts in other parts of China, but anti-incinerator protests are a major part of the environmental policy-making landscape with significant influence over contentious policies in Chinese society (Wang et al. 2012; Lang and Xu 2013:834).

Similar to those in other countries, mass anti-incinerator protests in China focus not only on removing incinerators from the community in question, but also on fighting for the right to participate in decision-making processes, environmental justice and information disclosure in such campaigns. Unlike in other democracies, however, Chinese citizens launch their protests in a highly repressive political context. Dozens of anti-incinerators protests have taken place in various cities such as Shanghai, Suzhou, Nanjing, Beijing and Guangzhou in the last decade, and they have not been halted despite the protesters facing political risks at the various stages of activism. The human health risks and environmental impact are the main reasons for these mass citizen protests, in addition to non-transparent decision-making processes and a lack of trust in local government. Facing the pressure of protests, the local governments typically suspend construction or remove the incinerator projects, and their responses have raised interest among scholars studying social activism in China who seek to explain the protests' successes and failures (Cai 2008; Cai 2010; Lang and Xu 2013).

3.4.3 Anti-incineration Activism and Policy Change

In studying protests in authoritarian China, Cai (2010) conducted a systematic quantitative survey to discuss the successes and failures of collective actions in recent years. He collected 266 cases of collective action (such as land acquisition, labour disputes, homeowners' rights and pollution) in China between 1994 and 2007. He concluded that local governments' responses to such collective actions can be categorised as follows: 1) concessions that meet citizens' demands, 2) concessions accompanied by the punishment of citizens, 3) resistance toleration as citizens' demands are ignored and 4) repression (Cai 2010:5). In his explanation, the success or failure of collective resistance depends on the power of the protesting group (for example, solidarity and tactics) and its demands versus the political and economic costs faced by the government (Cai 2010:3,7). In addition, Cai addresses policy adjustments (either in its abolition or revision) that occur in concessions (Cai 2010:13), but he does not give an in-depth analysis in this survey. Lang and Xu (2013) attempt to explain the success of environmental activism by comparing three examples of anti-incinerator activism in China, in Guangzhou, Beijing and Wujiang. They agree with Cai (2010) that social networks with strong media connections and links to government affiliations are the key to success in launching protests in China, and that the concept of

environmental modernisation, to some extent, has changed these societies gradually in terms of political processes and the use of incineration technology (Lang and Xu 2013:843-845). Yet, the relationship between successful environmental protest and policy adjustment is not developed in their work. In this work, I explore the causal link between environmental protest and policy change.

I use Cai's (2010) explanation for the successes and failures of protests as a framework for my analysis of a possible causal link between protest and policy change. As Cai (2010) notes, local governments tend to make concessions (either policy abolition or policy innovation) as a response to social activism with the aim of minimising social and political costs. Thus, an additional question is raised: what conditions are necessary for instigating policy change through local government? The cases in this work do not represent the full spectrum of environmental activism in China, but they do highlight a broader pattern of contentious politics in Chinese society.

Chapter Conclusion

Overall, the Chinese environmental management is formed in such a way that the government is not the sole actor, but shares responsibility with sub-governmental agencies and non-state actors who are actively engaged in environmental management, it further shows the fragmented authoritarian model is unable to explain the complicated relationships between state and non-state actors nowadays. Since the economic reforms of the late 1970s, the Chinese government has recognised the effects of both domestic and global environmental deterioration and has implemented a set of nationwide regulations and laws. The integration of the global environmental community also increasingly affects domestic environmental policy. After more than 30 years, the Chinese environmental management system is still being shaped, and often moves in the opposite direction of the economic development agenda. In addition, the governing structure interrupts effective environmental policy implementation. Similar to other countries, economic institutions override environmental protection institutions in China, and the polluters (such as state-owned companies) are well protected by the economic ministries and local governments. Thus, the environmental protection agencies are unable to enforce the environmental regulations (He et al. 2012:35). Local governments often prioritise economic growth and neglect environmental regulations, whereas local EPBs lack the power to enforce the law and mobilise resources. This demonstrates the problems generated by a fragmented governing structure and the difficulty of promoting environmental protection at the local level in the context of authoritarian China.

The emergence of green civil society, to some extent, is a response to the weakness of the 'top-down' environmental management discussed above, and an attempt to contribute to environmental protection in China. Alongside the effects of environmental deterioration, the changing of political processes towards public participation has also enhanced the rise of green groups. The Chinese government is relaxing control over social organisations such as ENGOs, enabling them to become actively involved in environmental issues. The establishment of Friends of Nature in Beijing in 1994 was a remarkable event in the history of environmental activism in China (Wu 2009:3), as it was the first civil organisation for environmental issues to be formally established after the Tiananmen Massacre in 1989. Consequently, other ENGOs such as the Global Village of Beijing and Green Earth Volunteers of Beijing bloomed in other parts of China. Such organisations not only provide environmental education, but also policy advocacy, working with the mass media and professional groups (including scientists) to expose pollution and to put pressure on the Chinese government. The recent implementation of the EIA Law and Information Disclosure Regulations has also facilitated public involvement in environmental issues. As such, the ENGOs have launched a form of 'rule-based' activism against pollution.

However, their non-confrontational strategy and highly localised and fragmented nature means they can only offer limited opposition to governmental policy (Wu 2009:4). Their hesitation also affects the scope of their ability to represent the public interest. Tang (2013) explains that an ENGO cannot litigate environmental cases on behalf of the general public, and that their role as mediator between the government and the public over environmental issues is inhibited by the social organisation registration system. The rise of street-level public campaigning, with events organised spontaneously by the public, is becoming the new social force against pollution (Tang 2013).

Finally, economic actors cannot be neglected when looking at environmental management in China. The measurements implemented by the government, the fashion of green consumerism, the pressure from domestic ENGOs and the international environmental standards for accessing the international market all push Chinese companies to be more environmentally aware. Green businesses, however, are still in development and most have been launched by famous enterprises keen to build a better image, thus their effect on environmental responsibility remains doubtful. For example, the China National Petroleum Corporation, one of the country's oil giants, was

criticised in early 2013 for producing air pollution in Beijing.[32] Its reluctance to meet tougher emission standards revealed the MEP's weakness when compared with other governmental departments responsible for economic development, such as the National Development and Reform Commission. Nevertheless, smaller companies also violate environmental regulations at the local level, which is tolerated by local governments due to economic interests. Balancing economic growth and environmental protection is a challenge the Chinese government continues to face.

This review of the change of environmental management in China shows that the state is not the only actor in environmental management, as both economic and civil society also play their roles. The limitations of the non-state actors involved in environmental policy making also explain the increase in public campaigning led by mass citizenry against polluting projects in their communities. The call has gone out for transparent and participative decision-making processes. The actors might form different coalitions on an environmental issue to express their grievance, and seek policy change. Also, this chapter also reveals that the use of radical strategies to press local governments is common in these mass protests, and the government made concessions in some of the cases for minimising both political and economic costs. Overall, the fragmented and decentralising governing structure allow the degree of autonomy to respond the grievance of coalitions at local level of government. Therefore, framework of "advocacy coalition framework" is deployed for explaining how do the non-state actors form coalitions and their interactions in environmental political making process, as well as how they reach policy change. The conditions of local government to respond the grievances of citizens also discussin subsequent chapters.

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[32] Wee, S.L. and Li, H. (2013). "Politics of Pollution: China's Oil Giants Take a Choke-hold on Power," *Reuters*, 2 February 2013 <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/02/02/us-china-pollution-oilcompanies-idUSBRE9110F620130202> (Accessed 20 May 2013).

Chapter 4

Literature Review: Advocacy Coalition Framework and Policy Change

4.1 Introduction

Many believe that public administration in China is highly centralised, and that the policy-making process is bureaucratically initiated and administered under a one-party dictatorship. The CCP cadres manipulate the entire policy process and certainly exclude the participation of autonomous interest groups and society at large. In general, the 'Western model' of civil society – which is characterised by the participation of a plurality of interest groups in public policy-making, implementation and evaluation – is absent in China's public-policy processes. Although the Chinese government has implemented participatory mechanisms, such as EIAs, to enhance public involvement in environmental policy making, the recent spontaneous protests against pollution demonstrate such mechanisms' failure and raise questions about the effectiveness of public participation in the policy-making processes. Moreover, the protests aim, in part, to achieve the possibility of policy change as an alteration of maintaining governmental legitimacy. Thus, the correlation between protest and policy change is the focus of this work.

As previously mentioned, few studies have examined the above correlation. Both Cai (2010) and Shih (2013) highlight local governments' decisions to change public policies, and the rationale behind such changes. Mertha (2009) argues that government officials act as policy entrepreneurs when they change policies to achieve their organisational mandates at the local level, but the dynamics between protesters and the local governments regarding public policy changes have not been analysed.

Protests are designed to pursue public policy changes, and while the cause-effect relationship between them is debatable (Bennett and Howlett 1992:275-276), the pressure exerted by social forces definitely drives such changes (Meyer 2004:138; Nathan 1999). Policy changes can also be an outcome of the learning that occurs among the policy makers (Bennett and Howlett 1992:277). However, these studies have received little attention insofar as they relate to the mechanisms of policy change. Thus, the ACF is introduced as an analytical framework to explain the dynamics between the state and non-state actors in reaching a consensus about policy change. In this chapter, the ACF is introduced, including its strengths, its weaknesses and its applicability in explaining the environmental policy changes in China.

4.2 Taking Stock of the Advocacy Coalition Framework

The ACF is introduced and developed by Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1988), and later a set of hypotheses are presented to generalise the dynamics of policy actors within policy subsystems and the mechanisms driving public policy change. Weible et al. (2009) agree that the use of ACF addresses the following limitations in the policy process literature: 1) the interpretation of the Stages Heuristic in relation to the causal theory of the policy process, 2) the provision of system-based theories of policy making and 3) the provision of a theory for the role played by scientific and technical information in the policy process (Weible et al. 2009:122; Jenkins-Smith et al. 2014:184). Unlike the traditional top-down or bottom-up approaches to analysing the policy process, the ACF integrates both approaches within a policy subsystem, revealing the dynamics between state and non-state actors striving for policy change (Jenkins-Smith et al. 2014:184).

The ACF illustrates the complexity of policy making and explicates that both state and non-state actors, with their specialisations, hope to influence the policy process. Hence, the ACF uses a policy subsystem as a primary unit of analysis, focusing on a specific policy in a specific territory (Weible and Sabatier 2007:192). The framework includes a set of policy actors; not just the 'traditional iron triangle' members (i.e. law makers, governmental agencies and interest groups), but also officials from all levels of government, scientists, judiciary officials and mass media who specialise in that policy area and thus become involved. The ACF assumes that policy actors with strong beliefs can translate them into actual policy. Regarding the dynamics between policy actors striving for policy change, the ACF believes that scientific and technical information plays a role in changing the beliefs of policy actors, such that those with similar beliefs form 'advocacy coalitions' to reach a consensus about policy changes through policy-oriented learning. In addition, external factors, such as the broader political and socio-economic systems, affect the behaviour of the policy actors. Nevertheless, the ACF assumes that the beliefs among the policy actors have been very stable for 10 years or more, making policy change more difficult (Sabatier and Weible 2007:192; Weible et al. 2009:122). Since the ACF's introduction in 1988, dozens of ACF case studies and publications have been applied to the environmental and energy policies in countries such as the US, Europe, Australia and Asia as a lens to explain policy change intended to solve policy disagreements among the policy actors (Weible and Sabatier 2007:123). The ACF has become one of the most useful public policy frameworks (Ibid).

These advocacy coalitions are formed in nested patterns, and thus may overlap with other policy systems. For example, the municipal SWM policy in this work overlaps with local land use and urban planning subsystems. The ACF assumes that the outcome of policy change can be seen in the negotiations among the policy actors, and that their behaviour is affected by two sets of

exogenous factors: relatively stable parameters (geographical features, sociocultural values and basic constitutional structure) and dynamic external factors (changes in socioeconomic conditions, changes in governing coalitions and changes in public opinions) (Sabatier and Weible 2007:193). These factors are hypothesised to be the conditions necessary for major policy changes.

Policy actors hold different beliefs and form competing coalitions, which leads to disputes in the policy-making process. The ACF examines the policy actors' belief systems that affect political behaviour. The framework stresses a three-tiered belief system model for the policy actors (Sabatier and Weible 2007:194; Weible et al. 2009:122). The highest tier of the model contains the *deep core beliefs*; specifically, those that are the broadest and most stable, involving general normative values such as liberty and equality, which are applicable across many subsystems and very difficult to change. The middle tier contains the *policy core beliefs*, which span the entire policy subsystem. Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1999) identify eleven components of policy core beliefs, some of which are the preferences of policy-related values, the authority of governments and markets, the roles played by the public, elected officials, civil servants and experts and the policy system's problems as a whole. These components are helpful in forming and coordinating the coalitions among the policy actors. Likewise, the policy actors at this level are reluctant to change, but they are still willing to apply deep core beliefs in developing policy core beliefs in that subsystem (Sabatier and Weible 2007:195). The lowest tier contains the *secondary beliefs*, which are narrow in scope and thus more likely to change over time.

Both policy and individual belief systems are the foundation for forming advocacy coalitions. The ACF assumes that the policy actors with the same beliefs join informal networks in a policy subsystem to translate their beliefs into actual policy. They seek allies who share their policy core beliefs among law makers, governmental officials, interest groups and researchers with the goal of sharing resources and developing strategies through the coalitions. The ACF stresses that the coalitions reach policy changes through coalition opportunity structures. As stated, both stable system parameters and dynamic external events influence policy change, and coalition opportunity structures mediate between them, affecting the behaviour of the actors within the policy subsystem (Sabatier and Weible 2007:199-200).

The coalition opportunity structures serve as a broader political and economic background for policy change, but such change depends on two more conditions: the degree of consensus needed

for major policy change (to change policy core beliefs) and the degree of openness exhibited by the political system (Sabatier and Weible 2007:200; Weible et al. 2009:124). The ACF assumes that pluralist coalition opportunity structures with open political systems have a high degree of consensus about major policy change. Accordingly, corporatist structures with less open political systems and fewer policy actors tend to achieve a medium degree of consensus on major policy change. Decision making is centralised in corporatist systems, and few social leaders have the power to influence decision-making processes. Authoritarian regimes make it even more unlikely that consensus will be reached regarding major policy change because the participation is limited and the minority elite dominates the entire process. The rising influence wielded by non-state actors and diversified social values has complicated the policy-making process among nondemocratic regimes, such as that in China. The policy changes surrounding the Nu River protest (Han et al.2014) and the cases studied in this work show that the ruling elite is not the dominant actor in the policy-making process, as it must reach consensus with other policy actors to achieve policy change. I elaborate on the ACF's applicability in the Chinese context in Section 4.4 of this chapter.

Regarding the correlation between the degree of openness exhibited by a political system and the degree of consensus on major policy change, the ACF identifies four ways to achieve policy change. The first way is through external events, such as the changes in socioeconomic conditions, public opinions and governing coalitions, because they influence policy beliefs. The second way is through policy learning; that is, new information or experience that reinforces the thoughts and behaviour needed to revise policy objectives (Sabatier and Weible 2007:198). The third way is through internal subsystem events (Sabatier and Weible 2007:204-205), as the failure of current subsystem practices leads to policy change. For example, an oil spill is a disaster that affects the petroleum subsystem (Ibid.). The fourth way is through the disputes between coalitions, settled by negotiated agreements. In such cases, an institutional setting is provided to facilitate negotiations and agreements among the policy actors (Sabatier and Weible 2007:205-206; Weible et al. 2009:124).

In summary, the ACF helps to clarify the complexity among diversified policy actors within the policy-making process. These actors share similar beliefs and seek allies when forming coalitions to influence a specific public policy. Policy change, according to the ACF, is not only affected by policy actors' behaviour, but also by the coalition opportunity structures. Nevertheless, the open coalition opportunity structures provide a high degree of consensus in reaching policy change.

The ACF identifies four ways to reach policy change, but acknowledges the difficulties involved in achieving policy change in authoritarian regimes.

The ACF has received worldwide attention and has been widely applied to a variety of public policy studies. Discussions of ACF, both its application and the testing of related hypotheses, exist in the literature, particularly in relation to environmental/energy and social/economic policies (Sabatier and Weible 2007:207; Weible et al. 2009:125-126; Jenkins-Smith 2014:188; Weible and Sabatier 2007). The ACF's popularity does not suggest infallibility, and its merits and limitations are examined in the following section.

4.3 Merits and Limitations of Advocacy Coalition Framework

The ACF provides an analytical tool for explaining public policy changes. Weible et al. (2011) describe the ACF as an 'international communication of scholars – a common language of important concepts, basic relations among concepts, and a shared scope of inquiry' (Weible et al. 2011:355). It also contributes to testable theories and hypotheses for further academic discussions.

STRENGTHS

The ACF can be used to effectively understand the dynamics of policy actors in the policy-making process. It examines the central question of policy process research; namely, how people mobilise and take action. It clearly outlines the formation and structure of coalitions, which aggregate similar interests influencing the policy-making process. It achieves this by borrowing theories from psychology and social psychology to model the beliefs and behaviour in the policy subsystems. The ACF breaks away from the classic theories on the stage heuristic policy process, which refers to the stages of the policy-making cycle, i.e. agenda setting, formulation, legitimation, implementation and evaluation. The ACF also considers the macro background, such as socio-political setting, public opinions and external factors affecting policy actors' behaviour, which provides a more comprehensive understanding of the policy-making process. The framework identifies the mechanisms behind how the coalitions reach an agreement that spurs policy change (Weible et al. 2011:352). It also considers the significant role played by scientific and technological information in policy making and political disputes. The ACF studies have shown that scientists are key players in advocacy coalitions, fostering changes within policy subsystems (Weible and Sabatier 2007:132). Coalition resources also influence policy change. The framework suggests that political resources, including the legal authority to make policy decisions, public opinions, information, troop mobilisation, financial resources and skilful

leadership, are used by policy actors to shape public policies (Sabatier and Weible 2007:201). These resources are also important indicators for explaining policy changes (Jenkins-Smith et al. 2014:205). The ACF can be used across a variety of governing structures, policy areas and various cultural societies (Weible and Sabatier 2007:132) at the global level. For example, in studying the correlation between degree of consensus in making policy changes and the openness of political systems, the framework has provided the various policy change outcomes in pluralist, corporatist and authoritarian political systems.

The ACF can be applied in both qualitative and quantitative studies. Weible et al. (2009:126) note that it can be used in different data collection approaches, such as questionnaires, content analyses and interviews, indicating its usefulness in multiple methodologies for analysis. It is also applicable in comparative studies of governing subsystems, such as education, society, welfare and economic policies, to enrich the theoretical inspiration.

LIMITATIONS

The ACF is not a perfect framework. It cannot overcome the free-rider problem among coalition participants. Although ACF research has addressed the formation of coalitions, it has not overcome the free-riders on coalition members, and necessary to find out what have the policy actors done in the process of policy change (Weible and Sabatier 2007:132). Weible and Sabatier (2014:133) argue that the ACF does not clearly define the coalitions within the policy subsystems, such as the minimum number of actors needed to form a coalition capable of affecting policy subsystem outcomes. It also does not explain how coalition resources support policy change. Several coalition resources affecting policy coalitions have been identified, but how the policy actors use them to influence public policy remains insufficiently analysed.

Regarding policy-oriented learning, the ACF does not offer a clear conceptualisation and measurement of learning and its process (Jenkins-Smith 2014:205). The framework emphasises new information/experience that affects belief systems, facilitating policy change (Weible et al. 2009:124). However, the ACF has not developed a clear typology of such information and experience, or the conditions for fostering learning among the coalitions (Weible et al. 2009:134). It identifies the importance of external events and internal shocks in explaining policy change, but it does not specify which condition is sufficient to explain major policy change (Nohrstedt 2009:14). For example, Hsu's (2005) study on Taiwan's nuclear power policy and the international influences affecting the policy-making process does not identify the external or internal shocks influencing major policy change. Finally, the mechanisms of policy change are

unclear in the ACF, which assumes that a more structured coordination of coalitions can exert more power over policy decisions. However, the level of coordination affects policy decisions that have not even been mentioned. The framework has also not identified the process for reaching consensus on major policy changes among coalitions, or suggested alternatives, such as the institutional analysis and development (IAD) framework (Weible et al. 2011:351). Nevertheless, the ACF does provide an alternative to instrumental rationality, in which the external environment determines policy actors' preferences and is able to explain the process of policy change more comprehensively. (Schlager 1995:253). The ACF not only shows the complicated dynamics between policy actors within a policy subsystem, but it also explores the conditions shaping the outcome of policy change. Although the ACF was developed and has mainly been applied in liberal democratic countries and it assumes that the multi-stakeholders are excluded in decision making process among nondemocratic regime (Sabatier and Weible 2007: 200), the framework can be deployed in nondemocratic regime, such as China. As the growing policy actors are increasingly getting involved in environmental policy making in China, it is necessary to examine how the policy actors affect environmental policy change in this authoritarian country. In the next section, the ACF's application in the context of authoritarian China is examined to assess how relevant the framework i is to authoritarian China. I expect it to lead to an enhanced understanding and refinement of the framework in non-democratic regimes.

4.4 The Application of Advocacy Coalition Framework in the Chinese Context

As I mentioned, the ACF assumes that the degree of consensus needed for major policy change is low in authoritarian regimes because the minority elite dominates the policy-making process. The ACF identifies the openness of political systems that allow actors to become involved in the policy process (Sabatier and Weible 2007:200), and points out a closed political system cannot host major policy change in an authoritarian regime. In this section, I highlight the characteristics of ACF, and then discuss the applicability in this authoritarian context.

In studying environmental protests in China, in particular anti-incinerator protest, literatures mostly focus on the reasons for and the formation of protests, strategies adopted in the protests, and evaluate the effectiveness of protests in changing government policy. However, there is little discussion on the environmental protests led to the change of environmental policy, neither the reasons to policy change (Wong 2015). In addition, Han et al. argue that the advocacy coalition framework may suffer from 'framework stretching', making it either inapplicable or unable to explain cases accurately in a different political context such as that of China (Han et al 2014: 314). Nevertheless, this framework has been applied to analyse a number of cases of

environmental activism in China. However, the variables that affect environmental policy change and policy change mechanisms have not been discussed in these cases. Given that the local governments enjoy some degrees of autonomy in local governance under decentralised governing structure, policy innovation or policy abolition would be the option for responding to environmental protests for minimising political and economic costs (Cai 2010:4). The decentralising governing structure also explicates that local governments focus on political and social openness at the local level when choosing their mode of policy adjustment, and the coalition opportunity structure varies in different local governments.

In examining the conditions for environmental policy change, fundamental socio-cultural values also help us understand the interactions among the political actors in the activism and policy-making processes (Sabatier 2007:202). The political atmosphere and socio-cultural values have shaped the different developments in post-Mao China. For instance, in this work, I show that the historical background, as the 'forerunner' of economic reform, has created Guangzhou's social openness. The most outspoken newspaper in China, the *Southern Metropolitan Daily*, has played a significant role in addressing public policy by sympathising with environmental protesters. Moreover, the practice of civic engagement has blossomed in Guangzhou. Thus, the cultural dimension has framed the interactions between government and the protesters and those between government and civil society organisations. In contrast, Beijing, as China's capital, is characterised by a conservative political atmosphere and the late development of civil society, which have limited the city's capacity for civil development (Lu and Zhuo 2011). Furthermore, changes in the socio-economic conditions and public opinions also influence policy changes. Economic wealth creates a middle class that pursues a better quality of life, and the rise of environmental awareness changes public opinion on environmental protection in the society. A recent public poll found that 60 per cent of the Chinese people are concerned about pollution, and they want their government to prioritise environmental protection over economic growth[33]. As such, the grievances regarding environmental protection and the willingness to engage in policy change depend on both the openness of the political systems and socio-cultural values of local government.

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[33] Wang, Hongyi, 2014. Protecting environment tops public concerns in poll. *China Daily*, [online] 16 May. Available at < http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2014-05/16/content_17511326.htm> [Assessed 17 July 2014].

The rise of multiple interests such as agencies at different levels of government, environmental NGOs and citizens and led to the formation of coalitions to influence the policy-making process. Similar policy beliefs and mobilised resources are important assets among the rival coalitions in environmental policy subsystems. The pro-environmental protection coalition comprises environmental groups, citizens with a strong sense of environmental protection, whereas the state actors usually form a coalition focused on economic development. Scientific and technological information is used in both coalitions. They might invite scientists to share knowledge and collect scientific data supporting their arguments in the policy-oriented learning process. Other information such as the knowledge of laws and regulations related to a specific environmental policy is an additional important asset. As such, the rise of the middle class in urbanised cities such as Guangzhou and Beijing prompted the protesters studied in this work to adopt a contentious, legal-based approach in their activism. Meanwhile, the state actors claimed legal authority by interpreting the laws and law enforcement to limit the rivalry coalition's behaviour during the protests.

In addition to laws and scientific information, other coalition resources are also used to influence environmental policy. Public opinion that supports a coalition's policy position can be used as a resource by the policy actors. For example, the environmental protection coalition usually gets sympathy and support from the public during specific types of activism. Thus, the protesters might contact the mass media through personal networks to express their grievances.

Finally, the ACF assumes that skilful leadership can be found in the Chinese context, and that its presence can attract more resources to the coalition, in addition to ensuring that resources are used effectively (Sabatier and Weible 2007:203). A group of coalition members or an individual member might take a leading role in the protests, such as planning strategies and attempting to bring about an actual change in environmental policy.

As Sabatier and Weible (2007) mention, the coalition opportunity structure is borrowed from the concept of a 'political opportunity structure' (POS) (Sabatier and Weible 2007:199), in which the political process is shaped by resources and actors (Ibid:200). In the ACF, the coalition opportunity structure refers to a mediator between stable system parameters (i.e. constitutional and social structures, natural resources and fundamental socio-cultural values) and policy subsystems (Ibid:199). However, a POS has a more detailed definition. Theoretically, a POS is applied to a protest to explain the evolution of social movements (Meyer and Minkoff 2004:1457;

Gamson and Meyer 1996:275) and provide a set of variables for examining the dynamics between protesters and political institutions (Gamson and Meyer 1996:275). The 'degree of political openness' (Lewis 2000) is known to affect the development of social movements. Two types of political openness are classified: open and closed political opportunity structures. An open political opportunity structure explains 'how … organisations [can] participate formally in political procedures'. A closed political opportunity structure 'provides fewer institutionalised means for grievances to be heard'.[34] Both types involve the possibility of citizens' participation shaping policy change in the policy-making process.

In Western theory, an 'opened political opportunity structure' government accommodates more civil society organisations in policy procedures, as noted above, and the relationships between institutions and state-society relations are considered (Parsons 1995:335). Although institutions determine policy actors' behaviour, their constraints should not be over emphasised (Ibid:88). What is more, the policy actors often renegotiate, revise and reinterpret the rules, or new constraints (rules or structures) are made (Ibid:88). Thus, policy actors' behaviour regarding the policy process changes accordingly. Hajer (2003) further explains that the context of policy making is changing as institutional voids are filled by the emergence of new civil societies (Hajer 2003:175). The presence of institutional voids does not mean that the state institutions have suddenly faded and become obsolete, but rather that they have developed new norms and institutions through deliberations and negotiations (Ibid:175-176). Hence, state institutions become adaptive and resilient during the policy process, in which the rise of civil society and the participation of non-state actors play a crucial role. The core value of civil society is civic engagement in public affairs, such as involvement in the policy-making process for the good of society. The rise of civil society accumulates social capital, promotes civic engagement in public affairs and accelerates public participation in the policy process. Thus, institutional arrangements of state and civil society are interdependent in their influence over public participation in the policy process. Given that political and socio-cultural openness have shaped the behaviour of policy actors in the environmental policy subsystems, changes in socio-economic conditions and in public opinion are used as the indicators of conditions in this work.

