Implementing the Mass Line in Criminal Investigation in China

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Certificate of authorship

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Intellectual property rights

The text of this thesis has not been published in any form prior to its submission for examination except that an earlier condensed version of Chapter 4 was published under the title of “Beyond an elegant political slogan: Reading the mass line through the lens of methods” by the *Fudan Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. 5, No. 4, Dec. 2012.

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Where the views of individual Chinese frontline police officers are quoted in this thesis, these views are personal and are therefore not necessarily representative of Chinese Police or the Chinese government.
Professional editorial assistance

Paid editorial assistance was obtained when preparing this thesis. That assistance did not start until initial drafts had been completed and feedback had been obtained from my supervisors. It was under my supervisors’ suggestion and approval that I chose the editor. The editorial service was funded by the Centre of Excellence in Policing and Security (CEPS).

The editor was Dr Robert Trevethan. He has an academic background in psychology spanning over 40 years, and holds a Bachelor of Arts with honours from the Australian National University, a Master of Science from the London School of Economics and Political Science, and a PhD from Macquarie University. He has edited a range of materials since he left full time academic life in 2008. He specialises in editing academic material (PhDs, masters theses, honours dissertations, journal articles, etc.), and has edited within a range of disciplines including architecture, education, demography, the environmental sciences, ethics, juvenile justice, management, marketing, occupational therapy, psychology, sociology, social welfare, and the visual arts.

Neither the editor’s current or former area of academic specialisation is similar to that of mine. In-text editing of the thesis was strictly limited to spelling, grammar, formatting, word choice, style, and minor corrections. During editing, no alterations were made to improve the substantive content or conceptual organisation of the thesis, but my
attention was drawn to problems that appeared to occur concerning such things as comprehensibility, consistency, sequencing of ideas, repetition, and placement of material.
Abstract

The mass line, formulated by Mao Zedong, has become the fundamental political ideology, organisational approach, and work method of the Communist Party of China (CPC), and is embraced and implemented in almost every aspect of the Party’s work. Police work, one of the Party’s most important core tasks, is therefore required to adhere to the mass line as well. Under the guidance of the mass line, Chinese police value greatly the role of the broad masses of the people and their participation both in social order maintenance (which focuses on preventing crime) and in criminal investigation (which concentrates on fighting crime). Although the focuses of these two general tasks differ in some ways, the ultimate purposes are the same: relying on the masses to control crime and protect the interests of the masses.

Studies about the mass line policing theories and practices are numerous in China, but most focus on the social order maintenance role of implementing the mass line in police work, with studies on implementing the mass line in the criminal investigation being far from adequate. Furthermore, the majority of available studies on the mass line in criminal investigation all focus on how to rely on the masses, or the public, to collect crime clues so as to find out criminal suspects and solve a criminal case. To a great extent, implementing the mass line in criminal investigation, both in theory and in practice, is narrowly interpreted in terms of effective interactions between the police and the masses outside the police force in the process of solving criminal cases. This is
certainly one important aspect about implementing the mass line in criminal investigation work, but not the only one.

In this thesis I aimed to make a systematic study of how to more effectively and comprehensively implement the mass line in criminal investigation work. To fulfil such a research goal, it was necessary to obtain a thorough understanding of the mass line. Therefore this thesis includes a systematic analysis of Mao’s works on the mass line. According to Mao’s description of the principle of “from the masses, to the masses” (Mao, June 12, 1943), the mass line was articulated as the Marxist theory of knowledge and the method of leadership. Therefore, the analyses of Mao’s works on the mass line included his writings on the Marxist theory of knowledge and on the method of leadership. My analyses of Mao’s works concluded that the mass line in essence was a set of methods and the core aim of the mass line was to objectively concentrate the ideas and efforts of the masses to maximally avoid subjectivism in the process of forming judgements, decisions, policies, or theories for effectively solving problems.

From the conclusion above, implementing the mass line in criminal investigation should embody more than simply relying on the masses for providing crime clues and helping to locate criminal suspects. In order to obtain a deeper and more thorough study of the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation, Mao’s writings on police work, Luo Ruqiqing’s speeches about implementing the mass line in police work (Luo was Mao’s first police minister), and interviews with Chinese frontline police officers were collected and analysed in this research. The triangulated sources of data have, to
the maximum degree, ensured the depth of the research and the avoidance of potential bias from one source of data.

Based on the findings from analysing Mao’s writings, Luo’s speeches, and the interviews with frontline police officers, the issues examined included the principles of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation, the concept of the masses in the context of criminal investigation, the difficulties encountered, the mass line leadership styles, and recommendations for better implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. My study concluded that the core aim of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation should be to guide criminal investigators to objectively collect information, clues, and evidence from all sources then analyse them creatively but logically to form more objective, and less subjective deductions, judgments, and conclusions on a criminal case being investigated. In the process of investigating a criminal case, if criminal investigators have managed to objectively collect information from the masses through legitimate methods, and regularly check on the reliability and relevance of this information until all legitimate measures have been employed to explain any doubts encountered before coming to any conclusions, they can be assessed as having properly and thoroughly implemented the mass line in criminal investigation.
### Abbreviations

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<tr>
<td>CCPU</td>
<td>China Criminal Police University</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEPS</td>
<td>Centre of Excellence in Policing and Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPC</td>
<td>Communist Party of China</td>
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<td>CSU</td>
<td>Charles Sturt University</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPC</td>
<td>Great Production Campaign</td>
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<td>GSP</td>
<td>Gold Shield Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPS</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>MXJ</td>
<td>Mao Zedong Xuanji (SWM in Chinese)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRC</td>
<td>People’s Republic of China</td>
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<td>SWM</td>
<td>Selected Works of Mao Zedong</td>
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<td>UK</td>
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Chapter 1  Introduction

The relation between the Party and the masses is like that between fish and water. Without good relations between the Party and the masses, the socialist system cannot be established or, once established, be consolidated.

— Mao Zedong (July, 1957, p. 477)

In Chinese philosophy, water is metaphorically described as two symbols: the symbol of the highest virtue and the symbol of the ordinary people. This is explicitly expressed and advocated both in Taoism and Confucianism, the two most well-known philosophies in Chinese culture. On the one hand, the two philosophies maintain that rulers should have the virtue of water, being generous, selfless, modest, and benevolent. Laotse\(^1\) preached that “the best virtue is like water”\(^2\) because “Water benefits all things and does not compete with them. It dwells in (the lowly) places that all disdain — Wherein it comes near to the Tao” (Laotse translated by Lin, 2009, p. 33). Confucius maintained that “the wise love [the virtue of] the water”\(^3\). The sage was like the water, being kind, benevolent, modest, and selfless; hence it was the sage who was suited to the position of a ruler or a leader (Yaoji Jin, 1993; Yong Jin, 2009; Q. Liang, 1996; Lin, 2009; Tong, 1982). Confucius argued that the sage should love extensively, not only bestowing benefits on others but also assisting and leading them to achieve success together\(^4\). These values that emphasise the morality, the ability, and the personality of the ruler, the leadership, and the government hold prominence over other doctrines in China and are deeply rooted in Chinese culture. They are reflected in Chinese legends

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\(^1\) Laotse, the modern spelling is Lao Zi, is the father of Taoism.

\(^2\) See Chapter 8 in \textit{Dao De Jing} (Taoism), the classical works recording the teachings of Laotse.

\(^3\) See Chapter 6 in \textit{Lun Yu} (Analects of Confucius), the classical works recording the teachings of Confucius.

\(^4\) See Chapter 6 in \textit{Lun Yu} (Analects of Confucius).
about some benevolent and people-loving rulers that have been passed down for
thousands of years. Among these rulers, Emperor Yao and Emperor Shun in the
prehistory period have become Chinese icons for virtuous and excellent leadership (A.
Cheng, 2008; Yong Jin, 2009; Lin, 2009; Mu, 2009).

Water is also likened to the ordinary people. Water looks very soft, weak, and
silent just as the ordinary people might appear. However, the power of water is also
tremendous even unmatchable, particularly when it converges to show its strength
and/or anger. Therefore Laotse believed that “there is nothing weaker than water but
none is superior to it in overcoming the hard” (Laotse translated by Lin, 2009, p. 251).
Similarly, a Chinese saying advised that “The ruler, the boat; the people, the water. The
water may carry the boat, the water may capsize the boat.” In Chinese history, there
were many stories about tyrants, however powerful they seemed to be, who were
overturned by the “weak” ordinary people (Yong Jin, 2009; Mu, 2009; Xia, 1979).

The vital relationship between the ruler and the ruled was compared to that
between boat and water in traditional Chinese culture, or between fish and water in
Mao’s ideology (Mao, July, 1957). A boat cannot sail without the support of water just
as a fish cannot survive without staying in water. Therefore, the wise ruler should love
the ruled; a good government should take care of its ordinary people, and win their
hearts and support. Such ideas are labelled the Minben sixiang (people-as-root ideas) in
Chinese culture (Yaoji Jin, 1993; P. Li & Zhang, 2000; Q. Liang, 1996; Y. Liu, 2009).
One of the most popular quotations about the Minben sixiang is the doctrine by Mencius:
the ordinary people are most important, then the state, last the sovereign (Min wei gui, Sheji ci zhi, Jun wei qing\(^5\)).

Minben sixiang upholds that the Min, the ordinary people, are the roots of a state. When the roots are solid, the state will be in peace, for he who wins the Min’s hearts gains the world (Yaoji Jin, 1993; Yong Jin, 2009; Q. Liang, 1996; Ouyang, 2005; Perry, 2001). The ruler’s virtue is the key for gaining the support of the ruled. Hence only those who are honest, upright, and straightforward can be promoted to leadership and then the people will submit and support the government. On the contrary, if mean, selfish, virtue-less ones snatch the leadership, eventually they will be overturned by the people. Such ideas have long been advocated as the ideal political philosophy in Chinese culture, are considered as embryos for modern populism and democracy in China, and are still producing profound effects on contemporary Chinese society (Chen, 2004; A. Cheng, 2008; Yaoji Jin, 1993; Q. Liang, 1996; Y. Liu, 2009; Perry, 2001; Townsend, 1977).

However, it is Mao Zedong who not only articulated such ideas most clearly but also “through his personal power and prestige, was most effective in translating these ideals into practice” (Townsend, 1977, p. 1006). Mao played the most important role in “transforming populism from a rebel or protest belief to a legitimate principle of the government in power” (Townsend, 1977, p. 1007). He not only compared the vital relationship between the Party (the leader and ruler) and the masses to that between “fish and water” (July, 1957, p. 477) but also delineated how the Party should keep close ties with the masses, learn from them, and organise them to overcome all

\(^5\) This is a well-known teaching by Mencius which is recorded in Chapter 14 of the Analects of Mencius.

The core of Mao’s legacy is the mass line (CPC, 1981; Townsend, 1977; Xiong, 2007). The mass line was mainly formulated by Mao during China’s new democratic revolution era6 in the 20th century. It played a significant role in the history of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and was incorporated into the CPC’s constitution as the fundamental principle for all practical work. The mass line is regarded as the living soul of Mao Zedong Thought7 (CPC, 1981).

Townsend considered that “the mass line is probably the strongest part of the legacy” of Mao and that it has obtained a constitutional aura (Townsend, 1977, p. 1011). In practice, however, “Like all constitutional principles, it may be disregarded or violated at times, but it retains its force as an article of faith in a national identity” (Townsend, 1977, p. 1011). Since the mass line has become a constitutional principle and part of Chinese culture, “it would be difficult to reject it without altering the ideology as a whole” (Townsend, 1977, p. 1011). The mass line, like its author Mao, had once been worshipped. It was seen as an omnipotent strategy in the chaotic revolution era but had also been challenged, doubted, and even refuted after the momentous failures of the Great Leap Forward during the late 1950s and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976 (Gray, 2006; She, 2010; Womack, 1986). Michael Dutton even declared that the marketisation and commercialisation tendencies that emerged in the new reform era in China had led Chinese police to devise

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6 The new democratic revolution era was proposed by Mao. It refers to the years from 1921 to 1945. For more information, refer to Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party adopted by the CPC on April 20, 1945 and Mao’s seminal article On New Democracy, written in January 1940.
7 Mao Zedong Thought (or Mao Zedong Sixiang written in Chinese) is the special term referring to Mao’s philosophies. In Western terminology, it is usually referred to as Maoism, just like Marxism and Leninism.
their own money-based contract responsibility system to reinvigorate the mass line policing, hence quite possibly heralding the end of socialist mass line policing (Dutton, 2000, 2005a). In accordance with Dutton’s comments, the current mass line policing is no longer the mass line policing of Mao’s era. This implies that the spirit of Mao’s mass line has been changed. Dutton’s comment is contrary to Towsend’s conclusion that the mass line has become a constitutional principle and the strongest part of Mao’s legacy that will be “difficult to reject without altering the ideology as a whole” (Townsend, 1977, p. 1011).

Debatable as the mass line is, the CPC is still upholding it as the fundamental political line, organisational line, and guideline for conducting all practical work of the Party (CPC, 2007). Today, the spirit of the mass line as an important guideline has been written into a range of laws, including The Constitution of the People’s Republic of China (PRC), The Constitution of the CPC, The People’s Police Law 1995, The Criminal Procedure Law of the PRC, and other laws and regulations. Democratic centralism, for instance, as the application of the mass line in political activities, is written into the constitution of the PRC as the fundamental principle for all state organs, and therefore has gained its constitutional place in China’s polity (Constitution of the PRC, 1982/2004).

In police work as well, there is a requirement that the mass line be followed. Article 3 of The People’s Police Law 1995 states that “People’s policemen must rely on the support of the masses, keep close ties with them, listen attentively to their comments and suggestions, accept their supervision, safeguard their interests, and serve them
whole-heartedly” (Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, 1995). This is the legislative ground for implementing the mass line in police work.

1.1 Background – an overview of the Chinese policing system

Based on the characteristics of police systems in various countries, scholars have categorised police systems into three general models: centralised, decentralised, and integrated (Bayley, 1992; J. He, 1995; Y. Ma, 1997). The centralised police model refers to a centralised national police force directly under the control of the central government, and the national government is held accountable for the success or failure of law enforcement (Y. Ma, 1997). France, Italy, Denmark, and Sweden are usually categorised as countries employing the centralised police model (Bayley, 1992; J. He, 1995; Y. Ma, 1997).

The decentralised model, also known as the fragmented model, is characterised by its distinctly localised organisational structure. In a decentralised model, police agencies are organised locally and are accountable to local authorities (Y. Ma, 1997). Police systems in the United States of America (USA), Canada, and the Netherlands are typically categorised under this model (Bayley, 1992; J. He, 1995; Y. Ma, 1997).

The integrated model, also known as the combination system or the composite system, refers to the organisation and administration of the police being a shared responsibility of the central government and the local authorities (Y. Ma, 1997). Japan, Germany, Australia, and the United Kingdom (UK) fall within this category (Bayley, 1992; J. He, 1995; Y. Ma, 1997).
China’s police system has some distinctive features, which makes it difficult to fit it into any one of the three models (Y. Ma, 1997). Due to historical reasons, China so far is still not a united country. Its “one country, two systems” polity makes it more complicated when the police system is to be discussed. In theory, China has been recognised as one country and the PRC is the sole legitimate representative on international political stages. China now has 34 province-level administrative regions: two special administrative regions (Hong Kong and Macao), twenty-three provinces (including Taiwan), four municipalities directly under the central government (Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Chongqing), and five autonomous regions. In reality, China has two different systems, the socialist system in the mainland and the capitalist system in Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan. Hong Kong, the previous British colony, and Macao, the previous Portuguese colony, have been united with the mainland but are still maintaining their previous capitalist social system, including police systems. Taiwan keeps its own system descended from the capitalist Republic of China. In recent years, judicial assistance and policing cooperation among the Mainland, Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan are on a steady rise. In this research, the police system refers to that in the mainland of China except where stated otherwise.

Generally speaking, China’s police system can be regarded as the integrated model, though Ma argued that “the system falls somewhere between the centralized model and the integrated model” (1997, p. 114). According to The People’s Police Law 1995 and The Organisational Management Regulation of the Public Security Organs, Chinese police are under the joint leadership of the State Council (the Central Government) and local governments and are accountable to both. The People’s Police Law 1995 stipulates
that the Chinese people’s police consist of “policemen working in public security organs, state security organs, prisons and organs in charge of reeducation through labor\(^8\), as well as judicial policemen working in the People’s Courts and the People’s Procuratorates” (Article 2) and “the Chinese People’s Armed Police Forces” (Article 51). Each of these police forces performs specifically designed functions and each has its own organisational structure (Y. Ma, 1997).

The State Council exercises the unified leadership, through corresponding ministries under it, over the police forces. The Ministry of Public Security (MPS) is in charge of public security police and carries joint leadership with corresponding ministries over special police forces such as customs police, railway police, transportation police, civil aviation police, and forestry police. In addition, the MPS, representing the State Council, also shares leadership over the People’s Armed Police (PAP). Some PAP forces, mainly for fire fighting, border defence, security guarding and protection, are primarily under control of the MPS (Sun & Wu, 2009). In this research, we will focus on the public security police, the largest police force performing a wide range of general police duties: order maintenance, criminal investigation, traffic control, street patrol, emergency response, and guidance for the work of mass organisation concerning crime prevention. When Chinese people talk about police in China, they usually refer to public security police. In my research, when the term “Chinese police” is used, it refers to the public security police unless stated otherwise.

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\(^8\) On December 28, 2013, the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress passed a decision to abolish the system of reeducation through labor founded in 1957. However, those police officers who were working on the camps of reeducation through labor have not been dismissed but transferred to other police sections.
The police forces at various local levels enjoy discretionary power to adapt the general policies and basic laws made by the national state organs (such as the National People’s Congress and its Standing Committee, the State Council and the MPS) or the Party so that these policies and laws can be better implemented in accordance with local circumstances. The national state organs or the higher level organs will collect, concentrate and summarise the lessons and experiences from the local or lower organs so that these policies and laws can be rectified or improved to fit new circumstances better.

Criminal investigation work takes up only a small proportion of all police duties. However, probably due to the sensational accounts of fights between police and criminals, between justice and evil, and the intrinsic challenges of solving crime puzzles through finding out who the real criminals are, criminal investigation has always been the focus of police work in the eyes of the public. In China, the major professional forces for investigating crimes are the police officers working within the public security police organs.

The organisational hierarchy of public security police can be depicted as a pyramid structure with a single body constituting leadership at the top and integrated body parts down to the ground (see Figure 1.1). At national level, the MPS represents the State Council, directing and regulating the police operation and management throughout the country. Moving one level down is the Public Security Department at each province-level jurisdiction, including the twenty-two provinces, five autonomous regions, and four municipalities directly under the central government in the Mainland of China. These provincial public security departments have broad discretionary power
in making local policies and reforms in line with the fundamental national policies and laws. Under the provincial level are public security bureaus at city or county level. Depending on need, where city districts have been established, district public security sub-bureaus may be established. City/county public security bureaus may establish public security police stations on the basis of practical need. Police stations are not independent but dispatched agencies of their immediately superior public security bureaus.
Each local public security organ is accountable to both the immediately higher public security organ and the local government at the corresponding level (Y. Ma, 1997). For example, a city public security bureau is accountable to both the provincial public security department and the city government, and a provincial public security department is accountable to both the MPS and the provincial government. This is in essence a dual leadership mechanism over the public security police force. At the
national level, the MPS is responsible for providing general guidance, professional assistance, technological support, and assessment of rewards or punishments. The regulations made by the MPS are binding on all public security police organs in the country. The MPS is also responsible for coordinating and directing the investigative operations among local police organs in relation to cross regional felonious criminal cases. In a similar vein, the provincial public security departments are responsible for directing police work within their jurisdiction and coordinate with other province police forces, and the city/county public security bureaus direct their subordinates. The local governments take the primary administrative responsibility for setting up police forces within their jurisdictions. These responsibilities include making proposals and decisions on the size of the police forces, budget, equipment, and local law enforcement priorities.