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[34] Lewis, T.L., (2000). "Transnational Conservation Movement Organizations: Shaping the Protected Area Systems of Less Developed Countries", In: *Mobilization: An International Journal*, 5(1):108.

Political opportunity structures have shaped the interactions between government and protesters in China's environmental activism. The FA framework has created a variety of political opportunity structures in this regime by breaking the Chinese political system, which is decentralised and disjointed. In turn, the local bureaucratic enterprises are encouraged to compete and bargain to serve and promote their own interests or preferences in the policy process (Lieberthal 1992:8; Lam 2013:146). Thus, this structure provides 'the political geography of local authority boundaries' (Rootes 2009:881) and different degrees of political openness among the local governments. Environmental management institutions, such as district and municipal governments, local environmental protection authorities, the Municipal Commissions of City Administration and Environment and the Municipal Urban Planning Bureau, have competing interests and lack coordination. In this situation, the weakness of local environmental authorities is revealed in their inability to follow the instructions given by the central environmental bureaucracy. The fragmented political structure creates space for the protesters to seek the leverage they need to gain more support. In addition, the local governments enjoy 'autonomy' in policy making under the decentralised political system, resulting in various degrees of political openness shaped by the possibility of formal participation (Lewis 2000:108). The ACF notes that the paths of policy change are also valid in the Chinese context. Changes in public opinions and socio-economic conditions facilitate the environmental protection coalitions in pressuring the state actors to change environmental policy. For example, the rise of environmental awareness among the public is reflected in their support of the environmental protection coalitions. The new information or experience reinforces the behaviour among the policy actors within the environmental policy subsystem. Any information about the incineration technology, for example, becomes important evidence for the coalitions in persuading others to change their policy beliefs. Finally, there is also the possibility of negotiations and agreements among the policy actors in the Chinese policy-making process. In the Nu River hydropower project protest, for instance, the societally based environmental coalition negotiated with the state agencies and eventually agreed to trim the number of dams from 13 to 4 (Han et al. 2014).

As the POSs change, the actors protesting must calculate their strategies accordingly (Kriesi 1995:168; McCauley 2009:926; Gamson and Meyer 1996:278). Thus, POSs shape those environmental protests seeking changes in policy on building incinerators, such as the cases studied here. Although the all-encompassing concept of POSs is contestable, they have provided the factors for explaining the complexities of policy conflict and mobilisation within policy subsystems. The variations in response, in particular to policy innovation and environmental

activism among the local governments, also reflect the FA characteristic in China. As noted above, the governments at all levels enjoy a certain autonomy within the FA framework, as the decentralised powers are able to conduct different policy experiments during economic reform. However, in facing the rise of non-state actors and decentralised governing structures, the FA model does not accurately explain the policy changes in collective activism across the country. The conflicts between pro-incinerator entities and their societal opponents further reveal that the FA framework does not provide a sufficient explanation.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter examined China's environmental practices using the advocacy coalition framework (ACF), emphasising internal and exogenous factors, structural contexts and the dynamics among the policy actors within the policy subsystems. The ACF is not only applicable in studying policy change in pluralist and corporatist political systems, but also helps explain policy change in the context of authoritarian China with a particular focus on diversified policy actors and the bottom-up pressure from non-state actors in the policy-making process. The ACF is a useful analytical tool for developing hypotheses to guide research and explain policy changes. It not only defines the composition of policy actors in the coalitions and their resources, but also sets the coalition opportunity structures for the conditions shaping the policy actors' belief systems to reach a consensus on policy change. This examination of the ACF attempts to apply it to the Chinese context. A fragmented governing structure provides local governments with a certain degree of autonomy in implementing environmental policy. Poor environmental enforcement has driven the growth of protests in cities nationwide, challenging the local governments. Both state and non-state actors have formed coalitions to seek policy change, and their choices are shaped by coalition opportunity structures. In this work, I specify governing structures, socio-cultural values and changes in socio-economic conditions and public opinion as the conditions in the coalition opportunity structures that influence environmental policy change.

The decentralised governing structure is the structural background that defines actors' interests and behaviour. Socio-cultural values facilitate the development of civil society, and the non-state actors engage in policy making and pursue their own interests through policy-oriented learning. The economic wealth of society has shifted public opinion towards environmental protection, paving the way for the growth of environmental awareness and later the rise of environmental protests in the cities. Although the ACF does not fully explain the Chinese context, it does

provide a set of variables that can be used to understand the policy-making process in non-democratic regimes.

However, the use of the ACF in non-plural China can be problematic. According to Han et al. (2014:314), 'framework stretching' may result in the ACF being misinterpreted. Because the ACF was originally designed to explain policy changes in democratic regimes, it can be misinterpreted. Nevertheless, if the possible coalitions for an issue are identified and the minimal conditions of the ACF are met, then framework stretching can be avoided (Sabatier and Jenkin-Smith 1999:152), and its use in this work is justified. The ACF's use here also contributes to the ACF literature and supports the framework's generalisability.

The next chapter introduces my methodology and research design, detailing the instruments used to investigate the empirical cases. The theories presented are then cross-referenced when alternative explanations are produced through the analysis.

Chapter 5. Research Methodology

Studying environmental activism has largely used qualitative approach to study participation in the process of environmental governance. These studies have typically used archival examination, interviews with stakeholders and ethnographic approaches to data collection to synthesise their analyses. For instance, Yearley et al. (2003) use group discussions to explore air pollution in the local communities of three cities in the UK. Saunders (2007) explores the relationships between London-based environmental movement organisations and national ENGOs in the UK and examines resource mobilisation using semi-structured interviews, surveys and participant network analyses. She also explained the advantage of using a qualitative approach for clarifying the reasons behind why the formal organizational structure inclines to compete the resources, which the quantitative approach fails to explain (Saunders 2013:17). Some of other literatures have deployed a qualitative approach, for instance, Ogilvie and Rootes (2015) argued that the use of qualitative approach benefits to see the dynamics between the actors and the impacts of protests in studying the environmental campaigns (Ogilvie and Rootes 2015:878). These are just few examples and this research deploys qualitative approach and shows the advantages in studying environmental activism.

In this work, I also used qualitative methods, emphasising archival examination and interview content to investigate public involvement in China's environmental policy-making processes. The qualitative methods used here were particularly suitable for the deep analysis of social phenomena, and for providing textual descriptions of human behaviour such as experience, interpersonal interactions and feelings. Likewise, a qualitative approach helped reveal the complexity and implications of the policy actors' involvement in the anti-incinerator protests. I conducted a systematic investigation of the origins, evolution and features of China's environmental policy-making process, and of the responses to and effects of the anti-incineration protests. To achieve this, the data for this comparative empirical study were collected in four ways: i) through fieldwork in library research using publicly accessible archives in China on the topics of environmental policy making and environmental activism; ii) through the examination of Internet documents released by the Chinese government; iii); through fieldwork in gathering Chinese perspectives on public participation in environmental policy making and iv) through fieldwork conducted in Beijing and Guangzhou. In addition, I used a comparative study because it provided an awareness of 'unexpected differences, or even surprising similarities, between cases, [as] comparison brings a sense of perspective to a familiar environment and discourages

parochial responses to political issues' (Hopkin 2002:249). This comparison of the anti-incinerator activism in Beijing and Guangzhou shed light on the political process between local governments and protesting groups. Theories were then tested to generalise the complexity of environmental management in China. The similarities and differences of the actors and their campaign strategies, the protests' outcomes and the local governments' responses were compared. Then, I examined the underlying causes of the campaigns' various outcomes and the governmental responses to explain the link between protest and policy change. Finally, I attempted to identify general patterns in the variations in China's environmental management using the framework of fragmented political structures.

In this work, I compared activism in Liulitun, Beijing and in Panyu, Guangzhou. Beijing was the first of China's cities to experience anti-incinerator protests, and they successfully pressed the municipal government to suspend the incinerator project, which set a country-wide example. As China's capital and a city-province, Beijing acts as a mirror for national trends (Teets 2013:19). Guangzhou has served as an 'indicator of the openness of China' since the economic reform in the late 1970s. Traditionally open in terms of cultural and political perspectives, Guangzhou is one of the forerunners and 'policy pilot places' of economic reform. In addition, activism in Guangzhou has greatly influenced anti-incinerator construction in ways that other protests in China have not. The protesters in Guangzhou not only successfully suspended the incinerator project, but also later formed a green group advocating a zero-waste society in the city. The activism in Guangzhou also changed the attitudes of the municipal government regarding public participation in decision-making processes. Both Beijing and Guangzhou represent economic achievement, with GDPs ranked second and third, respectively, in 2013.[35] Hence, the rise of the Chinese middle class becomes the new force in environmental activism as they strive to protect their rights to knowledge, to participation in decision making, to a better quality of life and to clean air and water. Thus, although environmental activism in urban China is similar to that in other places in the world, where '(the protesters) challenge government's role in producing or reinforcing an uneven distribution of power and resources' (Fainstein and Hirst 1998:183), it does takes place in a highly repressive political environment.

The results provided a new impetus for revisiting some scholarly paradigms that have previously

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[35] "Shenzhen's GDP Ranks the Fifth in China" (Shenzhen GPD zhanju quanguo diwu luohuo beishangguang he Tianjin). (2013). *China's Economy* (Zhonggup Jingji Wang), 31 October, Available at: <http://gd.ce.cn/sy/gd/201310/31/t20131031_1170964.shtml> (Accessed 21 July 2014).

been used to explain public participation in China's environmental policies. This work received ethics approval from the University of York Economics, Law, Management, Politics and Sociology Ethics Committee.

An empirical qualitative inquiry aims to 'explore people's subjective experiences and the meanings they attach to those experiences' (Devine 2002:199), and thus is a good method for identifying holistic meanings, thought processes and the context of the information received (Ibid:199). Hence, the use of quantitative research methods was unfeasible and inadequate for this work. Moreover, the use of questionnaires did not allow for an in-depth analysis of the dynamic between state and non-state actors in protest and post-protest situations. In this study, my close observations and intensive interviews with environmental activists, journalists and government officials revealed the dynamic between government and public participators in environmental decision making, providing further understanding of the transformation of environmental governance in China.

In addition, an archival examination including newspapers and government documents provided background information that facilitated a better understanding of the cases. It also served as counter-evidence to my assumptions. Social media platforms, such as online discussion forums, provided a significant channel for collecting data on organising activism in Beijing and Guangzhou.

5.1 Newspaper Articles and Government Archives

First, information was acquired from governmental documents that focus on environmental policy and regulations, such as EIAs, which are available on the Internet. The Regulation of the People's Republic of China on the Disclosure of Government Information (中華人民共和國政府信息公開條例) has been effective since May 2008, and aims to enhance governmental transparency. Several types of information are openly disclosed, such as information about the structure, function and working procedures and other matters relating to administrative agency, laws and regulations, regulatory documents and financial budgets. This information facilitates our understanding of decisions made by both central and local governments. In addition, information about the environmental protection department is helpful for investigating the relationship between this agency and environmental organisations. For example, a list of the participants who had been invited to become members of a consulting committee on municipal waste management in Guangzhou was very useful. The laws and regulations for public involvement in environmental

issues were also explored, including those regarding public hearings in China. Governmental information was an important component of this work, as it supplemented the oral interviews, which were sometimes deficient in providing information.

Articles from newspapers (on issues such as protests in China) and stakeholders (such as reports about the incinerator projects posted on the Internet) were used extensively in this work. The information provided by newspapers was not used to check the validity of government and resister narratives, but rather to provide a backdrop for the protests studied. Six hundred newspaper articles in Chinese were collected from the Internet. I searched WiseNews (a Hong Kong-based online newspaper database service archiving Chinese and English newspapers from the Greater China region since 1998) for keywords related to incinerators, Guangzhou Panyu and Beijing Liulitun, and found articles and special reports on incineration technology, including polling on the proposed location of the incinerator in Guangzhou conducted between 2006 and 2014. Examples of China's national and local newspapers were included, such as *People's Daily* (人民日報), *Southern Weekly* (南方周末), *Southern Metropolis Daily* (南方都市報), *Beijing Times* (京□□□), *Beijing Daily* (北京日□) and *Nan Fang Daily* (南方日報). The newspaper articles generally sympathised with the protesters, particularly those published in *Southern Weekly* and *Southern Metropolis Daily*, which supported the Guangzhou incinerator protesters and thus played an important role in monitoring the government's incinerator construction activity.[36] *Southern Weekly* and *Southern Metropolis Daily* are members of the Nanfang Media Group (南方傳媒集團), a Guangzhou-based tabloid considered to be the most 'outspoken' newspaper in China.

5.2 Online Discussion Forum

Social media, which plays the roles of agent and platform in protests (Segerberg and Bennett 2011:200), was my second source of information for this work. However, in authoritarian China there are policies and regulations in place to limit Internet use (Yang 2008:129), and they also control the spread of protest. This does not mean that it is impossible to use the Internet to mobilise protests. Chinese citizens still use the Internet to express their opinions about Chinese current affairs. In this work, I used two online discussion forums – the Riverside Garden Community Forum (江外江麗江花園社區論壇 http://www.rg-gd.net) and the Fenglin Mountain

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[36] Liu, J. and Lao, Y. (2012). "The Role of Newspaper Commentary in Public Policy Decision-making" (Xinwen pinglun zai gonggongzhenche de zuoyong), 17 April, *People's Daily*, Available at: <http://media.people.com.cn/GB/22114/206896/242384/17679482.html> (Accessed 9 August 2014).

Villa Discussion Forum (中海楓漣山莊業主論壇 http://house.focus.cn/msglist/1396/) – to acquire information about the anti-incinerator protests in Guangzhou and Beijing. These forums are the major information exchange platforms for homeowners in residential complexes, who share information on topics such as the tariffs demanded by decoration companies or use the platforms to sell second-hand items. These online discussion forums also served as an important way to share information about activism. For example, the residents posted the plans for opposing the incinerator construction and shared their opinions on the government's responses to their actions, hoping to obtain more resident support.

5.3 In-depth Interviews

Valuable information was also gathered through interviews with stakeholders about their involvement in environmental activism and municipal waste management programmes. Because I focused on the dynamics between the public and sub-national agencies, my interview targets were residents affected by the incineration projects, environmental activists and the officials in the environmental protection department. In addition, lawyers and academics who had voiced concerns about the incinerator projects were also interviewed. Twenty open-ended interviews were conducted, in individual and group formats. Twenty in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted during my fieldwork. The interviewees were divided into the following categories: protesters, ENGO activists, environmental lawyers, street-level bureaucrats (responsible for launching a trial waste sorting programme in one of Guangzhou's communities) and academics. The interviewees' demographics are listed in Appendix G. Their accounts were sorted and analysed alongside information from publicly accessible archives to reveal the dynamics between state and non-state actors at the local level. I knew the improbability that a large number of interviewees who participated in the protests in Beijing and Guangzhou could be interviewed. The residents who were invited to participate in the interviews proved inaccessible in numerous ways, including being reluctant to take the political risk embodied in being interviewed.

5.3.1 Interview questions

Interview guides were drafted based on the controversies identified through existing discourses on the incinerator projects and public participation in environmental policy in China. The interviewees were invited to share their experiences with and opinions on the protests and the formation of the environmental groups, etc. Open-ended questions were developed, focusing specifically on anti-incinerator activism and public participation in environmental policy:

1) Example questions for the protesters: 'Why did you participate in the protests?'; 'Do you agree with the government's response regarding the incinerator project?'; 'What is your opinion on municipal waste management in this city?'

2) Example questions for ENGO activists: 'What did your organisation do in the anti-incinerator protest?'; 'What has your organisation done for the launch of waste recycling programmes?'; 'What was your organisation's role in the activism? Was it that of mediator between the government and the public or was it to represent the public in expressing their concerns to the government?'

3) Example questions for street level bureaucrats: 'How would you encourage residents to participate in this trial programme?'; 'What are the difficulties in promoting waste sorting programmes in this community?'

4) Example questions for environmental lawyers: 'How did you get involved in activism and help protesters?'; 'What is your opinion of environmental impact assessments?'

5) Example questions for academics: 'How do you perceive the development of public participation in environmental policy in China?'; 'What is your opinion of the government's response to the public consultative committee?'

5.3.2 Selection of Interviewees

Twenty activism participants were interviewed, of whom two (Zhang Boju, the chief executive of Friends of Nature and Xia Jun, the environmental lawyer) were involved in both the Guangzhou and Beijing protests. All of the interviewees were approached through ENGO networks that had been involved in the anti-incinerator protests before the focus shifted to municipal waste management in China. Thus, I was able to obtain first-hand information about the protests in both Guangzhou and Beijing.

I selected interviewees who had directly participated in the protests and/or had assisted with the municipal waste management project. Thus, my sample consisted of actors who were key participants in the different stages of activism and municipal waste management. The first category of interviewees – protesters – comprised residents who had participated in the activism in Guangzhou and Beijing. They lived near the proposed incinerator plants (less than 6 km in Guangzhou and less than 5 km in Beijing). Despite the presence of residents in Liulitun proper, most of the protesters in both cases lived in newly built private residential complexes and were well-educated, with professional occupations such as journalists, retired cadre members, teachers and business people. Thus, they were generally able to gain information about the problems

related to having incinerators near their homes and were aware that their rights had been overlooked. Their backgrounds also enabled them to seek external help through social networks. For instance, the retired cadre members contacted NPC and CPPCC members through personal contacts, which allowed them to table their grievances in NPC and CPPCC meetings.

The second group of interviewees was the ENGO activists. Friends of Nature (自然之友), the first ENGO in China, was indirectly involved in both protests. Beijing's Liulitun residents asked Friends of Nature for help in January 2009, when the municipal government resumed their plan to build an incinerator after the 2008 Olympic Games. Friends of Nature gave advice and contacted environmental scientists to discuss incineration-related problems. Later, the ENGO launched a waste-sorting programme to educate the communities in Beijing. The experience gained in Liulitun then allowed it to provide the same help for the Guangzhou activists. Friends of Nature also inspired the establishment of Eco-Canton, a green group formed by the protesters in Panyu to continue advocating a zero-waste society. Other ENGOs such as Nature University (自然大學) also organised waste-sorting programmes for the Liulitun residents in Beijing. Friends of Nature and Nature University both provide legal advice on incinerator construction nationwide.

The third interviewee category was environmental lawyers, and Xia Jun played an important role in both anti-incinerator protests. Mr Xia, who specialises in environmental public interest litigation, provided legal advice for the Beijing and Guangzhou activism. For example, he helped the Liulitun residents use the 'Administrative Reconsideration Law' to complain that Beijing's municipal government did not consult residents during the process of planning the incinerator. He also publicly advocated reforming the EIA Law to increase public participation in the EIA process and ensure that it could be supervised by lawyers.

The fourth category of interviewees was officials. The officer interviewed was responsible for launching a trial waste-sorting programme in the Huale community of the Yuexie district in Guangzhou, and is thus labelled as a street-level bureaucrat due to his public service and his direct dealings with citizens (Lipsky 1980:3). He worked to establish the recycling centre in the community and organised regular educational programmes for the residents about waste recycling and sorting. He was also responsible for recruiting volunteers to monitor waste sorting on the street.

The last cohort of interviewees consisted of academics. Dr Chen Xiaoyun and Professor Kuo Weiqing, from Sun Yat-sen University's School of Government, played significant roles in the Panyu, Guangzhou activism. Professor Kuo did not participate in the protests, but both advised the protesters and later helped them to form Eco-Canton. They also shared their perspectives on municipal waste management in China via the media.

In general, the findings from the interviews revealed the differences in the perceptions held by state and non-state actors regarding incineration, municipal waste management and public participation in decision-making processes. The narratives of the actors were shaped by their experiences in the protests, their views on governmental dynamics and their backgrounds and professions. This information clarified both the activism and the dynamics between state and non-state actors.

The interviews were conducted in various locations in Guangzhou and Beijing. To interview the Liulitun protesters, I was invited to visit the offices of Green Monitoring Group (located inside a concrete plant initially intended for use as an incinerator. For details, refer to Chapter 6, section 6.2). After the interview, a member of the group who had participated in the protest took me to visit the landfill next to the plant by Liulitun village. To interview the street-level bureaucrats, I visited the Huale community in the Yuexue district of Guangzhou to observe the operation of a trial waste-sorting programme. I also attended the annual meeting of Eco-Canton to better understand the group's operation and to participate in their activities, including visiting a state-run food waste plant in Datianshan Recycling Park (大田山生態循環園) in Huangpu district (黃埔區), Guangzhou.

5.4 Research Limitations

It is still challenging to conduct research in China when the topic touches on data that are regarded as politically sensitive by the Chinese government, and thus the credibility of such information is often suspect (Carlson et al. 2010:6). However, multiple research methods such as interviews, surveys, newspapers and state-generated data can help to outline the big picture. Regarding the credibility of state-generated data, Xi Chen (2010:16) points out that an understanding of the political processes by which materials are generated should not be neglected, particularly 'why and how state agencies have produced the data that we are going to use' (Ibid:23). State-generated data are not only gleaned from official archives and agencies at the

local and national levels, but also from national mass media and stakeholders, such as social activists, who use government materials to enhance their bargaining power. Overall, multiple methods strengthen the objectivity of research.

One major problem that I faced in this work was the lack of consolidated analytical frameworks and comparative approaches for studying protests and their relationship to policy change in China. Previous studies have mainly focused on the reasons for protests, and the environmental policy-making process is rarely discussed. Scholarly works have discussed the policy-making process and policy implementation in China in the 1980s (Lampton 1987; Lieberthal and Oksenberg 1988) and the environmental policy-making process and implementation in the 1990s (Sinkule and Ortolano 1995; Lieberthal 1997), but data accessibility can prove challenging. Although the Chinese government promulgated the Regulation of the People's Republic of China on the Disclosure of Government Information in 2007, followed by the Archives Law in 1996, informational transparency is not always available. In particular, archives at the local level can be very old and incomplete due to certain agencies being unwilling to transfer materials to the archives. It was necessary to cross-check different sources to verify the validity of my data. For example, regarding the plan to build an incinerator in Liulitun, I double-checked that I had the complete official document by looking at local newspapers. Another limitation of interviewing government officials is that such interviews are notoriously difficult to arrange, and even when the opportunity is granted, there is further difficulty obtaining informative answers (Chen 2010:16,20). None of the officials (current or former) from Beijing and Guangzhou's municipal governments, environmental agencies or other related governmental departments agreed to be interviewed for this work. To compensate for their under-representation amongst the interviewees, I collected and analysed municipal governmental documents and mass media reports to help provide insight into the protests and interactions between the governments and the protesters in both cases. For instance, the governmental documents facilitate our understanding of decisions made by both the central and local governments. In addition, information about the environmental protection department is helpful for investigating the relationship between this agency and environmental organizations. It also serves as counter-evidence to the assumptions made in this study.

Overall, this work provides a multi-dimensional examination of the anti-incinerator protests in Beijing and Guangzhou through the perspectives of various stakeholders. More specially, this mixed methods tease out actions and interactions of policy actors at multiple levels that can help

explain observed patterns as well as facilitates us to discuss in the framework of advocacy coalition framework (ACF) in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 6 Case Study: The Anti-incinerator Protest in Liulitun, Beijing

6.1 Background

As mentioned above, environmental disputes have become one of the common causes of collective activism in China. Since 1996, the number of environmental collective incidents (環境群體事件) has been increasing by 29% per year,[37] and there were three protests (Qidong, Shifang and Ningbo) within four months in 2012,[38] which alarmed the Party-state.[39] Although the Chinese government implemented the Environmental Impacts Assessment Law in 2008, which has provided a channel for citizens to express their opinions about environmental projects, the law has not halted dissatisfaction among Chinese citizens. As such, the purpose of this research is to sketch and test an analytical lens for understanding the process of environmental policy change in authoritarian China. Specially, it employs the advocacy coalition framework to examine both Beijing and Guangzhou cases and analyses the political opportunity structure in order to comprehend coalition emergence, strategies and suspension of building incinerators in both cities. In this work, I study instances of environmental collective resistance in Beijing and Guangzhou, and the local governments' responses in this chapter and the next, respectively. The following is a

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[37] "Environmental Collective Resistance Risen by 29%" (Zhongguo Xuntixing shijian nianzhen 29%, Fayuan yin mingen ju lian). (2012). *Sohu News*, 28 October. Available at: <http://news.sohu.com/20121028/n355887990.shtml> (Accessed 28 May 2014).

[38] Feng, J. (2012). "Officials Struggling to Respond to China's Year of Environment Protests", *China Dialogue*. Available at: <https://www.chinadialogue.net/article/show/single/en/5438-Officials-struggling-to-respond-to-China-s-year-of-environment-protests-> (Accessed 28 May 2014).

[39] For example, thousands of people opposed a paper-manufacturing factory drain in Qidong, Jiangsu province (located in Southeast China and less than 60 km from Shanghai city) in July 2012. The paper-manufacturing factory, supported by investments from Japanese capital, planned to build a 110-km-long drain that would have affected the Qidong coast. The plan never underwent public consultation and angry protesters stormed the government building where they caught Party Secretary Sun Jianhua and tore his shirt off. He was then forced to wear a red t-shirt with the slogan 'Strongly oppose the building of the drain'. The protesters searched Mr Sun's office and found a box of condoms, luxury wines and cigarettes, and thus they also suspected him of being corrupt. Later, the protesters threw documents from the government building. In the face of this disruptive protest, the government announced that the drain project would be permanently cancelled. The protest ended when the cancellation was announced. <http://hk.apple.nextmedia.com/international/art/20120729/16556752> (Accessed 18 August 2014). This event represented the tip of the iceberg. The central government has since issued documents on social disputes and their effects on the CCP's rule. In the Sixth Plenary Session of the 16th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China held in December 2006, the ruling party issued a document intended to 'actively prevent and manage people's intra-conflicts to maintain the interests of mass citizens and social stability' (積極預防和妥善處置人民內部矛盾引發的群體性事件，維護群眾利益和社會穩定), highlighting the social disputes challenging the CCP's rule and suggesting that mass education be strengthened at all levels across the country. In addition, the concept of 'harmonious society' (和諧社會) was advocated. <http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2006-12/08/content_5454148.htm> (Accessed 18 August 2014). This was the first time that the CCP had mentioned social disputes in the national agenda since the implementation of economic reform (Zhu 2009) <http://soci.cssn.cn/shx/shx_zhyj/201310/t20131025_578498.shtml>

review of how the anti-incinerator protest in Liulitun, Beijing evolved. Then, the ACF is applied to the findings in the chapter conclusion.

6.2 The Power of Citizens: The Anti-incinerator Protest in Liulitun, Beijing

The ever increasing volume of municipal solid waste is one of the problems faced by the urbanised cities, like Liulitun; and solid waste management has stimulated a controversial debate within the community. In the analytical terms of the ACF, the municipal waste management incarnates a belief system as follows. At the deep core level, building a sustainable society is a target for the community as a whole among both pro-burn and anti-burn coalitions. To achieve the goal, the policy actors translate their policy core beliefs into the concerns for urban management at present as well as the environmental consequence to future generations. In instrumental policy beliefs level, two coalitions are formed by different policy beliefs. They use construction of incinerator, and protests respectively to achieve their desire goals in policy core beliefs. As mentioned above, two coalitions 'pro-burn coalition" and "anti-burn coalition" were formed in this case: the 'pro-burn coalition' consists of municipal and district government officials and "pro-burn" scientists, while the "anti-burn coalition" formed by the Liulitun residents nearby the incinerator site, environmental lawyer, environmental group, academia and "anti-burn" scientists. This set of policy actors, as pointed out by Sabatier and Weible (2007), not only includes "iron triangles" of officials and interest groups leaders, but also involved other professionals, for example researchers and journalists, who specialised in that policy area and seek to affect environmental policy making process (Sabatier and Weible (2007: 192). In this section, the background of anti-incinerator protest is introduced, the formation of both "anti-burn" and "pro-burn" coalitions, and development of the activism are mentioned.