There are two major advantages of the dual leadership hierarchy. On the one hand, it ensures the whole nation’s police forces remain under the control of the central government so that important national policies, fundamental laws, and uniform professional standards can be effectively and thoroughly implemented across the country. This is the prong of the maintaining centralism in the hand of the central government. On the other hand, it provides the local government and police organs with utmost autonomy in determining how to use the police resources to the best local law enforcement interests and circumstances. This is the prong of giving democracy to the local governments.

The professional criminal investigation forces are organised as team units within the public security police forces, which correspond with the structure of the public security police organs at each level (see Figure 1.1). The command and management of
professional criminal investigation forces can be described as the model of “unified command, centralised management”. At a national level, the Criminal Investigation Bureau (CIB) is established within the MPS representing the Ministry in directing and coordinating criminal investigation work across the country. The Chief of the CIB is usually an experienced police senior officer acting as the national criminal investigation commander whose major responsibility during a criminal investigation operation, where necessary, is to organise and coordinate local police forces between different jurisdictions to effectively cooperate in collaborative action and provide technological and expertise support to each other. The CIB itself has no criminal investigation force under its direct control, so its leadership in criminal investigation can only be fulfilled through cooperation with local police chiefs who actually command the local police forces.

The chief of each criminal investigation force at a local level is the highest commander within his or her own force, but subject to the higher commander. A criminal investigation general detachment is established within each public security department at the province level. The general detachment is responsible for investigating very grave felonies and providing support to and coordinating criminal investigation operations within that province jurisdiction, as well as responding to criminal investigation requests from other provinces. Moving down from the province level, a criminal investigation detachment is set up within each city public security bureau, and a criminal investigation brigade is established in the district sub-bureaus of a city public security bureau or in the county public security bureau. The criminal investigation brigade is usually composed of several criminal investigation squads that
are the basic components of professional criminal investigation forces stipulated in the 2007 Organisational Management Regulation of the Public Security Organs. Criminal investigation brigades and squads are the principal forces in criminal investigation who play the major role in the professional criminal investigation forces, take main responsibility for investigating and handling grave and serious cases, serial crimes and those where special/professional investigation measures are needed (Anhui Province Public Security Department, 2011).

In practice, detective teams are usually grouped within a professional criminal investigation force on the basis of voluntary choice of the detectives and balance of skills, experiences, age, and specific case to case needs. Detective teams are not organisations stipulated by the police organic regulations, but operational models for the division of labour among frontline criminal investigators.

In terms of management, all police officers within a criminal investigation force are centralised within a certain workplace, usually within the same building or work base. Each work day, they will have a meeting for assigning tasks or discussing cases. Then the detectives or investigators will scatter into the masses of society to collect information and evidence. During this process, they will maintain contact with their commanders or headquarters and report any contingent situations at any time when necessary. At the end of the day, or whenever necessary, they will hold a meeting again reporting the investigation process so that the various information and opinions can be concentrated and discussed. On the basis of the most recent circumstances and analyses, tasks will be adapted and assigned to the detectives again.
At the bottom of the structure are the police stations and self-governance mass organisations (see Figure 1.1). Guided by the mass line, police stations are based in Chinese urban and rural communities for crime investigation, crime prevention, and service provision. These police stations, albeit small in size with a very limited number of police officers, are usually geographically located in residential areas and supported by various mass organisations, that is citizen self-governance organisations (Chen, 2002; Dai, 2008; Fu, 1990).

Police stations are usually described as the grassroots public security “comprehensive combat entity” bearing responsibilities for fighting crime, maintaining order, serving the masses, and protecting safety and peace within their jurisdictions (Anhui Province Public Security Department, 2011). Detectives/officers within a police station are usually responsible for investigating criminal cases that have evident cause and effect relations, being simple in circumstances, needing no professional investigation measures or cross-county/city investigation. These cases fall into five categories: criminal suspects are caught red-handed by police station officers, criminal suspects surrender themselves at the police station, criminal suspects are seized and delivered to the police station by the masses, the clues that the police station officers obtained can directly lead to solving the case, and other criminal cases with simple circumstances that match the criminal investigation capacity of the police station officers (Anhui Province Public Security Department, 2011). When the police station officers find out the cases they are handling exceed their capacity or jurisdiction, they should hand these cases over to the criminal investigation brigades or squads.
Police stations and criminal investigation brigades are two very important forces for preventing and combatting crimes and for maintaining social order and stability. Police stations play the key role in preventing crime while criminal investigation brigades lay stress on breaking criminal cases. In criminal investigation practice, the two forces often converge for tracking down a criminal suspect. Since the police stations are located among residential communities and responsible for undertaking comprehensive management and service for the masses, their officers have the advantage of being more familiar with residents and local circumstances. Therefore, when a neighbourhood canvass is needed, they can provide more detailed information concerning criminal suspects for the criminal investigation brigades. On the other hand, the criminal investigation brigades can give professional guidance, suggestions and assistance to the police station officers in preventing crime or investigating some criminal cases. Certainly, all these activities need the support of the mass organisation and the masses.

The residents’ committees are the grassroots self-governance mass organisations in urban areas, and are composed of several sub-committees. The sub-committee of people’s mediation and the sub-committee of public security play important roles in maintaining social order at the grassroots level (Chen, 2002; Zhong, 2009). According to Chen (Chen, 2002), these two sub-committees are two key grassroots organisations in maintaining public order and serving as bridges between police and the masses. Both committees are mass organisations under the leadership of local governments and are proactive in providing criminal investigation clues, identifying potential social troubles, preventing crime, and resolving conflicts before they evolve into crime.
The internal safety and protection divisions are established within various work units. The work units refer to where people are employed, and include enterprises (e.g., factories) and non-production and non-profit public service units (e.g., schools and universities) (Zhong & Grabosky, 2009). The internal safety and protection work started in the 1930s in the revolutionary bases, and the system was formalised across the country in 1949 (Dutton, 2005a; Wong, 2009; Zhong & Grabosky, 2009). It still plays an important role in social order maintenance and criminal investigation today. Prior to the reform era, since most work units were state owned, collective owned, or government supported, the internal safety and protection divisions could be labelled as semi-public or semi-official organisations. Therefore, “initially the internal safety and protection divisions had a strong Party link” (Zhong & Grabosky, 2009, p. 441). In the reform era, their functions have shifted from stopping counter-revolutionary sabotages to safety matters, stopping and preventing thefts.

The social order joint protection teams were established through collaboration among several neighbourhood districts and work units, and were similar to the organised vigilante groups that appeared in the eighteenth century in the USA and the UK (Abrahams, 1998). The salient difference between the two was that in the Chinese case the teams were under the direct leadership of the police, while the vigilante groups in the USA and UK were made up of private voluntary agents rather than state agents. The social order joint protection teams manifested one important aspect of police work guided by the mass line—the integration of the special organs (the police forces) with the general masses. In principle, the joint protection team members had no law enforcement power and should have been accompanied by police officers when
performing duties. But in practice they acted as representatives of the police and often abused power *ultra vires*; some team members even committed crimes and physically abused suspects or citizens in ways that resulted in death (Zhong & Grabosky, 2009). The legitimacy of these social order joint protection teams was increasingly challenged by the mass media and the citizens, which finally led to a circular from the MPS for the disbanding of all the teams by January 1, 2008. Many of the personnel who had previously been members of these teams moved into the security service organisations, the equivalent of private policing organisations in Western countries.

Police work guided by the mass line demonstrates a triple structure in organisation and a triple role played by the police. First, in terms of organisation, the Party committees and the governments at various levels exert their leadership in making general policing policies and strategies; second, the police enforce laws and play the leading role in crime investigation and social order maintenance; and third, the masses support and participate in a variety of policing activities such as providing clues about crimes, participating in social order maintenance, and helping to guide traffic and pedestrians.

The police play an important triple role: order maintenance, criminal investigation, and service provision. Metaphorically speaking, the Party and the government are the film producers, the police are both directors and leading actors, and the masses are the supporting actors, the audience, and the critics — who are all cooperatively making a film about fighting crime and maintaining a safe society. To achieve success in policing work, the police as the leading actors must not only know what the masses as the
audience and critics want to see but also how to win their understanding and support and how to mobilise and organise them (as the supporting actors) in concerted actions.

1.2 Research questions

The mass line policing theory sounds very impressive. However, it also attracts some important questions. What exactly is the mass line? Is the mass line primarily an elegant political slogan? Or as Mao claimed, is it the only correct method of leadership (at least for the CPC)? Is the mass line still playing a role in guiding the police and criminal investigation work in China today? If so, how?

The central aim of this research is to obtain a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the mass line for informing the better implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation and against which that implementation can be judged. The study has been guided by the following specific research questions:

1. What is the mass line?
2. Who are the masses in the context of criminal investigation?
3. What principles should be followed in implementing the mass line in criminal investigation?
4. What are the difficulties in implementing the mass line in criminal investigation?
5. How might the mass line be better implemented in criminal investigation?

1.3 Justifications and significance

Police work guided by the mass line had achieved great successes in fighting crime and maintaining social order in the 1950s and early 1960s (Dutton, 2000; Luo, July 31,
During the Cultural Revolution (1966 to 1976), policing systems and other judicial systems were almost totally destroyed (She, 2010; Y. Wu & Sun, 2009; X. Xu, 1995). Since the late 1970s, and still now, police work in China has stepped into the reform and opening up epoch. Although the mass line is still being declared as the fundamental guideline in police work, the changed social context presents both opportunities and challenges for implementing the mass line in a reforming and changing society. These changes include the transformations from a demand economy to a market economy, from a static society to a mobile society, from an agricultural country to an industrial country, from an underdeveloped country to a moderately developed country, and from an egalitarian society to a poor-rich polarised society (Dutton, 2000; Sun & Wu, 2010; J. Yu, 2007; Zhong & Grabosky, 2009). Some of the new challenges facing police are the implementation of the mass line in the commercialised and marketified social context, the stratified security demands of the masses, and the emergence of new crimes (Dutton, 2000; G. Li, 1993; Lu, 2004; Zhao, 2008). Therefore, it is necessary to make comprehensive studies of the place of the mass line in contemporary policing theory and practice.

Studies on the mass line in police work are numerous in China and have been conducted by both academics and police officers (L. He, 2011; Jing & Wang, 2011; G. Li, 1993; J. Li, 2006; B. Liu, 2004). The majority of the studies on the mass line in criminal investigation focus on how the police can mobilise and lead the masses (or the citizens) outside the police force in solving criminal cases. In these studies, the police as a whole are in the position of the leadership in solving criminal cases while the masses are in the position of “the led” supporting the police. To achieve effective leadership in
solving a criminal case, the police must keep close ties with the masses and know how to obtain clues and support from them. This is, and will remain, one important aspect in implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. Yet these studies deal with only one arm of the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation work.

Mao described the ideas of the mass line in many articles and writings. Yet Mao for the first time delineated more comprehensive ideas of the mass line in the article titled *Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership*. In this article, Mao proposed the most well-known principle of the mass line: “from the masses, to the masses” and claimed that it is the Marxist theory of knowledge and the correct method of leadership (Mao, June 12, 1943). Therefore, when discussing the implementation of the mass line, the mass line methods of leadership and the Marxist theory of knowledge should have central roles to play. If so, implementing the mass line in criminal investigation should embody more than just keeping close ties between the police and the masses. As methods of leadership, implementing the mass line in criminal investigation should also include the effective interaction between a police commander and police officers within the same police force. As a theory of knowledge, implementing the mass line in criminal investigation should also include how the mass line directs the cognition process of solving a criminal case. Yet so far no studies on implementing the mass line in criminal investigation have focused on these two aspects. This implies that even in China there is a lack of systematic theoretical studies of how the mass line can most fully be implemented in criminal investigation.

Recent literature in English on policing in China has encompassed a wide range of topics including policing philosophy, police organisations, police roles and functions,
police subculture, policing strategies, and a number of specific issues and problems (Dai, 2008). Many studies have recognised the mass line as a dominant principle in Chinese policing (Bracey, 1989; Chen, 2002; Wong, 2001). However, these latter are very limited, cursory, and superficial (Dai, 2008; Wong, 2001). So far, there is no study in English that is focused on the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation, as a specific area of police work, in China.

The research proposed here is significant because it, first of all, makes a substantial and original contribution to the knowledge base of Chinese policing studies. It will present a comprehensive account of police work guided by the mass line in China, with a specific focus on criminal investigation, thereby expanding the existing knowledge of Chinese policing studies. This research will enrich the limited English literature on Chinese policing studies and shed some light on Western policing theories. The scope, scale, and speed of the globalisation of crime have resulted in similar challenges in police work worldwide. To effectively encounter the challenges facing police, rethinking the role of police is necessary. In this macro context, various policing theories and models have emerged and are still emerging. Broken windows theory, community policing, evidence-based policing, intelligence-led policing, and zero tolerance policing (Wakefield & Fleming, 2009) are some of the widely studied and practised policing theories first proposed in the Western world. While China’s policing reform has imported some Western philosophies, strategies, and technologies, the mass line is still regarded as the unchanged melody. All the policing theories, Western and Eastern, share one common point: the participation, on some level, of the masses or the public is of pivotal importance for the success of policing. In the flowing tide of
policing reform, while it is still too early to say that one single policing method or theory is dominant over others, it does seem that “the concepts of citizen-police engagement and collaboration in the community problem-resolving effort are favored in most situations” (Ortmeier & Meese III, 2010, p. 281). Given that this sort of public engagement and collaboration is central to police work guided by the mass line, this research will undoubtedly shed some light on Western policing theories.

In addition to the academic contribution, this research is of significance in guiding police most directly in China and then indirectly throughout the world in solving crimes in a fast changing world. Wardlaw noted that “the pace and nature of change in the late twentieth century has left us with models, attitudes, strategies and institutions that may not be best adapted to dealing with the challenges of the twenty-first century” (1999, p. 2). The forces of change are also driving rapid and profound changes in “the nature, extent and impact of crime” (Wardlaw, 1999, p. 2), which have become grave challenges facing modern policing worldwide. He further argued that we should take a balanced view of the emerging threats and see opportunities instead of simply having a very pessimistic view of the future of crime and seeing only overwhelming threats. Such is the case in the reforming China. Since the reform and open-door policies in the late 1970s, China has witnessed not only fast economic development and huge technological advancement, but also soaring rates of both old and new crimes (Dutton, 2000; Zhong & Grabosky, 2009). The upheaval of China’s society has presented both challenges and opportunities for changing police work in the reform era. Therefore, analysis of the implementation of the mass line in policing work — criminal investigation work specifically — will help Chinese police adapt to the changed social
context and find more effective ways of solving crimes, which may also to some extent shed light on solving crime problems worldwide.

1.4 Overview of the thesis

Chapter 2 examines the literature on studies of the mass line in criminal investigation work in China. This literature review includes literature from both Chinese and English language sources. Since criminal investigation work is only one arm of the multiple functions of policing, the scope of the review contains literature on the implementation of the mass line in police work as a whole with a focus on criminal investigation work. By reviewing previous studies, this chapter provides a summary of the issues and difficulties that have been discussed in such studies, identifies the knowledge gaps that need to be filled, and therefore justifies what this research aims to do.

Based on issues and questions located as a result of the literature review, Chapter 3 outlines the research design and methods for data collection and analysis employed to conduct a systematic study of the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation work in China. For achieving such a goal, it is necessary to analyse documents written by Mao to obtain more comprehensive and in-depth understandings of the mass line. The initial documents analysed were seminal articles contained in the *Selected Works of Mao Zedong* (SWM). The SWM contain the most important documents recording Mao’s philosophy, so are the most important data sources for studying Mao’s beliefs about the mass line. In addition, Luo Ruiqing’s speeches and reports on the implementation of the mass line in police work in Mao’s era were used as important document sources. Luo was the first police minister appointed by Mao for
establishing the independent police organisations when the People’s Republic of China (PRC) was founded in 1949. Luo’s speeches and reports are valuable documents for indicating how the mass line was implemented in Mao’s era, what problems were encountered at that time, what measures have been taken to overcome those problems, and what outcomes have been achieved. These analyses provide fundamental information for exploring how to implement the mass line in criminal investigation work in contemporary situations.

The analysis of key documents focuses on the historical perspective of the study of the mass line and its application in police work. To obtain a synchronic perspective of the issues concerning the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation work in China, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted among some Chinese frontline police officers. These interviews contained the interviewees’ understandings, their experiences, and their suggestions about how to implement the mass line in criminal investigation work. In addition, some closed criminal cases were collected from the mass media and from the interviewees. These cases serve as examples for demonstrating the importance and methods of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation.

Chapter 4 presents findings on the understanding of the mass line in general. Through systematically analysing Mao’s writings on the mass line, this research develops a more in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the mass line as a set of methods: the method of knowing the world, the method of leadership, and the method of investigation. This chapter synthesises Mao’s descriptions and explanations of the mass line embodied in a number of seminal articles, thus producing a more holistic
picture of the connotations of the mass line. The findings provide the theoretical foundations for discussing the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation.

In Chapter 5, section 5.1 presents basic principles drawn from Mao’s works and Luo’s speeches about implementing the mass line in criminal investigation work. These principles serve as theoretical grounds for understanding the mass line in criminal investigation work. Section 5.2 presents the findings from analysing interviews with Chinese frontline police officers. These findings provide significant empirical knowledge about police officers’ understanding of the mass line and their experiences and suggestions for implementing it in criminal investigation operations, an important element to take into account if the results of this research are to have practical application.

Chapter 6 starts with drawing together the issues and lessons from the thesis to discuss and draw conclusions about the research questions, based on the literature review and the analyses in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. Then limitations in this study are discussed and further study directions are suggested. Finally, this chapter ends with an overall concluding remarks, summarising and evaluating the whole study.
Chapter 2  Literature review

The literature reviewed in this chapter embodies a broader range of publications on Chinese policing studies than those that are focused primarily on the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation in China. Criminal investigation work in China, as in any nation, is only one arm of the three basic police functions: criminal investigation, order maintenance, and service provision. Furthermore, criminal investigation activities make up only a small portion of all police functions (Bayley, 1992). However, these activities are closely connected with and underpinned by the other two functions. Therefore, to understand fully the mass line in criminal investigation work, it is necessary to consider the Chinese policing system as a whole while focusing on criminal investigation in particular.

The literature collected and examined on implementing the mass line in police work in general and criminal investigation work in particular consists of two types: Chinese language literature and English language literature. Correspondingly, the literature review is organised into two general sections: Chinese language literature review and English language literature review, with comparisons made where necessary. Within each section, the literature review basically follows the thematic approach to summarise, evaluate, and synthesise the arguments and ideas.

2.1  Chinese language literature

In Chinese language literature, studies on mass line policing are numerous, but specific studies embracing “the mass line in criminal investigation” in their title or as the major
study subject are few\textsuperscript{1}. Even so, these studies cover a range of topics. That the mass line must be followed in criminal investigation is a unanimously upheld and declared principle. For example, the mass line was considered to be “the magic weapon for the development of criminal investigation work” (M. Yang, 1999, p. 36), “the lifeline for fighting against narcotics” (Z. Ma, 1999, p. 65), and “the indispensable work method in criminal investigation, which shall be strengthened further” (Jing & Wang, 2011, p. 148).