Liulitun is a community of 30,000 residents located in Haidian district (海淀區), in the northwest of Beijing. Haidian covers and area of 431 km^2 and its residents numbered 3.2 million in 2010.[40] Liulitun has several residential sites and schools, and there is an Aerospace Town just 3 km away. The construction of an incinerator in Liulitun was planned for 2007, less than 500 m away from surrounding poor villages and the heavily polluting factories of industries such as brick-firing and about 5 km away from some new middle-class residential areas. A landfill was developed in 1999 next to the planned incinerator site. On 29 August 2006, the new middle-class residents of this community learned of the incinerator plans on an online forum for homeowners

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[40] Haidian District Statistics Bureau. (2011). *The Sixth National Population Census, Haidian, Beijing.* Available at: <http://www.hdtjj.gov.cn/HDTJJWEB/rkpc6/S_38920.html> (Accessed 10 August 2013).

(http://house.focus.cn/msglist/, which subsequently became a primary communication channel in the protest), and the knowledge aroused discussions among the residents. Meanwhile, on 15 September 2006, Beijing's municipal government launched a one-month consultation about daily social issues in Beijing for 2007 (北京市 2007 年在直接關係群眾生活方面擬辦的重要實事). The consultation aimed to collect the public's opinions on many aspects of society, such as social security, education, employment, medical care, public order and city planning. Another purpose for this consultation was to collect opinions about the preparation for the 2008 Olympic Games. The residents in Liulitun sent the municipal government letters and expressed their concerns about the smell from the landfill and the possible detrimental effects of the proposed incinerator. A month later, in October, burning rubbish was found in the landfill and the smell spread over the community. This sparked a discussion among homeowners in the online forum in which the topic of dioxin was mentioned. In researching the smell from the landfill, the residents discovered documents showing that the municipal government was preparing to build four incinerators in the Chaoyang, Nangong and Haidian districts by 2008. These documents were the 'Outline for National Economic and Social Development in the Tenth Five-Year Plan for Beijing City' (北京市國民經濟和社會發展第十個五年計劃綱要) and the 'Outline for National Economic and Social Development in the Eleventh Five-Year Plan for Beijing City' (北京市國民經濟和社會發展第十一個五年計劃發展綱要).[412] In November 2006, the municipal government published the urban plan for northern Haidian for the subsequent five years, which included the construction of an incinerator at a landfill site near the newly developed area with a daily disposal capacity of 1,200 tonnes.[42] These plans were based on the comprehensive city plan for 2004-2020, which was implemented by Beijing's municipal government in January 2004 and included the construction of multiple incinerators.[43] Clearly, incinerator construction was (and is) expected to be one of the solutions to the cities' municipal waste problems, but the smell of the landfill and burning waste

[41] Outline for National Economic and Social Development in the Tenth Five-Year Plan for Beijing City" (北京市國民經濟和社會發展第十個五年計劃綱要). (2001). National Reform and Development Commission, <http://www.ndrc.gov.cn/fzgh/ghwb/dfgh/W020050614802777788614.pdf>; "Outline for National Economic and Social Development in the Eleventh Five-Year Plan for Beijing City" (北京市國民經濟和社會發展第十一個五年計劃綱要) (2006). Beijing Municipal Government. <http://zhengwu.beijing.gov.cn/ghxx/sywgh/t833176.htm>; "The Beijing Municipal Waste Management White Paper" (北京市生活垃圾治理白皮書). (2007). Beijing Solid Waste Administration Department. <http://www.bswad.org.cn/tabid/119/InfoID/757/Default.aspx> (Accessed 10 August 2013).
[42] "First Time to Display the New Developed Plan in Northern Haidian District in Coming 5 Years" (北京海淀北部新区 5 年规划首次亮相). (2006). *Sina News*. Available at Sina.com.cn. 28 November. <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2006-11-28/141411643213.shtml> (Accessed 10 August 2013).
[43] "General Urban Planning of Beijing City, 2004-2020", （北京城市重体计划）. (n.d.). Beijing Municipal Commission of Development and Reform,<http://www.bjpc.gov.cn/fzgh_1/csztgh/200710/t195452.htm> [Access 10 August 2013].

again aroused concerns among the residents, who planned to use litigation to shut the project down.

The public concerns about the smell of the landfill attracted other parties. The First Plenum of the 8th CPPCC of Haidian district was held on 14-18 December 2006 and CPPCC members submitted two proposals: the 'Proposal on Building Scientific Municipal Waste Management System' (關於建立科學處理生活垃圾體系的建議) and the 'Proposal on Managing Liulitun Landfill' (對六里屯垃圾填埋場環境整治的建議). They highlighted the landfill's effects on health, the ecosystem and the development of the district, and called for a solution to the problem. The 'Proposal on Managing Liulitun Landfill', written by the Jiu San (3 September) Society (九三學社)[44] of Haidian district, investigated the landfill issue. The report showed that the smell from the landfill was affecting people's lives, and that polluted water was leaking from the landfill. In addition, the landfill did not meet the requirement that it should be no less than 3 km from inhabited areas, which placed the residents at risk.[45] At the conference, the Revolutionary Committee of the Chinese Kuomintang (中國國民黨革命委員會)[46] of Haidian district disagreed with the plan to

[44] The Jiu San society, founded in December 1944, is an officially recognised political party in China that currently has nearly 100,000 members. Its political aim was to carry on the traditions of democracy and science, oppose the civil war and practice democratic politics. Known as a party comprised primarily of intellectuals, its present programme stipulates that, organisationally, the party draws members from representatives of middle- and senior-level intellectuals in the fields of science, technology, higher education and medicine.
In September 1949, representatives of the Jiu San Society participated in the First Plenary Session of the CPPCC at which the Common Programme was adopted as the provisional constitution, and the Central People's Government was elected and founded, hence the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC).
After the founding of the PRC, the Jiu San Society solemnly declared that it accepted the leadership of the CPC and had adopted the Common Programme. Since then, the Jiu San Society has actively participated in governmental and political affairs as a democratic party.
It held its third and fourth national congresses in October 1979 and December 1983, respectively, deciding that it should focus on economic construction and devote itself to the following: developing and improving the established multi-party cooperation led by the CPC and political consultative system; continually participating in government and political affairs; abiding by the principle of coexisting over a long period, engaging in mutual supervision; showing utter devotion to each other; and sharing honour and disgrace, weal and woe with the CPC.
The Jiu San Society has played an increasingly important role in governmental and social affairs and economic construction, such as safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of its members, helping the CPC and government to adopt policies regarding intellectuals. It has also made significant contributions to the modernisation drive. Source: Non-Communist Parties in China, China Culture.org. http://www1.chinaculture.org/library/2008-02/14/content_22254_2.htm> (Accessed 11 August 2013).
[45] Guo, S. (2006). "Smell of Liulitun Landfill Is Being Criticised" (北京海澱區六裡屯垃圾填埋場惡臭熏人遭批評), Sohu.com, 15 December. http://news.sohu.com/20061215/n247056064.shtml> (Accessed 11 August 2013).
[46] The Revolutionary Committee of the Chinese Kuomintang (RCCK) recruits its members from among those who have relationships with the former Chinese Kuomintang, those who are historically or socially related to the RCCK and those who have ties with Taiwan. The RCCK also recruits members from

build the incinerator in Liulitan. The two major industries in the newly developed area were tourism and research and development (R&D), and the committee was worried about emissions from the incinerator polluting the area and damaging these industries. They also implied that the incinerator might not be operated properly, and cited similar examples in Shanghai and Shenzhen.[47] In responding to the inquiries from CPPCC members in Haidian about the smell from the landfill, the Haidian district government confirmed construction of the incinerator by March 2007, stating that the landfill would be closed in 2010.[48] The homeowners were angry and planned to take action to oppose the incinerator and the landfill plans.[49]

The owners of Fenglin Mountain Villa (中海楓漣山莊) and Baiwang Jasmine Garden (Baiwang Moli Yuan, 百旺茉莉園)[50] posted a message on the online homeowners' forum calling for a protest against the landfill and incinerator on 22 December 2006. They also sought resources, including financing, to support this activism. The organisers (using Internet usernames) suggested that the participants send their contacts and their 'preferred roles' by email, so that the names of

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professionals in social and legal circles and from other sources, especially the middle and upper social strata, and leading intellectuals. Democratic Kuomintang forces and other patriotic democrats held their first congress in Hong Kong in November 1947. On 1 January 1948, the Congress officially announced the founding of the RCCK, after which it began actively preparing for the CPPCC and made lasting contributions to the founding of the People's Republic of China.

After the founding of the PRC, the RCCK, as a member of the multi-party cooperation led by the CPC, participated in the building of the people's political power and the CPPCC, playing a constructive role in consolidating the people's democratic dictatorship and developing a patriotic united front while successfully accomplishing the socialist transformation and advancing the cause of socialism. Since China's reform and opening-up, the RCCK has been committed to multi-party cooperation and political consultation led by the CPC, building socialism with Chinese characteristics. In promoting self-improvement, the RCCK has made efforts to perform the functions of a party participating in government and political affairs, constantly establishing and improving work mechanisms for participation in and deliberation of state affairs, and for democratic supervision. It has made new contributions to advancing reform and opening-up, promoting the peaceful reunification of the motherland. The RCCK has always been inspired and encouraged by Dr Sun Yat-sen's spirit of patriotism, revolution and ceaseless progress. This is a glorious tradition for the RCCK. DITTO Source: Revolutionary Committee of the Chinese Kuomintang, <http://www.minge.gov.cn/mgzy/mgjj/list.shtml> (Accessed 11 August 2013).

[47] Guo, S. (2006). "Smell of Liulitun Landfill Is Being Criticised" (北京海澱區六里屯垃圾填埋場惡臭熏人遭批評), Sohu.com, 15 December. <http://news.sohu.com/20061215/n247056064.shtml> (Accessed 11 August 2013).

[48] Wang. Q. (2006). "Haidian District Government Replies to CPPCC Member: Plan to Build an Incinerator in Liulitun" (海澱區政府回應委員：六里屯垃圾處理將建焚燒廠), CPCC News Web, 5 December. <http://cppcc.people.com.cn/GB/34952/5172640.html> (Accessed 11 August 2013).

[49] "Plan to Build an Incinerator in Liulitun" (六里屯垃圾處理將建焚燒廠), Fenglin Mountain Villa Discussion Forum (中海楓漣山莊業主論壇), 15 December 2006. <http://house.focus.cn/msgview/1396/71308944.html> (Accessed 11 August 2013).

[50] Both residences are located at Liulitun, which is near Summer Place Software Park. Fenglin Mountain Villa, built in 2005, is a small residency with 1,245 households. The Baiwang Moli Yuan (Baiwang Jasmine Garden), also built in 2005, has 2,000 households.

absentees and their reasons for absence would show on the online discussion forum after the protest. The protest took place on schedule. On the forum, the homeowners emphasised that the protest should take place within the existing legal framework.[51] This message was echoed among the protesters, and other homeowners began to support them. Some left suggestions for further forms of activism, such as contacting the mass media, meeting with other official agencies, submitting a petition to the municipal government and using litigation.[52]

The homeowners of Fenglin Mountain Villa and Baiwang Jasmine Garden had their first meeting on 23 December 2006 and drafted an action plan that they entitled, 'Build a Harmonious Community, Strongly Oppose the Building of the Incinerator in Liulitun' (共築和諧社區 共建美好家園 強烈反對六里屯建設垃圾焚燒場). In the plan, they not only pointed out the problems with the landfill, such as the bad smell, they also expressed their worries about the proposed incinerator construction. They also listed the division of labour and guidelines for the protest: 1) the participants shall follow the organisers' instructions and no-one shall be allowed to speak for the whole group, 2) the participants shall not oppose the CCP and socialism, 3) national laws and regulations shall be followed and 4) the participants shall not contact foreign mass media. To run a more organised campaign, the organisers worked out a division of labour that included the roles of leadership core, financial support, external relations and legal support. They also set the schedule for the campaign:

24 December 2006: Petition start date

24 December 2006–1 January 2007:

(i) Have leading organisers confirm the action plan.

(ii) Confirm the context for applying ombudsman and litigation, along with notice for other homeowners in Liulitun.

(iii) Collect the information of other homeowners' associations for contact in future.

(iv) Collect evidence of incinerator-related problems for litigation.

12–14 January 2007: Publish the notice among other homeowners' associations to gain support.

15-19 January 2007: Submit the complaint letter to the government agencies and the mass media.

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[51] "About the Building of the Incinerator!" (關於建立垃圾焚燒廠事宜!), Fenglin Mountain Villa Discussion Forum, 20 December 2006. <http://house.focus.cn/msgview/1396/71767106.html> (Accessed 11 August 2013).
[52] Ibid.

To be confirmed: Further action depends on the governmental response.[53]

Meanwhile, they recruited volunteers to submit the complaint letter to the relevant government agencies and indicate increased participation, which could put pressure on the government; promote the campaign in the community; and (for those volunteers with a legal background) provide consultancy for the campaign. Then, they confirmed the content of the complaint letter (with 600 signatures) entitled, 'A Complaint Letter about Opposing the Building of an Incinerator in Liulitun Community' (百旺新城社區居民關於反對在六里屯建垃圾焚燒廠的申訴信), and submitted it to the State Environmental Protection Agency (formerly the MEP) and the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau on 29 December 2006. The letter read as follows:

> To whom it may concern,
> A complaint letter opposing the building of an incinerator in Liulitun community
> We are the residents of the community Xibeiwang Baiwangxincheng in Haidian District, Beijing. We chose this place because of the surrounding landscape and urban planning in the newly developed northern Haidian district, which enabled us to spend our savings on buying the houses here. When we first moved in, however, we never thought that it would be the start of a nightmare! This nightmare is the Liulitun landfill, which is less than 2 km from our homes. In recent years, the smell overwhelmed us between 9-10 pm and 6-7 am every day (sometimes the smell is noticeable in the daytime). We close our windows in the summer but the smell stops us from sleeping. Starting in 2000, we, together with some business enterprises, expressed our concerns about the smell to the government, and government agencies, such as SEPA and the Office of Letters and Calls of Beijing, replied to our complaints. At the end of 2005, several members of NPC and CPPCC visited the landfill and tabled the proposal during the NPC and CPPCC conferences. A few media outlets (including CCTV2) reported the news. But the smell of the landfill has not been resolved and is getting more serious.
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> Moreover, at the end of 2006, we learned of the new development plan for the

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[53] "Build a Harmonious Community, Strongly Oppose the Building of an Incinerator in Liulitun" (共築和諧社區 共建美好家園 強烈反對六裡屯建設垃圾焚燒場), Fenglin Mountain Villa Discussion Forum, 24 December 2006. <http://house.focus.cn/msgview/1396/72041648.html> (Accessed 11 August 2013).

northern Haidian district, which includes a new waste-to-energy plant to be built next to the landfill in mid-March 2007. The plan has made us anxious about our environment and we suspect that the government has done nothing to deal with the smell. Others in the community have the same concerns: at the First Plenum of the 8th CPPCC of Haidian district on 14 December 2006, CPPCC members tabled the proposals 'Proposal on Building Scientific Municipal Waste Management System' (關於建立科學處理生活垃圾體系的建議) and 'Proposal on Managing Liulitun Landfill' (對六里屯垃圾填埋場環境整治的建議) to highlight the effects of the landfill on health, the ecosystem and development of the district and seek a solution for the smell of the landfill and municipal waste disposal. The former proposal, tabled by the Revolutionary Committee of the Chinese Kuomintang (中國國民黨革命委員會) of Haidian district, was against building the incinerator in Liulitan because tourism and R&D were the two major industries in the newly developed area and there were concerns about emissions from the incinerator polluting the area and damaging these industries. The latter proposal, written by the Jiu San (3 September) Society （九三學社）of Haidian district, investigated the problems with the landfill. The report showed that the smell of the landfill has been affecting the lives of the people and that polluted water is leaking from the landfill. In addition, the landfill does not meet the requirement that it was no less than 3 km from inhabited areas, and residents may thus be at risk.[54]

We are encouraged to take further action: a website named 'Landfill and the Environment' is now open for discussions. We are studying the problems related to landfills around the world through the Internet, academic journals and friends. We understand that there is no perfect solution for managing waste, but the landfill was built and located up-wind of the inhabited areas and next to drinking water sources, and the proposed incinerator violates the 'Standard for Pollution Control on the Municipal Waste Incineration' (GWKB3-2000) and the 'Renewable Energy Law of the People's Republic of China'. The proposed location of the incinerator violates the law because 1) it is located in the newly

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[54] Guo, S. (2006). "Smell of Liulitun Landfill is Being Criticised" (北京海澱區六里屯垃圾填埋場惡臭熏人遭批評), Sohu.com, 15 December. <http://news.sohu.com/20061215/n247056064.shtml> (Accessed 11 August 2013).

developed area of the northern district, less than 5 km from some important landmarks (for example, Zhongguancun Software Park and Beijing Space City), which affects investment in that area; 2) the incinerator is located to the northwest of Beijing City and pollutants such as dioxin are carried on the wind, affecting the community and sources of drinking water; and 3) the design and construction of the incinerator do not meet the expected standard. The cost of emissions tests and control is very high and the safety of the incinerator is in doubt.

In addition, we have found discrepancies between design and operation in various incinerators in different parts of our country, and we also worry that the Liulitun incinerator will not be able to manage 1 million tonnes of garbage annually. Some of our residents visited the incinerators in Switzerland and Macau and learnt that strict regulations are adopted in operation and waste separation. Thus, it is impossible to burn the garbage safely without any separation and the smell cannot be avoided. What is more, dioxin is another problem that cannot be solved and some foreign countries, such as Japan, the U.S. and some European countries, have banned waste-burning. In addition, the incinerators in Shanghai and Shenzhen cities cannot meet the emission standards.

On the whole, we think that the government has not solved the problems surrounding the landfill and that the decision to build an incinerator is wrong. We, the residents in Liulitun, oppose the building of this incinerator!
Last but not least, the residents are looking forward to receiving an official response as soon as possible.

Residents in Liulitun Community
26 December 2006[55] (*The original letter is in Chinese*)

The agencies received the complaint letter and the staff of the Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau indicated that they were not the sole department responsible for building

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[55] "After Studying the Opinions Given by Homeowners, the Promotion Group Responds to the Opposition to Building the Incinerator at Liulitun…", (在認真學習和研究各位熱心業主的意見和建議後，宣傳組對反對建六里屯垃圾焚燒廠申訴…), Fenglin Mountain Villa Discussion Forum, 27 December 2006. <http://bjmsg.focus.cn/msgview/1396/1/72368685.html> (Accessed 11 August 2013).

incinerators – that there were other departments involved, such as the Haidian district government, Beijing Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment and the Beijing Municipal Commission of Housing and Urban-Rural Development. Later, a televised current affairs programme, Beijing Chamber (北京議事廳), reported that the mayor of Beijing, Mr Wang Qishan (now currently serving as Secretary of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection), had met with Beijing Municipal NPC members on 30 December 2006. One of the members told the mayor about the smell being generated by the landfill and questioned the project, given that the masses were so opposed. Mr Wang replied that it was difficult to find an appropriate location for an incinerator, as it would be opposed by those in the nearest community regardless, but that the country faced increasing volumes of waste. Mr Wang claimed that the government constantly tested the impacts of its operations, along with the influence of landfills and incinerators on the local community.[56] His speech and the response from the Environmental Protection Bureau stoked the homeowners' dissatisfaction, and they planned to mount another protest.

The homeowners organised an exhibition in the community on 1-3 January 2007 that included posters showing the facts: the distances between Fenglin Mountain Villa, Baiwang Jasmine Garden and the proposed incinerator; the effects of incinerator construction; the laws by which the incinerator was illegal; and suggestions for action to oppose the incinerator project. They also collected more signatures for a petition and financial support from homeowners. This activity was not only supported by the inhabitants of these two residences but by their property management company and other nearby homes. They received the attention of Professor Lu Anhuai, a National CPPCC member from Peking University who promised to table this issue at the next NCPPCC meeting.

The leadership core responsible for coordinating and planning the campaign was formed on 8 January 2007. There were 15 members, and while they promoted the campaign within the community and encouraged more residents to join, they were all from Fenglin Mountain Villa and Baiwang Jasmine Garden. Their Internet user names, email addresses and residential areas

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[56] Tian, L. (2008). "After the Building of Liulitun Incinerator was Abandoned" (六里屯垃圾電廠'叫停'之後), Environmental Protection Union (中國環保聯盟), 14 March. <http://www.epuncn.com/huanbao/5157.htm> (Accessed 12 August 2013).

were posted on the forum and they planned to re-submit the complaint letter to government agencies on 18 January 2007.[57]

The district government held a meeting about the incinerator project on 17 January 2007 and invited the residents' representatives. The chief of the Beijing Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment, the landfill and incinerator directors, the chief of the Haidian Local Taxation Bureau and select environmental scientists also attended the meeting. The environmental scientists reiterated that incinerators were a safe and effective municipal waste management solution. In addition, the chief of the Beijing Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment divulged that the location of the incinerator had been chosen following the comprehensive plan in 2004. His speech aroused anger among the residents because the location had never been disclosed, and they felt that the district government should have released the information before they chose to move into the area. Thus, they decided to launch their petition as planned on 18 January 2007.

On 18 January 2007, the residents split into several groups and submitted complaint letters to various government agencies, including the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau, the Beijing Municipal Commission of Urban Planning and the Office of Letters and Calls of the Beijing Committee of the Communist Party of China. In the process of submitting the complaint letter to the Beijing Municipal Commission of Urban Planning, the residents discovered that the incinerator project had obtained a land use permit and administrative license, but not a building permit. The residents hung banners opposing the incinerator's construction around their residences, but a day later the Municipal Bureau of City Administration and Law Enforcement asked that the banners be removed.

Although the district government faced opposition to its plans for the incinerator, it held a press conference about the incinerator project on 22 January 2007. At the press conference, the government did not mention the date of project commencement, but stated that it expected the date of operation to fall within 2008. The government emphasised that the incinerator would be safe.[58] However, the residents engaged in a series of activities against the project. They appealed

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[57] "Name List of Group against Incinerator in Liulitun" (反對在六里屯建垃圾焚燒廠活動核心小組名單), Fenglin Mountain Villa Discussion Forum, 8 January 2007. <http://house.focus.cn/msgview/1396/73702714.html> (Accessed 12 August 2013).
[58] "Liulitun Incinerator Expected to Operate Next Year" (六里屯垃圾焚燒廠有望明年運), NetEase, 24 January 2007. <http://news.163.com/07/0124/05/35J1VTJ30001124J.html> (Accessed 12 August 2013).

to the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau on 11 February 2007 citing the Administrative Reconsideration Law and asked that the incinerator project be cancelled. In March 2007, they also conducted a survey of opinions regarding the incinerator construction. The survey's design was based on the EIA and they collected 387 responses from residents.[59] Meanwhile, they also contacted a solicitor, Xia Jun – an expert in environmental litigation – for legal advice. The district government held a second meeting with the residents on 2 March and reiterated that the project should continue.

The opposition to the incinerator also attracted the attention of National CPPCC and NPC members, and the groups tabled their objections in their respective meetings in early March. However, the residents discovered that construction materials had been found on the proposed incinerator site on 26 March 2007, which they suspected of being illegal because the building permit had not been approved.[60] The following month, the mass media reported on the opposition to the incinerator in Liulitun and widely discussed the management of municipal waste in Beijing. On 3 April 2007, the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau defended their decision to build the incinerator, which had been taken comprehensively, based on all legal procedures.[61]

On 14 April 2007, the residents launched another action against the incinerator project. The Liulitun landfill held an open house to give people the chance to learn more about its waste management operation and the technology used. Three hundred residents took this opportunity to launch a campaign at the landfill. They held a banner that said, 'Opposing the building of the incinerator', and blocked the main entrance.[62] The residents also responded in a letter to the response regarding the Administrative Reconsideration Law given by the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau on 3 April and submitted the letter to SEPA on 16 April 2007. In the letter, the residents disagreed with the scientific information provided by the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau and restated their rights to raise a complaint within a

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[59] Interview with Friends of Nature, in Beijing on 28 August 2013.
[60] "Forward: Emergency Notice about the Incinerator!", (轉貼：關於焚燒廠的緊急通知!!!), Fenglin Mountain Villa Discussion Forum, 26 March 2007. <http://house.focus.cn/msgview/1396/79296462.html> (Accessed 12 August 2013).
[61] "Written Defence of Administrative Reconsideration from the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau" (北京市環保局對我們提出的行政覆議的答辯書), Fenglin Mountain Villa Discussion Forum, 3 April 2007. <http://bjmsg.focus.cn/msgview/1396/80067659.html> (Accessed 13 August 2013).
[62] Wang, Q. (2007). "Residents Held Banner against the Building of the Incinerator" (居民手持標語要求停建垃圾焚燒廠), sina.news.com.cn, 15 April. <http://news.sina.com.cn/s/2007-04-15/013812779589.shtml> (Accessed 13 August 2013).

legally stipulated period of time.[63] However, the proposed incinerator project was started on 18 April 2007.[64] This angered the residents and they launched another round of activism. They sent individual complaint letters to the deputy chief of SEPA, Mr Pan Yue (currently serving as Vice Minister of the Ministry of Environmental Protection), who was in charge of the EIA, opposing the response to the Administrative Reconsideration Law on 3 April and asking for a re-evaluation of the impact of building the incinerator in Liulitun.[65] On 20 April, the residents also held a rally outside the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau and demanded that the bureau's chief step down. This time, their action generated results. The Beijing Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment announced the postponement of the incinerator's construction on 10 May 2007 due to the residents' opposition.[66]

The residents did not end their campaign there. They launched another rally on Earth Day (5 June). One thousand residents wearing T-shirts with the slogan 'Against the incinerator in Liulitun' went to SEPA to demonstrate. Two days later, the deputy chief of SEPA suggested the postponement of the incinerator's construction,[67] and on 12 June 2007 SEPA officially announced the postponement, citing the Administrative Reconsideration Law. In the announcement, SEPA stated that there should have been wide public participation and study in the planning stage, and that the process should have been transparent. Once the project had been studied, it should have been sent to the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau for approval and publicity. Moreover, the study's results should have been reported to SEPA, as a project cannot commence before being publicised and reported to SEPA.[68] The following day, the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau announced that the new standard of waste burning would be

[63] "Residents Reply to the Written Defence from the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau" (居民對北京市環保局答辯狀的回復), Fenglin Mountain Villa Discussion Forum, 16 April 2007. <http://house.focus.cn/msgview/1396/81308392.html> (Accessed 13 August 2013).
[64] Ma, J. (2007). "Debates of Liulitun Incinerator" (六里屯垃圾焚燒廠引爭議), Jinghua.cn, 18 April. <http://epaper.jinghua.cn/html/2007-04/18/content_107002.htm> (Accessed 13 August 2013).
[65] Ma, J. (2007). "Debates of Liulitun Incinerator" (六里屯垃圾焚燒廠引爭議), Jinghua.cn, 18 April. <http://epaper.jinghua.cn/html/2007-04/18/content_107002.htm> (Accessed 13 August 2013).
[66] Guo, X. (2007). "The Liulitun Incinerator is Postponed" (六里屯焚燒廠延期開工), 10 May. Beijing News. <http://epaper.bjnews.com.cn/html/2007-05/10/content_15022.htm> (Accessed 13 August 2013).
[67] Wang, C. "Anti-Incinerator Activism in Beijing: A Case Study" (北京反垃圾焚燒發電廠抗爭之案例分析), Taipei Forum. <http://140.119.184.164/taipeiforum/award_pdf/11.php> (Accessed 13 August 2013).
[68] "State Environmental Protection Administration Announces the Administrative Reconsideration on the Building of the Incinerator in Liulitun" (環保總局公佈京六里屯垃圾發電專案行政覆議決定), Xinhua News, 12 June 2007. <http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2007-06/12/content_6231635.htm> (Accessed 13 August 2013).

implemented within a year, and that incinerator construction should meet the requirements of this new standard.[69]

The anxiety surrounding the incinerator's construction did not dissipate, however. Rather, it continued after the 2008 Olympic Games. *Sina News* reported (2008) that the Haidian District Commission of City Administration and Environment had chosen the location of the Liulitun incinerator and completed the first stage of the EIA, and that it would seek public opinion about the project. Meanwhile, the district government planned to build a food waste processing plant the following year.[70] This news roused the homeowners again and they launched a petition in mid-October 2008. They sent letters to SEPA, the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau, the Beijing Municipal Commission of Development and Reform, the Beijing Municipal Commission of Urban Planning, the Beijing Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment and Beijing's mayor. In the letters, they restated their strong dissatisfaction with the incinerator project and demanded that it be suspended immediately. In November and December, the residents of Liulitun visited the municipal government ten times, but none of the governmental agencies responded to their request. The mass media abandoned the issue and were reluctant to report the campaign's actions. Given this situation, it was difficult for the residents to express their opinion, so they had to plan their next action.[71]

The controversy over the incinerator dragged on into 2009. The Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment held a meeting with other departments on 3 February 2009 about incinerator construction in Beijing. The office emphasised the necessity of incinerator construction in Beijing (the Liulitun incinerator was one of five planned) and of implementing more comprehensive municipal waste management solutions.[72] More than 20 residents gathered and discussed the problems of burning waste and how to deal with the government's decision.