However, when discussing the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation, those studies nearly all concentrated on the guideline of relying on the masses. The concept of the masses in all of those studies referred to the ordinary people outside the police forces (Wang, 2004; H. Wei, 1999; L. Wu & Ma, 2002). Although some authors also proposed the concept of expert masses (K. Xu, Zhang, & Wang, 2009) and the concept of “organisational masses” (B. Liu, 2004, p. 126), the groups thereby referred to were either individuals or entities outside the police forces. Consequently, the topics of those studies on implementing the mass line in criminal investigation all focused on how police could or should effectively interact with the masses outside the police force so that police could obtain clues and help from those masses for solving criminal cases. This is definitely a significant aspect for carrying out the mass line in criminal investigation work, but not the only one.

\textsuperscript{1} By 5 February 2012, the search results through China’s key e-publishing database CNKI showed that a total of 3,651 items (including journal articles, doctoral theses, and masters dissertations) included the terms “the mass line” and “criminal investigation” in their contents, comprising 74 doctoral theses, 381 masters dissertations, and 3,196 journal articles. However, there were only three journal articles with “the mass line in criminal investigation” in the title and four journal articles listing “mass line” and “criminal investigation” as keywords. No doctoral or masters dissertations had the words “the mass line in criminal investigation” in their research title. There were only nine masters dissertations and 34 journal articles with “the mass line in criminal investigation” as their research subject.
The mass line is a method of leadership that requires effectively incorporating ideas of the masses into leadership decisions and policies (Mao, June 12, 1943). For ensuring the mass line is really and effectively implemented, the leading Party should not only maintain close ties with the masses outside the Party, but above all establish close ties between “the Party’s leading bodies and the masses within the Party (between the cadres and the rank and file)” (Mao, April 20, 1945, p. 208). In other words, maintaining close ties and effective interactions between the leadership and the led within an organisation is the prerequisite for ensuring the mass line is thoroughly implemented by the whole organisation when it interacts with the masses outside this organisation. Analogically, maintaining effective interactions between a criminal investigation commander and other criminal investigators should be the indispensable element in thoroughly implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. However, in current studies concerning the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation, the issues on how the mass line should be implemented within a criminal investigation force have been greatly neglected.

The review of Chinese language literature shows that most studies on the mass line in criminal investigation focus on three aspects when discussing the guideline of “relying on the masses”: the need for relying on the masses, the problems encountered in the reform era in implementing this guideline and the causes of these problems, and the strategies for better implementing the guideline of relying on the masses in criminal investigation. The following subsection starts with reviewing the concept of the masses in current studies. Then the following subsections review the three aspects of relying on the masses that most current studies have focused on.
2.1.1 The concept of the masses

Regarding the concept of the masses in criminal investigation, it appears that scholars have all defined it as those people who are outside the police force, though they divide the masses into different categories. According to Liu (2004), the masses can be categorised into at least three tiers. The first tier refers to most law-abiding citizens. They constitute the majority of the masses and the major supporting forces that the police can rely on in criminal investigation. The second tier of masses can be categorised as the special groups of the masses. They are law-breakers but do not fall into the category of “enemies”, which means that their crimes are not aimed at overthrowing the government or threatening the security of the state. The first two tiers refer to human beings existing either as an individual or as a group. The third tier can be named the “organisational masses” (B. Liu, 2004, p. 126), and comprises such things as companies, banks, hospitals, prisons, and non-criminal investigation police agencies. These organisations can serve as a special group of masses who support criminal investigators in solving a criminal case. The third tier of the masses broadens the concept of the masses in criminal investigation. It makes a breakthrough in conceptualising the masses by categorising the non-criminal investigation police agencies as organisational masses. According to Liu, this proposal is helpful for clarifying the relations between different police agencies (B. Liu, 2004). Based on this proposal, criminal investigation agencies are the main force in investigating, while all other agencies including other police agencies can be regarded as the masses who can provide support to the criminal investigation agencies. However, Liu does not articulate
whether the rank and file police officers within a criminal investigation agency are also the masses to a criminal investigation commander.

Liu (2004) defines the concept of the masses in criminal investigation in a broad sense. This has been accepted by many other authors. Zhang (2008) argues that the “masses” should not be narrowly understood as individuals alone; instead, economic companies, institutes, schools, and other social organisations should all be included in the concept of the “masses”. However, Zhang does not clarify whether non-criminal investigation police agencies are also the masses as Liu has indicated. In addition, some authors propose the concept of “expert masses”, including technical experts, scholars, accountants, and others with professional knowledge in a certain area (K. Xu et al., 2009).

Although the broad definition of the masses in criminal investigation has been accepted by most authors, some have defined the masses in a very narrow way. According to Wang, “the masses in criminal investigation refer to persons that criminal investigators can rely on, unite with, or win over, except for criminal suspects and their associates” (2004, p. 17). This definition is challenged by Li (2013) who argues that, in the investigation stage of police work, excluding criminal suspects and their associates from the category of the masses runs potentially great risks because it implies the presumption of guilt, which is neither beneficial for protecting the legal rights of criminal suspects, nor helpful for winning the potential support of their relatives. Li (2013) upholds that criminal suspects and their associates should be regarded as a special category of the masses, which is close to the second tier of the masses identified by Liu (2004).
Whether those authors have defined the concept of the masses in a broad sense or in a narrow sense, all studies have conceptualised explicitly or implicitly the masses as those people who are outside the police force. Following from this conceptualisation, these studies all focus on how police can rely on these masses in fulfilling the tasks of investigating a criminal case. This is certainly one important aspect in studying the mass line in criminal investigation. However, Mao defines the mass line not only as a method of mobilising the masses to help in fulfilling a task, but also as a theory of knowledge and methods of leadership (Mao, January 27, 1934, June 12, 1943). As this literature review illustrates, current studies have focused on the first aspect while giving little, if any, attention to the latter two. This research will seek to remedy this imbalance by developing the ideas of the mass line as a theory of knowledge and methods of leadership – both in general, and in relation to criminal investigation.

2.1.2 The need to rely on the masses

The importance of relying on the masses in criminal investigation has been discussed by many authors (Jing & Wang, 2011; Wang, 2004; M. Yang, 1999; Zhang, 2007). For example, relying on the masses is believed to be “the foundation for victory in criminal investigation” (Wang, 2004, p. 17). It has also been argued that, since the founding of the PRC, “the practice of fighting against crime proves that the criminal investigation work must follow the mass line, closely rely on the masses” (Liao, 1988, p. 66). However, constrained by definitions of the masses as those people outside the police forces, these studies all concentrate on explaining reasons why police as a whole need to conduct effective interactions with the masses in helping police solve criminal cases.
The perspective that a police commander needs to conduct effective interactions with the “masses” directly under her/his command – the rank and file police officers – has not been embodied in these studies of implementing the mass line in criminal investigations.

When arguing the need for relying on the masses in criminal investigation, authors have tended to focus on three factors. The first factor explains the inseparable social relations between the criminals and the masses. Some authors have argued that “criminals all grow up among the masses, hide themselves among the masses, and are bound to be revealed to the masses” (Wang, 2004, p. 17). Similarly, Jing and Wang maintain that “because lawbreakers and offenders are living among the masses, it is impossible for them to remain living among the masses for a long time without disclosing their crimes” (2011, p. 148). Liao also claims that “offenders need to survive; they have no choice but to live among the masses, hence all their activities are inevitably under the surveillance of the masses” (1988, p. 67). These ideas all focus on the fact that crimes are committed among the masses and criminals are living among the masses, so someone among the masses should know about these crimes and criminals. Consequently, if criminal investigators want to find out who has committed a crime, they should go to the masses for collecting clues and evidence.

The second factor concerns the opposing relations between criminals and the masses, between committing crimes and protecting the interests of the masses. Liao argues that “all crimes directly violate the interests of the state and the masses, so the masses hate crimes greatly” (1988, p. 67). Since crimes threaten the safety and property of the masses, “anyone who has conscience, even if they are relatives and friends of
those criminals, will not support or tolerate their vicious conduct” (Wang, 2004, p. 18).

Therefore, the masses have the enthusiasm not only for fighting crime of their own accord but also for supporting police in criminal investigations because “criminal investigation activities represent justice and justice is valued by the majority of the masses” (Wang, 2004, p. 17).

In addition to the first two factors, some authors argue that current crimes are increasing not only in quantity but also in quality in that some crimes are committed with the use of modern technology or involve specialist knowledge, thus demanding support and help from experts within the community who have relevant specialised knowledge (Cai, Wang, & Bao, 2001; K. Xu et al., 2009; M. Yang, 1999). For example, when explaining the need to rely on the masses in criminal investigations, Yang argues that some criminal cases involve special technological knowledge that requires police to “consult with experts and scholars who have such special knowledge, relying on them for solving technological problems” (M. Yang, 1999, p. 37). Although Yang does not state explicitly that experts are also a type of the masses, his view is consistent with the concept of expert masses proposed by Xu et al. (2009). This indicates some authors have realised that relying on the masses should embody obtaining technological support from experts among the masses.

The above authors have taken three different perspectives to explain the reasons why police should rely on the masses in criminal investigations. In common, however, they all discussed the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation based on the concept that the masses referred to those who are outside the police force. Consequently, no studies on implementing the mass line in criminal investigation have
discussed why a police commander needs to rely on police officers and to incorporate their ideas into decision making. This indicates that further studies on how the police leadership should implement the mass line within a criminal investigation force are necessary.

### 2.1.3 Contemporary problems encountered and their causes

Relying on the masses and mobilising them in the struggle against crime had been greatly emphasised and was successful in Mao’s era (Dutton, 2000; J. Li, 2006; Zhong, 2009). However, in the new economic reform era, the implementation of reliance on the masses in criminal investigations is facing some problems. These problems can be placed into one of three categories. The unwillingness of the masses to support and cooperate with the police ranks is the first. In the process of conducting criminal investigations and arresting criminal suspects, police officers have often found that they were “not only acting in an isolated situation without support from the masses, but also at times were being cursed and attacked by some masses who might not be aware of the issues at hand” (G. Li, 1993, p. 6). The masses’ unwillingness to provide support is usually attributed to changes in social values and social structure that emerged under the market economy, and to the unfriendly attitudes and responses of the police to the masses (B. Liu, 2004; Wang, 2004; L. Wu & Ma, 2002; M. Yang, 1999; Zhang, 2007).

The second main problem with relying on the masses is connected with the rapid development and application of modern technology in criminal investigation. Many authors have argued that the extensive use of modern technology in criminal investigation has made criminal investigators believe that technology is playing an
increasingly important role in criminal investigation, which weakens the investigators’ awareness of, and willingness to rely on, the masses (Cai et al., 2001; Jing & Wang, 2011; B. Liu, 2004; Wang, 2004; L. Wu & Ma, 2002). More specifically, some authors criticise criminal investigators for being too obsessed with modern technology and remind those officers that the technology is in the hands of the masses and that human beings are the key element in criminal investigations (Cai et al., 2001; Liao, 1988; B. Liu, 2004; Wang, 2004). Although authors have differing opinions about the role of modern technology in criminal investigation, most agree that the integration of modern technology with the support of the masses is essential for the success of criminal investigation in the new era (N. Liu & Hao, 2009; H. Wei, 1999; L. Wu & Ma, 2002; Yao & Guo, 2008).

The third main problem with relying on the masses concerns the estranged police-masses relations mainly caused by the unethical conduct of criminal investigators in the process of interacting with the masses. Some criminal investigators are not conscientious about providing high levels of service, “but employ simple and rude methods to their operations, treating the masses with cold, indifferent and unresponsive attitudes” (G. Li, 1993, p. 6). Some criminal investigators are not good at communicating with and learning from the masses or are not willing to do so at all (Jing & Wang, 2011; G. Li, 1993; C. Wu, 2001). In addition, corruption, extorting confessions by torture, misuse of police power, and other forms of misconduct are still common practices among some police officers, and this has badly damaged the image of the police (G. Li, 1993; H. Li & Li, 1999; C. Wu, 2001; L. Wu & Ma, 2002). Such unethical,
unlawful, and even criminal conduct leads the masses to lose trust in police and exacerbates alienated relations between the police and the masses.

Although these studies have explored the causes that led to the deteriorating relations between police and the masses, no studies have addressed the responsibilities of the police leadership for the estranged police-masses relations. As has been discussed previously, the mass line is a method of leadership that above all requires close ties between the leading body of an organisation and the masses within the organisation (Mao, April 20, 1945). In other words, the leadership should show examples for the led in implementing the mass line method of work. This is a further issue to be considered in this research.

2.1.4 Strategies for improvement

Corresponding to the problems encountered and the causes of these problems, a number of authors have proposed strategies for improving the implementation of the guideline of relying on the masses in criminal investigation in the new era (Jing & Wang, 2011; G. Li, 1993; J. Li, 2006; Wang, 2004; H. Wei, 1999; C. Wu, 2001; L. Wu & Ma, 2002; M. Yang, 1999). These suggestions involve four aspects. The first is concerned with improving the quality of the criminal investigation force; the second deals with how to build and keep harmonious, cooperative, and trustful police-masses relations; the third explores how to innovatively integrate modern technology with traditional methods of relying on the masses; and the fourth suggests institutionalising the methods of relying on the masses.
2.1.4.1 Improving the quality of the criminal investigation force

Chinese culture places high value on the virtue of rulers. This can be observed both in the Chinese ancient Taoist and Confucian philosophies of the benevolent government (Jiang, 2006; Yaoji Jin, 1993; Yong Jin, 2009; Lin, 2009) and in Mao’s doctrines of virtuous leadership (Mao, March, 1957, October, 1938, October, 1949). According to Li Jinping, Mao placed great stress on public security force building and said that:

public security organs are a knife in the hands of the proletariat. Well-controlled, they could attack enemies and protect the people; ill-controlled, they are easy to hurt oneself. If this knife were grasped by enemies, it would become more dangerous (J. Li, 2006, p. 80).

In addition, Sui (2007b) has pointed out that Mao had put more stress on the quality than on the quantity of the police. For example, Mao once stated that “the quantity of the public security force shall not be too big, but the quality must be very keen-witted and capable” (Mao, cited in Sui, 2007b, p. 61). Such observations indicate that the quality of the police played an essential role in Mao’s policing philosophy. These studies, however, do not elaborate on the quality and virtues of the leadership within the police force.

In order to build high standards within the police force, Mao laid great stress on ideological and ethical education of police officers (J. Li, 2006; Meng, 2008; Sui, 2007a; S. Wu, 2009). Such qualities and ethical standards were specifically stipulated in the 1957 Regulations of the People’s Republic of China on the People’s Police (National People's Congress, 1957) and the 1958 Eight Main Rules of Discipline and Ten Points for Attentions for Public Security Police (MPS, 1958). Although these regulations have been replaced by the newly promulgated The People’s Police Law 1995 and other police
regulations, the emphasis on improving the quality of the police has been maintained. At the legislative level, all these “laws and regulations, rules and points” put stress on adhering to the leadership of the Party, not violating the interests of the masses, and building highly qualified police forces with a firm political stand, exemplary ethics, and practical, considerate, and professional conduct (MPS, 1958, 2010).

In practice, however, even in Mao’s era, the dreamed-of close relationship like the harmonious state of “milk blended with water” between the masses and the police was never fully achieved (Luo, July 31, 1958). With the commencement of the economic reform era after Mao’s death, there was a worsening police-masses relationship in China. Some suggest that the police must improve their mass viewpoint, which includes having firm faith in the masses, being willing to learn from the masses, relying on the masses, and serving the masses (G. Li, 1993; J. Li, 2006; Wang, 2004; H. Wei, 1999; M. Yang, 1999). At the same time, the police should improve their ethical standards and professional skills, and should enforce laws strictly and justly (G. Li, 1993; J. Li, 2006; Wang, 2004).

In the above studies, however, the masses are still regarded as those people who are outside the police force. Therefore, these studies all focus on how the police as a whole can improve their quality so as to build a close relation between police and the masses. No studies have focused on how the police leadership can build a close relation with the rank and file police officers. These studies fail to fully realise that the rank and file police officers are also the masses to the police leadership, and fail to fully realise the importance of the quality of the police leadership in the process of improving the quality of a criminal investigation force. Yet according to Mao, maintaining close ties
between the leading body and the masses within an organisation is essential for ensuring the mass line being fully implemented (April 20, 1945) and leaders are a decisive factor in implementing the mass line (October, 1938). This indicates it is imperative to conduct a further study on the impacts of the quality of police leadership on the implementation of the mass line in police work.

2.1.4.2 Maintaining close police-masses relations

Whether a good police-masses relationship can be established and maintained is mainly decided by the quality of the police officers (G. Li, 1993; H. Li & Li, 1999; J. Li, 2006). Mao always emphasised the importance of maintaining close relationships between the Party and the masses (Mao, July, 1957, p. 477), and hence close relationships between the Party-led police and the masses. Although the police-masses relationship in the 1950s in Mao’s era was observed to have reflected the relationship between “fish and water” (Zhong, 2009, p. 162), Luo Ruiqing, Mao’s first minister of police, warned that the relationship had not reached the perfect state as the “well-blended mixture of the milk and water, being as closely united as can be” (Luo, July 31, 1958, p. 432).

According to Luo, there still commonly existed problems such as treating the masses indifferently, speaking coldly, being tainted with the old police style and privileged ideas, and even violating disciplines and laws (Luo, June 3, 1958). Therefore, Luo required that police treat the masses as “mother” and keep close ties with the masses through helping them to solve practical issues and problems of concern, and to avoid bureaucratic work practices, abandon privileged ideas, and desist from using “stern-faced manners” (Luo, June 3, 1958, March, 1958).
In the post-Mao reform era since the late 1970s, the relationship between the police and the masses has deteriorated. Many authors have documented such a phenomenon and have suggested ways for improving the relationship between the police and the masses (J. Cheng & Xue, 2011; G. Li, 1993; B. Liu, 2004; Wang, 2004; H. Wei, 1999; C. Wu, 2001; L. Wu & Ma, 2002). C. Wu (2001) suggests a range of measures for improving and maintaining police-masses relations, such as conducting activities of people-loving month (Ai Min Yue)², opening a police bureau director hotline, and establishing days for police leadership to meet the masses. Ren even recommends extending the people-loving month into a “constant people-loving project” (Ren, 2010, p. 87). M. Yang suggests “visiting the households of a hundred families, knowing the circumstances of a hundred families, solving issues for a hundred families, warming the hearts of a hundred families” (M. Yang, 1999, p. 37). In addition, Wei proposes using the modern media to effectively spread crime information and common knowledge so that the masses would know how to “prevent themselves from being victimised … once encountering emergency situations or crimes, they know how to respond” (1999, p. 40). According to the accounts of the above authors, these measures have achieved satisfactory effects, at least to some extent.

In 2006, the MPS launched the “Three Basics Project” which led to an upsurge in laying special stress on the police grassroots units, laying solid foundations for police work, and practising basic skills assiduously. This is a movement aimed at improving

² *Ai Min Yue* refers to one program conducted by a police agency in one month. Police helped the masses to solve a range of difficulties encountered in daily life. The program usually included distributing money, food, and clothes to the masses.
the capacity of the police force to safeguard social stability, the image of the police, and relations between the police and the masses (MPS, 2007).

The above studies all discuss suggestions from the perspective of the police as a whole, and the suggestions are very general. So far, no authors have reported thorough research on how criminal investigators can maintain healthy relations with the masses. In addition, no authors have discussed how a criminal investigation commander can and should show examples for the ordinary officers to implement the mass line work methods.

2.1.4.3 Developing technological methods of relying on the masses

Although stressing the importance of adhering to the traditional methods of relying on the masses, Chinese scholars and law enforcers have been willing to accept the need for innovative technological ways of operating. As Western experts have realised the relations between the development of technology and crime commission and control (Clarke, 2004; Grabosky, 1998; Haque, 2005), so have Chinese police circles. A number of Chinese scholars have pointed out the importance in criminal investigation of integrating the traditional methods of relying on the masses with newer methods supported by modern technology (Jing & Wang, 2011; G. Li, 1993; Y. Li, 2008, 2009; N. Liu & Hao, 2009).

For example, in addition to DNA testing, GPS (Global Positioning System) monitoring, video surveillance, and television broadcasting, Chinese police are trying to extend traditional foot-based door-to-door neighbourhood canvasses to
netizen\textsuperscript{3}-supported Internet canvasses, or “Renrou searches”\textsuperscript{4} for collecting crime clues and identifying criminal suspects (J. Cheng & Xue, 2011; N. Liu & Hao, 2009; Yao & Guo, 2008). The Renrou search tactic has not only helped Chinese police successfully solve several criminal cases since 2008 but also helped British police solve a murder case (N. Liu & Hao, 2009), and has been described as a new trial of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation in the Internet era (J. Cheng & Xue, 2011; N. Liu & Hao, 2009). It is also reported that Chinese police have successfully used the “MicroBlog”\textsuperscript{5} to track down some fugitives and persuade some of them to surrender (L. He, 2011; Yaohui Huang & Xu, 2011; L. Yu & Wang, 2011).

The practice of integrating traditional investigative measures with modern technology, such as the employment of Renrou searches as a new method of conducting an area canvass in criminal investigation, indicates that Chinese police are exploring innovative methods of mobilising the masses to provide crime clues in the information era. Certainly such new investigative techniques need pertinent legal stipulations so that their use does not undermine the protection of the masses’ legitimate interests while effectively combating crime. (Bai & Ji, 2008; J. Cheng & Xue, 2011; N. Liu & Hao, 2009).

These innovative methods of integrating modern technology with the support of the masses have played important roles in collecting clues to solve some criminal cases. It appears that modern technology will continue to play increasingly significant roles in

\textsuperscript{3} Netizen is a newly created word from Net (=Internet) and citizen, referring to someone who spends a lot of time using the Internet.

\textsuperscript{4} “Renrou search”, also called “human flesh search”, is a practice popularised by Chinese netizens that involves hunting down the personal details of a publicly despised person and posting them online.

\textsuperscript{5} MicroBlog is a type of web site diary that usually contains someone’s personal experiences, interests, comments on various issues, and provides links to other places on the Internet.
criminal investigations. However, further studies should not concentrate only on using modern technology to mobilise the masses for collecting crime clues, but should also address how such technology may produce change by removing the ideological residues of believing in extorting confessions by torture. In the feudalist era, due to the underdevelopment of technology, extorting confessions by torture was believed to be an essential way for finding out crime facts and had been broadly applied in trying criminal suspects. With the development of modern technology, extorting confessions by torture is regarded as a cruel method and has been prohibited by law worldwide, including in China. Although such illegal and unethical behaviours are not routine in Chinese police practices, they have occasionally occurred and have produced very grave damage to the masses’ trust in police (G. Li, 1993; Y. Li, 2008; L. Wu & Ma, 2002). According to Mao, implementing the mass line in criminal investigation requires methods of extorting confessions and corporal punishments to be abolished and strictly prohibited (December 25, 1940). It seems that replacing the method of extorting confessions with innovative technological methods in solving criminal cases may be a good option for the police to regain the masses’ trust and support.

2.1.4.4 Institutionalising the methods of relying on the masses

The necessity for institutionalising the methods of implementing the mass line has been discussed by a number of authors in China (F. Li & Zhao, 2004; She, 2010; C. Wu, 2001). The mass campaigns, as one important and well-known method for carrying out the mass line, need particularly to be institutionalised to avoid any ill-controlled mass campaigns leading to social damage, even social chaos (She, 2010). The two failed great
mass campaigns in China, the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, made it obvious that “to secure the accountability of the Party bureaucracy would require democratic institutions” (Gray, 2006, p. 667).

The strike-hard6 campaigns launched since the 1980s in China are in essence the continuation of mass campaigns in crime control (T. He, 2008; Tang & Miao, 1997). According to He (2008), the strike-hard policy should be adhered to as a long term policy but be operated in more regularised and legislated ways and should be integrated with a policy of balancing severity and leniency so that it can better protect the interests of the masses and human rights.

Some Chinese authors have proposed that the current “reward system for reporting crimes” should be improved so that the relying on the masses guideline in criminal investigation can be better implemented in the new market economy situations (B. Cheng, 2006; F. Li & Zhao, 2004; H. Liu, 2007; X. Liu, 2007; X. Yu, 2005). This improved “reward system for reporting crimes” should not only include more detailed protocols such as the amount of prizes and the protection of crime reporters, but also encourage the masses to report corruption and other crimes associated with abusing powers (Yuyu Huang, 2010; Peng, 2011; X. Yang, 2010). In addition, it has been suggested that the mass supervision system over judicial work should be regularised and institutionalised so that openness and justice can be better achieved (L. Cheng, 2007; Yuyu Huang, 2010; Peng, 2011; X. Yang, 2010; Zhang, 2008). It can be expected that

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6 This refers to the Yanda Campaigns (campaigns for severely fighting serious crimes) launched periodically throughout 1981 to 2001 in China aiming to solve the soaring crime rate that emerged after the economic reform since the late 1970s.
the trend of institutionalising some methods of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation is inevitable.

These studies and suggestions for institutionalising the methods of relying on the masses are very helpful for obtaining crime clues from the masses. However, these studies still focus on the police-masses perspective. As for whether the mass line leadership methods can be institutionalised and what methods should be institutionalised for ensuring a criminal investigation commander implements the mass line leadership within a police force, particularly in the process of investigating a criminal case, relevant studies are still not available. In my research, the mass line leadership styles will be explored based on analysing Mao’s works, Luo’s speeches, and interviews with Chinese frontline police officers.

2.2 English language literature

Within the English language literature, it is difficult to locate any studies specifically about implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. The available studies mostly concentrate on the history and policy changes in Chinese policing. Among these studies, those related to the mass line in police work focus on two topics. One is concerned with the connection between the campaign-style policing strategy and the mass line policing strategy. The other concerns the debate of “the end or continuity” of mass line policing.

2.2.1 Campaign-style policing and mass line policing

Available English literature related to mass line policing theories and practices includes a number of articles and books that discuss the strike-hard policy and campaign-style
policing in China. Through investigating the Chinese strike-hard criminal justice policy launched in the 1980s, Trevaskes (2007) argues that official justification for the policy has its roots in the organisational and ideological connections between “Mao’s mass line and the strategies of crime control in criminal justice work, which originated in the revolutionary period and were further developed in the post-revolutionary period after 1949” (p. 31). At the start of the 21st century, China’s criminal justice policy saw a shift from severe punishment to “balancing severity and leniency”, attempting to limit a decades-old strike-hard policy toward serious crime (Trevaskes, 2010). Trevaskes argues that:

The recent turn to “mass line” and “justice for the people” rhetoric makes more sense when we see how the Party is forging a new friend/enemy binary between “the people” and those who, in “threatening” and “sabotaging” the nation’s ongoing marketization — through organized crime, corruption, terrorism, and so forth — place at risk the future prosperity of the masses (Trevaskes, 2010, p. 354).

Trevaskes’ studies focus mainly on how the Party’s political rhetoric informs the Supreme People’s Court in adjusting criminal justice policy. Her studies concentrate on two aspects: one is the relationship between the Party’s political rhetoric and criminal justice policy making; the other is the policy changes within the court system or judicial system. Trevaskes mostly refers to the implementation of the mass line at the stage of trying and sentencing criminals. However, she mentions little about how the police are carrying out the mass line in identifying criminals or the implementation of the mass line in the criminal investigation stage. Nevertheless, studies such as hers can provide valuable and insightful contextualisation for studies on the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation because Chinese criminal justice policies, whether they
focus on the court system or police system, are both informed by the Party’s political rhetoric.

Under the guidance of the strike-hard policy, Chinese police launched campaign-style policing. According to Tanner, campaign-style policing refers to concentrated, fixed-term, special targeting of particular categories of crime for arrest and severe punishment — hence the colloquialism “stern blows” (yanda) is applied (2005, p. 171). Tanner argues that a key feature of these anti-crime struggles has been the use of Maoist techniques of mass campaigning (2005, p. 171). Tanner makes the criticism that “Deng Xiaoping, who had called for an end to such mass campaigns (yundong) in 1978, nevertheless argued in 1983 that without mass involvement, these struggles would not succeed” (Tanner, 2005, p. 171). Tanner comments that, “with hallmark bluntness, he [Deng] accordingly labeled these ‘campaigns that we simply will not call campaigns’” (Tanner, 2005, p. 171).

Although Tanner’s descriptions and observations of campaign-style policing are reasonable, he appears to mistranslate and misinterpret the nature of mass campaigns and mass involvement from the original Chinese. Deng’s original speeches about launching the anti-crime campaigns include the following: “We do not regard these as making movements because we are not making person-persecuting movements, but we must mobilise the masses for concentrated fight against crime; such are movements but not the so-called movements” 7 (Tang & Miao, 1997, p. 452). Apparently, Deng generally divides movements into two categories: political movements aimed at persecution, and non-political movements targeted at solving particular social problems.

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7 Deng’s original words in Chinese are 我们不叫搞运动，是不搞整人的运动，但集中打击刑事犯罪还必须发动群众，只是不叫运动的运动。
The strike-hard campaigns belong to the latter, which are aimed at fighting crime instead of political persecution. Deng stresses that “we shall not let crime offenders fear of nothing, which requires strengthening the power of dictatorship” and “stern legal punishment”, because “we are protecting the security of the maximum majority of the people, and this is humanism” (Tang & Miao, 1997, p. 452).

To comprehensively understand the “mass involvement strike-hard campaigns”, the following aspects should be kept in mind: mass involvement differs from mass campaigns, and mass campaigns do not equal the mass line (Luo, July 31, 1958; She, 2010; Tang & Miao, 1997). In other words, the mass campaign is only one aspect of mass involvement and only one method of implementing the mass line. For example, a mass campaign in criminal investigation usually focuses on some targeted crimes (for example, robbery or rape) and will last for a fixed term (for example, six months, or one or two years). It may also target a particular criminal case (an explosion or a murder case), or a very dangerous criminal suspect (a serial killer or a most wanted criminal suspect). When launching a mass campaign, the police will mobilise the masses through various media (such as newspapers, posters, flyers, television, radio, the Internet, and mobile phone messages) to report crimes, provide clues, and even help to arrest a criminal suspect. This is a campaign-style mass involvement in criminal investigation.

There are many other forms of mass involvement in criminal investigation, such as recruiting of secret informants from the masses, accepting mass supervision over criminal investigation activities (for example, the masses have the right to know the investigation outcome for a crime they reported, and the right to criticise the mistakes criminal investigators made in the process of investigating a crime), and seeking
technical support from experts among the masses in solving technical difficulties encountered in criminal investigation (Cai et al., 2001; J. Li, 2006; C. Wu, 2001; Zhang, 2008). All these campaigns and/or kinds of involvement are elements of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation practices.

If we simply take implementing the mass line in criminal investigation as being nothing more than the launching of mass campaigns, we cannot capture the whole picture. More issues such as who the masses are in criminal investigation, and what other methods besides mass campaign can be employed in criminal investigation should be studied fully.

2.2.2 Mass line policing: End or continuity

The English literature reviewed demonstrates two views in stark contrast vis-à-vis the fate of mass line policing. On the one hand, some of these studies have recognised the mass line as the dominant principle in Chinese policing (Bracey, 1989; Chen, 2002; Wong, 2001). In theory, The People’s Police Law 1995 of the PRC continues to acknowledge the mass line as the fundamental principle which stipulates that “people's police must rely on the masses, keep close ties to them, listen attentively to their comments and suggestions, accept their supervision, safeguard their interests, and serve them wholeheartedly” (Dai, 2008, p. 213). This is the most evident legislative proof of the belief in the mass line in contemporary Chinese policing philosophy.

Within the same perspective, some authors argue that mass line policing practices have never stopped, but have developed to keep pace with social changes (Dai, 2008; Zhong, 2009). Taking the community policing reform in recent years as an example,
Zhong regarded it as “nothing more than old wine in new bottles” (2009, p. 158). This means that the new package of community policing reforms is more a label for an imported concept than a change in nature, because the community policing reform maintains the essential characteristics of the mass line approach (Zhong, 2009). Similarly, Dai argues that the traditional Chinese policing methods will remain but some new elements will also be “incorporated periodically as a reaction to social economic needs” (Dai, 2008, p. 225).

In striking contrast to the above perspectives, Dutton (2000, 2005a, 2005b) has predicted that the end of the Chinese mass line policing, as it had previously been known, is imminent. He argues that the economic reforms have inculcated Chinese people with the values of commerce and “the contract responsibility system it has relied upon reinforces a type of equivalence that is central to the new Chinese value system” (2000, p. 89). According to Dutton, within such a macro social context, Chinese police have devised their own money-based version of contract responsibility ostensibly to reinvigorate the mass line and are themselves increasingly subject to the law of the contract (Dutton, 2000, 2005b).

It is this law [the law of the contract] that has transformed the mass line into a mass-production line for the maintenance and extension of values that the revolution once fought against. This perhaps is the final irony and lasting legacy of the mass line in policing and quite possibly the end of socialist policing in China. If nothing else, however, it is the end of this version of their story (Dutton, 2005b, p. 220).

According to Dutton’s comments, the employment of the new money-based contract responsibility tactic to reinvigorate the mass line in police work indicates the end of the spirit of the mass line. While Dutton has observed the huge economic
changes in China and the changes that economic reform has brought to the implementation of the mass line in policing, he might be too early in sentencing mass line policing to death. It should be noted that “mass line leadership is a strategy for the use of power. It does not have any necessary implications as to exact tactics” (Barlow, 1981, p. 304). This means that “the operational tactics for implementing the mass line may be very flexible, pragmatic, and problem-oriented” (Y. Li, 2012, p. 64). In other words, the methods or tactics for implementing the mass line can (and perhaps should) change in line with changes in time, place, and concrete problems. For example, the nationwide large-scale revolutionary style mass movements came to an end with the advent of the economic reform era (She, 2010).

However, other forms of mass movements have never stopped altogether. The strike-hard campaigns against soaring crime rates, for example, are in essence the reformed mass campaign method of implementing the mass line in police work in the new era. These strike-hard campaigns have all followed the principles of launching a mass campaign described by Mao as “to combine the general calls with the particular guidance” and “to combine the leadership with the masses” (June 12, 1943), and each process is roughly divided into three stages: preparation, initiation, and summarisation (see Chapter 4 for more details). During the process of a strike-hard campaign, the campaign is made known to all the masses, the masses are mobilised to provide clues about crimes and assistance, and the campaign is stopped after a certain period when the targeted crimes are basically solved (B. Liang, 2005; Tang & Miao, 1997; Tanner, 2005). Then experiences and lessons are summarised to make improved policies so that
errors, if any, can be corrected promptly or be avoided in the future, and to prepare a new campaign if necessary.

The mobilisation of the masses, the participation of the masses, and the observation of the law of the spiral movement\(^8\) of “from the masses, to the masses” are the prominent features in Mao’s mass line (Mao, July, 1937, June 12, 1943). If these are kept in mind, it is evident that strike-hard campaigns are the continuity of Mao’s mass line (B. Liang, 2005; Trevaskes, 2007). In China, adherence to the guidance of the mass line has been stipulated as a constitutional principle for all government agencies and functionaries (Constitution of the PRC, 1982/2004). Implementing the mass line in police work is also clearly stipulated as a principle in the police law of the PRC. Such a situation indicates that mass line policing will not end, at least not in the near future, but methods of implementing it will change to accommodate changes in society.

2.3 Framing the mass line studies in contemporary policing discourse

English literature on Chinese policing primarily focuses on being a general introduction to and a discussion of the relevant history, culture, policies, and reforms. This literature, blended with Westerners’ critical views, can provide comparative perspectives and beneficial references for reflecting on the problems revealed in Chinese mass line police work. Among other issues, the better protection of the human and legal rights of criminal suspects (Tanner, 2005; Trevaskes, 2007) is one area where China needs to learn more from the Western world, particularly as serving the people and protecting the interests of the masses are intrinsic ingredients of the mass line.

\(^8\) The law of the spiral movement is the endless circle of gaining knowledge from the social practice of the masses. This will be analysed in detail in Chapter 4.
However, Wong has claimed that there is still a paucity of studies from outside China about Chinese policing and that knowledge about Chinese policing is “sketchy, spotty, and superficial” (2009, p. 1). Dai reflects a similar viewpoint, writing that many studies in English literature about Chinese policing are “introductory and descriptive in nature” (2008, p. 224). Furthermore, some studies tend to “generalize Chinese policing, especially in the discussions of how one strategy has been replaced by another in the history of Chinese policing” (Dai, 2008, p. 225). This may result from the lack of research interest, difficulty in obtaining data, inaccessibility to places and/or people, scarcity of bilingual researchers, and/or incompatibility of scholarship styles (Wong, 2009). In addition, lack of empirical studies, use of secondary information, language barriers, and the dearth of cultural background knowledge could have all attributed to the problems in English language studies about Chinese policing (Dai, 2008). Probably due to these difficulties in studying Chinese policing, none of the literature available in English has focused on the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation. Therefore, when it comes to how to implement the mass line in criminal investigation, the literature in Chinese has been the focus.

The review of literature from China shows that the majority of studies on the mass line in criminal investigation focus on how to implement the guideline of relying on the masses — the masses outside the police force — to collect clues in solving criminal cases. Current studies of reliance on the masses usually concentrate on three major aspects. First, they argue for the need to rely on the masses in criminal investigation; then, they describe the problems encountered in the new era and analyse the causes; and finally they propose some suggestions for better carrying out the guideline of relying on
the masses. To a great extent, the mass line in criminal investigation, both in theory and in practice, is narrowly interpreted as achieving effective interactions between the police and the masses in the process of solving criminal cases. This is certainly one important aspect of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation, but not the only one.

The mass line embodies more than merely relying on the masses. The basic doctrines of the mass line are briefly elaborated as doing everything for the masses, relying on them in every task, and carrying out the principle of “from the masses, to the masses” (CPC, 2007). According to Mao, the principle of “from the masses, to the masses” is the Marxist theory of knowledge and methods of leadership (Mao, June 12, 1943). Particularly, it emphasises that building close ties between “the Party’s leading bodies and the masses within the Party (between the cadres and the rank and file)” is the prerequisite for ensuring that the mass line is effectively implemented (Mao, April 20, 1945, p. 208).

In the same vein, implementing the mass line in criminal investigation thoroughly and properly should embody more than just relying on the masses for providing clues about crimes and helping apprehend criminals. Other critical questions, such as who the masses are in the context of criminal investigation, how to protect the interests of the masses, and when and how to mobilise the masses to help in solving a criminal case should be included in studies focusing on the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation.