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[69] "Standard of Burning Waste in Beijing City will be Announced within this Year" (北京垃圾焚燒環保標準目前正制定 年內就將發), China Economy.net, 13 June 2007. <http://www.ce.cn/xwzx/gnsz/gdxw/200706/13/t20070613_11721346_1.shtml> (Accessed 13 August 2013).
[70] "The Completion of EIA for the Liulitun Incinerator" (六里屯垃圾焚燒廠完成環評手續), Sina.news.cn. 9 October 2008. <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2008-10-09/133014550306s.shtml> (Accessed 13 August 2013).
[71] Interview with a resident in Beijing, 27 August 2013.
[72] "The Head of the Beijing Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment Held a Meeting about the Building of the Incinerator" (市市政管委陳永主任主持召開垃圾焚燒廠專案專題會), Beijing Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment, 4 February 2009. <http://www.bjmac.gov.cn/pub/guanwei/A/A1/200902/t20090204_12889.html> (Accessed 13 August 2013).

The residents planned to expose the government's decision and their situation through mass media and the green NGOs. The mass media, however, was constrained from reporting this sensitive news and the residents instead sought assistance from the ENGOs. One of the residents in Liulitun, Ms Han, contacted Friends of Nature on 21 January 2009. Ms Han claimed that several ENGOs in Beijing had been contacted, but that none of them had provided assistance. Thus, she attempted to reach Friends of Nature through a personal contact. In her interview for this work, Ms Han explained that the municipal government had not suspended the incineration plan in Liulitun because 1) the municipal government planned to give RMB600 million (around US$96.3 million) to the Haidain district government for building the incinerator, and the project was thus perceived as the district's main source of income; and 2) incineration had become the municipal government's main solution for managing waste. She further recalled that the Liulitun residents felt frustrated, as they had been attempting to contact the government since November 2008 but had not received any response. It was not easy for the residents to secure a place to discuss the issue within the community, as meetings were prohibited by the government or interrupted by the police. They also felt that they were being excluded from participating in the decision-making process regarding incinerator construction, and thus they had contacted the mass media and ENGOs for assistance. Moreover, the Liliutun residents suggested seeking help from overseas ENGOs to increase the pressure on the municipal government.[73] However, Friends of Nature turned down this suggestion due to the political risk it posed.

With the help of Friends of Nature, the residents launched a discussion forum on 19 February 2009. Dozens of residents attended the forum and environmental scientists, such as Zhao Yuanzhang, an expert in municipal waste management, were invited to speak and consult. The forum mainly focused on the problems of waste burning and the possible solutions for managing waste in the city. Zhao pointed out the challenges of burning waste in China, including deficient monitoring, the multi-interests behind the project and incomprehensive waste sorting. He further encouraged the residents in their actions. The residents were inspired and planned a website to publicise the problem of burning waste. They proposed that the website include the history of their campaign, the environmental laws and regulations, information from environmentalists and material that would help them defend their environmental rights. In February 2009, they also sent another petition letter with 10,000 signatures to the same government agencies to express their dissatisfaction and to request that the district government listen to the people.[74] As a result, the

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[73] Telephone interview with Ms Han on 12 April 2014.
[74] Interview with a resident in Beijing on 26 August 2013.

deputy head of the Haidian District Commission of City Administration and Environment met with them to discuss the incinerator construction in Liulitun in July 2009. He denied that the location of the incinerator had already been confirmed and claimed that the agency was still assessing the risks of incinerator construction.[75]

After the petition, Friends of Nature organised waste sorting programmes in two residential complexes – Baiwang Jasmine Garden and Fenglin Mountain Villa – in the Liliutun community. The programmes were so successful that they expanded to other communities in May 2009. Friends of Nature also provided residents in the landfill area and several communities in Liulitun with environmental education. With the exception of Fenglin Mountain Villa, other residents and property management companies were delighted by the work of Friends of Nature. In addition, the work in Baiwang Jasmine Garden was suspended by the district government due to the outbreak of the Chinese Jasmine Revolution in February 2011.[76]

A breakthrough came on 19 January 2011. The Haidian district government announced that a new location for the incinerator had been found in Sujiatuo town (蘇家坨), and they abandoned the plans for Liulitun.[77] Finally, the campaign in Liulitun, which had lasted for over four years, concluded and the residents dismissed the anti-incinerator group.

6.3 Post-activism: What is Going on in Liulitun?

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[75] "Responding to the Opposition of Residents, the Liulitun Incinerator will Move to a New Location" (北京六里屯垃圾焚燒廠因民眾反對將另行選新址), Chinanews.com, 4 February 2010. <http://www.chinanews.com/sh/news/2010/02-04/2108339.shtml> (Accessed 14 August 2013).

[76] Affected by the Jasmine Revolution in Africa in 2010, Chinese citizens called for 'stalks' under the same name in February 2011. Various places in China such as Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Shenzhen launched the same activity between mid-February and mid-March 2011. In the activity, the Chinese advocated freedom of speech and the end of one-party dictatorship in China. Friends of Nature launched a waste-sorting programme in Baiwang Jasmine Garden, but the residency's name was considered sensitive by the authorities, who worried that it might be the place used to organise the Chinese Jasmine Revolution. Thus, the waste-sorting programme was suspended. Source: Interview with Zhang Boju, CEO of Friends of Nature, in Beijing in February 2014.

[77] Compared with the incinerator project in Liulitun, there was little opposition in Sujiatuo town because the location was far from residential areas. The incinerator was expected to be built in June 2015. (Source: Web of construction bidding in China (中國招標網), <http://www.jszhaobiao.com/projectdetail/27806011.html> (Accessed 8 May 2014).
"Non-Stop Debates about the Building of the Liulitun Incinerator for 4 Years, the Government Restarts Public Participation" (4 年裡六里屯垃圾焚燒廠建設紛爭不斷，政府重啟公眾參與程式), Beijing Environment and Resources Society (北京市法學會環境資源法研究會), 31 March 2011. <http://www.bjelf.com/news/bencandy.php?fid=47&aid=701&page=3> (Accessed 14 August 2013).

In the last section, development of protest is introduced and showed the complex dynamics among the policy actors over building incinerator in Liulitun. Either "pro-burn" or "anti-burn" coalitions used environmental laws, as well as scientific knowledge to affect the building decision. In this and following sections, the struggle of building a "zero-waste community" among policy actors in post-activism is shown: On one hand, the municipal government implemented relevant municipal waste management measures to the city; on the other hand, the green group initiated "zero-waste campaign" for encouraging residents to do waste sorting in the community.

Although the incinerator project was relocated to Sujiatuo in 2011, Liulitun continued to experience severe air pollution. A concrete plant, owned by BBMG Group (金隅集團, a listed national construction enterprise) was built in 2009 next to the Liulitun landfill and the surrounding the villages. The plant did not undergo an EIA before construction and the villagers complained to the Haidian district government. The government replied that because the plant was on industrial land, it did not have to conduct an EIA.[78] The villagers then turned to BBMG and opposed the plant. Eventually, the enterprise compensated them by building a road in the village that bypasses the concrete plant and connects to the main road; forming a recreational group for the elderly in the villages; installing street lights in the villages; and promising to clean the streets regularly. In June 2013, BBMG also initiated the formation of the Green Environment Monitoring Group, and five cadres from the villages were invited to serve as volunteers. The BBMG also provided an office inside the plant. The volunteers were responsible for reporting on the air quality in the villages to the plant manager and for reminding the company to clean the streets regularly. The group did not register under the Ministry of Civil Affairs, but the volunteers insisted that it had a legal status.[79] The villagers commented that the Green Environment Monitoring Group's formation was a 'win-win situation' because the enterprise obtained a good reputation and increased profits and the villagers' living conditions improved.[80] The villagers also commented that their goal (to remove the incinerator) had been reached, and that they thus had no plans for further action.

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[78] This has revealed a loophole in existing EIA Law in China. Article 8 of the law lists which projects are required to undergo EIAs, including industrial-related projects, but it does not mention that land use should be specified. Thus, the officials used the loophole to allow the construction of a concrete plant in Liulitun.
[79] In the interview, the volunteers claimed that the group is legal because the EIA Law gives it legal status. In Article 5, the state encourages the public to participate in EIA Law.
[80] Interview with the volunteers of Green Environment Group in Liulitun, Beijing in January 2014.

6.4 Municipal Waste Management in Beijing after the Activism

Following the anti-incinerator protests in Lilitun, the municipal government implemented a series of measurements for reducing the volume of waste in the city, including a waste sorting programme, incinerator construction and garbage charges. Meanwhile, waste burning remained one of the major waste management solutions in Beijing. Other locations such as Gaoantun (高安屯), Asuwei (阿蘇衛) and Nangong (南宮) planned to build incinerators. In November 2011, the municipal government promulgated 'Regulations on Municipal Waste Management for Beijing City', which was the first legal document on managing municipal waste in the country. The regulations highlighted the responsibilities of the citizens, authorities and corporations, and classified the waste into four treatment categories: 1) food waste for waste compost and biogas generation; 2) glass, paper and plastic for recycling; 3) non-recyclable waste for incineration; and 4) hazardous waste for landfills. In January 2011, the government planned to promote a trial waste sorting programme in 1,200 communities within 5 years. Waste charges by volume were also suggested, and took effect in March 2012.[81] Later, Beijing's municipal government implemented the 'Three-Year Plan of Municipal Waste Facilities for Beijing City' (北京市生活垃圾處理設施建設三年實施方案), with an implementation date of April 2013. In this three-year plan, the government expected the municipal waste problem to be solved by 2015 through waste burning (70%) and landfill (30%). Thus, incinerators and food waste plants became mainstream ways of resolving future waste problems.[82]

In contrast, after the Liliutun activism, green groups began promoting waste sorting. Famous Beijing-based ENGOs such as Friends of Nature and Nature University (自然大學) began to organise several activities advocating zero waste in the city. For example, both Nature University and Friends of Nature have used policies to halt incinerator construction, in addition to launching waste sorting programmes in residential communities. In 2011, the green groups established the country-wide 'zero-waste alliance' (零廢棄聯盟) to promote nationwide zero-waste status through cooperation between governments, businesses, citizens, social groups and academia. In August 2013, for example, the alliance invited Luo Jiangming (Internet pseudonym

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[81] Sun, Q. (2011). "Waste Levy by Volume Turns to Regulation" (Duoreng laji cheng fagui), 19 November, Beijing Times (Jinghua Shibao). Available at: < http://epaper.jinghua.cn/html/2011-11/19/content_731585.htm> (Accessed 20 January 2014).

[82] "Regulation for Municipal Waste Management in Beijing" (2013-2015), (Beijing Shi Shenghuo Laji Chuli sheshi jiangche sanlian shisi fangan). Available at: http://210.75.193.158/gate/big5/zhengwu.beijing.gov.cn/ghxx/qtgh/t1312026.htm (Accessed 20 January 2014).

'Basuofengyu', 巴索風雲), one of the founders of Eco-Canton, to share his experience in promoting waste sorting in Guangzhou.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter examined the development of anti-incinerator activism in Beijing, from when the Liulitun citizens objected to the construction of an incinerator nearby and launched protests, to the municipal government's decision to cancel the planned construction and relocate the incinerator. This four-year protest was significant in relation to similar instances of activism in other parts of China in that it was the first anti-incinerator activism in China and the first time the government responded by relocating the incinerator (Hsu 2010:6). Since then, anti-incinerator activism has emerged nationwide in places such as Guangzhou, Gaoantun (Beijing), Asuwei (Beijing), Nanjing and Shanghai. Anti-incinerator activism has revealed the varied concerns of the state and society, and I use the ACF in this section to summarise the decisions of the protestors and the government and show how they influenced the decision-making process. First of all, the municipal government suspended the plan of building the incinerator as a response to the protest, which has shown the feature of decentralised governing structure at local level in China. As discussed in previous chapters, the local governments enjoy a certain degree of autonomy in public policy making and making policy changes. As such, the authorities are able to suspend any policy to respond the protest for minimising political and economic costs. The policy actors have played their roles for seeking policy change and the ACF help us to understand their dynamics in the process of policy change.

In the case at hand, four groups of stakeholders with different concerns about the Liulitun incinerator were identified: the Beijing and Haidian district governments, the citizens, the ENGOs and the epistemic community. Two coalitions – pro- and anti-incinerator – were formed around different beliefs systems. Both the Beijing and Haidian district governments and some pro-incinerator scientists planned to build an incinerator to solve the municipal waste management issue. The pro-incinerator coalition did not change their minds after the activism. Given that the city generates 18,000 tonnes of garbage every day, Beijing's municipal government considered incineration to be the most effective solution for reducing the volume of solid waste in the city. Meanwhile, Liulitun residents, i.e. the 'victims' in the incinerator project exhibiting NIMBY syndrome, opposed the incinerator in their neighbourhood and thus were the major policy actors in the anti-incinerator coalition. The Liultun residents can be classified into two types: the residents who were living in the poor villages near to the planned incinerator location, and the

new, incoming residents surrounding the incinerator. Both of these groups opposed the project and asked for its relocation, but the incoming residents played a more significant role in the activism. The new residents were mainly from the newly built communities such as Fenglin Mountain Villa and Baiwang Jasmine Garden, both built in 2005, and most were retired cadre members and professionals with good educations, high incomes and experience fighting the government. These new residents used their knowledge and personal networks to further the cause. They acted on their knowledge of their rights and of how to submit petitions. They contacted CPPCC and NPC members to bring residents' opinions to the attention of the top levels of government. They met with lawyers to discuss litigation and invited scientists and other experts to provide information on the hazards of incinerators. They also initiated and organised the anti-incinerator protests. Hence, both the anti- and pro-incinerator coalitions were clearly identified in the incinerator policy subsystem, through clear beliefs and abundant resources.

Social networks were one of the most important resources for the anti-incinerator coalition, which had to deal with asymmetric power compared with the state actors. Most of the residents in Lilitun were retired cadre members and professionals, which meant that they had strong social networks through which to enhance their negotiation power in the policy change process. The NPC and CPPCC members, for example, wielded a notable level of power in the activism that influenced the outcomes. As both NPC and CPPCC members are part of the 'ruling elite' in the context of socialist China, with the former responsible for law-making and supervising governmental work and the latter involved in 'political consultation on state's policies' and 'democratic supervision through proposals and criticisms',[83] their influence over public policies such as the incinerator project in Liulitun was significant. The Liulitun residents contacted them with the expectation that they could affect the government's decision. In addition, some NPC members were living in the residencies and were thus victims. Hence, it is not surprising that the NPC and CPPCC members tabled concerns about the effects of incinerators on human health and the ecosystem in the district's CPPCC meetings.

In the policy-oriented learning process, scientific and technical information was used in both the pro- and anti-incinerator coalitions. The protesters used legal knowledge to defend their rights. First, they discussed the activism strategies at their residences. Then, they posted their opinions and called for action through social media, such as their online discussion forums. Unlike the new residents, the villagers who lived close to the landfill and planned incinerator location initially

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[83] "The Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee". Available at:
http://www.cppcc.gov.cn/zxww/2012/07/03/ARTI1341301557187103.shtml (Accessed 1 February 2014).

appeared to accept the incinerator construction. They were weak in opposing any governmental decisions, and while they did participate in the anti-incinerator protests, it is notable that they later accepted the construction and operation of a concrete plant nearby. The Lilitun residents did not have any further plans for action once the incinerator was relocated, such as promoting or engaging in a waste recycling programme. [84] The contradictions regarding the effects of incineration were found among the epistemic communities of both coalitions. The scientists mainly debated the technology of incineration and its effects on human health and the ecosystem. Their debates were either pro- or anti-incineration. The Liulitun residents had invited Zhao Yuanzhang, a famous anti-incineration scientist, to consult, and his scientific data on the consequences of incineration became strong evidence in the petition letters. The government, in contrast, invited the pro-incineration scientists to support the planned construction by focusing on the problems stemming from an overload of waste. All of the scientists involved used a variety of scientific information and overseas experience to prove the strengths and weaknesses of incineration, which led to wider social discussions. Representatives of the mass media, such as *Southern Weekend* and China Central Television (CCTV), reported on the debates among the scientists, and while no consensus was reached on the safety of incineration, their discussions enlightened and enriched the development of civil society in China.

Under the pressure exerted by protesters, the municipal government suspended incinerator construction and imposed several measures for waste reduction that were perceived as policy change, such as the Outline for National Economic and Social Development in the Tenth FYP, the Outline for National Economic and Social Development in the Eleventh FYP and the Regulations on Municipal Waste Management (2011). These measures were designed to reduce the volume of waste in the city and set up a more comprehensive waste management system, and the government has been active in implementing them. Since the protests, a more comprehensive waste management system has been established, including garbage charges and trial waste sorting programmes in dozens of communities.

According to the ACF, in the Beijing case, specific factors drove the municipal government to enact policy change. First, the changes in economic and cultural values and those in public opinion fostered the rise of environmental awareness at the society level. Having explored the stakeholders' concerns, it is clear that the activism in Liulitun was not a typical NIMBY campaign, which can usually be described as an emotional, and selfish action (McAvoy

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[84] Interview with the volunteers of Green Environment Group in Liulitun, Beijing in January 2014.

1998:275) aimed at removing unpopular nearby facilities. The protesters in the Beijing case challenged the NIMBY stereotype in that they prepared well and expressed their dissatisfaction to the government by producing scientific data on the hazardous effects of incineration. Nevertheless, the residents did not take further action after the suspension of incinerator construction, such as promoting a 'zero-waste' model in their communities.

Second, Beijing's municipal government responded to the pressure applied by the protesters by suspending the planned incinerator construction and implementing waste reduction measures. As Cai (2010) notes, the local government's policy changes were a response to the collective activism with the aim of maintaining the social order. When faced with the pressure of several protests and widespread media reporting, both the district and municipal governments were forced to suspend and relocate the incinerator in response to the grievances of the Lilitun protesters. Then, later, a solid waste management programme was implemented as proof of the governments' efforts to maintain social order and legitimacy.

I made the following observations in relation to the Beijing case study. Although the government stopped the incinerator construction in Liulitun as a response to the residents' demands, it still manipulated the waste management policy without public involvement. The protest did not influence public participation in policy-making processes; that is, citizens still suffer from a lack of channels through which they can participate in decision-making related to waste management, with the exception of EIA Law. Thus, anti-incinerator protests continue to crop up in other districts of Beijing, such as Gaoantun and Asuwei. Moreover, the work of green groups has not changed much since the Liulitun activism. Limited by the existing political system, green groups are unable to play a role in monitoring the government. Instead, they play a non-confrontational role in areas such as education, policy advocacy and the establishment of waste-sorting and recycling programmes in the community. As such, citizens rarely seek help from the ENGOs and green groups and thus do not benefit from their mediating role between government and society. In ACF, coalition opportunity structure affects policy subsystem also found in this case. Suggested by Sabatier and Weible (2007), coalition opportunity structure mediates stable system parameters and exogenous factors which affect the policymaking within the subsystem (Sabatier and Weible 2007: 1999). In this case, the decentralised governing structure provides a stable system parameters and the exogenous factors in the society, such as the change of public opinion and economic condition, have affected the attitudes of building incinerator among the Liulitun citizens. The economic growth leads to create middle class, who are living near the proposed incinerator location, understood the negative impacts of incinerator to the health and the

environment. Thus, they did studies to collect the evidences to show hazardous of incinerator, used environmental laws to protect their rights, and connected NPC / CPPCC members and journalists to express their grievances.

In this work, I explore the power that the citizens in the studied cases wielded when fighting en mass against incinerator pollution and for the right to participate in the policy process. In the case of Liliutun, the residents launched protests and successfully stopped the incinerator construction in their community; specifically, Beijing's municipal government acknowledged their demands and relocated the incinerator. After the anti-incinerator activism, however, the government did not create a mechanism that would allow the public to participate in decision-making processes. Although Beijing's municipal government is still assuming a leadership role in planning and building incinerators around the city, neither citizens nor ENGOs are able to monitor the government's actions. Consequently, similar anti-incinerator activism has emerged in other parts of China. The ACF was also used to identify the structure of advocacy coalitions and their beliefs within policy subsystems, and the factors driving policy change have been discussed above.

All in all, the case study further exposes the limitations of Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) when explaining the dynamics of policy process in PRC in two ways. First, the local governments have apparently enjoyed certain degree of discretion when putting forward the decrees from the Central People's Government (CPG) in public policymaking and implementation. The Beijing government, as a municipality directly under the CPG in PRC,   have actively responded to the public outcries and protests against the incinerator proposal and eventually retrieved its decision. Regardless the reasons for the 'concession' from government, the case simply contradicts to the most fundamental presumption of the ACF that is not likely to take place in the 'nondemocratic regimes'. The case shows the Beijing government, together with those economically prosperous municipalities, may be blessed by the CPG and could be more autonomous in policy implantation so as to minimise 'political' and 'economic' costs. Secondly, the ACF argues for the attention to the coalition within environmental policy subsystem. The members in "anti-burn coalition' are all from a social network that is composed of middle class professionals and retired cadre members who maintain smooth and strong interactions with the government. Some activists are even former actors in governance (delegates of the CCPCC in this case) and they have skilfully collaborated with the non-fully autonomous mass media to put pressure on government. This further reveals the imperfection of the ACF in explaining the policy process in PRC- in particularly in the environmental agenda as I argued in the previous chapters, as the well-received conceptual construct appears paying insufficient regard to the central-peripheral power dynamics

in policy process in an unitary political system in Asia; as well as the different pattern of civil society in the PRC.

Chapter 7

The Anti-incinerator Movement in Guangzhou: From Activism to a Consultative Committee

7.1 Background of Activism

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the anti-incinerator activism in Beijing Liulitun has encouraged the emergence of anti-incinerator activism in other parts of China, such as Guangzhou Panyu. In this chapter, the ACF is used to understand the development of anti-incinerator activism, as well as the complex dynamics among the policy actors in Guangzhou Panyu.

Guangzhou (in Canton), located in the south of China, is the political, economic and political centre of Guangdong province. Guangzhou covers an area of 7,434 km^2 and has a population of 8 million, of whom over 67% were permanent residents in 2011.[85] The city is divided into ten districts (Yuexiu, Haizhu, Liwan, Tianhe, Baiyun, Huangpu, Huadu, Panyu, Nansha and Luogang) and two county-level cities (Conghua and Zengcheng). As a result of economic development, the GDP per capita for Guangzhou reached US$13,000 in 2011. It is one of the wealthiest cities in the country, with both secondary and tertiary industries (such as automobile manufacturing, tourism, business and exhibitions) making key contributions to the city's economy. Guangzhou was one of first trading ports to the western modern world in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). Later on, Guangzhou became the leased territory of Britain and France until the establishment of People's Republic of China in 1949 and it has been seen as the first page of history to connect modern world. In addition, Guangzhou was a pioneer city in Guangdong province in the early reform period. Guangzhou reformed its price system in 1978, the year of the Open Door Policy in China, and changed to a market-oriented system. The city also implemented a shareholder system in the late 1990s and became one of most marketised places in the country.[86] Thus, Guangzhou is described as an 'open city' with a relatively pluralistic society in terms of its economic, social and cultural perspective (Chan 1999:265).

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[85] Factsheet, Guangzhou Government, <http://english.gz.gov.cn/publicfiles/business/htmlfiles/gzgoven/s9148/201104/789512.html> (Accessed 1 December 2013).
[86] "Local Chronicles of Guangzhou", <http://www.gzsdfz.org.cn/rsgz/kfqy/201311/t20131120_8391.htm> (Assessed 1 December 2013).

This 'open city' has also been described as 'a place of social activism' (Zhang 2013:104) due to its geographical location. Guangzhou is close to Hong Kong (about 130 km), with which it shares close economic and social ties. The cities share a common dialect (Cantonese), they are linked by flow of population (thousands of people have fled to Hong Kong since the establishment of socialist China in 1949) and Hong Kong's popular culture affects the lifestyles and mentalities of Guangzhou's communities. The 'open mentality' exhibited in Guangzhou has influenced civil society and associational life. Moreover, Guangzhou's government has shown more tolerance towards the growth of NGOs and their tendency towards being openly confrontational (Chan 1999:265). This more tolerant nature is also reflected in the strong social activist presence. In an interview for this work, Luo Jingming (Internet pseudonym 'Basuofengyun' 巴索風雲) and Chen Xiaoyun, both of whom participated in anti-incinerator protests and other social activism, agreed that Guangzhou's government had never suppressed a rally.[87]

Regarding the development of civil society in Guangzhou, 5,967 grassroots NGOs were registered at the Bureau of Civil Affairs of Guangzhou Municipality in 2013,[88] and their members include elderly service, environmental protection, migrant, women's rights and healthcare workers. These social groups play roles in education and welfare service provision. However, the rise of NGOs in Guangzhou and the demonstrations in Hong Kong seeking democracy have also affected the people in Guangzhou, encouraging them to enthusiastically defend their rights. Topics related to social activism, similar to those in other places in the country, include labour rights, land acquisition and urban management. The strong sense of local identity amongst the people in Guangzhou has also been discussed. For example, thousands of people took a 'stroll' to protest a proposed increase in Mandarin programming across Guangzhou TV in July 2010 – referred to as the 'Preserving Cantonese Incident' (保衛□語事件).[89] Such social activism in

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[87] Interviews with Luo Jingming and Chen Xiaoyun in Guangzhou on 23 January 2014.
[88] "Annual Report of Municipal Civil Affairs Bureau", Guangzhou 2013. Available at: <http://www.gzmz.gov.cn/publicfiles/business/htmlfiles/GZ09/8.1/201403/2630481.html> (Accessed 1 February 2014).
[89] In June 2010, the CPPCC Guangzhou Committee conducted an online survey suggesting that Mandarin be the broadcasting medium for TV and raising debates on preserving Cantonese. The CPPCC members asserted that Mandarin is the best way to understand the country. Starting in mid-July, protesters gathered at the exit of one of the underground stations in Guangzhou, but the exit was blocked by the police. Although the gathering was forced to cancel, hundreds of people still gathered at the station exit. A month later, thousands of people gathered in a park in defence of Cantonese and three people were arrested. At the same time, in Hong Kong, two hundred people joined a demonstration to support the 'stalk' in Guangzhou. The incident showed that local identity is strong in Guangzhou. Source: Wikipedia (Chinese version),

Guangzhou is the focus of my second case study, with the people's 'open mentality' and the government's tolerance as leading examples of political reform in China (Chan 1999:265).

There are 24 ENGOs in Guangzhou founded by the government (GOENGOs), and they are mainly green business associations and green societies.[90] The total number of ENGOs in Guangzhou is unidentified. Even the government has not publicised the exact number registered. According to a survey by the Green Society Environmental Action Network (濟溪環境交流網路), an ENGO in Chongqing, there are 27 ENGOs (including official, registered and grassroots environmental groups) in the city.[91] The history of ENGO development in Guangzhou is short compared to that in Beijing. The first registered ENGO, the Guangzhou Green Point Environmental Welfare Association (Green Point, 綠點), was founded in 2003 by a group of university students to provide environmental education services to the government, business groups and other NGOs. Bike Guangzhou (拜客廣州), another famous ENGO established in 2009, advocates green transportation and builds bike lanes. However, the Guangzhou green groups are facing similar challenges to those troubling other parts of China, the most important of which is the local government's tendency to prioritise economic development over environmental protection. The ENGOs prefer to adopt non-radical, non-confrontational and self-contained strategies to minimise political risk in the context of authoritarian China (Sun and Zhao 2008:160), and their weakness drives the environmental campaigns led by citizens.

Similar to other places in China, environmental deterioration is a severe problem in this wealthy city. According to a public poll conducted in 2013, 20% of people are dissatisfied with the current environmental situation in Guangzhou, mainly in relation to air (38%) and water (41%) conditions, respectively. The poor enforcement of environmental rules was also mentioned in the poll results (32%).[92] The Ministry of Environmental Protection pointed out that the air pollutants in Guangzhou, mainly PM2.5 and ozone, exceed the national standards, with industries in

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"Action for Supporting Cantonese in Guangzhou, 2010" (2010 年廣州撐粵語行動), <http://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/2010%E5%B9%B4%E5%BB%A3%E5%B7%9E%E6%92%90%E7%B2%B5%E8%AA%9E%E8%A1%8C%E5%8B%95> (Accessed 31 March 2014).

[90] Guangdong Environmental Web. Available at: < http://www.gepf.org.cn/> (Accessed 1 February 2014).

[91] Jingqi Environmental Web. Available at: <http://epo.gsean.org/> (Accessed 13 February 2014).

[92] This survey was conducted by the Canton Public Opinion Research Centre, a non-profit organisation in Guangzhou. Please note that the sample size is not mentioned in this survey. Available at: <http://www.c-por.org/index.php?c=news&a=baogaodetail&id=2301&pid=10> (Accessed 13 February 2014).

suburban areas and urban vehicle emissions as the main sources.[93] Zhujiang (Pearl River) and cross-border pollution between Guangzhou and Foshan City are the main locations of water pollution. Illegal dumping from woodwork, plastics and paper-making factories and illegal livestock farming along the border create water pollution in the city. Municipal waste is another environmental issue in Guangzhou that is discussed in this work. The city generates 10.4 thousand tonnes of waste per day, with incineration and landfills used as waste management solutions. Currently, two landfills and one incinerator are set up in the city, with 90% of waste delivered to the landfills,[94] which are expected to be full in 3 years.[95] Incinerator construction is seen as an alternative way to reduce waste in the city. The severe environmental situation in Guangzhou and the weak ENGOs explain the rise of environmental campaigns and consciousness among its citizens, who expressed their opposition to incinerator construction. These citizens were also dissatisfied with the lack of opportunities to participate in decision-making processes and the lack of accessible information about the incinerator. The citizens who participated in the street protests revealed the deficiency of the non-confrontational strategies favoured by environmentalists in the past.

Apparently in the analytical terms of ACF, decentralised governing structure and socio-economic condition of Guangzhou are significant factors in affecting the change of incinerator building policy. The growing of social groups in Guangzhou implies an "opened political opportunity structure" that the government tolerates diversified interests thrive in a society. In the next section of this chapter, the anti-incinerator activism in Panyu, Guangzhou is discussed, demonstrating the aforementioned rise of environmental activism.

7.2 The Rise of Activism in Panyu

In the analytical terms of ACF, two coalitions are found in the anti-incinerator activism in Panyu case, "Pro-incinerator" and "Anti-incinerator" coalitions, with different policy beliefs. Similar to the case of Beijing Liulitun, the coalitions of Panyu have been struggling the concerns between urban management and sustainable development for the next generation. The "Pro-incinerator"

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[93] "The top 10 most air pollution cities, Guangzhou exceeds the standard" (十大空气最差城市，广州未上榜但空气污染超标), Fang.com (10 March 2014), <http://news.gz.soufun.com/2014-03-10/12265386_all.html> [Access 3 January 2014].

[94] *People's Daily*. (2013). 26 August. Available at: http://gd.people.com.cn/BIG5/n/2013/0826/c123932-19390670.html (Accessed 20 February 2014).

[95] "Insufficient Land for Disposal Waste in Guangzhou" (Guangzhou Laji Bufenxiao sanlianhou modi ketie), Ifeng.com. Available at: http://news.ifeng.com/gundong/detail_2013_04/24/24569734_0.shtml (Accessed 3 January 2014).

coalition comprised of municipal and district government officials, and scientists, who support the build of incinerator for reducing the municipal waste volume in the city; while the "Anti-incinerator" coalition formed by residents, journalist, "anti-burn" scientist, environmentalists, and environmental lawyer. They expressed their concerns over the impacts of building incinerator to the health and the environment; in addition, the government never informed the incinerator plan to the residents nearby and the residents have not been invited to participate in the decision making process. The competing coalitions used both scientific and technological information to revise policy objectives in the policy-oriented learning process.

Panyu, a highly urbanised district in the south-east of Guangzhou, was the proposed location for an incinerator. Panyu covers an area of 1,314 km^2 and had a population of 1.8 million in 2011. Several landmarks are found in this district, including Guangzhou University and Chimelong Xiangjiang Safari Park. In addition, various famous and new residential complexes such as Riverside Garden, Clifford Estates and Huanan Country Garden[96] are located in this district within 6 km of the proposed incinerator site. The closest residential area to the proposed site is just 1 km away. The Panyu district government posted the plans for the incinerator project in February 2009, with the expectation that construction would be completed in 2010. The municipal government cited the Likeng incinerator in the Baiyun district as an 'outstanding example', and claimed in their promotional materials that the proposed incinerator would use the same technology. Initially, the proposal did not receive much attention from local residents (Kuo and Chen 2011:102).

In September 2009, the Municipal Urban Management Bureau confirmed the incinerator project and the land was requisitioned while the EIA was launched. The residents learned from a government website that a waste incinerator power plant was going to be built, and posted the information on an online residential discussion forum, 'Jiangwaijiang' (江外江論壇, http://www.rg-gd.net/forum.php?mod=forumdisplay&fid=12) that opposed the incinerator project. The news spread quickly and several online discussion forums posted the same message protesting the incinerator construction. The information on the government website revealed that the Panyu district government had proposed and approved the construction of a waste-to-energy incinerator in 2004, and that the Guangzhou Planning Bureau had approved the location in 2006,

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[96] Most of the residents living in these residential complexes were government officials, business professionals, teachers and journalists. Riverside Garden has 40,000 households and is home to most of the journalists from the *Southern Metropolis Daily*, a Guangzhou-based tabloid considered to be the most 'outspoken' newspaper in China. In addition, the residents of Riverside Garden are experienced in social activism, having campaigned against road construction in 2002 and fought for a residents-based homeowners' association in 2004 (Kuo and Chen 2011:101-102). Thus, intensive interaction between journalists and activists took place in this anti-incinerator campaign.

without the residents' knowledge. The government had not consulted the public, from the time of implementation through the time of approval. The residents also learned that the proposed location was less than 6 km from residential complexes. In the following days, the residents sat together to study the incinerator's effects and discussed what, if any, action to take. Later, on 13 and 14 October 2009, the residents took to the streets of the district with a petition and distributed handbills about the problems associated with incinerators, seeking public support.

Alongside these actions, the residents organised a visit to the Likeng (李坑) waste-to-energy plant located in Baiyun district (白雲區, a northern suburb of Guangzhou city). The Likeng incinerator was the first in the city and was hailed as an exemplar by the municipal government.[97] However, the Panyu residents found that the incinerator exuded a noxious smell into the surrounding area, and expressed their worries about the technology. Likeng incinerator was built on what had previously been a landfill site that had seriously polluted the underground water, affecting a nearby village. The environmental deterioration continued even after the landfill was closed in 2004. The incinerator was built in 2005, at a distance of less than 300 m from local houses. The smell and dust from the incinerator spread over the village; moreover, the media had publicised its effect on the health of the local populace. Sixty-two cases of cancer had been reported in this village of 8,000 people, with 42 people dying between 2005 and 2009. The villagers believed that the cancer was related to emissions from the incinerator.[98] The Panyu residents expressed their sympathy to the villagers and reiterated their belief that banning the Panyu incinerator project was necessary. They made a documentary entitled, 'Who can save you, people in Likeng?' (誰來拯救你，李坑人民), and uploaded it to the Internet to publicise the hazardous effects of incinerators (Kuo and Chen 2011:104).

Some days later, a group of residents carrying a letter stating their concerns and a thousand signatures visited the Guangzhou Municipal Bureau for Environment and Hygiene (now renamed the Guangzhou Municipal Urban Management Committee). The agency promised to reply within two months. In the letter, the residents expressed their dissatisfaction with the plans to build the incinerator without public consultation, and requested that the agency disclose the details of the EIA process and cancel the project. In the following days, the residents also visited the Panyu

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[97] "Guangzhou Likeng Waste-to-Energy Plant", Veolia Environmental Service (China). Available at: <http://www.veolia-es.cn/en/about-us/20121105241.html> (Accessed 1 December 2013).

[98] "Cancer Deaths Found Near to Likeng Incinerator" (李坑垃圾焚燒發電廠附近部分村民死於癌症), *Sina News*, 26 November 2009, <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/sd/2009-11-26/111519132701_2.shtml> (Accessed 1 December 2013).

district government, the South China Institute of Environmental Sciences (the agency responsible for conducting the EIA for the incinerator) and the Municipal Bureau of Gardens of Panyu district (廣州市番禺區市政園林管理局, the agency responsible for choosing the incinerator's location). They also contacted NPC and CPPCC members and the mass media for support.

On 25 October 2009, dozens of protesters wearing surgical masks and dressed in t-shirts bearing the slogan 'Refuse Toxic Air' collected signatures from the public at the entrance of a supermarket. Some protestors held banners with slogans such as 'Anti-burning' and 'Anti-dioxin'.[99] Their actions attracted the attention of the police, who arrested some protestors on the charge of 'alleged unlawful assembly'. A few days later on 22 November, government representatives held a press conference, during which both the municipal and district governments announced that they had not changed their positions, emphasising the incinerator's necessity. This made the residents angry. The following morning, one thousand residents 'strolled' to the headquarters of the municipal government and Guangzhou Municipal Urban Management Committee with banners, where they shouted slogans and sang the national anthem. Although the police were present and the protesters posted their banners on police patrol cars, the police remained on standby and did not take further action. After lunchtime, the municipal government suggested that the protesters select a representative from their number to allow for better communication, but the suggestion was rejected. They shouted: 'We are representing ourselves!' and 'No one is representing us!' Eventually, at 2 pm, the protestors left peacefully.

In the face of this opposition, the government attempted to change its position on the incinerator construction. Three days after the protest march, the Panyu district government suggested inviting an expert to consult on a comprehensive plan for the district, with residents invited to vote and decide on the plan. In addition, the Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau announced that the EIA for the incinerator would be assessed by the Bureau and the final decision shown to the public after the hearings. The project reached a breakthrough on 10 December, two weeks after the 'stroll'. The district government announced that construction of the planned incinerator would be postponed until 2011 (a year after the 2010 Asian Games, of which Guangzhou was the host). Meanwhile, the district government released a document about waste management solutions and sought public opinion. Finally, the party secretary of the district was invited to attend a meeting

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[99] "Guangzhou: Environmental Protection in the Name of 'stroll'" (廣州：'散步'，以環保之名), *China News Week* (中國新聞周刊), 7 December 2009, <http://magazine.sina.com/bg/chinanewsweek/2009044/2009-12-07/ba80275.html> (Accessed 1 December 2013).

with the residents of Riverside Garden on 20 December 2009. In the meeting, the party secretary let it be known that the project had been suspended as a result of the mass opposition, and announced that public opinion on waste management in the district would be considered in the future. It was also decided that there would be a study on the feasibility of introducing waste sorting in a small residential community.[100] The four-month campaign of activism had finally reached an end.

7.3 Incinerator Returns to Panyu District

Even though this controversial project was suspended, and the mayor promised to implement a waste-sorting scheme in ten small communities in April 2011,[101] the controversy over incinerator construction started again after the Asian Games. In a press conference launched by the Panyu district government on 11 April 2011, it was announced that five locations had been selected (please see Appendix), and that one would be chosen as the site for an incinerator, with two months of public consultation provided to discuss the proposal.[102] The proposal, however, was contentious because Dashi town (大石), despite mass citizen opposition in 2009, was one of the five proposed locations. Moreover, three of the locations were near Foshan city (3-5 km away), and the Foshan municipal government had not been informed.[103] The citizens in both Guangzhou and Foshan criticised the proposal. They questioned the standards being used to choose locations, the means of public involvement in the process of selection and the supervision that would be used for the incinerator operation. In addition, following questionable public participation, the citizens worried that the waste-sorting plan would be halted in the future. The people living in Foshan, particularly those in the Shunde (順德區) district, worried about ash polluting the lands and rivers within the district and suggested that district governments should have better communication systems to monitor the issue.[104] The Bureau of Environment, Transportation and

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[100] "Construction of Panyu Incinerator Suspended: 75% of Mass Consent is Required to Pass EIA" (番禺垃圾焚燒廠已停建 環評需敏感區群眾 75%以上同意才通過), Boxun.com (博迅網), 21 December 2009, <http://www.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2009/12/200912212012.shtml> (Accessed 1 December 2013).
[101] "Waste Sorting Programme Kicks off in 16 Communities" (2011). *Dayoo News*, 8 March. Available at: <http://m.dayoo.com/105163/105166/105167/201103/08/105167_16720801.htm> (Accessed 24 January 2014).

[102] "Panyu waste incinerator '5 chooses one'" (番禺垃圾焚烧发电厂五选一), Nddaily, (13 April 2011), <http://gcontent.oeeee.com/8/3f/83fa5a432ae55c25/Blog/02a/616b1f.html >[Access 13 August 2013].
[103] "Building Punyu Incinerator, the Locations Close to Shunde", *Southern Metropolis Daily*, 13 April 2011.
[104] Due to time limitations, I did not conduct an interview in Foshan. The opinions were obtained from newspapers. Source: "Public Consultation will be Launched for 2 Months on the Locations of Building Incinerator", *Southern Metropolis Daily,* 13 April 2011.

Urban Management for the Shunde district (順德區環境運輸和城市管理局) also expressed concern about the incinerator proposal, claiming that the Panyu district government had never informed it about the proposal. It expected the Panyu government to exhibit comprehensive planning before the construction, to minimise the effect on the Shunde district.[105]

Days later, the ruling leaders of the Foshan municipal government and the Shunde district government asserted that they had known nothing until told by the mass media, claiming that the Panyu district government should consult with Foshan. On 15 April 2011, the Bureau of Environment, Transportation and Urban Management for the Shunde district visited both Guangzhou and Panyu's EPBs to get more information on the incinerator.[106] After the visit, the officers of the Shunde government disclosed the content of the meeting and the Panyu EPB's response. The Panyu EPB emphasised that the Guangzhou Urban Planning Bureau was responsible for choosing the incinerator location while the district EPB was responsible for managing the EIA afterwards. Finally, the Shunde government's message of opposition against the incinerator was forwarded to the Guangzhou Urban Planning Bureau.[107]

A few days later, the Foshan and Shunde governments expressed their opinions on incinerators. In a press conference on 21 April 2011, the Panyu government released the standards and process used to choose the incinerator locations, which had been selected by the urban planners in special meetings alongside plans to collect public opinions. Meanwhile, Guangzhou's municipal government consulted neighbouring district governments and experts launched a special seminar for studying the locations. Eventually, the EIA process would be conducted for the selected location. The Panyu district government expected the EIA to be completed by the end of 2011.[108]

The disclosure of this selection process, however, did not quell the anger of the citizens living nearby. Dozens of residents from Riverside Garden and elsewhere visited the Municipal Urban Management Committee on 25 April 2011 and expressed their dissatisfaction, pressing the government to speed up a waste-sorting scheme for the whole city. The residents also revisited the authority with 5,000 signatures and a letter opposing incinerator construction in Dashi town,

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[105] "Shunde Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau: Guangzhou Should Assess the Impact Immediately", *Nan Fang Daily*, 14 April 2011.
[106] "Shunde Environmental Protection Bureau Visited Reclamation Site in Panyu", *Nan Fang Daily*, 15 April 2011.
[107] "Oppose to Build in Shunde City", *Southern Metropolis Daily*, 18 April 2011.
[108] "EIA Will Be Conducted for Panyu Incinerator", *Southern Metropolis Daily*, 22 April 2011.

but the Panyu district government did not provide an immediate response. One of the residents living in Riverside Garden told me that he attempted to submit a proposal for a waste-sorting scheme for Riverside Garden, but did not receive any support from the Municipal Urban Management Committee. He felt frustrated because the residents lacked the resources to promote waste sorting in their residential complex.[109]

The mass media also kept an eye on the debate over location selection. Nandu.com[110] organised online voting for the best place to build an incinerator. More than 380,000 votes were cast, and most of them (over 57,000 votes) opposed Daishi as a location due to the proximity of several residential complexes. Dagang town (大崗鎮, located in southwest Panyu district), however, was favoured by voters as an ideal location for an incinerator (around 53,000 votes) because it was several miles away from the residential area and the land acquisition had already been completed.[111]

On 22 June 2011, the Panyu district government announced that the incinerator would be built in Dagang town. The reaction to this selection outcome varied between Guangzhou and Foshan's citizens. The residents in Daishi town and Riverside Garden celebrated the result, but the residents living near Dagang and Foshan's citizens expressed concern and asked that the decision-making process be disclosed.[112] Days after the announcement, Shunde Environmental Science Association, a government affiliation, issued 20,000 questionnaires to Shunde's citizens about the incinerator location, and over 77% of the respondents preferred Dongchong town (東涌鎮, located in southeast Panyu district, 13.5 km away from Shunde district). After collecting these opinions, the Shunde district government planned to discuss the matter with the Panyu district government.[113] Meanwhile, the residents of Dagang town were angry about the election result. The town comprised numerous villages and several new-build residential complexes, and the residents submitted 2,000 signatures to the Municipal Urban Management Committee opposing the incinerator.

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[109] Interview with Mr A, resident of Riverside Garden, in Guangzhou on 12 April 2012.
[110] Nandu.com is a member of *Nandu Daily Media Group*, a Guangzhou-based newspaper. For more information, please refer to footnote 16 in chapter 2.
[111] "Deadline of collecting opinion on Panyu incinerator location" (番禺垃圾焚烧厂五选一意见收集截止), Tencent News (腾讯新闻),16 June 2011. <http://news.qq.com/a/20110616/000394.htm > [Access 12 August 2013].
[112] "Oppose to Build Incinerator in Shunde City", *Nan Fang Daily*, 23 June 2011.
[113] "Shunde People Oppose the Location: A Survey Outcome", *Southern Metropolis Daily*, 27 June 2011.

Given this opposition, the Panyu district government promised to maintain high transparency in the selection process, and to undertake a more comprehensive study before building the incinerator. Yet even in 2015, plans to build incinerators in Guangzhou have continued due to their reputation as the most effective way to reduce the volume of municipal waste. The 'garbage' battle between the government and the citizens continues.

In the ACF's terms, the change of building incinerator policy was resulted by both stable system parameters and external system factors. In stable system factor, the decentralised governing structure provided certain degree of autonomy to local government, both Panyu district and Guangzhou municipal governments changed their incinerator plan as a response to the activism for minimising economic and political costs. In external factor, the rise of new wealth-off class in the society worried about the hazardous impacts of incinerators to health and environment, and against the build of incinerator. These factors had been affecting policy actors' strategies in policy-oriented learning process. In the policy-oriented learning process, the competing coalition had deployed different strategies, for example both coalitions contacted mass media for showing scientific data about the impact of incinerator to health and the environment, and the "anti-incinerator coalition" adopted national environmental laws to safeguard their rights. Facing the growing pressure from the protests, the authorities changed the plan of building incinerator to minimise political and economic costs.

7.4 The Emergence of Eco-Canton: From Activism to a Consultative Committee

Decentralised and opened political structure enhanced further public participation in decision making process. Following their campaign against the incinerator, Panyu residents – particularly those from Riverside Garden – realised that municipal waste was a problem and that the city needed an efficient solution. They formed a volunteer group, Green Family (綠色家庭), in February 2010, just a few months after the suspension of the incinerator project. At first, Green Family mainly advocated waste recycling in local communities with the belief that it would fundamentally change municipal waste management in Guangzhou. Seventy families joined the waste-sorting programme at Riverside Garden. After a short time, the group recognised that the role of government should not be neglected, and thus in mid-April 2010 they urged the Municipal Urban Management Committee to implement an effective recycling policy. This informal

organisation faced some difficulties, such as a lack of volunteers and a shortage of financial support, which hindered its development and the launch of the waste management campaign.

Meanwhile, the group recognised that assistance from a professional ENGO was essential to help and sustain Green Family's development. At the conclusion of the anti-incinerator activism in 2009, one of Green Family's founders, Luo Jingming (Internet pseudonym 'Basuofengyun', 巴索風雲), travelled to Beijing where he met Zhang Boju, the chief executive officer of Friends of Nature, to exchange campaigning experience and waste management knowledge. The meeting came about because Friends of Nature had assisted the Liulitun residents in their anti-incinerator campaign by launching community recycling projects.[114]

With help in the form of funding, knowledge and human resources from Friends of Nature, Green Family became more institutionalised. The group renamed itself 'Eco-Canton' and registered as an NGO with the Bureau of Civil Affairs of Guangzhou Municipality in June 2012. There are now more than 40 core volunteers in the group, which is formed mainly of residents of Riverside Garden, Clifford Estates and Huanan Country Garden. The newly founded ENGO aims to advocate zero-waste in communities, with the cooperation of government and enterprises, and to promote public participation in environmental issues. To this end, Eco-Canton has launched various activities with different parties to promote ideas such as establishing a recycling community in Clifford Estates; promoting a recycling programme to the offices of Sun Yet-Sen University; forming a 'Zero-Waste Coalition' with other Chinese ENGOs (such as Friends of Nature and the Green Beagle Environment Institute) to promote recycling in society;[115] and publicising a survey about waste sorting in the streets of Guangzhou in 2012.[116]

Meanwhile, Guangzhou's municipal government not only suspended the incinerator project in December 2009, but it has since implemented a series of new instruments for municipal waste management. These new instruments, such as plans to promulgate regulation on waste sorting in Guangzhou and setting more pilot points for waste sorting, aim to promote recycling in Guangzhou.[117] A further breakthrough has been made in the policy-making process. The Public

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[114] Interview with Zhang Boju (Friends of Nature) in Beijing on 26 August 2013.
[115] "'Zero Waste Coalition' Is Formed Today" (零廢棄聯盟今日宣告成立), Friends of Nature （自然之友）, <http://old.fon.org.cn/content.php?aid=14806> (Accessed 3 December 2013).
[116] "About Us" (關於我們), Eco-Canton (宜居廣州), <http://www.yjgz.org/a/aboutus/dsj/ > (Accessed 3 December 2013).
[117] Zhang, Y.Q. (2011). "Regulations Have Been Set for Waste Sorting" (廣州垃圾分類將有法可依),

Consultative and Supervision Committee for Urban Waste Management of Guangzhou City (廣州市城市廢棄物處理公眾咨詢監督委員會) was established under the Municipal Urban Management Committee in August 2012. The agency first announced that a public committee was to be established, and invited citizens to become members by applying online by mid-June 2012. The committee members were required to be residents of Guangzhou and aged 18 years or above with knowledge of municipal waste management. The duration of membership was one year.[118] The 30-member consultative committee was made up of two groups: the public and the experts. The former group comprised 19 people from different sectors of society selected by the agency; specifically, citizen representatives (12 people), business representatives (3 people) and representatives of social organisations (4 people). The expert group comprised 11 people selected from within the recycling industry from universities and professional institutes at different levels. On the day the consultative committee was founded, Guangzhou's mayor, Mr Chen Jianghua, stated that the aim of establishing the committee was to create a platform for communication, supervision and advocacy of municipal waste management.[119] He also recognised that the committee was a breakthrough in public policy making in Guangzhou and a landmark for urban management and governance.[120] One of the leaders in the anti-incinerator campaign, the founder and CEO of Eco-Canton, Basuofengyun, was a member of this committee in both its first and second cohorts.

After the establishment of the consultative committee, its members actively engaged in promoting waste management for the city. The members discussed solutions for managing waste and suggested their ideas to the municipal government in a meeting in April 2013. One such suggestion was waste charging. After discussion, the committee and the government came to a consensus and planned to choose some communities in which to pilot waste charging and waste

China News (中國新聞網) (Online) 26 January. <http://www.chinanews.com/ny/news/2010/01-26/2091751.shtml> (Accessed 3 December 2013); Lai, W.X. (2010). "A Trial Waste Sorting Takes Place in Donghu Street, Guangzhou: Professional Garbage Collection Company Incorporated Junk Collectors to Serve the Community" (廣州垃圾分類動真格了東湖街將試行由專業垃圾回收公司收編收買佬以服務社區), Dayoo News (大洋網) (Online) 25 January.
<http://news.dayoo.com/guangzhou/201001/25/73437_11861975.htm> (Accessed 3 December 2013).
[118]Qiu, P. (2012). "How to Manage Waste? Municipal Urban Management Committee Nominates Members for Consultative Committee for One Year Term" (垃圾如何處理 城管委徵顧問市垃圾處理'咨委會'徵義務委員，聘期一年), *Southern Metropolis Daily* (Guangzhou) (南方都市報 廣州版), 19 June, p. AII 09.
[119] Xu, H.X. (2012). "Take Advice from Experts and Listen to Mass Opinion Fighting For Better Waste Management" (融專家智慧 聽民眾呼聲全力以赴打好垃圾處理攻堅戰), *Guangzhou Daily* (廣州日報), 5 August, pp. A01-02.
[120] Ibid.

sorting by June 2013,[121] with the waste-charging scheme to be extended to six more communities in January 2014.[122] After the first one-year term, the consultative committee rotated, with a cohort of 15 new members joining the 30-member committee in October 2013.[123]

The municipal government also launched two public forums on municipal waste management in August and October 2012. In these forums, the government invited experts, the consultative committee and the general public to discuss effective measures for managing waste in the city, and the possibility of waste sorting. The municipal government appeared to have learned the importance of listening to the public in maintaining social stability and legitimacy of rule.