Furthermore, there appear to be no studies that have focused on how to implement the mass line leadership within the police force. However, implementing the mass line leadership is the most essential part of the mass line philosophy (Mao, April 20, 1945,
June 12, 1943, March 13, 1949). This research is intended to obtain more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the mass line for informing the better implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation and to provide a standard against which the practice of criminal investigations can be judged. I will not only interpret Mao’s mass line philosophy and Luo’s speeches on implementing the mass line in police work systematically to build a solid theoretical ground, but will also conduct an empirical study through in-depth interviews with Chinese frontline police officers to obtain their experiences and understanding of the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation. Therefore, in addition to the current studies that concentrate on the element of relying on the masses for collecting crime clues, this project should provide more insights about the way the mass line in criminal investigation should be practised.
Chapter 3  Methods of data collection and analysis

In this chapter I outline the research design and process of undertaking a critical examination of the mass line as explicated in Mao’s works\(^1\), as well as the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation in China as explicated in both Mao’s works and Luo’s speeches\(^2\), from which principles for better implementing the mass line in criminal investigation can be developed. Principles usually prescribe highly unspecific actions (Braithwaite, 2002), possess vertical and horizontal integrity (Hunter, 2005), and are not subject to temporal-spatial limits (Q. Liang, 1996). In other words, principles serve as fundamental thought and belief that are unspecific, universal and lasting guidelines. Therefore, Maoist principles of implementing the mass line are still valid and viable in today China. Certainly, the specific methods for better implementing the mass line in practical work should be adapted subject to the concrete conditions. The interviews were focused on how police officers employ specific methods to carry out the mass line in solving criminal cases in current China.

In section 3.1, the need for better understanding of the mass line will be discussed, including the concept of the masses. In section 3.2, I will articulate why and how specific works of Mao and specific speeches of Luo on the mass line and its implementation in police work were selected for analysis, and how this analysis was undertaken. In section 3.3, I will provide a justification for conducting the interviews

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1  Mao’s works here refer to his personal seminal articles, as well as speeches, directives, reports, and resolutions he wrote for the CPC. His most important and representative works are collected in Mao Zedong Xuanji (The Selected Works of Mao Zedong), published by the CPC in the 1960s and re-published in 1991.

2  Luo’s speeches here refer to his speeches and work reports on implementing the mass line in police work in Mao’s era. These speeches are collected in Luo Ruiqing lun renmin gong’an gongzuo (Luo Ruiqing talking about the people's public security work), published by the MPS in 1994.
with Chinese frontline police officers, the interview question design, the processes of preparing and conducting interviews, and the subsequent analysis process used in respect of those interviews. These interviews provide first hand empirical data. The analysis of these interviews will provide valuable insights from the insiders’ perspective on implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. The final section discusses the ethical issues associated with this research. Ethical issues concerning analysing documents, interviews, and using criminal cases as examples will be discussed respectively.

3.1 The need for better understanding of the mass line

The mass line was mainly formulated by Mao from the 1920s through to the 1940s, and the ideas of the mass line were continuously expounded by him until his death in 1976. However, Mao did not delineate comprehensively what the mass line is in any single piece of writing. Mao for the first time proposed and explained the principle of “from the masses, to the masses” in the article Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership in 1943 and claimed that this was the Marxist theory of knowledge (Mao, June 12, 1943). Even in this article Mao did not explain what the Marxist theory of knowledge is and why this principle is the Marxist theory of knowledge. More fundamentally, neither did he give a clear concept of who the masses were in this article or in any other writings.

Therefore, the first task for this research must be to analyse who the masses are in Mao’s mass line philosophy. These analyses should embody questions such as what the literal meaning of the masses is and what specific perspective should be considered for
better understanding the concept of the masses in Mao’s works. Following such analyses, Mao’s proposition that the principle of “from the masses, to the masses” is the Marxist theory of knowledge should be analysed for deeper understanding, and this should embody fundamental analyses of the origin of cognition, the process of cognition, and the subjects of cognition in the context of Mao’s mass line philosophy. Then, the specific principles, rules and methods that are embodied in the mass line methods of leadership should be examined. Finally, correlations between the mass line theory of knowledge, the mass line methods of leadership, and methods for implementing the mass line in practical work need to be explored. Without an in-depth understanding of who the masses are and what the mass line is, it will be difficult to consider how the mass line can be implemented in practice.

Mao’s works, like documents in the study of historical issues, are “simply … the only viable source” (Bowen, 2009, p. 29) from which to obtain an adequate understanding of the mass line, particularly with regard to understanding the mass line from a theoretical perspective. Mao also talked about the mass line in criminal investigation in some of his works, which included directives, principles, and policies. However, there are only a few of these works. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse other documents in addition to Mao’s works.

Luo Ruiqing’s speeches on implementing the mass line in criminal investigation are the most important additional documents for analysis, given that he was the first police minister of the PRC appointed by Mao when the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), the Chinese police headquarters, was established in 1949. He was of the same generation as Mao, had been directly under the leadership of Mao for many years, and
could talk with Mao in person for reporting and discussing the implementation of the
mass line in criminal investigation work.

Luo’s speeches included essential documents concerning principles of carrying out
the mass line in criminal investigation work, the problems encountered, and the
measures suggested for solving these problems. Luo’s speeches are therefore
indispensable documents for studying the mass line in police work, particularly with
regard to understanding it from the practical perspective of how to implement the mass
line in criminal investigation.

3.2 Selection and analysis of relevant documents

In order to accomplish the necessary analysis of Mao’s and Luo’s writings, I needed to
follow some (but not all) of the steps of a traditional document analysis. For example, I
needed to follow the basic steps of planning, gathering, and reviewing (O'Leary, 2010)
Mao’s works and Luo’s speeches to gather possibly relevant documents, then identify
those that were most relevant. However, a number of concrete steps of a traditional
document analysis were not relevant or necessary in my research. For example, usually
a document’s authenticity, credibility, and representativeness need to be evaluated
(Love, 2003; O'Leary, 2010; Punch, 2005; Wharton, 2006), but in my research these
questions were not of concern for the following reasons.

Mao’s works in this research come from two sources that have been broadly
accepted, recognised, and referred to in academic studies of Mao’s thought. One is the
Selected Works of Mao Zedong (English version, hereafter SWM)3 and Mao Zedong

3 The English version was published by Foreign Languages Press, Peking (Beijing). Volume I covers the periods of
Xuanji (Chinese version of SWM, hereafter MXJ). The SWM and MXJ were both published by the Committee for the Publication of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong, Central Committee of the CPC. According to the committee, Mao had “read all the articles, made certain verbal changes and, in isolated cases, revised the text” (CPC, 1965, p. 5). Where uncertainties arose about the time and place that some works were written, they were all double-checked both by Mao and the committee (Feng, 2005).

Luo’s speeches were collected from the book Luo Ruiqing Talking about the People's Public Security Work, published by the MPS in 1994. According to its editing committee, several reputable editors have checked and proofread all these selected documents (MPS, 1994). The editors only amended some wrongly-spelt words, and added some footnotes/endnotes for providing background knowledge about these documents, but no change was made to the content of any of these documents.

Since these documents were collected directly from the original authors, albeit with some editing by others, the questions about the authenticity, credibility, and representativeness of the documents are beyond reasonable doubt. Furthermore, obtaining a deeper understanding of the mass line and its implementation in criminal investigation work will not be ill-affected even if the documents I look at were not 100% Mao’s or Luo’s original words. In other words, their ideas embodied in these documents had not been altered or distorted simply because of later editions. Therefore,
it is more desirable and practical to focus the analysis on the meaning of these documents.

Although the analyses of the documents were not conducted in the strictly traditional way, a document analysis worksheet was still designed to fit my own research (see Appendix A). Through referring to some document analysis worksheet templates (National Archives and Records Administration, n.a.; Truman Presidential Museum and Library, n.a.), I maintained only three items in the heading section: document title, author, and document date. Other items like the type, the physical qualities, and the confidential classification of the document were not included because they were not relevant to my research. In the body section, there were six main categories of questions⁴:

1. For what audience was the document written?
2. Why was the document written?
3. What is the document about?
4. What bias/prejudice, if any, of the author could be identified in the document?
5. What is the potential benefit of this document to my study?
6. What is left unanswered in this document to my study?

The first three questions focused on extracting primary information about the documents. The last three questions focused on my analysis of the documents. Together, the six questions embodied essential information for analysing the documents that would provide valuable insights for my research.

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⁴ These questions were designed referring to the document analysis worksheet templates provided by National Archives and Records Administration, Truman Presidential Museum and Library, and Missouri Historical Society.
3.2.1 Selection and analysis of Mao’s works

In my research, the works of Mao that were selected and analysed included both the Chinese version (MXJ, second edition) and the English version (SWM, first edition). I first compared the Contents sections in the two versions and found that one of the most important seminal articles, *Oppose Book Worship (Fandui benben zhuyi)*, the only additional article in the second Chinese edition, was not included in the first English version. This article is one of Mao’s favourites and is also considered to be the embryo of the mass line philosophy (Feng, 2005). So I located this article in an English version from the website www.marxists.org and compared it with the original Chinese version. I found it to be an accurate translation and therefore used it in my research. Then I randomly sampled several articles from the SWM for examining the accuracy of the translation against those articles in MXJ and found that the translations are accurate. So I decided to use the English version as the primary source and the Chinese version as a corroborative source. The availability of the English version of SWM saved a large amount of time in translating, which allowed me to concentrate on analysing the content of Mao’s writings.

It must be noted that I constantly compared the two versions against each other throughout this research. This minimised potential misunderstandings on my part between original and translated documents. Also, in the course of making comparisons I sometimes discovered some differences in expressions between the two versions, and took immediate measures to investigate these.

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5 This article was lost when the first edition of MXJ was published, though it was valued greatly by Mao. He said the loss of this article was like the loss of his child (Feng, 2005). This article was found in 1961.
A good example of the differences in expression is the translation of *qunzhong* into *the masses*. The following paragraph provides an example.

It is wrong to have a handful of government functionaries busying themselves with collecting grain and taxes, funds and food supplies to the neglect of organizing the enormous labour power of the rank and file of the Party, the government and the army, and that of the people, for a mass campaign of production (Mao, October 1, 1943, p. 133).

In this paragraph, the English term *the rank and file* was written as *qunzhong* in the Chinese original paragraph; and the term *the people* was written as *renmin qunzhong*.

This discovery reminded me that there might be other ways of translating between the Chinese *qunzhong* and the English *the masses*. On the one hand, *qunzhong* might have been translated into other terms, such as the two terms just presented. On the other hand, some other Chinese expressions might also have been simply translated as the masses. My subsequent comparisons revealed that other Chinese expressions, namely *minzhong* and *dazhong*, had also been translated as *the masses*, because all these expressions shared the same word *zhong*, meaning “many people”. These findings not only helped me to locate sufficient data for analysis but also deepened my understanding of the concept of the masses. For example, when realising that *qunzhong* might have been translated as *the rank and file* in the English version, I conducted a thorough search throughout the SWM. Altogether, I found five sentences where *qunzhong* were translated as *the rank and file*. In these sentences, both in the original Chinese version and the translated English version, *qunzhong* (or the rank and file) referred to ordinary members within the Party, the army, or the government. This finding indicates that the...

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6 To read the original Chinese expressions of this paragraph, refer to the last two lines on p. 911 and the first line on p. 912 in the Chinese version published in 1991.
concept of *qunzhong* (the masses) not only refers to those ordinary people/citizens in a society but also includes ordinary members within an specific organisation.

In this way, the integrity of the seminal articles was preserved and the accuracy of the interpretation was maximised. In the following, the selection and analysis process of Mao’s works will be discussed in more detail.

I first of all skimmed all the articles in the SWM and identified those that indicated a close or a potential connection to the concept of the masses, the theory of knowledge, methods of leadership, methods for implementing the mass line, and implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. In this skimming process, any titles containing the word “mass” or “masses” were selected. Also, the titles or contents containing the phrases “methods of work”, “methods of leadership”, “mobilising the masses or the people”, and “style of work” were selected because Mao described the mass line as a method of leadership (Mao, June 12, 1943). In this initial skimming process, I located 28 articles that indicated a connection to the description of the mass line.

When examining these 28 articles I gave priority to 13 seminal articles. I reread these 13 articles to obtain progressively thorough understanding of each article, both in itself and in terms of its connections to others. For example, through this process, I found four articles, *Oppose Book Worship*, *On Practice*, *On Contradiction*, and *Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership*, that are the most important ones for understanding the mass line as a theory of knowledge. In addition, the article *Oppose Book Worship* is also the most important document for analysing Mao’s methods of conducting investigation work among the masses. The primary contents of each article are summarised in Table 3.1.
### Table 3.1. Mao’s 13 Selected Seminal Articles and Their Main Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seminal articles</th>
<th>Main contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 27, 1934. <em>Be concerned with the well-being of the masses, pay attention to methods of work</em></td>
<td>Protecting the interests of the masses and adopting proper methods of work are the two essential prerequisites for winning mass support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 7, 1937. <em>Win the masses in their millions for the Anti-Japanese National United Front</em></td>
<td>All forces that are willing to fight against Japanese invaders shall be united, including the proletariat, the peasantry, and the bourgeoisie; hence all belong to the concept of the masses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July, 1937. <em>On practice</em></td>
<td>Seminal article on philosophy. The social practices of millions of masses are the origin of knowledge. Exposition of the “practice-knowledge” cognition formula.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October, 1938. <em>The role of the Chinese Communist Party in the national war</em></td>
<td>The role of the Party. The exemplary role of the leadership. The criteria for selecting, training, and assessing leaders or cadres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 12, 1943. <em>Some questions concerning methods of leadership</em></td>
<td>The mass line is the Marxist theory of knowledge. The methods of combining “the leadership with the masses”, “the general with the particular”. The “masses-leadership” cognition formula.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 30, 1949. <em>On the people's democratic dictatorship</em></td>
<td>The dialectical relations between democracy and dictatorship or centralism. The concept of people. The nature of the people’s police. The strength of the masses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May, 1951. <em>The Party's mass line must be followed in suppressing counter-revolutionaries</em></td>
<td>The principles for applying the mass line in police work. Tactics and methods for mobilising the masses. Measures for addressing deviations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 27, 1957. <em>On the correct handling of contradictions among the people</em></td>
<td>The first two sections include the articulation of the concept of the people (masses).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March, 1957. <em>Persevere in plain living and hard struggle; maintain close ties with the masses</em></td>
<td>Various aspects of maintaining close ties with the masses, including the leadership and the led, officers and soldiers, the high and low levels.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This familiarisation process with the documents involved two main tasks. One was to write memos in order to record ideas that came into my mind. The other was to gather text extracts from each article, including any passages, sentences, or phrases that on first impression appeared to represent a description and explanation of the mass line and/or the concept of the masses. The basic unit of analysis was either a whole sentence or a

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7 Some concepts referred to in this column, for example the various “cognition formulae”, will be explained where appropriate in subsequent places within the thesis.
section of a passage. For me, this resulted in manageable units of analysis while not detracting too much from the context. However, when any uncertainty emerged due to the lack of context, a larger piece of text or the whole article from which a unit of analysis had been extracted was referred to.

Following that, the text extracts were read through iteratively so that they could be grouped into suitable categories. Generating categories is the core feature of a qualitative inquiry (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004) that was conducted through constant comparisons. The aim of such constant comparisons was to create more representative and suitable categories to answer the research questions (Elo & Kyngas, 2008; Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). For example, the text extracts of “peasant masses”, “worker masses”, and “student masses” were grouped into a category of “the general masses”; and “masses within the Party”, “soldier masses”, and “masses of democratic parties” were grouped under the category of “special masses”. Thus, my understanding of the concept of the masses was developed further.

Finally, findings based on these categories and text extracts were abstracted for analysing the mass line at an interpretive level. The findings captured important latent meanings or “some level of patterned response or meaning” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82) within Mao’s works in relation to understanding the mass line and the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation work.

### 3.2.2 Selection and analysis of Luo’s speeches

The analysis of Luo’s speeches on the mass line in criminal investigation work commenced by paralleling the steps described in collecting and analysing data from
Mao’s works except that there was no English version for Luo’s speeches. Therefore, I needed to translate all the text extracts from Luo’s speeches into English when they were quoted in this research. Although this required considerable effort, it enhanced my understanding of the speeches and facilitated the process of identifying relevant text extracts from those speeches. The analysis of Luo’s speeches differed, however, in that it was primarily conducted in terms of the categories generated in the analysis of Mao’s works. This also provided a testing process for the understanding and the application of the mass line in police work in Mao’s era.

The compilation of Luo’s speeches embodies 66 documents covering 496 pages in all. These documents include Luo’s speeches on various issues concerning public security work in Mao’s era, such as the important role and duties of the public security work, how to mobilise the masses in the movement of suppressing counter revolutionaries, how to build and maintain close ties between the police and the masses. These are important documents for studying Luo’s policing philosophy, but not all of these documents focus on implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. Therefore, selecting pertinent documents became the first task.

During the first selection process, 15 documents were selected for scrutiny, because they were all associated with the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation work. After reading these, seven seminal documents were selected which were re-read thoroughly and then analysed. Among these seven documents, two speeches were the most comprehensive: *Public Security Work Must Further Implement the Mass Line*, and *Several Questions Concerning the Summations of the Nine-Year Struggle*. These two speeches summarised the implementation of the mass line in
criminal investigation work, including successful experiences and problems encountered, primarily from 1949 to 1958. The seven documents are summarised in Table 3.2. The concrete contents and analyses are reported in subsequent chapters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.2</th>
<th>Luo’s Seven Selected Documents and the Main Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Titles for the speeches</strong></td>
<td><strong>Main ideas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1, 1949. Zuzhi duiwu, jianli xin Zhongguo de gong'an gongzuo (Organise the forces, establish the public security work of the new China)</td>
<td>Tasks, guidelines, and procedures of police work. It is essential to win the support of the masses in police work, including the ordinary members in some secret societies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 5, 1949. Zai Zhongyang Renmin Zhengfu Gong'anbu chengli dahui shang de jianghua (Speech at the conference for the establishment of the MPS)</td>
<td>The importance, functions, tasks, and requirements of police work. The significance of establishing fine work styles, keeping close ties with the masses, and relying on them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 19, 1956. Tong fan'geming jinxing douzheng de zhuanyao jingyan (Major experiences from fighting against counter-revolutionaries)</td>
<td>Six experiences in fighting counter-revolutionaries, including implementing the mass line, putting stress on the work style of investigation and study, leadership of the Party, and supervision of the masses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November, 1956. Gong'anjun bixu miqie lianxi renmin qunzhong (The Armed Public Security Force must keep close ties with the masses of the people)</td>
<td>Defects in keeping close ties with the masses and the measures for improvement. Caring for the masses is always the essence for better implementing the mass line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 13/14, 1957. Renmin Jingcha shi renminde qinwuyuan (People's police are the servants of the people)</td>
<td>Establishing and keeping close ties with the masses depends on concrete services the police provide to the masses. Police should have high moral standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 3, 1958. Gong'an gongzuo bixu jinyibudi guanche qunzhong luxian (Public security work must further implement the mass line)</td>
<td>Summarising the implementation of the mass line in police work: good experiences versus problems and causes, improvement measures. This document embodies rich information about implementing the mass line in police work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 31, 1958. Guanyu jiunian douzheng zongjie de jige wenti (Several questions concerning the summations of the nine-year struggle)</td>
<td>Summarising the police work in the nine years: leadership of the Party, reliance on the masses, integrating police professional work with mass campaigns, criminal investigation guidelines, and defects revealed by relying on the masses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.3 Semi-structured in-depth interviews with police officers

Semi-structured in-depth interviews (hereafter interviews) with Chinese frontline police officers provided an important data source. Interviews are one of the most common data collection methods in qualitative research, and are a powerful way of knowing people and their ideas, perceptions, definitions, and constructions of reality (Jones, 1985;
Punch, 2005). Conducting interviews aims to “elicit a vivid picture of the participant's perspective on the research topic” (Mack et al., 2005, p.29). My interviews were conducted on a face-to-face and one-on-one basis that intended to provide data about how frontline police officers understand the mass line, how well they understand the principles of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation proposed by Mao and Luo, how they usually implement the mass line in criminal investigation, what problems they encounter, and their suggestions for better implementing the mass line in the real world.