7.5 Public Participation in Public Affairs: A Trial

The establishment of the Public Consultative and Supervision Committee for the Urban Waste Management of Guangzhou City influenced other public policies in Guangzhou. On 11 March 2013, the municipal government announced another breakthrough measurement: the Guangzhou Major Livelihood Decisions Public Consultation Committee System (trial) (廣州市重大民生決策公共意見征詢委員會制度 (試行)). Under this measurement, consultative committees for collecting public opinion are set up before any important public decisions are made. The public decisions covered under this measure include those relating to public services, budget allocation for providing public services, important public infrastructure in both urban and rural areas, land use and development, land acquisition, environmental protection, employment, social security, family planning, education, health, food security, housing security, public transportation, urban management and public order. Other decisions closely related to the interests of the people, including those involving a wide range of social and livelihood decisions, now require extensive consultation of public opinion. Prospective members of consultative committees are invited to express their interest via application, invitation or referral. Then, the municipal government

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[121] Zhang, L., Zheng, Y.P., Huang, S.J. (2013). "A Consensus on Waste Charging Model Will Be Made in mid-June" (垃圾分類收費模式 6 月中旬會有共識), *Yangcheng Evening News* (羊城晚報), 26 April, p. A14G.
[122] "Waste Charging Will Be Implemented in Guangzhou Today" (廣州今啟動生活垃圾計量收費), *Guangzhou Daily* (廣州日報), 21 January 2014, <http://newsapp.gzdaily.com/jsp/share.jsp?code=MjQ3NTM%3D> (Accessed 18 December 2013).
[123] Quan, J. (2013). "15 New Members Joined the Second Term of Consultative Committee" (第二期公咨委新進 15 名成員), *Guangzhou Daily* (廣州日報), 15 October, p. A02.

makes its selections and the list of candidates is published for further nomination.[124] The number of members in the consultative committee is no fewer than 15 people, and one-third of its members must be citizens. Its members also have access to full information and all relevant documents, and the right to participate and express their opinion in the policy-making process. If the consultative committee has not been formed, the government cadres are not allowed to make unilateral decisions on a public policy.[125]

This breakthrough was significant for public policy making in the Chinese context, effectively institutionalising public participation in policy making. Although the current participatory mechanisms involving the NPC, the CPPCC and public hearings have provided channels for collecting and expressing opinions, the formation and implementation of a consultative committee is a new platform for direct communication and participation in public policy making that is shared between governments, citizens, experts and businesses. All major policies are discussed at the agenda-setting stage by committee members representing different sectors, and the selection of committee members is more transparent and representative than those used in the NPC and the CPPCC. In addition, the consultative committee encourages public engagement in public affairs, as people are entitled to initiate requests for policy advice, which is different from public hearings. Thus, the newly implemented participatory mechanism reduces the risk of public opposition to the launch of controversial projects while maintaining the government's legitimacy.

This breakthrough was in part facilitated by the style of government in Guangzhou. First, as a forerunner in the reform era, Guangzhou has proven eager to implement innovative policies. It is a 'place of social activism' (群體性事件) (Zhang 2013:104), with widespread public recognition of the need to establish a more responsive government. The subjects of this social activism not only include environmental protection, but also labour rights, land acquisition, urban management, etc. with campaigns highlighting the deficiencies of municipal government on the one hand and the rise of civil consciousness on the other. As such, social activism has pressured the municipal government to be more responsive. In December 2011, the Party Secretary of

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[124] Feng, Y.Q. (2013). "Guangzhou: Public Opinion Is Guaranteed in Making Major Decisions" (廣州: 用制度來保障 重大民生決策必須徵求民意), *People's Daily* （人民日報）
<http://gd.people.com.cn/n/2013/0311/c123932-18280036.html> (Accessed 18 December 2013).
[125] "The Set-up of Major Decision Public Consultative Committee (Trial) Is Approved" (廣州重大民生決策公共意見徵詢委員會制度（試行）通過), People's Government of Guangdong Province （廣東省人民政府), <http://www.gd.gov.cn/gdgk/gdyw/201303/t20130312_175976.htm> (Accessed 19 December 2013).

Guangdong province, Mr Wang Yang (now serving as a committee member on the Political Bureau of the CCP), advocated the concept of 'Environmental Democracy' (民主環保) in response to the increasing level of environmental activism in the province.[126] According to Wang, environmental democracy means that the general public has rights of information, participation and supervision in all environmental issues. In addition, a policy for disclosing environmental information should be developed and an environmental consultative system established.[127] In the same month in 2011, Guangzhou's government advocated an initiative called 'Happiness Guangzhou' (幸福廣州) at the 10th Party Congress of Guangzhou. 'Happiness Guangzhou' not only emphasised economic growth in the city, but also advocated the improvement of all aspects of living conditions and the drive towards a sustainable city. The scheme called for enhanced public participation in public affairs and promoted the growth of social organisations in the city.[128]

7.6 Municipal Waste Management in the Post-activism Era

After the anti-incinerator campaign and the establishment of the Public Consultative Committee on Municipal Waste Management in Guangzhou, the municipal government initiated a series of measures for managing waste. First, it launched a waste recycling programme in January 2011, under which a district was chosen to conduct a trial of a recycling scheme that could later be rolled out to the wider city with the goal of cutting the volume of waste in half after three years.[129] This plan, the Trial Regulation on Municipal Waste Recycling and Management (廣州城市生活垃圾分類管理暫行規定), took effect on 1 April 2011, and the volume of waste sent to incinerators and landfills was reduced by 3.09% between 2012 and 2013.[130] However, concerns about overloading the city's waste management facilities remained. In February 2010, two

[126] Du, J. (2011). Wang Yang raised questions about PM2.5 four times and introduced the concept of 'Environmental Democracy', (汪洋 4 提 PM2.5 問題：提'民主環保'概念), ifeng news (鳳凰網). Available at: <http://news.ifeng.com/mainland/detail_2011_12/28/11619569_0.shtml> (Accessed 21 December 2013).
[127] Ibid.
[128] Tian, E., Zheng, X.X., Ma, H.Y. (2011). "Target in Coming 5 Years: Happiness Guangzhou" (未來五年目標：幸福廣州), *Yangcheng Evening News* (羊城晚報), 24 November, <http://www.ycwb.com/ePaper/ycwb/html/2011-12/24/content_1287690.htm> (Accessed 21 December 2013).
[129] Dai Dai. (2010). "Guangzhou Promoted Waste Sorting" (廣州啓動全面推廣垃圾分類), Chinese Economy (中國經濟網), 26 January, <http://www.ce.cn/cysc/ny/xny/201001/26/t20100126_20076965.shtml> (Accessed 22 December 2013.)
[130] Huang, G.P., Chen, Q. (2013). "Guangzhou Waste Sorting Reaches New Achievement" (廣州垃圾分類處理取得新成效), 12 July, *Xinhua News* (新華網) <http://big5.xinhuanet.com/gate/big5/www.gd.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2013-07/12/c_116505255.htm> (Accessed 22 December 2013).

months after the anti-incinerator campaign, the municipal government held a two-day conference on waste management. They invited 32 experts to attend the conference, which had the following discussion themes: 1) how to promote recycling management, 2) how to manage municipal waste in Guangzhou and 3) how to effectively supervise waste management. The experts suggested that 'trash burning is the core [and] landfill is the auxiliary strategy for municipal waste management in the future.'[131] Furthermore, the municipal People's Congress, held in April 2012, confirmed plans to build four incinerators before 2014, on the basis that waste burning is an effective way for solving waste overload in the city.[132] These plans aroused a great debate in the city. Experts and citizens alike worried about issues such as the technology used for waste burning, incinerators' locations and the transpareny with which they would be constructed. Opposition to the proposals was reflected in a July 2012 survey, in which 2,342 out of 3,129 citizens (75%) were against building 6 more incinerators in the city.[133]

Chapter Conclusion

Incinerator construction seems to be an inevitable solution for managing the severe volumes of municipal waste in Guangzhou. However, the lack of transparency and public participation in the process tends to leave citizens dissatisfied. The Guangzhou case is notably interesting when compared with other instances of NIMBY activism in China, because a new green group was formed with the aim of promoting a long-term strategy against incinerator construction, to encourage waste sorting in the city and to fight for public involvement in decision making.

This chapter tells the story of anti-incinerator construction activism in Guangzhou and highlights how it differed from conventional NIMBY protests, which disbanded after reaching their goal. The Guangzhou activists did not disband. Instead, they changed the focus of their activism to incorporate a wider public issue: zero waste in the city. In their campaign, the residents were not only fighting for the suspension of the incinerator project, but also for greater transparency and participation in decision-making processes. The incinerator project was suspended, indicating a successful campaign, and the activists later formed Eco-Canton to advocate waste-sorting programmes and government-implemented public consultative committees. Beyond the

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[131] "Local Chronicles of Guangzhou",
<http://www.gzdaj.gov.cn/gzdsj/2010dsj/201007/t20100713_52779.htm> (Accessed 22 December 2013).
[132] Haung, X., Wang. (2012). "Six Incinerators Planned to Be Built Before 2014" (6個垃圾焚燒廠 2014年前建成 一期若滿足需求，二期或不建), *Nan Fang Daily* (Guangzhou) (南方日報 廣州版), 26 April, p. GC02.
[133] "Six More Incinerators Planned" (廣州再建六個焚燒廠), Tencent.com (騰訊網). Available at: http://gd.qq.com/zt2012/ljfs/ (Accessed 3 January 2014).

municipal government-implemented waste reduction and management policy, the activism further encouraged public engagement through innovative participatory mechanisms, which is a breakthrough in China's public policy-making process. In this section, the ACF is used to analyse the case of Guangzhou.

Both anti- and pro-incinerator coalitions were present in this case. The Panyu district government, Guangzhou's municipal government and the 'pro-incineration' scientists composed the pro-incineration coalition, supporting incineration technology. In contrast, the anti-incineration coalition comprised the residents living near the proposed incinerator site, particularly those in the Panyu and Shunde districts living in Riverside Garden, Clifford Estates and Huannan Country Garden (most of whom were civil servants, business professionals, teachers, journalists and members of the new middle class). Riverside Garden was home to numerous journalists from *Southern Metropolis Daily*, and many of the other residents were experienced in social activism. They became the major force in launching anti-incinerator campaigns. They not only opposed the incinerator, but also advocated waste sorting and recycling in the city. Their backgrounds provided valuable social networks with the ruling elite and other high-level professionals through which to express their grievances.

The activists expressed their opposition by contacting CPPCC and NPC members to seek their support. Similar to the case in Beijing, this 'power leverage' strategy is a traditional way for citizens to influence decision making; specifically, to change unfavourable decisions. Their personal and social networks (for instance, some residents work as civil servants and journalists) become a strong connection to the political and social elite. Chinese citizens expect NPC and CPPCC members to influence decisions by putting pressure on local governments, based on the Constitution, which gives such members the right to propose or amend any policy in the meetings. Moreover, the opinions of experts such as government- and university-affiliated scientists have also influenced the decision-making process. For example, the Panyu district government heard board experts' suggestions prior to incinerator location and construction. This power makes experts a target when protestors are seeking support. Panyu's residents sought help from Dr Zhao Zhangyuan, a scientist from the Chinese Academy for Sciences who, during the activism, opposed the argument that the incinerator was the only solution for reducing municipal waste. In meetings with the government, Dr Zhao stated the problems that incinerators pose to human and environmental health and raised debates with the pro-incineration coalition. This practice of citizens securing 'power leverage' is a common strategy in China's current political environment. Because Chinese citizens lack participation rights in policy-making processes, they

expect the political elites (i.e. CPPCC and NPC members and experts), who have the power to influence government, to change unfavourable policy outcomes. Although power leverage is one possible strategy for expressing dissatisfaction, in the long run, the residents still want to participate in policy processes.

Although most of the residents and political elite opposed the construction of an incinerator in Guangzhou, others – members of the pro-incineration coalition such as Panyu government officials, scientists and urban planners – continued to consider incineration as the most efficient way to resolve municipal waste problems. For example, Zeng Minhui, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Research Centre for Eco-Environmental Sciences, attended a press conference on 30 October 2009 regarding the proposed incinerator construction in Panyu. He emphasised that dioxin is very common in the atmosphere, and that it should not make people over-anxious.[134] Another expert, Shu Chengguang, attended the same press conference and asserted that the waste-burning technology in China is mature, and is thus the most effective way to resolve the city's municipal waste issues.[135] However, conflicts of interest in Shu's background incited the residents' anger, and they launched a protest against his input on 24 November 2009. Shu was the vice-president of Covanta Energy (China Region), an American-based company providing waste-to-energy infrastructure solutions, and the residents believed that his business interests drove his decision to back the government and the incinerator provider. Moreover, a magazine, *Yazhou Zhoukan* (亞洲周刊, *Asia Weekly*), featured an article about the connections between incinerator construction and business interests. In the article, an interviewee noted that pro-incinerator coalitions comprising scholars, entrepreneurs, facility suppliers and investors frequently organised seminars promoting incineration technology and lobbying government officials or local governments to build incinerators in build-operate-transfer collaborations. In these seminars, the coalition invites guests to give 'positive descriptions' of incinerators in return for a US$2,195 honorarium paid after the seminar. This anonymous interviewee had participated in a coalition and previously promoted incineration in China, but had since seen the problems created by incinerators as a resident of Riverside Garden.[136] Thus, the 'pro-burning' parties were

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[134] "EIA Should Be Passed Before Building the Incinerator". (2009). *People's Daily*, 31 October. Available at: <http://politics.people.com.cn/GB/14562/10293746.html> (Accessed 23 February 2014).
[135] "Promised Not to Build Before Conducting EIA". (2009). Sinanews.com. Available at: <http://news.sina.com.cn/c/2009-10-31/040718945121.shtml> (Accessed 23 February 2014).
[136] "Problems of Waste in China". (2010). Boxun.com, 16 February. Available at: <http://www.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2010/02/201002160537.shtml> (Accessed 23 January 2014).

criticised as being middlemen for profit proliferation rather than true experts on incineration (*Southern Weekend* 2009).

Both the pro- and anti-incinerator coalitions used scientific and technological information to address the safety of incineration and to suggest alternate ways of reducing waste. The protesters tactically defended their rights through different means in the policy-oriented learning process. The residents' backgrounds and professions helped them oppose incinerator construction through legal means. Luo Jingming (Internet pseudonym 'Basuofengyun', 巴索風雲) and 'White Cherry' (Internet pseudonym, 櫻桃白), two of the main activism organisers and founders of Eco-Canton, mentioned that the participants understood that activism had to abide by the law through channels such as, for example, submitting petitions to the government agencies. They also reached a consensus that radical actions, such as attacking police and government officials, were to be prohibited in the protests.[137] Meanwhile, the residents studied the laws and conducted scientific investigations to gather empirical evidence of the environmental disadvantages of building incinerators in the selected locations, and of policy implementation mismanagement. This evidence has become important material for bargaining with the governments and publicising the matter via mass media, and its collection was a good learning process for the participants in that it paved the way for the formation of Eco-Canton. As some of the residents were journalists working for conventional mass media outlets such as newspapers, online-forums and instant online messenger (QQ), the media were the main channels for spreading the news.

Ultimately, the coalitions reached a consensus and the government relocated the proposed incinerator for reasons similar to those in the Beijing case; namely, to maintain local social order and the municipal government's legitimacy. Nevertheless, applying the ACF to discuss the policy changes in this case revealed that the development of civil society and the 'openness' of local government in Guangzhou were responsible for the campaign's success.

Similar to citizens in other places in China, Panyu's residents were unable to participate in creating waste management policies under the context of an authoritarian regime. They began by expressing their concerns about the incinerator construction through petitions and visits to government officials. Then, they contacted NPC and CPPCC members, scientists and the mass media but did not receive any help from local green groups. Using the limited channels available

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[137] Interviews in Guangzhou on 12 April 2014.

for voicing their dissatisfaction, Panyu's residents launched campaigns and obtained wider sympathy and support throughout the city.

Both Guangzhou and Panyu's governments were responsive to the activists and suspended incinerator construction immediately. After the anti-incinerator activism in Panyu district in 2009, the municipal government established the Public Consultative and Supervision Committee for Urban Waste Management of Guangzhou City, which provides encouragement in relation to urban waste management. In each case, the governments chose to be responsive and resolve the confrontations with the citizens to maintain the legitimacy of their rule. The institutionalisation of the public consultative committee has provided a platform for effective communication between government and citizens, which has in turn facilitated the growth of a sense of civil rights in the city. For instance, Eco-Canton has been invited to consult on waste sorting in the Huale community of the Yuexiu district.

An 'open' local government encourages public participation in environmental policy, which benefits the institutionalisation of campaigns and the development of civil society. The experience of activists forming a green group was highlighted in the ensuing NIMBY campaign. There was no leadership in the process of opposing the incinerator. The local homeowners gathered to discuss the campaign with the aim of avoiding any political risk and sharing the responsibilities of organisation. Unlike other NIMBY campaigns, which tend to disband after reaching their goal, this campaign resulted in the establishment of Eco-Canton and those involved continue to advocate 'zero-waste' in Guangzhou, thereby shifting the focus of further activism from 'not in my back yard' to a wider public issue; namely, the problem of waste overload in Guangzhou. Eco-Canton has been institutionalised, hiring full-time staff, composing a constitution, electing board members, recruiting members and volunteers and accepting donations. It has also extended its network of other NGOs country-wide. For example, along with Friends of Nature, Eco-Canton joined the 'zero-waste coalition' (零廢棄聯盟) founded in Beijing in 2011 by several green groups, research institutes and environmental experts. It aims to promote the '3Rs' (i.e. reduce, reuse, recycle), provide waste management education and present technological suggestions to the government. Furthermore, the head of Eco-Canton, one of the original anti-incinerator activists, has been invited to serve as a member of the Public Consultative and Supervision Committee for Urban Waste Management of Guangzhou City – an event that reflects the openness of government and encourages the development of environmental civil society in the city. For example, the waste-sorting programme in Huale community has

attracted people to be volunteers. Those living in Huale community, students and people from other places have been participating in training workshops and activities to learn waste sorting and assist with garbage sorting and recycling on community street corners. Other green groups in Guangzhou have taken similar steps. Green Point has launched a new waste management project and Biker Guangzhou advocates green transportation in the city. The anti-incinerator campaign and Eco-Canton's work have generated new green groups and re-posited their role in society.

The institutionalisation of the campaign has also increased the effect of public participation in environmental policy. Unlike the green groups in developed societies, who confront governments, Chinese green groups are non-confrontational in that they believe that their effect on environmental policy will come about through their local experience and knowledge. The goal of obtaining legal status is supported by citizens en masse, and is thus the reason why the activists formed Eco-Canton.

Eco-Canton, however, was faced with a difficult choice during the outbreak of an anti-incinerator demonstration in the Huadu district (about 68 km away from the Panyu district) in July 2013.[138] The activists claimed that Eco-Canton did not provide any help with their demonstration. On the one hand, Eco-Canton was concerned that its relationship with the government would suffer and that its NGO registration would be cancelled if it aided the activists. On the other hand, its aim of supporting the people would not be achieved if it did not provide some sort of assistance.[139] This incident exemplifies the dilemmas faced by newly founded NGOs and tests the consultative committee's decision-making effectiveness while revealing doubts about the degree of transparency surrounding access to government documents.

Panyu's residents successfully protested the incinerator construction in their district and the municipal government not only tolerated the establishment of Eco-Canton but also established the public consultative committee. In this case, policy change appears to have been driven by a

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[138] Thousands of people opposed the construction of an incinerator in Huadu district on 19 July 2013. Two people were injured in the demonstration. The Huadu district government conceded that more research on the project was necessary, and thus it did not confirm the project. Source: King, B. (2013). "Thousand People against the Building of the Incinerator in Huadu District" (花都垃圾焚燒廠址遭千名市民游行反對), OFweek.com（環保網), http://ep.ofweek.com/2013-07/ART-39007-8120-28704502.html (Accessed 10 January 2014).
[139] Interviews in Guangzhou with Chen Xiaoyun, a PhD candidate from Sun Yet-sen University who has followed and advised activism since 2009.

flourishing civil society and an open government, which breaks the ACF assumption that there is a low degree of consensus on policy change among the authoritarian regime.

Chapter 8

Discussion

The comparison of the anti-incinerator activism in Guangzhou and Beijing in this work shows how environmental protests affected policy change and gradually transformed public participation in decision-making processes in the context of Socialist China. The cases revealed the complexities of the policy-making process, and confirmed that the CCP-dominant model of policy making does not currently apply in China.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, both municipal governments sought to use incineration as an alternative strategy for managing SWM in their cities, but the projects they proposed were opposed by the local residents and criticised for their potentially negative effects on human health and the environment. The residents also condemned the non-transparent nature of the information and the lack of public participation in the decision-making process. Consequently, both municipal governments suspended the opposed incinerator projects, choosing policy change as their response to the protests to maintain social order and legitimacy.

In responding to activism, local governments have the following options: make concessions that meet the citizens' demands, make concessions but punish the protesters, tolerate the resistance but neglect to meet citizens' demands and suppression (Cai 2010:5). Guangzhou and Beijing's municipal governments made concessions and met the citizens' demands; that is, incinerator construction in Panyu and Liulitun was cancelled, public consultation on incinerator locations was re-launched and waste-sorting and recycling measures were implemented. Rather than suppression, the governments used project abandonment to reduce the citizens' dissatisfaction, which preserved social stability and government legitimacy. Local governments can make concessions to minimise political (e.g. social stability and signs of weakness in local governance) and economic costs, but if they choose repression, they may face an escalation of resistance and damage the regime's legitimacy. The central government could then intervene and punish local officials (Cai 2010:5-7). Thus, both Beijing and Guangzhou's municipal governments preferred to make concessions that met the citizens' demands.

The case studies also revealed that two groups with different policy beliefs from each other shaped the policy-making process and ultimately achieved policy change. This outcome breaks the ACF's assumption of a lower possibility of reaching consensus in policy change in the nondemocratic regimes. Hence, this chapter is divided into two parts. The first examines the use

of the ACF in the Chinese context to compare the case studies in terms of campaign process, participants, activism strategies and government responses. The conditions for policy change are also discussed. The second part addresses the limitations of applying the ACF in the Chinese context.

8.1 Using the Advocacy Coalition Framework to Compare Anti-incinerator Activism in Beijing and Guangzhou

As Chapter 4 pointed out, the ACF revealed the pattern of interactions among the policy actors within policy subsystems. It also proved to be a promising framework for identifying the factors that shape beliefs about policy change.

8.1.1 Coalitions and policy beliefs

Both protests began with opposition to incinerator construction in nearby communities. Liulitun and Panyu included several new-build residential complexes, and their residents were retired cadre members and professionals – middle class citizens who were strongly aware their rights – with good educations working as journalists, teachers and business executives. In both cases, the district governments did not publicise the incinerator construction plans, and the residents only discovered them by chance, which left them feeling exploited and excluded from the decision-making process. In both cases, EIA processes were skipped, prompting the residents to protest. The protesters in both cases had strong social networks that they used to contact mass media, legal professionals, scientists and even NPC and CPPCC members for help expressing their grievances. In both cases, the protesters demanded that the local governments suspend the plans, disclose the information and allow them to participate the decision-making process. The local governments (at the municipal and district levels) and other governmental agencies argued that the proposed incinerators would facilitate solid waste reduction, and they consulted scientists who were expected to champion the incineration technology. As such, both the pro- and anti-incineration coalitions were identified.

Over time, the anti-incineration coalition of Guangzhou also began to pay attention to the 'zero-waste' movement. After the campaign, the protesters formed a green group to argue for a zero-waste society. In summary, two coalitions with different policy beliefs and goals emerged, with different policy-making perspectives. The pro-incineration coalition preferred a top-down, state-

centred approach to social development while the members of the anti-incineration coalition called for great transparency in the policy-making process.

8.1.2 Resource Mobilisation and Strategies of Each Coalition in the Campaigns

An asymmetric level of power was found between the pro- and anti-incineration coalitions. The pro-incineration coalition seemed to have more resources than the anti-incineration coalition. Composed largely of bureaucrats, the pro-incineration coalition enjoyed advantages in financial stability, human resources and access to information and power. In contrast, the members of the anti-incineration coalition were mainly the residents who lived near the proposed incinerator sites, and they had few such advantages. Social networks are commonly used in Chinese protests and thus the protesters' backgrounds in these cases allowed them to contact different aspects of society to express their dissatisfaction. For example, *Southern Metropolis Daily*, a Guangzhou-based newspaper, widely reported the controversies surrounding incinerator construction and municipal waste management, in part because many of their journalists lived in Riverside Garden, which was one of the residential complexes affected by the Panyu incinerator proposal. The news attracted waste management discussions and pressured the local government to take further action. Despite their social networks, the activists faced certain political risks under the suppressive political environment, such as arrest, and thus they expressed their dissatisfaction through legal means. As such, the protests took place within the existing legal framework.

Scientific and technological information was used by both coalitions. Apart from personal networks and mass media, cyberspace also played a crucial role in the activism in both cases. Although the Chinese government has implemented laws and policies designed to limit cyberspace use, it still features in activism against social injustice and governmental mismanagement. Cyberspace is also an important instrument for publicising information and mobilising protests. Activists usually use the online forum, Weibo (a micro-blog) and instant messengers (e.g. weixin 微訊, QQ) to organise and mobilise resources. In the case studies, the campaigns mainly relied on online forums to recruit volunteers and discuss their plans. These online forums were used as platforms for the exchange of information among the homeowners in the residential complexes. For example, the homeowners' online forum in Beijing allowed residents to share information on home decoration. Protesters' presence on Weibo attracts mass citizen support, but because online messages can be deleted or websites shut down by the authorities, the Internet must be used carefully and tactically as a space for citizen self-organisation, promoting bottom-up politics and long-term change (Yang 2003:92). Liulitun's

residents used the Administrative Reconsideration Law[140] to uncover the fact that the incinerator project had violated several environmental regulations. It should be noted that it is difficult for individual citizens to engage in environmental litigation under the current Chinese legal system. The cases in this work, which involved large groups of people filing lawsuits against the polluting projects, are classified as environmental public interest litigation (環保公益訴訟). Under China's current environmental public interest litigation procedure, citizens are hindered in using lawsuits against polluting projects and thus often turn to collective resistance as an alternative way of expressing their dissatisfaction (Interview with environmental lawyer, Xia Jun, in Beijing on 12 January 2014). In contrast, the Chinese government also takes advantage of information technology to maintain its rule. For example, the Chinese government implemented measures increasing the degree of transparency, including publicising the governmental documents, laws and regulations on the Internet.

Since the campaigns, the protesters have developed technical and legal knowledge with which to counter information from government and incinerator experts. This has made them 'citizen experts', tasked with studying the environmental costs of government decisions (Tesh 1999:40). Panyu's residents organised a visit to the Likeng waste-to-energy plant to better understand incineration's effects on the health of the local populace. The Liulitun activism began in 2006, and Panyu's residents learned from the earlier campaign. Some protesters, such as Basuofengyun, visited Beijing and met Liulitun's residents and Zhang Bojou, the Chief Executive of Friends of Nature, to learn their activism tactics (Interview with Basuofengyun in Guangzhou on 11 April 2014). Both Liulitun and Panyu's residents gained legal and technical knowledge through self-study and by connecting with legal and scientific experts. Furthermore, the residents provided comprehensive documentation to gain public support and increase their opportunities to bargain with the government. Liulitun's residents collected evidence of problems with incineration for their litigation process, and learned about the landfill and waste processes to determine whether the government had violated national pollution control standards. Panyu's residents also learned how incineration and waste management benefits the community, and they later used that knowledge to form Eco-Canton and launch municipal waste education and advocacy work in their society. Johnson (2013) notes that the residents used a de-politicised strategy to promote a recycling society and 'portray themselves as concerned citizens supportive of the public interests' (Johnson 2013:122).

Involving experts such as scientists enhanced the protesters' understanding of incinerator technology and waste management. Zhao Zhangyuan is a fellow in waste management at the Chinese Research Academy of Environmental Science and a famous 'anti-burning' figure. He provided suggestions regarding incinerator technology to the protesting groups in both Panyu and Liulitun. Zhao was invited to speak to Panyu's residents about the problems of waste burning and possible solutions for reducing waste. He wrote to the environmental authorities and opposed the government's attempts to build an incinerator 300 m away from residencies. This was a good opportunity for the residents to learn from an expert about collecting evidence and developing environmental education for the community. Finally, support from ENGOs was reported in both cases. Although ENGOs are constrained by the Chinese political system and thus cannot launch radical campaigns, the green groups found other ways to help the protesters. For instance, Friends of Nature provided help in both the Liulitun and Panyu cases by contacting experts, the mass media and government officials to obtain environmental knowledge. Friends of Nature also played an important role in forming Eco-Canton after the activism in Guangzhou, in terms of environmental education, advocacy and building networks with other green groups in the zero-waste alliance. In summary, these external supports increased the protesting groups' capacity to negotiate with governments during activism.

Social movements require mobilisation to coordinate resources and actions. In China, the political constraints hinder any organisation from mobilising citizens against the regime; thus, collective activism is not highly organised or institutionalised and tends to be launched spontaneously. In addition, the participants may initiate action without an explicated signal (Yu 2014:155). In both case studies, the residents used self-mobilisation via online discussion forums to plan actions such as contacting experts and media, drafting the complaint letters and arranging to meet government officials. There was not, however, a high level of organisation despite some of the protesters taking a leadership role in Panyu. Cai (2010:34-35) analyses the rise of leadership in collective activism in China, and says that leadership depends on moral responsibility, respect and prestige in communities, knowledge of government policies, personalities and personal interest in the activism. In the Panyu activism, some of the protesters were identified as mobilisation leaders. 'Basuofengyun' (real name Luo Jianmin), like the other residents of Riverside Garden, first expressed his opinions on the incinerator plans in the online discussion forum and later joined with other participants to collect signatures in the community, in addition to drafting the complaint letter. In October 2009, he became one of the campaign's leaders. He invited the

governor of the Panyu district government to Riverside Garden to talk about the incinerator plan in December 2009. He was then invited to attend a session of Guangzhou Municipal People's Congress in April 2010 where he shared his thoughts on promoting waste recycling. He was eventually elected to be a member of the Public Consultative and Supervision Committee for Urban Waste Management of Guangzhou City, and ultimately founded Eco-Canton. He was a typical leader in the Chinese collective activism context, inspiring confidence among the protesters and negotiating with the government on behalf of Panyu's residents (Cai 2010:34). In contrast, there was no identifiable leadership in the mobilisation Liulitun's activism. The residents coordinated and planned actions voluntarily through an online homeowners' discussion forum, self-mobilised the petition and 'strolled' to the government offices. The Internet has changed the pattern of mobilisation in social movements, particularly with regard to leadership. Liulitun's citizens posted messages in online forums for discussion, planned actions and disseminated information. The incinerator construction in Liulitun provided a 'common crisis' for Liulitun's residents, who voluntarily collected information, shared it online and discussed possible actions. The incinerator construction became a common point of identity among the residents, who took action together. Thus, it is evident that not all activism requires leaders or organisers.

The two cases also differed in their aftermath. After the anti-incinerator campaign, Panyu's residents set up a volunteer group, Green Family, that evolved into the more institutionalised ENGO, Eco-Canton. Eco-Canton has launched various activities such as promoting a recycling community in Clifford Estates, forming a zero-waste coalition with other ENGOs to promote waste recycling across the country and policy advocacy. Liulitun's residents, in contrast, have not taken further action to promote waste recycling programmes in the community. As an interviewee said, they just wanted the incinerator away from their space (Interview with a Liulitun resident in Beijing, January 2014). Friends of Nature attempted to launch a recycling programme in Liulitun after the campaign, but the residents were not eager to participate. The formation of Eco-Canton by Panyu protesters was a breakthrough in collective activism in China, and the green group not only opposes incinerator construction, but has also turned the waste problem into a public issue. A de-politicalised strategy has been used by Eco-Canton's members to sustain their activism, and their advocacy has enhanced their influence over government decisions.

Overall, both cases of activism successfully forced local government to suspend the incinerator projects, and they shared a similar strategy for influencing government decisions. Despite the lack of a highly institutionalised campaign, the protesters' self-organisation and initiative in gaining

legal and technical knowledge and seeking external assistance contributed to their success. Later, the campaigns developed in different ways, with Panyu's residents forming an ENGO to promote a zero-waste society and Liulitun's residents satisfied with the cancellation of the incinerator construction. To understand how policies and policy-making have changed, it is necessary to assess local governments' responses to activism.

8.1.3 Policy change

Faced with the residents' opposition, the municipal governments in both cases suspended the proposed incinerator projects, suggesting that social order and legitimacy maintenance were their priorities. However, the conditions shaping the behaviour between the pro- and anti-incinerator coalitions should not be neglected. The ACF's coalition opportunity structures help to explain the conditions shaping the policy change outcomes in this work. As stated, coalition opportunity structures borrow the concepts from 'political opportunity structures', indicating sets of parameters for providing each coalition with different constraints and opportunities in action. I address how constitutional structure, different sociocultural values, changes in socio-economic conditions and changes in public opinion affected the governments' decisions to suspend incinerator construction.

China's decentralised governing structure provided the flexible environment needed to implement the national policies based on the locals' situation, and this background resulted in different outcomes for the anti-incineration protests. Guangzhou's municipal government not only suspended the proposed incinerator site, but also initiated an institutionalised participatory mechanism for municipal waste management in the society. Indeed, the political environment of Guangdong province influenced Guangzhou's municipal government to implement this new participatory mechanism. First, the historical background and geographic location of the city provided an open political environment. As Guangdong province is located in the south-east of China, with a long coastline bordering the South China Sea, Guangzhou has been one of China's most important trading ports since ancient times. In the First Anglo-Chinese War (or Opium War, 1839-1842), the Qing Monarchy ceded Hong Kong Island to the British government in 1842, and five ports (Canton, Amoy, Shanghai, Ningbo and Fuchow) were opened to the world. Both Britain and France set up extra territories in Canton (now Guangzhou) in 1861 after the end of the Second Opium War (1856-1860). This background indicates that Guangzhou connects China to the world. Being under the influence of Western culture and geographically close to British colonial Hong Kong made Guangzhou a revolutionary place that witnessed the overthrow of the

Qing Monarchy and the establishment of the Republic of China in 1911. Guangdong province's openness prevailed through the economic reforms of the People's Republic of China in the late 1970s. Two special economic zones were implemented in Shenzhen and Zhuhai, and Guangdong's tight economic relationship with Hong Kong has allowed its economy to enjoy unprecedented growth in the last three decades. Guangdong province is a 'testing place' for China's economic reforms, which has influenced the openness of its government. In terms of political development, Guangzhou's municipal government has been a model of administration reform for other places in China seeking to reform legal systems or regulate foreign investment (Guangzhou Academy of Social Sciences 2010).

This degree of political openness supports Guangzhou's breakthrough in implementing participatory mechanisms. Political opportunity theory explains the dynamics between social movements and state; specifically, that 'degree of political openness' (Lewis 2000) affects the development of social movements. Two types of political openness are given: open and closed political opportunity structures. In open political opportunity structures, 'it [is] possible for organisations to participate formally in political procedures'. In closed political opportunity structures, there are 'fewer institutionalised means for grievances to be heard' (Lewis 2000:108). This applies to the possibility of citizens participating in the policy-making process. The open political opportunity structure of Guangzhou's municipal government allowed mass citizens to participate in mechanisms such as the consultative committee, and to influence environmental decision making. Political openness also implies the possibility of a partnership between civil society and the government.

Overall, the changes in socio-economic conditions and public opinions have shaped the behaviour of policy actors in incineration policy. China's unprecedented economic growth has contributed to severe environmental degradation and health problems, in addition to creating a new middle class, the members of which are economically well-off, well-educated and interested in healthy lifestyles and environmental consciousness. This new middle class is also interested in environmental activities such as voluntary clean up, green consumption and even protests. Hence, the changes in socio-economic values between economic growth and sustainable development. The debate over incineration's safety has changed public opinions on SWM. After the protests in Guangzhou, the municipal government increased the budget for waste recycling projects to meet the expectation of a zero-waste society.

The abovementioned conditions explain the municipal governments' choice to pursue policy change in response to protesters' pressure, but the differences between the innovative participatory mechanism in Guangzhou and the lack of any such programme in Beijing deserves further explication. The degree of openness exhibited by each area's political opportunity structure may explain the difference. Theoretically, governments with an 'open political opportunity structure' accommodate civil society organisations participating in policy procedures. The relationships between institutions and state-societies must also be considered (Parsons 1995:335). Although institutions determine policy actors' behaviour, the constraints they bring should not be over-emphasised (Ibid:88). Thus, policy actors' behaviour in relation to policy processes changes accordingly. Maarten Hajer (2003) further explains that the context surrounding policy making is changing, and that an institutional void has been filled by the emergence of a new civil society (Hajer 2003:175). The institutional void, he emphasises, does not mean that state institutions have suddenly faded and become obsolete, but that they have developed new norms and institutions through deliberation and negotiation (Ibid:175-176). Thus, state institutions are adaptive and resilient in policy-making processes, and the rise of civil society and the participation of non-state actors now play a crucial role in the process.

The political openness of Guangzhou's municipal government explains this unprecedented institutional innovation. Allowing Eco-Canton's registration, despite its status as a former protest group, is a prime example of the political openness exhibited by Guangzhou's government. Moreover, the introduction of participatory mechanisms has increased opportunities for the public to engage in public affairs and the development of civil society. Public consultative mechanisms are not new to the regime. Consider the urban water tariff (Zhong and Mol 2008) and water conservation (Enserink and Koppenjan 2007). However, in these consultative models, the citizens were in a passive position and thus may not have been able to express their opinions directly (Fishkin, He, Luskin and Siu 2010). However, in the 'Guangzhou model', which opened the channels of participation through the consultative committee, the committee's work and the process of selecting members are transparent. The establishment of consultative committees is to be issue-based; that is, each committee is specific to one topic, such as conservation, which emerges in the agenda-setting process.[141] The Public Consultative and Supervision Committee for Urban Waste Management of Guangzhou City, for example, collected mass opinions on choosing

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[141]"China Social Development Report, 2014", Social Sciences Academy, Available at: <http://www.pishu.com.cn/skwx_ps/databasedetail?contentType=literature&subLibID=&type=&SiteID=14&contentId=1823430&status=No> (Accessed 22 June 2014)

the location of the proposed incinerator in Huadu district.[142] Guangzhou's government also advocated the concept of 'environmental democracy', which emphasised public participation in and public supervision of all environmental issues. Later, Guangzhou's municipal government advocated 'Happiness Guangzhou' for better living conditions and a more sustainable city. As such, citizens, to some extent, can directly affect governmental decision making.

Active civic engagement also facilitates public involvement via the new participatory mechanism. As the capital city of Guangdong province, Guangzhou has been influenced by global markets, exhibits economic prosperity (one of the top ten richest cities in China) and enjoys intimate ties with Hong Kong (sharing the same dialect and culture). Furthermore, there are frequent exchanges and cooperation between NGOs in Hong Kong and Guangdong. Several Hong Kong-based NGOs have developed projects in Guangdong since the early 1990s on, for example, labour rights issues. Voluntary groups and activists in Guangzhou are the most developed in China (Spires, Tao and Chan 2014:69). Thus, it is believed that social groups and civic engagement in Guangzhou are more open than in other cities (Zhu 2010). Guangzhou is 'a place of social activism' where people enthusiastically defend their rights. The topics of social activism there are similar to those found in other places in the country, including labour rights, cultural preservation, land acquisition and urban management. Local identity is also much-defended in Guangzhou, as in the Preserving Cantonese Incident. Beijing, by contrast, has a stricter mode of registration for social organisations (half of the Beijing NGOs are registered under business regulations, which provides an easier way to obtain legal status), which creates a 'thick political atmosphere'. Spires, Tao and Chan (2014:76-77) note that the political caution exercised by Beijing's municipal bureaucrats and its citizens does not spark changes in the relationship between local government and civil society organisations. This is reflected in the case study, in which the municipal government maintained 'collaborative relations' with the civil society organisations involved in waste management policy; that is, the municipal government welcomed the assistance of green groups to promote recycling in the city rather than providing a participatory mechanism for decision-making processes.

In summary, the governments in both cases changed their incinerator policies, but none of the coalitions changed their fundamental policy-oriented beliefs (i.e. incineration is the most effective

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[142] Annual Report 2013, Guangzhou Municipal government <http://www.gzcgw.gov.cn/portal/site/site/portal/gzcgw/zwgk_nrpage.portal?contentId=NQPLZZN3RCSCPV3Y10QR1N6P3G4FOLBX&categoryId=PU5R1EVSARTCYX4VNOXYIQJORFEIO23Z> (Accessed 23 June 2014).

SWM solution versus incineration is harmful). They only adjusted their positions strategically to respond to rival claims. Nevertheless, the pro-incineration coalition changed its policy core belief (i.e. the implementation of waste recycling programmes) to minimise the political risk generated by the protests. Thus, consensus between the coalitions was reached.

8.2 Limitations of Applying Advocacy Coalition Framework in the Chinese Context

In this work, I used the ACF to analyse the policy-making processes that led to policy change in the anti-incinerator protests in Beijing and Guangzhou. The ACF proved useful in explaining the complex dynamics between the two conflicting coalitions in the incineration debates. The case studies facilitated the ACF's theoretical generalisation and challenged the belief that the Chinese policy-making process is strictly a top-down process. However, the limitations to my use of the ACF in this work must be acknowledged. First, there is insufficient literature on the use of the ACF in authoritarian China. The literature on Chinese policy making and environmental activism rarely examines the policy-making process and its complexity, and there are few studies that systematically identify policy actors and fractional politics (Han et al. 2014:330). In this work, for example, in studying the changing decisions on incinerator construction among the governmental agencies, it was difficult to identify the exact interactions between the rival coalitions. The public policy-making process has been described as a 'black box' (Birkland 2014:27), and the application of the ACF is more challenging in authoritarian China than in democratic regimes. Nevertheless, in this work, I provide a preliminary examination under the ACF.

Second, my findings herein may not be generalisable to other incinerator projects or policy subsystems in China. Han et al. (2014) uses the ACF to analyse an anti-dam project on the Nu River anti-dam project, which involved international actors because the river is part of the UNESCO World Heritage programme. In contrast, both of the case studies in this work focus at the local scale on the interactions between municipal and lower-level governments and local protesters on the topic of municipal SWM. Yet, the ACF crystallises the complexity of Chinese policy making and reveals the emergence of proto-pluralistic coalition politics in this authoritarian regime (Han et al. 2014:330).

Overall, the ACF's limitations in terms of generalisability and applicability in this work actually avoid the problems related to framework stretching.

8.3 How Policy Adjustments Have Changed Local Government and Civil Society Relations?

The ACF clarified the scope and conditions guiding policy actors within the policy subsystems. The political openness of Guangzhou's municipal government drove the measures implemented to encourage public involvement in environmental decision-making and other public issues. This participatory mechanism benefits both local government and civil society.

Mass citizens' involvement in environmental decision making is defined as individuals and social groups, such as ENGOs, influencing environmental policy decision(s) through designed consultation, deliberation and information dissemination. Citizen participation contributes a public-preference choice, makes policy implementation more effective, enhances governmental legitimacy (Stivers 1990; Beierle 1999; Thomas 1995:2) and supports solutions to social conflicts (Roberts 2004:315). It also allows the general public or civil society organisations to monitor the government while increasing civic engagement. Mass citizens' involvement in environmental decision making has changed the relationship between state–civil society relations at the local level. In this section, I first discuss how a policy adjustment (i.e. the implementation of new municipal waste management measures) has changed local government and civil society relations, and then analyse the reasons for this change.

Both Guangzhou and Beijing's municipal governments have implemented new measures for managing municipal waste, and their relationships with civil society have consequently changed. Guangzhou's municipal government advocates 'Environmental Democracy' and 'Happiness Guangzhou', both of which have encouraged more civic engagement in environmental issues. In addition, the establishment of public consultative committees has not only provided a platform for effective communication between governments and citizens, but has also facilitated the development of civil society and the growth of a sense of civic virtue. The emergence of Eco-Canton has facilitated policy advocacy through a partnership with Guangzhou's municipal government in promoting waste sorting and recycling programmes in the city. For example, the municipal government invited Eco-Canton to consult on waste sorting in the Huale community of the Yuexiu district, one of the model waste-sorting and recycling communities in Guangzhou where the residents, local students and people from other communities have been learning how to maintain garbage sorting and recycling on community street corners. Furthermore, the anti-incinerator campaign and the work of Eco-Canton have encouraged the rise of new green groups and re-posited their role in society. Green Point has launched a new waste management project

and Biker Guangzhou advocates for green transportation in the city. The green groups in Beijing have also begun promoting waste sorting and recycling after the Liulitun activism. Famous Beijing-based ENGOs such as Friends of Nature, Global Village and Nature University have organised activities to promote zero waste in Beijing. For example, both Nature University and Friends of Nature have used policy advocacy to stop incinerator construction and to launch waste-sorting programmes in residential communities. The Guangzhou case revealed that the creation of participatory mechanisms and the encouragement of public involvement in decision-making processes are effective solutions for social dispute. The roles of civil society organisations in monitoring government and advocating policy have also been legitimated. In the next section of this chapter, the conditions required to change local government and civil society relations are examined.

The core value of civil society is civic engagement in public affairs, such as involvement in policy-making processes. The rise of civil society results in the accumulation of social capital, the promotion of civic engagement in public affairs and the acceleration of public participation in policy-making processes. Thus, the institutional arrangements of state and civil society are interdependent, and they affect public participation in policy processes. As mentioned, the political openness of Guangzhou's municipal government has helped provide more innovative policies since the economic reform of the late 1970s. The development of civil society in Guangzhou also accounts for public engagement in decision making and the new participatory mechanism.

In summary, the innovative implementation of consultative committees in Guangzhou that allow citizens to get involved in decision making is a breakthrough in Chinese policy-making processes. Decision-making processes have become more plural, and the bureaucrats are no longer dominant but rather share power with other actors, such as individual citizens and social groups. More specifically, this institutionalised organisation has, to some extent, solved some social disputes and enhanced the communications between the local government and citizens. In the case of Guangzhou, it has been shown that the municipal government not only suspended the project to meet protesters' demands, but also advocated new social values for Guangzhou; namely, public participation and the zero-waste society. The relatively open political structure of local government and the active civic engagement of society explain this policy adjustment in Guangzhou. Such changes in public participation and decision making challenge our

understanding of environmental governance in China; in particular, broadening the varieties of environmental management used in different parts of the country.

Although the above findings cannot be seen as representative of the entire country, these two diverse cases shed light on the variety of changes shaping environmental management in China. As mentioned in the Overview, China's decentralised and fragmented governing structure explains the existence of the differences in environmental management methods shown above. Since the economic reform of the late 1970s, central government has diffused power to all levels of local government, such that the local governments enjoy a certain degree of autonomy in making public policies. Fragmented authoritarianism (Lieberthal and Oksenberg 1992; Lieberthal 1997; Lieberthal 2004) has clearly shown that the Chinese policy process is an aggregation of interests among the CCP political elite across national and local levels. They negotiate, bargain, exchange and reach consensus to achieve their political goals and influence policy decisions. Factional politics among the CCP leaders also affect the policy-making process. For instance, local governments put economic growth first, as it is highly related to their career promotion, but doing so makes them reluctant to implement environmental policies in their territories and results in local EPBs receiving inferior status. The local EPBs are responsible to local governments, which are responsible for declaring the financial support given to local EPB officials and for evaluating EPB performance. Although local EPBs also report to the higher levels of the environmental departments, they remain constrained by local government. In the face of rising environmental activism, China's local governments are responding to the protests in different ways, and local bureaucrats must make changes in policy priorities. This fragmented environmental management has changed the operation and our understanding of China's environmental regime.

Most of the scholarly literature on environmental management in China in the last decade has focused on the rise of multi-actors playing their environmental management roles in this transitional regime (Mol and Carter 2006) where the ruling party is no longer the dominant actor (Shi and Zhang 2006:277). The strategies of new emerging actors, such as economic and green groups, must now be considered by this non-democratic polity (Lu 2007; Economy 2006), along with public participation in environmental management (Enserink and Koppenjan 2007; Zhang and Mol 2008). International relations and China's environmental management – including topics such as the challenges of enforcing climate change targets and participation in global environmental conventions (Chan, Lee and Chan 2008) – are also being discussed. The literature

has mapped a general picture of the patterns, transformation, trends and challenges of this environmental regime, but the diversity of environmental management across the country is also visible.

The levels of decentralisation and flexibility in environmental policy making, which implicate the effectiveness of environmental management, vary across the country. It would be dangerous to generalise about environmental management in China. Multiple variations between regions and the involvement levels of government (O'Brien and Stern 2008:14) reveal a wide range of environmental management practices in China. As the case studies showed, the degree of political openness exhibited by municipal governments and the development of social groups determine policy innovation and influence the relationship between local government and civil society. Hence, it can be difficult to gain a comprehensive understanding of the environmental regime in China. Although the diversity of environmental management strategies across the country accelerates the decrease in the central government's control, it can also be perceived as a 'survival strategy' for the ruling party in a changing political environment. They regard these changes as small adjustments in their 'adaptive model' policy-making experiments. Local officials are encouraged to suggest new solutions and provide feedback to help formulate national policy. This strategy is a good way to deal with uncertainty, to prevent the cost of failed national reform and to minimise the effects on other jurisdictions (Heilmann 2011:62,87; Heilmann and Perry 2013:23). Thus, the CCP's legitimacy and resilience are maintained.

Chapter Conclusion

The comparison in this chapter explains the reasons behind the environmental activism in Guangzhou and Beijing and the municipal governments' responses to it. The substantial economic growth has led to environmental degradation across the country. The Chinese government has put effort into tackling pollution but it has failed, which has intensified growing environmental activism. Increasing environmental activism definitely is a source of social instability and has been challenging the legitimacy of the ruling party. This study also addresses policy adjustment and explores to what extent the relationship between government and civil society at the local level has changed and what are the conditions that have enabled this change. This chapter reveals the significance of applying the ACF to illustrate the complexity of public policy making in present-day China, which challenged the conventional policy-making beliefs. The monistic state has changed its attitudes about policy-making processes in this authoritarian

regime, highlighting the diversity of environmental management across the country and revealing the adaptive strategies of the ruling party.

The Panyu and Liulitun residents used activism to demand transparent decision-making processes and opportunities to participate in them. They used various strategies, some of which challenged social stability in the cities. In the face of the protests, both Guangzhou and Beijing's municipal governments suspended the opposed incinerator projects and implemented new measures to promote zero-waste management. These choices and the rationale behind making concessions are similar to the reactions to other cases of social activism in China, with the governments focused on minimising the political and economic costs of activism and fearing its capacity to challenge the rule of local government.

The case studies also provide a more in-depth view of policy adjustments in society. In the case of Guangzhou, the municipal government not only stopped the incinerator project and implemented the recycling programme, they also initiated mechanisms for public participation that have further changed social values by encouraging active civic engagement in decision making – a significant breakthrough. Unlike other participatory channels such as the EIA Law or public hearings, in which the citizens are passive in the decision-making process, this institutionalised consultative committee supports direct involvement. Local governments have become more responsible and accountable, paving the way for the emergence of more deliberative policy making. The political openness of governments and more active civil society organisations reflect the variations in environmental management across the country and confirm the complicated nature of environmental governance in China.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

Since the economic reforms of the late 1970s, China has experienced unprecedented economic prosperity and witnessed the livelihoods of most Chinese people improve enormously. Yet, this was accomplished in the face of formidable obstacles including urban–rural divisions, class inequality, a migrant workers underclass, environmental degradation, inter-ethnic unrest and bureaucratic corruption – all of which call into question the feasibility of sustaining high-speed growth in the country. Increasing social complexity has led to political contestation and social conflicts that have become more extensive and violent throughout Chinese society, creating a challenge for the ruling party (Selden and Perry 2010:2). Despite increasing stakeholder influence in policy making (Ma and Lin 2012:99), the number of protests has grown steadily.

This work was motivated by the tremendous spread of environmental protests across China. Why do some protests press local governments to make changes (such as the relocation of the PX factory in Xiamen and the incinerators in Beijing and Guangzhou), but not others? I started examining environmental protests and policy change to answer this question, among others. Previous studies have largely focused on patterns of environmentalism and environmental activism, and the development of environmental policies at both the local and national levels of in China. The dynamics between state and non-state actors in policy-making processes and how protests influence governmental responses remain under-investigated. To enhance the literature, in this work I used the ACF to examine the complexity of environmental policy making in China. I used the two activism case studies in two of China's most prominent cities as a platform for exploring the causal link between protest and policy change in China. My primary empirical research questions were: ***How can non-state actors influence policies on incinerator construction?*** and ***How did municipal governments respond?*** The answers to these questions fill an important gap in the empirical literature on the relationship between protests and environmental policy changes in authoritarian China. Likewise, this work examined the influence of political and socio-economic conditions, in the form of coalition opportunity structures, on the outcomes of protests to answer another research question: ***How do societally based environmental coalitions affect municipal solid waste management in Beijing and Guangzhou?*** The different protest outcomes noted here show that FA provides the structural variations attributed to different environmental activism outcomes across the country. My goal in this work was to conduct a systematic examination of the patterns and dynamics of policy actors,

and identify how these structural variations shape and influence the policy process. Then, I used the ACF to address future policy change.

As this work illustrates, collective resistance has become a new phenomenon in public participation in Chinese politics (Cai 2010:184), challenging the CCP's rule (Selden and Perry 2000:3). However, suppression has not been the ruling party's only response to activism. The Chinese government has also used policy change to maintain long-term social stability and legitimacy. A review of the scholarship on environmental activism in Post-Mao China shows that the focus has been on the survival of green groups, the rise of environmental protests among mass citizens, the limitations of environmental activism within the political constraints of authoritarian China and the weakness of environmental authority in the decentralised political structure (Wu 2009; Ho 2007; Wu 2013; Shapiro 2012; Stalley and Yang 2006; Alpermann 2010; Ho 2001; Schwartz 2004; Johnson 2013; Sun and Zhan 2008; Sullivan and Xie 2009; Tong 2005; Xie 2009; Li et al.2012; Yu and Zeng 2010; Sinkule 1995; Lieberthal 1997; Tang et al.1997). There have been few analyses of the governments' responses to environmental activism (such as environmental policy changes), the conditions in which these responses are made or their affects on the development of civil society and public participation in environmental policy in China. Cai (2010) uses a framework to analyse the relationship between protests and governmental policy response and concludes that Chinese local governments tend to adopt concessions as a response to social activism, as doing so minimises political and economic costs (Cai 2010:5-6). Based on this background, I examined the dynamics of policy actors and the conditions under which they operate to systematically reach policy change.