3.3.1 Interview questions design

Based on my interview aims, research questions, and the preliminary analysis of Mao’s works and Luo’s speeches, six general questions or general topic areas (see Appendix B) were designed to frame the scope of the interview and to maintain a focus on the research questions (Adam & Cox, 2008; Mack et al, 2005). As my interview was a semi-structured one, these questions were used as general guide. They were not raised in a strict and rigid order one by one; rather, their order was dictated by an interviewee’s responses. Based on the interviewees’ initial response to each topic, probing questions were also asked for obtaining more in-depth information. The probing questions were asked in a more extemporaneous than predefined way so that they were better-tailored to different interviewees and their different responses to the same question. Within the following paragraphs, only the six general questions are introduced. The relevant probing questions are reported in Chapter 5 where the interviews were analysed.
General question one (*Could you please talk about your understandings of the mass line in criminal investigation?*) aimed at eliciting an interviewee’s general understanding of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. Asking this question gave the interviewees an opportunity to express their personal views freely, without any potential influences from the researcher. From their responses, I could obtain a general picture of an interviewee’s understanding of the research topics, which helped me to develop more appropriate probing questions.

General question two (*Who do you think the masses are in the context of criminal investigation?*) focused on obtaining the interviewees’ understandings of who they consider to be the masses when undertaking criminal investigation. My literature review indicated that the masses in criminal investigation were predominantly interpreted as those, particularly ordinary people, who are outside the police force. This is the broadly discussed and accepted concept of the masses in available studies of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. I suspected that most police interviewees in my research would also interpret the concept of the masses in a very similar way, if not totally the same. However, my primary analysis of Mao’s works (*Mao, April 2, 1931, January 27, 1934, January 30, 1948, June 12, 1943, March 13, 1949, September 25, 1956*) demonstrated that the concept of the masses should be defined in terms of concrete relations between the leadership and the led. This means that, to the leadership, those who are in the position of the led could and should be regarded as the masses. Therefore, for obtaining police interviewees’ understandings of the masses in the relations between the leadership and the led, some probes were asked, such as *To a criminal investigation commander, are the rank and file police officers also the masses...*
that the commander can rely on in solving a criminal case? Why or why not? Why do/don’t you think criminal suspects are also the masses to criminal investigators? These probes were raised flexibly in accordance with each interviewee’s responses to the general question. Their responses to these probes provided valuable data for analysing and defining the concept of the masses in the context of criminal investigation.

General question three (In practical work, how do you usually implement the mass line method of “from the masses, to the masses”?) and general question four (Is the method of extorting confessions against the mass line? Why or why not?) focused on implementing the mass line in practical criminal investigation work. Question three and its subsequent probes were aimed at gathering data about how police officers implement the mass line method of “from the masses, to the masses” in practical criminal investigation, what problems they encountered if any, and the causes behind those problems. Question four and its probes were intended to explore police officers’ insights on the relation between implementing the mass line method of investigation and prohibiting the extortion of confessions in conducting criminal investigation. Adhering to the mass line method of investigation and prohibiting the extortion of confessions is one important principle Mao proposed for implementing the mass line in criminal investigation (Mao, 1943, December 25, 1940). However, such a relation between the two has not been discussed in current studies.

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8 Conducting investigation is a very important method Mao proposed for solving any problems encountered in all practical work. Mao upholds that “No investigation, no right to speak” that emphasises the importance of conducting investigation. The method of investigation Mao proposed is for conducting investigation work in general. More details about the method of investigation will be discussed in Chapter 4.
General question five (*As a criminal investigator, how could you better implement the mass line method of investigation in solving a criminal case?*) and general question six (*As a police commander, how could you better implement the mass line method of leadership in commanding the investigation of a criminal case?*) were designed to obtain interviewees’ suggestions about how to better implement the mass line in criminal investigation. Question five focused on how an ordinary police officer should implement the mass line method of investigation in criminal investigation, and question six focused on how a criminal investigation commander should do so.

Before asking the six general questions, I prepared a set of demographic questions. These were designed to collect basic information about the interviewees, including their ages, educational background, and working years in the police force. These were intended to build rapport with the interviewees and checking whether they met the primary condition in my research, namely whether they had been working as sworn police officers for over five years (see 3.3.3 for more information). The following sections provide more details about how the interviews in this research were conducted.

### 3.3.2 Procedural preparations for the interviews

In this research, the frontline police officers interviewed came from two police forces in China. One police force is in the northeast of the country and the other is in the southeast. Two reasons were behind my choice of these two police forces. First, both police forces have demonstrated outstanding performance in criminal investigation operations. According to my knowledge⁹, in the years 2000 – 2010 they solved many cases.

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⁹ My knowledge about their performance comes from internal police circulars, mass media, and officers I know
serious criminal cases and received awards from the MPS several times for their excellent operations. Some cases they solved were recognised as successful operations in combining the police force with the support of the masses and those cases have been introduced into police training courses in the China Criminal Police University where I have been working since 1995. Second, although several notorious wrongful convictions have occurred in China over the past 10 years, none was handled by either of the two chosen police forces. Their excellent performance triggered my interest in interviewing the police officers about their understanding, experiences, and suggestions about how to better implement the mass line in criminal investigation.

In the preparation stage, I first sought approval to use human participants in my research from the School of Policing Studies Human Research Ethics Committee (hereafter HREC) at Charles Sturt University (see Appendix D). This included producing an Information Statement (see Appendix E, English version) and Consent Form (see Appendix G, English version). The HREC required written approvals from the two police forces in China, confirming that it was permissible to approach their officers about potentially participating in an interview. Considering the far travel distance between China and Australia and the limitation of research funding, I decided to find some coordinators in China for submitting my applications for these approvals. I prepared two separate Application for Interview forms in Chinese to the chief directors of the two Chinese police forces, attached photocopies of my Charles Sturt University student ID card, my China Criminal Police University staff certificate, and the Chinese
versions of the *Information Statement* and *Interview Guide*\(^{10}\), and emailed them to two officers I know\(^{11}\), one from each of the two selected Chinese police forces. The *Information Statement* and *Interview Guide* included basic information about me as researcher, the host institution, the name of the project and its purpose, and the interview topics. The officers I know, on my behalf, submitted these documents to the chief director in each police force. When the approvals were granted, the officers I know scanned and emailed them to me. I then presented the approvals, as well as translated copies, to the HREC.

I returned to China in July 2011 to conduct the interviews on a face-to-face and one-on-one basis. Face-to-face interviews are the best method for conducting in-depth interviews, and one-on-one interviews are better-suited for acquiring personal insights, critiques, and suggestions on a social topic (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, & Namey, 2005). Since my interviews were intended to obtain police officers’ personal experiences, insights, and suggestions for better implementing the mass line in criminal investigation, such interviews were adopted as the best approach to achieve my interview aims.

Before conducting interviews, issues about language were also considered. In this research, since both the interviewees and the interviewer, that is me, come from the same cultural and linguistic background, no language barriers existed. Furthermore, I work at a police university in China, which ensures not only an easier way to establish rapport with interviewees but also ease of communication, particularly if police jargon

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\(^{10}\) Refer to Appendix F and Appendix I for the *Information Statement* and *Interview Guide* respectively.

\(^{11}\) These two officers do not know each other, and neither was interviewed for this research.
is used. Consequently, the potential for misunderstandings and loss of original meaning were minimised.

3.3.3 Recruiting and interviewing participants

Recruiting interview participants is more often than not a challenge. This may result from a variety of reasons, including participants’ concerns about confidentiality, lack of information about the research, lack of trust in the researcher, sensitivity of the profession, and political concerns (Tanner & Green, 2007; Wise, 2008). Where participants come from the criminal justice system, challenges are often much more complex than might be encountered in other social or professional areas. Due to the CPC’s strict political control over the police force, it is even more difficult to interview police officers, particularly police officers engaged in criminal investigation work, in China.

Fortunately, some of the potential difficulties were avoided because I am associated with the Chinese police system, namely as a staff member from China Criminal Police University which has close contacts with frontline police agencies. Further, two specific measures were employed to overcome potential participant or organisational concerns. The first was to present the police officers and their supervisors with a clear indication of the proposed interview topics (not detailed questions) in the Interview Guide and reconfirm that the interview would not depart from the listed topics. According to feedback received from the officers I know in the two police forces, this proved very helpful. The police chief directors both approved my application for interviews readily. They were confident that such topics would not raise any political or
confidential concerns for either the police forces or the potential interviewees. In addition, it was considered that the interviews might encourage the officers to think about how to implement the mass line more effectively in criminal investigation work.

The second measure employed to assist with participant recruitment, and usually the most important one in China’s police forces, was to show respect and obtain support from the chief director. When I returned to China, before initiating any direct contact with potential police interviewees, I was introduced to each of the chief directors by the officer I knew in the respective police force. These visits were significant in two ways. On the one hand, they showed that I respected the directors, respected the authority of the police forces, and observed the traditional Chinese etiquette in communication. In addition, it may have led to direct support from the chief directors, which often proves crucial to ensure research within a Chinese police force is completed effectively and efficiently. This indeed was the case. For example, after I presented the Interview Guide and confirmed the interviews would not exceed the listed topics, the chief director in the southeast police force I interviewed first gave me a warm welcome over a morning tea, and most importantly, he rang the captain of the criminal investigation squad to reconfirm his permission and support for the interviews I planned to undertake.

It must be noted that neither chief director from the two police forces used his power and position to command or coerce any individual police officer to take part in the interviews. Rather, each director simply showed his team members his supportive attitude to the interviews. In the first police force from which participants were drawn, the chief director assigned a coordinator, a police officer in charge of administrative work, to help arrange the interviews.
I first told the coordinator that the potential interview participants had to satisfy two primary conditions. They must:

1) have been working as sworn police officers for over five years and

2) have undertaken duties in crime investigation operations.

Based on my personal experiences in communicating with frontline police officers in training programs, conducting academic studies on police work, and practising in a police force, I had formed the view that it would usually take a new sworn police officer at least three years to accumulate enough experience of police work, and police officers working in the police forces for over five years became more mature and could likely present more valuable and in-depth insights and reflections on police work. Hence the first condition was required in my research. Since some police officers in China undertake duties not closely related to crime investigation (such as household registration, border control, and traffic control), they may not be the best interviewees for discussing criminal investigation work. Therefore, I preferred to interview police officers who were working in criminal investigation squads or had undertaken duties in crime investigation operations.

Once the two primary conditions were clarified, I held a detailed discussion with the coordinator about the general procedures for recruiting the interviewees. After discussion, the procedure for recruiting the interviewees was designed as follows:

1) The coordinator would help to hand out the *Information Statement* and *Interview Guide* (Chinese versions) among potential police interviewees at the
morning assembly the following day and reconfirm that this research had been approved by the police chief.

2) The coordinator would then provide me with brief background information on ten police officers who met the two primary conditions and were not handling any criminal cases during the interview days. I was informed that if they were handling any criminal cases at that period, it would be difficult for them to set aside time for an interview as they might be required to respond quickly to any work demands.

3) I could contact any of the ten police officers to arrange an interview at the interviewee’s convenience a day after the coordinator had handed out the Information Statement and the Interview Guide so that the potential interviewees had some time to think about the topics and decide whether or not to participate.

4) If the number of officers who agreed to participate was not sufficient, the coordinator may provide the contact details of more interview candidates.

One day after the coordinator handed out the interview documents I phoned each of the ten officers. Three officers declined the interview by saying that they were not interested in the topics or the interviews. One police officer agreed to participate but withdrew a couple of hours before the interview because of work commitments. Of the remaining six officers, all agreed to participate in an interview. However, one officer did not agree to be recorded because he felt uncomfortable about that. Soon after that interview had commenced, I found out that this officer had worked for only four years
and did not meet the two primary conditions. Therefore, I terminated the interview and thanked the officer for his participation. Finally, I interviewed five officers in the first police force. All interviews were conducted at a time convenient to the respective interviewee and at places each believed to be comfortable and suitable for conducting such interviews.

Although I expected to interview more police officers, I was advised that there was no point trying to recruit more participants due to existing workloads. I understood their situation and expressed thanks before leaving to conduct interviews within the second police force.

The interviews at the second police force were arranged using a similar process to that employed with the first police force. The coordinator at the second police force provided contact information for 12 interview candidates. I contacted them one day after the interview documents had been distributed. Three officers refused to be interviewed, and two who had initially agreed to participate subsequently withdrew before the interview because of work arrangements. An additional officer initially agreed to be interviewed, but when he learned that I was studying abroad he became very cautious, then refused to be recorded, and finally declined the interview. The other six police officers took part in the interviews, one in his office, the rest in their dormitories.

Altogether, I contacted 22 potential interviewees and interviewed 11. Of the 11, five were from the first police force I visited and six from the second police force. The interviewees included, ranking from higher to lower, two criminal investigation brigade captains, three criminal investigation squad captains, and three detective team captains.
(see Figure 1.1 for Chinese policing organizational structure). Captains at these three levels act both as commanders and combatants for investigating most criminal cases. It was lucky to have the eight captains voluntarily participate in the interviews, who would give their insiders’ experiences, understandings, and reflections on the mass line in criminal investigation work. For keeping their identities from being identified, the eight captains were not linked to any specific interviewees. Table 3.3 contains information about the interviewees and the interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years as police officer</th>
<th>Duration of interview (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Officer A</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer B</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer C</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer D</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer F</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer G</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer H</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer I</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer J</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer K</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer L</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>37.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>59.6</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interviews were all recorded, with a total recording time of approximately 656 minutes, and an average recording time of about 60 minutes. The actual interview time was longer than the overall recording time. The interview time included greeting and obtaining the signed Consent Form (see Appendix H, Chinese version), which lasted about five minutes. In addition, because all the interviewees were on-duty police officers, some interviewees needed to answer their phones during the interviews. When this happened, I would maintain the recorder at pause until the interview was resumed.
For ease of referring to each police interviewee in the analysis phase, each interviewee was given a pseudonym in alphabetic order from Officer A to Officer L. Officer E was the one whose interview I terminated early and information about him was not included in this research. The findings and analyses of these interviews are reported in the coming chapters.

### 3.3.4 Interviewing and techniques employed

Building rapport with interviewees is an essential tactic for conducting successful interviews (Adams & Cox, 2008; Allmark et al., 2009; Mack et al., 2005). In this research, building rapport with frontline police interviewees was particularly important because of their ingrained habit of keeping police-related information confidential. Interviewing police officers, especially criminal investigators, will often mean encountering some information that needs to be kept confidential. Considering the special character of criminal investigation work, I re-emphasised that the interviewees could refuse to answer any question they believed might disclose confidential information, and they could ask to delete anything at the end of the interview, or request that I do so at any time after the interview before finalisation of the research project.

In addition to building rapport, some techniques were employed for raising effective and interesting questions. In the process of undertaking the interviews, I was open to learning everything that an interviewee shared about the research topic. These interviews were “conversational, with questions flowing from previous responses when possible” (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, 2011, p. 1). The questions were asked “in a neutral manner, listening attentively to participants’ responses, and asking follow-up
questions or probes based on those responses” (Mack et al., 2005, p. 29). Particular attention was paid to asking one question at a time, asking open-ended questions, and using probes. Asking one question at a time assisted an interviewee to respond to an individual question in full, with probing questions being asked where necessary. For example, during the interviews, most interviewees mentioned the reluctance of the general masses to provide crime information or clues. I then raised probes such as *What do you think has produced such a phenomenon?* and/or *How do you usually get information from them then?*

Note taking was also a very important step in my interviews even though the interviews were audio-recorded. These notes were important complementary data to the audio recordings. However, it is always difficult for a researcher to be actively engaged in the interview as an adept questioner, an attentive listener, and an effective note-taker all at the same time. Therefore, a note taking table (entitled *Semi-structured In-depth Interview Guide with Field Notes*) was developed prior to the interviews, and this proved very helpful. See Appendix B for more information.

I prioritised my questioner and listener roles during the interviews. Field notes were usually taken with brief key words to record an interviewee’s unique views or phrases. When some significant non-verbal expression or unexpected interruption was observed, these would be also written down. After each interview, I replayed the audio recording in conjunction with the field notes to check whether any information was missing from the audio recording. If anything was found to be missing, the notes would be expanded as a backup.
3.3.5 Transcribing the interviews

In accordance with the commitments I had made to the HREC and the interviewees, for the sake of maintaining confidentiality and assuring the accurate understanding of some police jargon used in the interviews, I transcribed all the interview data myself. After the first transcription of each interview, the written texts were checked against the audio recording again. During the checking process, some missing words were added and mistyped words were corrected. Finally, nearly 140,000 Chinese words in written text were produced. In the transcribing process, I became more familiar with the data, which paved the way for subsequent data analysis.

3.3.6 Analysing the interviews

The analysis of interviews started after my checking the accuracy of the transcripts. As was stated previously, my interview questions were based on my research questions and preliminary analyses of Mao’s works and Luo’s speeches. This meant that some interview questions and topics could be used as categories for coding the data (Burnard, 1991). So I first grouped those interview questions, including probing questions, into initial coding categories such as concept of the masses, understanding of the mass line, methods of leadership, views on extorting confessions, methods for mobilising the masses, and leadership styles. These categories were not the final ones but helped me to condense the transcripts in a more effective and manageable way initially.

Following this step, each transcript was read and highlighted to locate text that could be placed under one of the categories. In the process of deductively coding the interview transcripts, data that could not be coded with an a priori category were
“identified and analyzed later to determine if they represent a new category or a subcategory of an existing code” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1282), or whether an existing category should be changed or refined. The main purpose of this step was to group the text that related to the same question into the same suitable category. For example, I grouped the responses of each interviewee to the question “who are the masses” under the category of the concept of the masses. Every text extract was labelled with a tag referring to the interviewee’s pseudonym. This helped me to track down who said what in the writing up stage.

Then the text extracts within each category were iteratively read and analysed to see whether they fitted there, what they represented, and whether new categories or subcategories should be developed. This process involved constant comparisons between categories and the text. Through this process, the initial coding categories were further developed and refined, as the analysis of the data deepened.

When I felt confident that all data had been coded, analysed, and placed into a suitable category or subcategory, I started to analyse the relationships between categories and subcategories, then organised them into hierarchical structures. These structures represented the relations between categories and categories, categories and subcategories, and their relations back to the data. These hierarchical structures were the main findings drawn from the interview transcripts.

3.4 Ethical issues

Ethical conduct involves not only doing the right thing, but also “acting in the right spirit, out of an abiding respect and concern for one’s fellow creatures” (National Health
and Medical Research Council, 2007, p. 3). Ethical issues may arise in relation to many aspects of a research project. These issues can generally be grouped into those that focus on “harm, consent, deception, privacy and confidentiality” (Punch, 2005, p. 277).

In this research, although issues concerning academic honesty and integrity in analysing documents were significant, the most important ethical issues related to data collection from interviews with police officers.

### 3.4.1 Ethical issues concerning analyses of documents

In this research, the majority of documents came from open sources, and therefore did not raise confidentiality and privacy issues. Academic honesty and integrity were the key issues to be considered in this component of the research project. Given that there were a large number of documents, there always existed a risk of plagiarism if caution was neglected. Therefore, I have tried my best to acknowledge clearly the work of others, avoiding an intentional taking of others’ ideas as my own when they were not (Le Voi, 2002).