In Chapter 4, I explored the ACF's application to China's environmental practices and addressed the role that coalition opportunity structures (COSs) play in shaping policy change. My results showed that the ACF is a promising tool for explaining policy change in the context of authoritarian China. In Chapter 5, I described the arrangements and strategies in conducting this work, including the rationale behind interviewee selection and data sources. The limitations of this work were also reported, such as the problems associated with accessing data from the Chinese government and the lack of a consolidated analytical framework from which to study the relationship between protests and environmental policy changes. Hence, this work served as a preliminary study of the ACF's use in examining environmental policy change in China, and as a multi-dimensional discussion of the case studies.

In Chapters 6 and 7, I explored the complexity of the policy-making process by studying the anti-incinerator construction protests in Beijing and Guangzhou: the emergence of organised opposition, the strategies and dynamics of the two rival coalitions and the final policy outcomes. The findings also showed strong qualitative evidence that the COSs influenced the policy change outcomes. In particular, I found that political systems, socio-economic and cultural values and changes in public opinion were more likely to drive policy change. Moreover, coalitions with 'open' COSs and socio-cultural values tended to engage in additional policy innovation, as in the Guangzhou case. Guangzhou's municipal government allowed the protesters to form Eco-Canton, implying that 'beyond NIMBY' strategies have changed the stereotypes of NIMBY activism, in which protesters mobilise for purely selfish reasons to reject an unpopular project. These findings have important theoretical implications for the environmental policy-making process in China. The fragmented and decentralised governing structure provided various COSs for shaping policy outcomes and the possibility of non-state actors participating in environmental policy-making processes.

In Chapter 8, I provided more detail on how using the ACF helped systematically explain the dynamics between policy actors in reaching consensus on policy change. The limitations to applying the ACF were also mentioned, including poor generalisability to other incinerator projects and policy subsystems in China. The ACF's theoretical generalisation definitely challenges the image of Chinese policy making as a top-down process.

Finally, I noted the relationships between COSs and policy change. Four dimensions of COSs stood out: political openness, which appeared to be the decentralised governing structure at the local level; socio-cultural openness, specifically the socio-cultural developments shaping civic engagement in society and the relationship between government and civil society organisations; changes in socio-economic conditions, such as the creation of a middle class that pursues improved quality of life; and changes in public opinion, such as the rise of environmental awareness.

These findings addressed the research questions stated earlier. Using the ACF, I showed how the non-state actors influenced incinerator construction policy, the compositions of anti-incinerator coalitions, their policy beliefs and their strategies for expressing their grievances. I also discussed how the municipal governments responded to the citizens' concerns and activism. I clarified the dynamics between protesters and governments attempting to reach a consensus on incinerator

construction. Finally, I used the COSs and the ACF to explain the different outcomes of socially based environmental coalitions on municipal SWM in Beijing and Guangzhou, on the relationship between government and civil society and on public participation in China's long-term environmental policy making.

In addition to these findings, the analysis in this work fills a theoretical gap in the Chinese public policy literature by demonstrating that the social entities involved in China's environmental policy making challenge its status as a top-down process dominated by state actors (Han et al. 2014:328). This has subsequently laid a foundation for others to systematically study policy change, as it not only reveals the dynamics of policy actors within public policy subsystems, but also outlines the COSs necessary for policy change. This work provides an example of how to measure and empirically explore the roles played by COSs in the policy-making process. A fragmented governing structure, socio-cultural values and changes in socio-economic conditions and public opinions all influence coalition formation, coalition strategies and policy change.

Given that both state and non-state actors seek major consensus for policy change, one direction for future research would be to analyse the mechanisms of policy actors that lead to policy change in China. Theories of policy change provide a range of approaches for analysis, but the ACF places a strong emphasis on changes in preferences within policy adjustment. Although coalition opportunity structures may change over time and in the contexts of different policies, they can still help us understand the various interactions between structure and agency in protests and their outcomes. Likewise, the significance of political openness and socio-cultural structures, and their interaction, should not be overlooked. This work demonstrates that to some extent, the ACF's expectations have been reflected in the cases analysed. Nevertheless, the different policy change outcomes revealed in this work have demonstrated the diverse nature of environmental management across the country.

As discussed, the theory and findings presented herein address a number of important questions with implications for studying Chinese environmental policy. The findings in this work will be subjected to future testing and refinement in other policy areas. Coalition formation, policy beliefs among policy actors, resource mobilisation, the policy learning process and COSs can be combined to create a framework for studying other areas of public policy. Moreover, the roles of COSs lead to corresponding changes in coalition strategies and different policy changes in environmental policy subsystems, providing good measures for future studies. In summary, this

chapter concludes that the knowledge generated in this work and the policy implications of the findings suggest future directions for studying the public policy process in China.

A number of implications can be drawn from this work. First, it clearly showed that those attempting to examine policy changes and the dynamics behind contentious facilities in China should consider the political institutional arrangement and the roles of COSs. I analysed how the COSs can influence policy processes and the formation of rival coalitions at the local level under the decentralised and fragmented governing structure that shaped policy change. COS indicators have been addressed in this work and will serve as a reference for other similar research in China. Second, the COS indicators and their correlation with policy change requires further exploration. Just as Chapter 4 analysed the effects of COSs in a specific policy subsystem on coalition strategies and policy change, so shall it develop measures for subsystems that can conduct a large-N analysis for further ACF generalisation in studying Chinese public policy.

Finally, in this work, I provided evidence from a nondemocratic country by applying the ACF in the Chinese context. As mentioned, few studies have used the ACF to study policy change in China, but the rhetoric stating the impossibility of reaching a consensus on policy change in a nondemocratic country has been disproven. Although the current findings remain limited, the empirical and theoretical understanding of policy change has increased confidence in studying the Chinese policy-making process in the future.

The following are some reflections on the effects of introducing a participatory mechanism into the Chinese policy-making process. Although the introduction of a participatory mechanism in Guangzhou has been a breakthrough in authoritarian China, the new mechanism was embedded within the existing policy system without further institutional change. As discussed above, variations in environmental management and the existence of different degrees of political and social openness at the local level are a result of the communist regime's 'survival strategy'. These actions may thus be perceived as an example of 'absorbing politics', in which the governmental authority 'absorbs' or incorporates the people into the establishment for consultation on public policy as a way of 'pacifying' social dissatisfaction.

The ruling party adopted FA to encourage local bureaucrats to use local experience to innovate new policy, and to help formulate national policy. The introduction of a participatory mechanism has led Chinese people to believe that they have the power to influence policy (Nathan 2003:15).

However, the overall political structure has not been changed. As this participatory mechanism is consultative in nature, the municipal government is not accountable to the public consultative committee in implementing municipal waste management policy. The municipal government retains the monopoly of control over the decision-making process, and the weak institutional status of EPBs has not been changed in the political structure. The CCP's power is thus consolidated and unchallengeable. But the CCP regime has shown resilience and a capacity for adaptation in the changing environment. It has learned from these experiments and found responses that it hopes will maintain its legitimacy.

The decentralised and fragmented political structures in authoritarian China provide space for 'political and economic experiments' at the local, day-to-day level to prolong the CCP's rule through the provision of conditional concessions. This ensures that the central government avoids becoming the target of blame (Cai 2008:411,415). Protesters use power leverage, engaging with policymakers at higher levels and with non-institutionalised powers in pursuit of their interests (Cai 2014:129). Cai (2014) argues that this strategy is effective due to the Chinese regime maintaining legitimacy for the sake of social stability (Cai 2014:130). Thus, a 'fragmented political structure' is the CCP's survival strategy in the changing political environment. They regard this arrangement as a part of the 'adaptive model', which includes experiments in policy making and small adjustments. Local officials are encouraged to create new solutions, and their input reflects local experience and provides feedback, which help to formulate national policy. This strategy allows those practicing it to deal with uncertainty, prevent the cost of failed national reform legislation and minimise effects on other jurisdictions (Heilmann 2011:62,87; Heilmann and Perry 2013:23). The CCP thus maintains its monopoly on political organisations and continues to suppress challenges to its status as ruling party, even as it adapts to be more inclusive in the changing economic and social environment (Dickson 2010:23). The momentum of mass citizen action has changed the monistic state's policy-making processes in this authoritarian country, with the CCP choosing to shift towards a more inclusive decision-making process to strengthen the resilience of its regime.

Above all, the widespread grievances of Chinese citizens and the growth of collective resistance have led to questions about conflict resolution between state and citizens. Although the Chinese government has implemented laws and regulations and opened more participatory channels for solving disputes, public participation remains limited. The findings of this work reveal that local governments' efforts to build conflict resolution mechanisms have been highly significant in the

study of Chinese public policy. This study adopts the ACF to discuss the decision-making processes that led to policy change in the case of anti-incinerator protests in Guangzhou and Beijing. The comparison of these similar cases of anti-incinerator activism in Beijing and Guangzhou advances our understanding of the political interaction between local governments and protesting groups. It also allows us to better understand the variation in local governments' commitment to municipal waste management. Exploring these cases exhibits the complexity of the policymaking processes within policy subsystems, the coalition opportunity structure, and the fundamentals of sociocultural structures, which are all significant factors that influence the conditions of government policy adjustments and various protest outcomes. Although coalition opportunity structures may change over time and vary by policy context, they can hlp us to understand the various interactions between structures and agencies as they relate to protests and their outcomes. The significance of political openness and socio-cultural structures and how they interweave are also examined above. This study demonstrates that the expectations under the ACF were reflected in the cases analysed to some extent.

In short, this study examines the link between environmental protest and policy change in China, which has taken root in local politics, particularly at the municipal level. Two cases are considered to show the variation in the policy change by local governments in response to protests. However, the findings cannot be generalized to other places in China, as the cases occurred at particular times and in particular places. The findings of the case studies allow us to look closely at environmental management at the local level and provide valuable contributions to research related to Chinese environmental policymaking and the ACF literature.

Map of China

Beijing

Guangzhou City (Canton)

Administrative Districts Beijing and Location of Liulitun   **Appendix B**

Yanqing County

Miyun County

Huairou District

Changping District

Shunyi District

Pinggu District

Mentougou District

6

8

2 1

4 3

5

7

TongZhou District
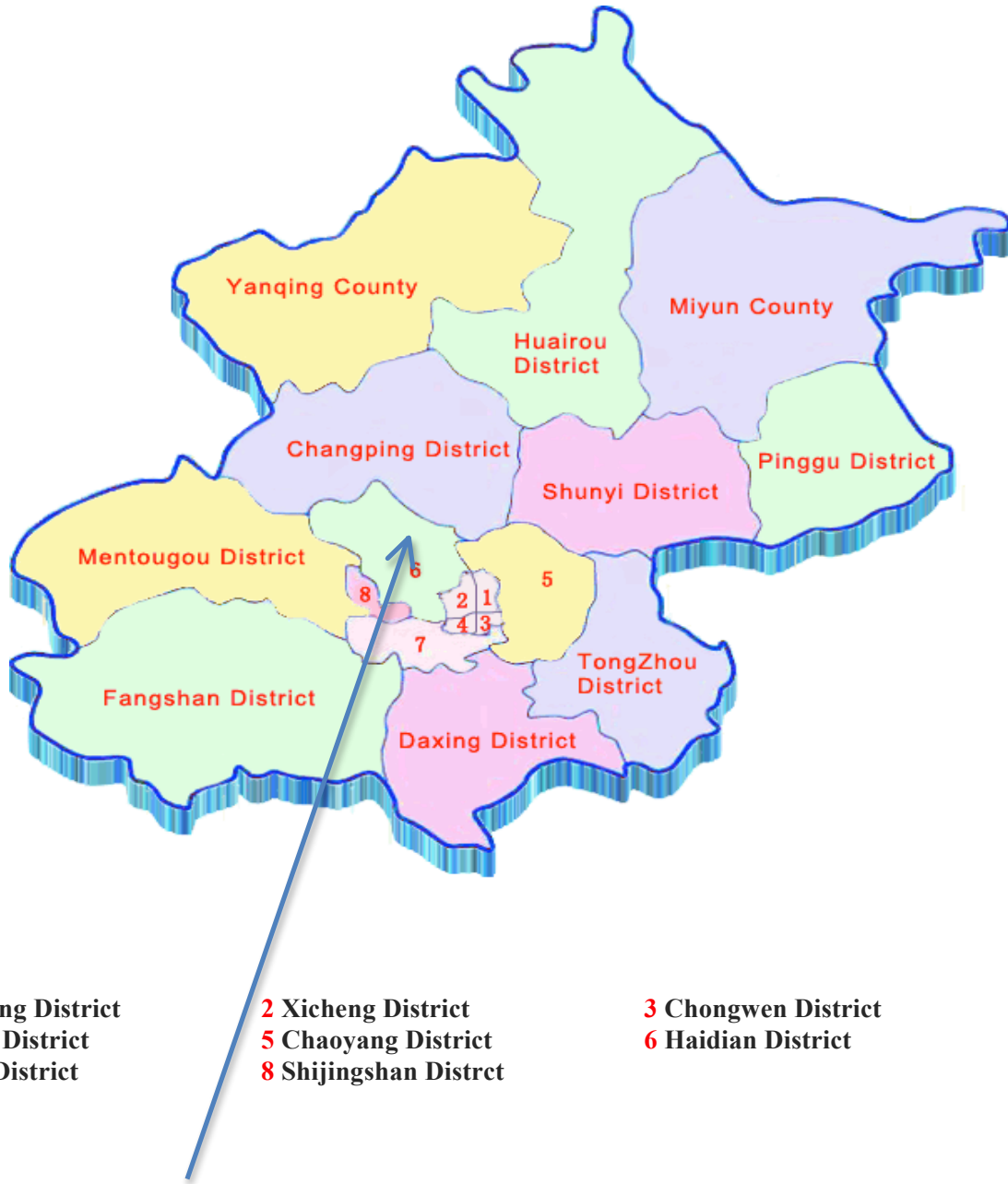
Fangshan District

Daxing District

1 Dongcheng District   **2** Xicheng District   **3** Chongwen District
4 Xuanwu District   **5** Chaoyang District   **6** Haidian District
7 Fengtai District   **8** Shijingshan Distrct

Location of Liulitun

Guangzhou Administrative Districts

Proposed location of incinerator

Timeline of anti-incinerator activism in Beijing Liulitun

2006

August	The Liulitun residents found the tender notice spontaneously on building incinerator was released on the district government's website
September	The Beijing municipal government launched a one-month consultation about daily social issues in Beijing for 2007 (北京市 2007 年在直接關係群眾生活方面擬辦的重要實事)
	The Liulitun residents sent letters to the municipal government and expressed their worries about the smell from the landfill and the build of incinerator.
November	The municipal government published a urban plan for northern Haidian district and plan to build an incinerator located a landfill site with a daily disposal capacity of 1,200 tonnes.
December	Two proposals about the effects of landfill on health and the ecosystem, and suggested solutions to the smell of landfill and municipal waste disposal were tabled by the CPPCC members in the First Plenum of the 8th Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) of Haidian district.

	The Haidian district government confirmed the construction of incinerator and completed by March 2007.
23 December	The residents drafted an action plan "Build a harmonious community, strongly oppose the building of the incinerator in Liulitun" (共築和諧社區共建美好家園 強烈反對六里屯建設垃圾焚燒廠) and prepared to have campaign.
26 December	Submit a complaint letter "A complaint letter about opposing the building of an incinerator in Liulitun community" (百旺新城社區居民關於反對在六里屯建垃圾焚燒廠的申訴信) to the State Environmental Protection Agency (the former Ministry of Environmental Protection) and the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau.
30 December	The mayor of Beijing, Mr. Wang Qishan, emphasised on the need of building incinerator in a current affairs programme Beijing Chamber (北京議事廳).

2007

1-3 January	The residents organised an exhibition in the community to shown the impacts of building incinerator. And collected signatures for petition.

17 January	The Haidian district government held a meeting about the incinerator project and invited the residents' representatives to attend. In the meeting, the government reiterated that the safety of incinerator and the plan was fixed in 2004.
18 January	The residents launched the first protests. The submitted the complaint letters to the municipal level agencies: the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau, the Beijing Municipal Commission of Urban Planning, and the Office of Letters and Calls of the Beijing Committee of the Communist Party of China.
22 January	The district government held a press conference and emphasised the incinerator should be operated in 2008.
February	The residents sent a letter to the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau and cited the Administrative Reconsideration Law and asked for cancelling the incinerator project.
2 March	The district government held the second meeting with the residents and reiterated that the project should be carried on.
3 April	The Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau replied the protesters and confirmed the decision of building incinerator, which fulfilled all legal procedures.

14 April	The residents launched another action against the incinerator project. On the same day, the Liulitun landfill held an open day to give a chance to learn more about the operation of waste management and the technology used in the landfill.
16 April	A letter sent to State Environmental Protection Administration, which disagreed with the feedback given by the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau.
18 April	The incinerator project was started to build.
20 April	The protesters took a rally outside the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau.
10 May	The Beijing Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment announced the postponement of the incinerator's construction due to the residents' opposition.
5 June	1,000 residents took a rally on Earth Day.
12 June	The State Environmental Protection Administration officially announced the postponement the project, and suggested a wide public participation in the planning stage.

2008

August	The Olympics Game commenced.

| 9 October | Newspaper reported that the Haidian District Commission of City Administration and Environment had chosen the location of the Liulitun incinerator and completed the first stage of the EIA. |

| Mid-October | The residents launched a petition and sent letters to State Environmental Protection Administration, the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau, the Beijing Municipal Commission of Development and Reform, the Beijing Municipal Commission of Urban Planning, the Beijing Municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment, and the Mayor of Beijing. |

| November & December | The protesters visited the municipal government 10 times to express their grievances. |

2009

| 3 February | The municipal Commission of City Administration and Environment held a meeting with other departments about the building of incinerators in Beijing city. The office emphasised the necessity of building incinerators for Beijing City (the Liulitun incinerator was one of five planned incinerators) and of implementing more comprehensive municipal waste management. More than 20 residents gathered and discussed the problems of burning waste and how to deal with the government's decision. |

19 February	The residents launched a discussion forum. Dozens of residents attended and environmental scientists, such as Zhao Zhangyuan, was invited for delivering a talk and providing consultation about the impacts of incineration.
Mid-February	The residents sent petition letter with 1,000 signatures to the government agencies to express their dissatisfaction and requested the district government listen people's voice.
July	The deputy head of the Haidian District Commission of City Administration and Environment denied that the incinerator location had already been confirmed and claimed that the agency was still assessing the risks of building an incinerator.
2011	
19 January	The Haidian district government announced that a new location for the incinerator had been found in Sujiatuo town (蘇家陀) and abandoned the plan for Liulitun. And the end of campaign.
November	The municipal government implemented "Regulations on Municipal Waste Management for Beijing city".
2012	
January	The municipal government planned to promote a trial waste sorting programme in 1,200 communities within 5 years and waste charge by volume was suggested to implement and took effect in March 2012.

2013

April

The Beijing Municipal government implemented "Three Year Plan of Municipal Waste Facilities for Beijing City" (北京市生活垃圾處理設施建設三年實施方案), the government expects the municipal waste to be solved by waste burning (70%) and landfill (30%) by 2015.

'

Timeline of anti-incinerator activism in Guangzhou Panyu

2009

February   Panyu district government posted the plans for the incinerator project Daishi in February 2009, in the expectation that construction would be completed in 2010. However, this proposal was not given much attention by local residents.

September   The Municipal Urban Management Bureau confirmed the incinerator project and the land was requisitioned while the environmental impact assessment (EIA) had been launched.

Residents accidentally had been learning that a waste incinerator power plant was going to be built from a government website and posted the information on a residential online discussion forum.

First meeting was convened to discuss the problems of incinerator projects and actions to be taken on 29 September.

October   The residents took to the streets of the district with a petition and distributed handbills about the problems associated with incinerators seeking public support on 13 and 14 October.

Dozens of protesters wearing surgical masks and dressed in T-shirts bearing the slogan "Refuse Toxic Air" collected signatures from the public at the entrance of a supermarket; some protestors held banners with slogans such as "Anti-burning" and "Anti-dioxin" on 25 October.

November	Government representatives held a press conference. In the press conference, both municipal and district governments announced that they had not changed their positions and emphasised the necessity of building the incinerator in the district on 22 November. This aroused anger among the residents.

The following morning, one thousand residents "strolled" to the headquarters of the municipal government and Guangzhou Municipal Urban Management Committee on 24 November.

Panyu district government suggested inviting an expert to consult on a comprehensive plan for the district, with residents invited to vote and decide on the plan. In addition, the Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau announced that the EIA for the incinerator would be assessed by the Bureau and the final decision shown to the public after the hearings on 25 November.

December The Panyu district government announced that construction of the planned incinerator would be postponed to 2011 on 10 December.

The party secretary of the district was invited to attend a meeting with the residents of Riverside Garden on 20 December 2009. In the meeting, the party secretary let it be known that the project had been suspended as a result of the mass opposition.

The Guangzhou government implemented new instruments on waste management, such as plans to promulgate regulation on waste sorting in Guangzhou city and set more pilot points for waste sorting, aim to promote recycling in Guangzhou.

2010

February   Green Family (former Eco-Canton) was formed.

March   One of the founders of Green Family, Luo Jingming (internet pseudonym "Basuofengyun", 巴索風雲) travelled to Beijing. There he met Zhang Boju, the chief executive officer of Friends of Nature. A breakthrough for institutionalisation of Green Family and paved a way for forming "Eco-Canton".

June   "Eco-Canton" was set up and registered as a nongovernmental organisation with the Bureau of Civil Affairs of Guangzhou Municipality in June.

November   Asian Games, 12 – 27 November

2011

January   The Guangzhou government launched a waste recycling programme. Under this programme the government proposed selecting a district to carry out a trial of the recycling scheme, which could later be rolled out to the wider city with the expectation being that the volume of waste could be reduced by 50% after three years.

April   The Trial Regulation on Municipal Waste Recycling and Management, took effect on 1 April 2011, and the volume of waste for burning and landfill has been reduced by 3.09% between 2012-2013 and further waste sorting scheme were implemented in 10 small communities in Guangzhou.

Panyu district government launched a press conference on 11 April 2011, selected 5 locations and would choose one of them to build an incinerator, two-month of public consultation will be provided for this proposal as well.

Without consultation with Fushan municipal government about the choices of location, the Bureau of Environment, Transportation, and Urban Management of Shunde district visited both Guangzhou and Panyu Environmental Protection Bureaus (EPBs) for getting more information on the incinerator on 15 April. And later, the Shunde government opposed the incinerator project.

Few days after the Foshan and Shunde governments expressed their opinion on incinerator, the Panyu government released the standards and process of choosing the incinerator locations in a press conference on 21 April and expected the EIA could be done at the end of 2011.

Dozens of Riverside Garden and other residents visited the Municipal Urban Management Committee on 25 April and expressed their dissatisfactions and pressed the government to speed up waste sorting scheme in the whole city.

June	Nandu.com organised an online voting on the best place for building incinerator. On 16 June, the result of voting released: more than 380,000 votes and most of the people (over 57,000 votes) opposed Daishi to be selected for building incinerator, while Dagang town was highly suggested to build incinerator (around 53,000 votes).
	Panyu government released the result and decided Dagang town as the location for building incinerator on 22 June.
	Shunde Environmental Science Association, issued 20 thousands questionnaires to the Shunde citizens about the incinerator location and announced over 77% of respondents preferred to choose Dongchong town 26 June.
	Dagang town residents submitted 2,000 signatures to Municipal Urban Management Committee for opposing the incinerator on 26 June.
	The municipal government maintains the incineration and expected to be complete by 2015.
December	Party Secretary of Guangdong Province, Mr Wang Yang, advocated the concept of "Environmental Democracy" in response to the increasing level of environmental activism in the province.
2012	
August	The Public Consultative and Supervision Committee for Urban Waste Management of Guangzhou City was established under the Municipal Urban Management Committee on August.

Interviewee demographics

(Note: Names are reduced to initials to maintain anonymity)

Category/Interviewee   **Background**

I. Protesters

1.   Mr Luo Jinming   A resident of Panyu district, an anti-
     (Internet pseudonym 'Basuofengyu')   incinerator protester in Guangzhou, the
                                 founder of Eco-Canton (formerly Green
                                 Family) and a member of the Public
                                 Consultative and Supervision Committee for
                                 Urban Waste Management of Guangzhou
                                 City.

2.   Ms A   A resident of Panyu district, an anti-
                                 incinerator protester in Guangzhou and a
                                 founding member of Eco-Canton.

3.   Mr B   A resident of Panyu district, a retired cadre
                                 member and an anti-incinerator protester in
                                 Guangzhou.

4.   Ms C   A resident of Panyu district, a housewife, a
                                 volunteer for Eco-Canton and an anti-
                                 incinerator protester in Guangzhou.

5.	Mr D	A resident of Panyu district, a retired cadre member and an anti-incinerator protester in Guangzhou.
6.	Mrs E	A resident of Panyu district, a retiree and an anti-incinerator protester in Guangzhou.
7.	Mr F	A resident of Liulitun district, an anti-incinerator protester in Beijing, a retiree and a volunteer for Green Monitoring Group.
8.	Mrs G	A resident of Liulitun district, an anti-incinerator protester in Beijing, a retiree and a volunteer for Green Monitoring Group.
9.	Mrs H	A resident of Liulitun district, an anti-incinerator protester in Beijing, a retired cadre member and a volunteer for Green Monitoring Group.
10.	Mr I	A resident of Liulitun district, an anti-incinerator protester in Beijing, a retired cadre member and a volunteer for Green Monitoring Group.
11.	Mr J	A resident of Liulitun district, an anti-incinerator protester in Beijing, a retired cadre member and a volunteer for Green Monitoring Group.

II. ENGO Activists

12.	Mr Zhang Boju	Chief Executive of Friends of Nature who provided assistance in both anti-incinerator protests.
13.	Ms Chen Liwen	A staff member for the ENGO Nature University (*Ziran Daxue*) who provided assistance in both anti-incinerator protests.
14.	Ms K	A Friends of Nature staff member who was responsible for organising the waste-sorting programme in the Liulitun district.
15	Mr L	A Friends of Nature staff member who was responsible for organising the waste-sorting programme in the Liulitun district.
16.	Mr M	An Eco-Canton staff member.

III. Environmental Lawyer

17.	Mr Xia Jun	A solicitor specialising in Chinese environmental law who provided legal assistance in both anti-incinerator protests.

IV. Street-level Bureaucrat

| 18. | Mr N | An officer in the waste-sorting programme in the Huale community of the Yuexie district in Guangzhou. |

V. Academics

| 19. | Dr Chen Xiaoyun | A scholar from the School of Government at Sun Yat-sen University who participated in the Panyu protest and provided assistance in organising Eco-Canton. |

| 20. | Prof Kuo Weiqing | A professor from the School of Government at Sun Yat-sen University who provided assistance in the Panyu protest and helped to organise Eco-Canton. |

Interview Questions

I. Interview questions for protesters:

1) Why did you participate in the protests?

2) Do you agree with the government's response regarding the incinerator project?

3) What is your opinion on municipal waste management in this city?

II. Interview questions for ENGO activists:

1) How did your organisation participate in the anti-incinerator protest?

2) How has your organisation participated in the launch of waste-recycling programmes?

3) What role has your organisation played in the activism? Was it that of a mediator between the government and the public or was it as a representative for the public in expressing their concerns to the government?

III. Interview questions for street-level bureaucrats:

1) How would you encourage residents to participate in this trial programme?

2) What are the difficulties in promoting waste-sorting programmes in this community?

IV. Interview questions for environmental lawyers:

1) How did you get involved in activism; specifically, in helping protesters?

2) What is your opinion of environmental impact assessments?

V. Interview questions for academics:

1) How did you get involved in activism; specifically, in helping protesters?

2) How do you perceive the development of public participation in China's   environmental policy?

3) What is your opinion of the government's response to the public consultative committee?

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