When analysing Mao’s works and Luo’s speeches, on the one hand, it was necessary to be faithful to the context of the documents, avoiding unjustified assumptions. On the other hand, to obtain more in-depth and comprehensive understandings of these documents, my own insights and interpretations were indispensable for analysing the latent meanings. Although it was not possible to achieve absolutely bias-free interpretations, I have attempted to avoid any purposeful and wilful bias by triangulating (Bowen, 2009; Love, 2003) the sources of data and comparing different perspectives as objectively as possible.
3.4.2 Ethical issues concerning the interviews

Interviewing as a form of human interaction must be conducted within certain ethical dimensions (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2007). As far as the interviews in this research were concerned, the specific ethical issues that had to be given priority were institutional ethics approvals, informed consent, and confidentiality.

For obtaining institutional ethics approvals, I first sought and obtained approval letters from the police forces in China as part of the application process for ethics approval. Then my application form was presented with the required documents to the minimal risk review School of Policing Studies HREC at Charles Sturt University. After thorough examination, the HREC approved my application and the approval number for this research is 2011-108-05. Refer to Appendix D for further details.

Obtaining informed consent from the interviewees was another important issue in my research. Each individual interviewee’s informed consent was obtained before recording the interview. A Consent Form (see Appendix H, Chinese version) was presented to the interviewee to read, and then I would talk very briefly about the research project and the interview. If the interviewees raised any questions, I would provide information until they were satisfied that they fully understood the project and the purpose and boundaries of the interviews. Finally, the Consent Form was signed by the interviewee and kept by the researcher.

Some interviews were interrupted by phone calls. After this had occurred, it was always reconfirmed whether it was convenient for the interviewee to continue the interview. At the end of each interview, I inquired whether the interviewee wanted to add, alter, or delete anything. Therefore, “continuous or process consent” (Allmark et
al., 2009, p. 49) was maintained throughout the interview process. In this way, a high level of voluntary participation was sought.

The confidentiality issues in this research also relate to the names and details of some victims or suspects mentioned as examples when the officers spoke about their work experiences in implementing the mass line in solving a criminal case. Fortunately, when mentioning such a criminal case, police officers almost always used generic terms such as a woman, a man, a guy, or “legal terminology”, such as the victim, or the criminal suspect. Where a real name and/or place was used or mentioned, I created pseudonyms in the transcripts and changed other details that might have led to a breach of confidentiality.

3.4.3 Ethical issues concerning criminal cases

Conducting criminal investigation research will often mean using criminal cases that need to be kept private and confidential, usually to ensure an investigation is not disrupted, or to protect a victim. In this research, some criminal cases have been collected as examples demonstrating the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation operations (see Appendix C). The cases collected and analysed in this research were all closed ones. This means that these cases had been settled in the courts and were not subject to an appeal. The cases collected from the mass media were all open to public access in TV programs, online reports, or newspapers. The information about the offenders and the victims was retained as it was in these data sources.
Chapter 4  Analysis of the mass line in Mao’s works

The mass line was mainly formulated by Mao from the 1920s to the 1940s, and the ideas of the mass line were continually articulated in a range of his works until his death in 1976. However, there is no one single writing in which Mao delineated the mass line in all respects. Therefore, for better mastering the basic doctrines of the mass line and its implementation in practical work, I analysed Mao’s seminal works that were closely related to the mass line. I first analysed what Mao meant by the word “masses” because this word had been mentioned so many times in his works¹ and the most well-known mass line leadership method was described as “from the masses, to the masses” by Mao in his seminal article Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership (June 12, 1943). Starting from analysing this article, I collected and analysed more documents from Mao’s works to see what the word “masses” and the mass line meant from his perspective.

In the following section 4.1, I will report my analysis and findings about the concept of the masses. This is the prerequisite for more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the mass line. In section 4.2, my findings about what is entailed by the mass line being understood as a set of methods will be reported. These methods captured the most important aspects of Mao’s mass line. Finally, I summarise my findings concerning the concept of the masses and the connotations of the mass line in section 4.3.

¹ The word “masses” appeared 1,215 times in the English version of the Selected Works of Mao Zedong.
4.1 The concept of the masses

As stated in Chapter 1, Mao’s mass line philosophy is closely connected with traditional Chinese culture. So for better understanding the meaning of *qunzhong* (the masses) in Mao’s works, it is necessary to make a brief interpretation of its meaning in Chinese culture.

The phrase *qunzhong* in Chinese embodies two individual words: *qun* (群) and *zhong* (众). Literally, the word *qun* means three or more animals gathering together; the word *zhong* was created by repeating the word *ren* (人, a person) three times, meaning three or more persons gathering together. Recently, the word *qun* is used to describe many people, many animals, many birds, or many fish. However, the word *zhong* still refers to many people gathering together. Together, the two words compose a phrase *qunzhong* (群众), which literally refers to the convergence or gathering of many people. In other words, if many individuals gather together, in certain forms (either highly or loosely organised), for certain aims (study, work, or politics), or for engaging in certain functions (farming, manufacturing, policing, or arming), they can be called *qunzhong*. The question is whether this literal meaning of the word masses (*qunzhong*) is still retained in Mao’s mass line context. In addition to the literal meaning, what other specific meaning might Mao have intended by the word “masses”?

The frequency of the word “masses” is very high in Mao’s writings collected in the SWM (*Selected Works of Mao Zedong*), but Mao did not give a clear definition of who the masses were. This to some extent may bring some confusion and difficulties for accurately understanding the mass line, particularly the mass line leadership method of “from the masses, to the masses”, and its implementation in practice.
For the purpose of capturing the concept of the “masses”, I first went through the texts in Mao’s works and found all the different phrases relevant to what “masses” meant by Mao. Through iteratively reading and comparing, I found the following samples\(^2\) typically represented different types of the masses in Mao’s works. For tracing down the trajectory of the use of the word masses, these samples were organised in chronological order from the 1920s to the 1950s. For the convenience of analysis, I have used bold type to identify the phrases embodying the word “masses”.

Sample one:

… the fact is that the great peasant masses have risen to fulfil their historic mission and that the forces of rural democracy have risen to overthrow the forces of rural feudalism (Mao, March, 1927, p. 27).

Sample two:

Because of the pressure of foreign goods, the exhaustion of the purchasing power of the worker and peasant masses, and the increase in government taxation, more and more dealers in Chinese-made goods and independent producers are being driven into bankruptcy. Because the reactionary government, though short of provisions and funds, endlessly expands its armies and thus constantly extends the warfare, the masses of soldiers are in a constant state of privation (Mao, January, 1930, p. 121).

Sample three:

The broad masses of the proletariat, the peasantry and the urban petty bourgeoisie need our work of propaganda, agitation, and organization (Mao, May 7, 1937, p. 292).

Sample four:

The richest source of power to wage war lies in the masses of the people. It is mainly because of the unorganized state of the Chinese masses that Japan dares to bully us (Mao, May, 1938, p. 186).

\(^2\) I checked all these selected samples against the Chinese version of the SWM published by the People’s Publishing House in 1991. The translated words “masses” in these samples were all written as qunzhong in the Chinese version, except sample four in which “the masses” was written as minzhong, a synonym of qunzhong. The translated phrase “the rank and file” in sample five was also written as qunzhong in the Chinese version.
Sample five:
It is wrong to have a handful of government functionaries busying themselves with collecting grain and taxes, funds and food supplies to the neglect of organizing the enormous labour power of the rank and file of the Party, the government and the army, and that of the people, for a mass campaign of production (Mao, October 1, 1943, p. 133).

Sample six:
To ensure that the line really comes from the masses and in particular that it really goes back to the masses, there must be close ties not only between the Party and the masses outside the Party (between the class and the people), but above all between the Party’s leading bodies and the masses within the Party (between the cadres and the rank and file) (Mao, April 20, 1945, p. 208).

Sample seven:
Don’t rail at the masses! In no circumstances must you do so. You mustn’t rail at the worker, peasant and student masses and the majority of the members of the democratic parties and of the intellectuals. You mustn’t set yourselves up against the masses, on the contrary you must always be with them (Mao, July 9, 1957, p. 468).

In these samples, Mao phrased the word “masses” with a range of modifiers to describe different types of the masses. Among these phrases concerning different types of the masses, each of the modifying words (peasant, worker, soldier, bourgeoisie, the Party, the Chinese, etc.) represents a particular group of people who share certain commonalities distinctive from others. For example, peasants mainly undertake agricultural production, workers primarily undertake industrial production, workers and peasants both undertake material production, students and intellectuals focus on intellectual activities, party members (either the communists or the democrats) are

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3 The translated phrase “the rank and file” in sample five was written as qunzhong (the masses) in the Chinese version.

4 This sample is from Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party adopted on April 20, 1945 by the Enlarged Seventh Plenary Session of the Sixth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. This resolution was passed under the leadership of Mao, hence was documented as part of Mao’s works in the SWM.
distinctive from others because of their political beliefs, soldiers are distinctive due to their military functions, and the Chinese are distinctive from foreigners due to their Chinese nationality.

The analysis of the above phrases shows that the word masses in Mao’s works keeps the literal meaning of the word masses – groups of people sharing certain commonalities. This is the basis for understanding the concept of the masses in Mao’s mass line philosophy. Certainly, we cannot comprehensively interpret the concept of the masses in Mao’s philosophy by staying only on the literal meaning. To understand Mao’s concept of the masses better and more thoroughly, the meaning of the masses in the leadership and the led relation was analysed.

In Mao’s works, the concept of the masses was particularly expressed in relations between the leadership and the led, particularly in the corresponding relations between the Party and the masses, between the government and the masses, and between cadres/leaders\(^5\) and the masses. Such relations were defined in accordance with concrete conditions, not absolutely but relatively. For example, to the leading Party of the CPC, the masses are those outside the Party and the masses within the Party (see sample six). The former refers to non-Party members, particularly those ordinary workers and peasants who are the basic masses and the majority of the masses (Mao, December 27, 1935, February 27, 1957, July, 1957). These masses outside the Party are in the position of the led, while the Party is in the position of the leadership. The latter refers to the ordinary members of the Party, or the rank and file, who are the masses (in

\(^5\) In Mao’s works, cadres refer to all key members within an organisation who form a leading group, while leaders usually refer to those chief cadres. Leaders and cadres are often used together referring to the members of the leadership.
the position of the led) within the Party to the Party leading groups (in the position of the leadership). The masses within the Party are distinctive from those masses outside the Party because of their membership of the Party.

Mao articulated the concept of the masses in concrete relationships between the leadership and the led in many of his works. The following narrative (bolding added) further demonstrates this point:

Don’t let the close relations between the higher and lower levels, between officers and men, between the army and the people and between the armed forces and the local authorities be impaired as a result of the adoption of the system of military ranks and other systems. It goes without saying that the higher levels should maintain close relations with the lower levels and that these should be comradely. Cadres should forge close ties with soldiers and be integrated with them. The armed forces should likewise maintain close relations with the people and with the local Party and government organizations (Mao, March, 1957, pp. 438-439).

This passage was extracted from Mao’s speech titled Persevere in Plain Living and Hard Struggle, Maintain Close Ties with the Masses. Mao made this speech at a conference of Party cadres in 1957. He emphasised the importance of maintaining close relations between cadres and the masses, mentioned some detailed methods of how to maintain such relations, and listed what types of relations might be included. In the above passage, Mao clearly articulated the relations “between the higher and lower levels, between officers and men, between the army and the people and between the armed forces and the local authorities” in a paralleling pattern when describing what concrete relations may include in maintaining close ties with the masses. This shows Mao evidently expressed that maintaining close ties with the masses should include that between “the higher levels and the lower levels”, between “officers and men” (officers
and soldiers), and between the “the armed forces and the local Party and government organisations”.

Based on the above relations (ties) between the leadership and the masses listed by Mao, the “the higher levels” (of the Party, the army, or government) can be considered as the leadership in the state power structure while the lower levels as a particular type of the masses since they are in the subordinate position of the led; soldiers (men) in the position of the led are the masses to officers who are in the position of the leadership; “the armed forces or the army” are in the leadership position in military actions, while both “the local authorities and the people” can be considered as the masses. This indicates that Mao’s concept of the masses is defined in the concrete relationships between the leadership and the led.

For obtaining a thorough understanding of what the word “masses” meant by Mao, in the process of analysing Mao’s works, different phrases relevant to the “masses” were coded and grouped under the heading *Terms used by Mao* in Column 1 in Table 4.1. Then through constant comparing and analysing, I sorted them out into two groups of like terms that were categorised as the general masses and the special masses (see Column 2 in Table 4.1). General masses refer to those ordinary people who are not members or personnel of any organisations that have special power, functions, duties, or particular political status. The general masses take up the majority of the population in Chinese society and are in the position of the led. In contrast, special masses refer to those ordinary members or the rank and file within an organisation, such as the ordinary members of the CPC, the soldiers of the army, the clerks in the government, or the
members of the other democratic parties. Though the special masses are ordinary members of the organisation to which they are affiliated, they as a whole are in the position of the leadership bearing particular power and functions that the general masses do not. Special masses also include agencies at lower levels of an organisation because these agencies at the lower levels are where those special masses are working. When “the lower level” is mentioned, it actually refers to all personnel within that agency at the lower level. The commonalities between the two categories of the masses lie in that they both refer to groups of ordinary people in the position of the led – in the case of agencies, those ordinary members at the lower levels contrasting to those leading members in the leadership.

Table 4.1. Analysis of the Definition of the Masses in Mao’s Works

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terms used by Mao</th>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Resultant definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peasant masses or masses of the peasantry, worker masses or masses of the proletariat, the worker and peasant masses, the majority of the members of intellectuals, student masses, the masses of the urban petty bourgeoisie, masses outside the Party, Chinese masses</td>
<td>General masses</td>
<td>The masses refer to groups of ordinary people and agencies that are in the position of the led contrasting to those in the leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masses within the Party or the rank and file of the Party, masses of soldiers or the rank and file of the army, the majority of the members of the democratic parties, the rank and file of government, the local Party organizations, the local government organizations, the lower levels of organizations</td>
<td>Special masses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drawing from the above analyses of the concept of the masses, in the context of implementing the mass line leadership method of concentrating ideas from the masses and mobilising the masses to practice the concentrated idea (a decision or a policy), the

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6 Before the CPC came into power in 1949, the Nationalists were the biggest party, the Communists were the second, and some other political parties existed as well. After the CPC came into power, the CPC established the Coalition Government with eight other democratic parties. The eight democratic parties are still important political powers in modern China.
masses refer to not only those ordinary people in the society such as workers and peasants but also any groups of people on whom the leadership can rely in solving concrete problems. Which groups of the masses may be involved in solving a concrete problem should be decided in concrete conditions. This is the footing for obtaining more thorough understandings of what the mass line is and how to implement it in practice to solve concrete problems.

4.2 The mass line as a set of methods

As pointed out previously, there is no one single article in which Mao has defined clearly what the mass line is and how to implement it in practice. Instead, he articulated his ideas on the mass line in a range of his works. Therefore, I skimmed all Mao’s articles in the SWM and initially selected 13 seminal ones closely related to the mass line for analysis, and more articles were also located and analysed where necessary.

Through constant reading and analysing of these articles, I grouped Mao’s articulation of the mass line into three main categories: the method of knowing the world, the method of leadership, and the method of investigation. The mass line as the method of knowing the world emphasises that the social practice of millions of the masses is the origin for all human knowledge. Hence genuine knowledge must be linked with the practice of the masses. The mass line as the method of leadership stresses that the masses’ ideas (or mass cognition) are the sources for making correct leadership decisions or policies (or leadership cognition). Therefore, achieving correct leadership, leaders and cadres must combine their own practice and ideas with that of the masses.

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7 These 13 articles and their main contents were listed in Table 3.1.
8 At this point, this is investigation in a general sense pertinent to solving a problem.
The mass line as the method of investigation articulates concrete methods or techniques for linking practice with theory and combining the leadership with the masses. The three methods all aim at opposing subjectivism. Mao defined subjectivism as “proceeding not from objective reality and from what is actually possible, but from subjective wishes” (Mao, August 30, 1956, p. 315). In Mao’s philosophy, opposing subjectivism does not deny the existence of subjectivity or the role that human subjective activities play in social practices. Actually, Mao argued that subjective activities were inevitable for developing perceptual knowledge to rational knowledge, and creating theories or programmes, but such subjective activities should base on and correspond to objective conditions, otherwise they would lead to subjectivism and errors would easily occur (Mao, July, 1937). Accordingly, what Mao opposes are those groundless, unsupported, or ill-informed subjective opinions, estimates, or wishes taking little consideration of realistic conditions. Opposing subjectivism so that human beings, in particular those individuals in leadership positions, can achieve more accurate and objective cognition of a problem and solve it is the cornerstone underpinning Mao’s mass line. Without understanding this point, no in-depth understanding and thorough implementing of the mass line can be achieved.

In all, the mass line in essence can be interpreted as a set of methods aimed at objectively concentrating the wisdom and efforts of the masses to maximally avoid subjectivism in the process of forming judgements, decisions, policies, or theories to effectively solve problems. The more specific details of this finding are reported in the following subsections.
4.2.1 The method of knowing the world

In his seminal article *Some Questions Concerning the Methods of Leadership* (June 12, 1943), Mao asserted that the mass line leadership method of “from the masses, to the masses” is the theory of knowledge. This indicates that the mass line is a method of knowing the world. Then what does Mao’s mass line theory of knowledge mean? What are the relations between the mass line theory of knowledge, the mass line leadership method, and the mass line method of investigation? How can it guide us in knowing the world? For better understanding these questions, I collected and analysed Mao’s works related to the theory of knowledge.

I judged four articles to be the most important for understanding Mao’s mass line theory of knowledge. These are *Oppose Book Worship* (May, 1930), *On Practice* (July, 1937), *On Contradiction* 9 (August, 1937), and *Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership* (June 12, 1943). These four articles were all written to combat three major types of subjective ideas: dogmatist, bureaucratic, and empiricist 10 ideas that existed extensively in the army and the Party at that time (Mao, August, 1937, July, 1937, June 12, 1943). *Oppose Book Worship* primarily opposes dogmatist ideas and emphasises that conducting a thorough investigation of a practical problem among the masses is the precondition for solving it. This is why Mao proposed his popular slogan “no investigation, no right to speak” in this article. *On Practice* was written to expose both dogmatist and empiricist ideas, particularly dogmatism. The title *On Practice* was given

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9 The word “contradiction” is used in its Maoist context. According to Mao, the law of contradiction in things is the law of the unity of opposites. For example, men and women are opposites but are the unity of human beings; birth and death are a pair of opposites but unites in the process of life. For more information, refer to *On Contradiction* by Mao.

10 In Mao’s works, empiricists refer to those people “who for a long period restricted themselves to their own fragmentary experience and did not understand the importance of theory for revolutionary practice or see the revolution as a whole, but worked blindly though industriously” (Mao, August, 1937, p. 295).
because it put stress on criticising the dogmatist subjectivism that belittled the significance of practice. *On Contradiction* was written after *On Practice*, but with the same object of overcoming dogmatist ideas. It also addressed empiricist ideas that were to be found in the Party at the time. This purpose is explicitly expressed by Mao in his concluding remarks in *On Contradiction*:

> If, through study, we achieve a real understanding of the essentials [of the law of contradiction in things, or the law of the unity of opposites] we shall be able to demolish dogmatist ideas … and our comrades with practical experience will be able to organize their experience into principles and avoid repeating empiricist errors (August, 1937, p. 346).

In *Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership*, he concluded that “to combat subjectivist and bureaucratic methods of leadership, we must promote scientific, Marxist methods of leadership” (June 12, 1943, p. 122), which means following the method of “from the masses, to the masses”.

In the following subsections, I will focus on analysing three issues concerning the mass line theory of knowledge: the origin of cognition, the relationships between the subjects of cognition, and the process of cognition.

### 4.2.1.1 The origin of cognition

According to Mao, all human knowledge is dependent on social practice, particularly on activity in material production which is the most essential practical activity and the determinant of all other human activities (Mao, July, 1937). It is primarily through material production activities that human beings gradually come to “understand the phenomena, the properties, and the laws of nature”, and the relationships between...
human and nature, and between human and human (Mao, July, 1937, p. 295). Mao argued that knowledge comes from only two sources: direct experience and indirect experience. Considered as a whole, “knowledge of any kind is inseparable from direct experience” because “what is indirect experience for me is direct experience for other people” (Mao, July, 1937, p. 300). Therefore, all knowledge originates from direct human experience gained in social practice where people perceive the objective external world through their physical sense organs.

Mao’s stand on the origin of cognition is the cornerstone for his mass line theory of knowledge, the theoretical and epistemological grounds for solving all practical problems. Since the social practices are the only root sources of knowledge, all correct policies, decisions, and/or theories must be achieved by linking them with practices, with the real material world, with reality and facts. This means any individual who divorces himself/herself from the social practice and objective reality in the process of knowing a thing will be engaging in subjectivism and errors will be easily made.

The analysis tells us that in Mao’s mass line theory of knowledge, social practice is considered to be the root source of knowledge. Then who are the major subjects of social practice: heroes, sages, leaders, or the ordinary masses? What relationships should be built between an individual and other subjects of cognition so that one can achieve genuine knowledge? This will be discussed in the following section.

4.2.1.2 Relationships between the subjects of cognition

According to Mao, as a social being, every member of a society participates in social practices in one way or another, including material production, political life, scientific
activities, and artistic pursuits, but social practice in the form of material production is the root source of human knowledge (Mao, July, 1937, pp. 295-296). This indicates that Mao believes the general masses undertaking material production activities play the major role in the process of gaining knowledge, though he acknowledges every individual has their personal roles in it. Hence Mao avowed that “the masses are the real heroes, while we ourselves are often childish and ignorant, and without this understanding it is impossible to acquire even the most rudimentary knowledge” (March and April, 1941, p. 12) and that “the people, and the people alone, are the motive force of world history” (April 24, 1945, p. 257). These statements further demonstrate that Mao regarded the general masses as a whole as the determining and major forces in social practice, and the source of knowledge, while the role those few rulers or leaders have played in human history is secondary. Such relationships between the subjects of cognition suggest that, in gaining knowledge of the world, any individuals, particularly those individuals in the leadership, must not only join in the general masses and participate in social practices in person, but also keep close ties with the masses, learn from them, and synthesise direct and indirect experiences of both themselves and of other masses to gradually advance their knowledge to higher stages. Consequently, Mao warned those leaders at the higher levels should “be a pupil before you become a teacher; learn from the cadres at the lower levels before you issue orders” (March 13, 1949, p. 378). Only by establishing such relations, could subjectivism – that may otherwise occur in the process of knowing a thing – be maximally avoided, while human knowledge will better approximate the truth.
Mao’s stand suggests that once the positive interactions between an individual leader and the masses were established, they would push human history and human knowledge forward more quickly on the right track. On the one hand, a leader must gain direct experiences through participating personally and diligently in social practice among the masses, and the leader’s practices then become part of the sources of the whole human knowledge. On the other hand, the leader must be ready to gain indirect experiences through learning willingly, attentively and critically from the direct and/or indirect experiences of the masses, and the practices of the masses become the unlimited sources for a leader or an individual’s knowledge. These interdependent actions move in an endless spiral that is manifested in the three formulae of the mass line cognition process.

4.2.1.3 The process of cognition: The three formulae

According to Mao, the process of cognition always moves in endless cycles, and with each cycle human knowledge advances a step higher, becoming richer, more profound, and more accurate, which basically follows three stages within each cycle: perception, rationalisation, and verification (Mao, August, 1937, July, 1937, June 12, 1943). From different perspectives, Mao expounded these three stages in three seminal articles – On Practice, On Contradiction, and Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership. Based on Mao’s articulation, the process of cognition was categorised into three formulae in my research: the “practice-knowledge-practice formula” in On Practice (July, 1937), the “particular-general-particular formula” in On Contradiction (August,
1937), and the “masses-leadership-masses formula” in Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership (June 12, 1943).

The practice-knowledge-practice formula emphasises that practice at the perception stage is the root source of rationalised knowledge, and the rationalised knowledge can better guide practice. Mao summarised this formula in his seminal philosophical article On Practice as follows:

Discover the truth through practice, and again through practice verify the truth. Start from perceptual knowledge and actively develop it into rational knowledge; then start from rational knowledge and actively guide revolutionary practice to change both the subjective and the objective world. Practice, knowledge, again practice and again knowledge. This form repeats itself in endless cycles, and with each cycle the content of practice and knowledge rises to a higher level. Such is the whole of the dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge, and such is the dialectical-materialist theory of the unity of knowing and doing (Mao, July, 1937, p. 308).

The practice-knowledge-practice formula describes not only how knowledge develops from a perceptual (lower, superficial, even false) stage to a theoretical, conceptual, or rational (higher, essential, or true) stage, but also the interdependent relationship between perception and rationalisation, or practice and knowledge. Mao argued that rational knowledge is reliable precisely because it depends upon perceptual knowledge; without its source in sense perceptions, the rational would be subjective and unreliable (July, 1937). However, knowledge at the lower and perceptual stage needs to be developed to the rational stage. “To think that knowledge can stop at the lower, perceptual stage and that perceptual knowledge alone is reliable while rational knowledge is not, would be to repeat the historical error of ‘empiricism’” (Mao, July, 1937, p. 303). Mao’s statements indicate that the perceptual knowledge accumulated...
from the practice of the masses needs someone to concentrate it so it can better guide further practice. Then who takes the responsibility to concentrate? It is leaders who grow up from the masses and keep close ties with the masses. This paves the theoretical grounds for Mao’s mass line leadership method: from the masses, to the masses.

Then what sequence should we follow to gradually concentrate the perceptual knowledge into the rational knowledge? The answer Mao gave is the particular-general-particular formula: starting from knowing the particular essence of a thing to knowing the common essence of things. Mao described this formula as follows:

there is always a gradual growth from the knowledge of individual and particular things to the knowledge of things in general. Only after man knows the particular essence of many different things can he proceed to generalization and know the common essence of things. When man attains the knowledge of this common essence, he uses it as a guide and proceeds to study various concrete things which have not yet been studied, or studied thoroughly, and to discover the particular essence of each; only thus is he able to supplement, enrich and develop his knowledge of their common essence and prevent such knowledge from withering or petrifying. These are the two processes of cognition: one, from the particular to the general, and the other, from the general to the particular. Thus cognition always moves in cycles and (so long as scientific method is strictly adhered to) each cycle advances human knowledge a step higher and so makes it more and more profound (Mao, August, 1937, pp. 320-321).

This passage embodies, but is not limited to, two main points. First, the sequence of the movement of human cognition is from individual or particular cognition/knowledge to general knowledge or common essence. Any individual cognition alone cannot be regarded as general/common knowledge. Individual cognition should be combined with others’ cognition and verified through practice before it can be generalised into common knowledge for guiding further practice. If one takes the
particular knowledge he/she obtains as common knowledge and uses it to guide all practice, he/she will turn to empiricism. Second, the general knowledge or the common essence (theory, principles, policies, etc.) must be used as a guide, not dogmas, to know particular things in practice. The general knowledge must be put back into social practice to test its truth or falseness, to be enriched and developed. This means that from knowing the particular essence of a thing to knowing the common essence of things, following the practice-knowledge-practice formula is always indispensable. To believe that the general knowledge obtained at a certain stage is the ultimate general knowledge and can guide the practice to know all particular things at all places, will lead to dogmatism. Both empiricism and dogmatism are two forms of subjectivism that Mao strongly opposed in his statements on the theory of knowledge (Mao, August, 1937, July, 1937, May, 1930).

When these two formulae are applied to the leadership method, it is the method of “from the masses, to the masses”. This is named the masses-leadership-masses formula in my research. According to Mao,

In all the practical work of our Party, all correct\footnote{The word ‘correct’ is translated from the Chinese phrase “zhengque de”, which embodies meanings of being right, effective, proper, and suitable.} leadership is necessarily “from the masses, to the masses”. This means: take the ideas of the masses (scattered and unsystematic ideas) and concentrate them (through study turn them into concentrated and systematic ideas), then go to the masses and propagate and explain these ideas until the masses embrace them as their own, hold fast to them and translate them into action, and test the correctness of these ideas in such action. Then once again concentrate ideas from the masses and once again go to the masses so that the ideas are persevered in and carried through. And so on, over and over again in an endless spiral, with the ideas becoming more correct, more vital and richer each time. Such is the Marxist theory of knowledge (Mao, June 12, 1943, p. 119).
According to the masses-leadership-masses formula, the scattered and unsystematic experiences, ideas, and observations of the masses are the “raw data” that contribute to human knowledge, including making correct leadership decisions and policies. This raw data obtained in the social practice of the masses (perception stage) is gathered, studied, and turned into concentrated directives or policies (rationalisation stage) and then verified through practice (implementation stage). Following that, a new cycle of perfection, rationalisation, and implementation (perfection stage) starts again, “over and over again in an endless spiral, with the ideas becoming more correct, more vital, and richer each time” (Mao, June 12, 1943, p. 119).

To the question *Is there a completion of the movement of knowledge?* Mao’s answer is both yes and no. According to Mao, at a certain stage, a certain place, and a given time, there is a completion for the purpose of changing a certain natural or social objective process, such as “the verification of a scientific hypothesis, the manufacture of an implement or the reaping of a crop” (July, 1937, p. 305). For instance, the process of planting wheat in spring, taking care of its growth throughout summer, and the reaping in autumn can be seen as a completion of producing wheat in a specific year. Then experiences are abstracted into knowledge on how to improve the production and/or the taste. In the following year, the new cycle of farming starts again and hence a new cycle of gaining knowledge in human farming practice.

Together these formulae aim at overcoming subjectivism that exists in all human cognitive activities. This point is particularly reflected in Mao’s assertion that “Subjectivism will always be there, ten thousand years and even a hundred million years from now, and it will be so as long as humanity does not perish. Where there is
subjectivism, there are mistakes” (Mao, August 30, 1956, p. 316). For overcoming
subjectivism, Mao argued that “thought must reflect objective reality and must be tested
and verified in objective practice before it can be taken as truth, otherwise it cannot”
(Mao, August 30, 1956, p. 316).

In sum, the mass line as a method of knowing the world maintains that genuine
knowledge originates in the social practices of millions of masses, that the masses are
the determining forces in social practices and the major subjects of cognition, that an
individual’s knowledge is only one element of and always interdependent with the
whole of human knowledge, and that the growth of knowledge is always from knowing
the particular to knowing the general. The best way of gaining genuine knowledge is to
combine the individual cognition with that of the masses, to link theory with concrete
practice, and to move from knowing the particular to knowing the general. Based on his
time of knowledge, Mao proposed two mass line leadership methods: combining the
leadership with the masses and combining the general with the particular (Mao, June 12,
1943).

4.2.2 The method of leadership

As has been analysed above, Mao believed that any correct individual cognition
(including that of a leader, a hero, or an expert, etc.) must take mass cognition as
fundamental and incorporate individual cognition with mass cognition logically,
objectively, and creatively. When this stand is applied to leadership methods, it means
that correct leadership decisions (as individual cognition) must combine with the ideas
of the masses so that the subjectivist elements in a leadership decision can be maximally
prevented. It must be noted again that the masses in the leadership and the led relation refer to both the general masses and the special masses that have been clarified in section 4.1. If the concept of the masses were narrowly interpreted as only those general masses (the ordinary people or citizens), it would distort Mao’s genuine meaning.

The question then arises about how to combine leadership decisions with the ideas of the masses in concrete tasks. My analysis of Mao’s works shows that Mao introduced two fundamental mass line leadership methods, proposed high requirements for the virtues of the leadership, and institutionalised the mass line leadership into the democratic centralism system. At this stage, Mao’s mass line moved from the method of knowing the world at the epistemological level to the method of leading the masses to change the world in social practices.

### 4.2.2.1 The two fundamental methods of the mass line leadership

“Combining the leadership with the masses” is the basic method of leadership (Mao, June 12, 1943, p. 120), which means to concentrate the ideas of the masses and develop them into leadership decisions, then implement them among the practices of the masses to test their correctness and improve them. “In the process of concentrating ideas and persevering in them, it is necessary to use the method of combining the general call with particular guidance, and this is a component part of the basic method” (Mao, June 12, 1943, p. 120). The two methods are inseparable for implementing the mass line in practical work.

The aim of a “general call” is to mobilise the masses to support a particular task and provide as many suggestions as possible. This is the preparatory step for gathering
scattered ideas from the masses. However, persons in leadership should not confine themselves to a general call, but should personally “go deeply and concretely into the work called for, make a break-through at some single points, gain experience and use this experience for guiding other units” (Mao, June 12, 1943, p. 117), and test the correctness or enrich the content of their general calls. This process embodies two tiers of meaning. One is to conduct a thorough field investigation of a specific problem among the masses to reach a well-informed decision or policy, thus to maximally reduce subjectivist ideas of the leadership. The other is to test the correctness of the decision or policy through the practice of the masses, and to correct the defects or mistakes in order to achieve an improved decision or policy until the problem is solved.

Mao maintained firmly that general calls must be based on investigations among the masses because “no investigation, no right to speak” (Mao, May, 1930, n.p.). He argued that “when you have not probed into a problem, into the present facts and its past history, and know nothing of its essentials, whatever you say about it will undoubtedly be nonsense” (Mao, May, 1930, n.p.). Only having made a thorough investigation, will the general calls be more accurate and effective. In this sense, “to go to the masses and make thorough investigation” is the prerequisite for forming general calls.

The analysis above shows that a leader’s personal practice and investigation at a particular place among the masses are the basis and precondition for generating leadership general calls (decisions, directives, policies, etc.). This is the process of “from the practice to knowledge”, “from the particular to the general”, or “from the masses to the leadership”. Then the leadership can use these general calls to guide further practice of the masses. Since such general calls are primarily based on objective
facts and well-informed by the ideas of the masses (the real subjects of cognition), the
general calls will be less subjectivist, but more objective, correct, and closer to the truth.

The general calls usually were implemented by various forms of mass campaigns. Mao’s special love for mass campaigns may have derived from his deep belief that the masses were the real heroes. His firm belief in the masses was rooted in his philosophy which was explicitly expressed in his two important philosophical essays *On Practice* and *On Contradiction*. Certainly, Mao’s belief in the masses was not simply “idealism” or “rationalism”, but was a product of his study of China’s history, Marxism, and the practical revolutionary movements of his times.

First, Mao learned lessons from the peasant uprisings in Chinese history. In *The Chinese Revolution and the Chinese Communist Party* (December, 1939), Mao listed at least 18 well-known peasant uprisings in Chinese feudal society. He concluded that “the class struggles of the peasants, the peasant uprisings, and the peasant wars constituted the real motive force of historical development of Chinese feudal society” (Mao, December, 1939, p. 308). Such a belief led Mao to conclude that the peasant masses must be united, mobilised, and relied on if the CPC was to win the revolution.

Second, Mao believed in the importance of theoretical guidance and correct leadership for the success of a revolution. On this point, he turned to Marxism. He pointed out that because “the peasant uprisings and wars did not have correct leadership such as the proletariat and the Communist Party provide today, every peasant revolution failed, and the peasantry was invariably used by the landlords and the nobility as a lever for bringing about dynastic change” (Mao, December, 1939, p. 309). According to Marxism, the leading force in modern democratic revolution is the industrial proletariat.
and the leadership of the Communists over the industrial proletariat and other working classes is fundamental for ensuring the victory of the revolution (Mao, April 24, 1945, July, 1937, March, 1926, May 3, 1937). Hence, Mao required the CPC to arm itself with Marxism and integrate its basic principles with China’s specific situation and practical struggles so that it could lead the masses to success.

Furthermore, Mao, through personal investigation of the peasant movements, genuinely felt the great force and power of the masses. His famous field research writings on the peasant movements include *Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society* (March, 1926), *Report on Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan* (March, 1927), and *The Struggle in the Chingkang Mountains* (November 25, 1928), which ultimately led to his firm belief in the worker and peasant masses and the mass campaigns.

The process of launching a mass campaign usually follows the principles Mao described as “to combine the general with the particular” and “to combine the leadership with the masses” (June 12, 1943). This process can be roughly divided into three stages: preparation, initiation, and summarisation. The tasks in the preparation stage include targeting an issue, conducting a preliminary investigation among the masses, and formulating general calls. The tasks in the initiation stage include propagating the general calls, putting them into practice, providing particular guidance to the practice at a given place, and learning while practising. The tasks in the summarisation stage include concentrating the new experiences and lessons, drawing up new directives, and preparing for the new general calls.
Mass campaigns have played a significant role in CPC history, especially during the revolution era. The Great Production Campaign (GPC) in the early 1940s, for example, was very successful and far-reaching (Gray, 2006; Mao, December, 1942). The years 1941 and 1942 saw enormous financial difficulties in the Liberated Areas caused by the Japanese invaders’ savage attacks and the Kuomintang’s encirclement and blockade (Mao, December, 1942, p. 111; She, 2010; J. Wei, 2011). In order to overcome these difficulties, Mao demanded that the Party lead the army, the government organisations, and the general masses in the Liberated Areas to develop production as much as possible to support their own needs.

During that campaign, the government agencies, the armed forces, and the general masses were all mobilised to undertake production. With the Party’s calls of “developing the economy and ensuring supplies”, great successes were achieved, which not only helped Mao lead his armed forces and the general masses in the Liberated Areas successfully to survive the most difficult period of the war, but also “provided the Party with a rich store of experience for guiding economic construction in later years” (Mao, December, 1942, p. 112).

During the GPC, Mao adamantly required “that the leading cadres themselves assume responsibility and participate personally, that the leading group links itself closely with the masses and general calls are combined with particular and specific guidance, and that investigation and study are undertaken and priority is given to what is urgent and important” (October 1, 1943, p. 134). As has been discussed previously, these are the key methods of implementing the mass line in mobilising the masses to
solve a problem, which are also essential requirements for ensuring the success of launching a mass campaign.

4.2.2.2 Virtues of the mass line leadership

To ensure the mass line leadership methods were effectively implemented, Mao put great stress on the virtues and the role of the leadership (leaders and cadres). According to Mao, “Cadres are a decisive factor, once the political line is determined” (October, 1938, p. 202). The political line Mao referred to is the mass line. He noted that “a great revolution requires a great Party and many first-rate cadres to guide it” (May 7, 1937, p. 291). In China, a big country both in population and territory, “it is impossible to carry through our great revolution, which is unprecedented in history, if the leadership consists of a small, narrow group and if the Party leaders and cadres are petty-minded, short-sighted and incompetent” (Mao, May 7, 1937, p. 291). Mao’s statements mean that the leadership should not only recruit enough members from the masses, particularly the relatively active masses (Mao, June 12, 1943), but that it should also recruit those who have high qualities and virtues.

Mao upheld four criteria as the Party’s cadre policy: “absolute devotion to the cause, contact with the masses, ability independently to find one’s bearings and observance of discipline” (Mao, June 12, 1943, p. 119). The cadres, as the bridge between the Party and the masses, must be “free from selfishness, from individualistic heroism, ostentation, sloth, passivity, and sectarian arrogance, and they must be selfless national and class heroes” (Mao, May 7, 1937, p. 291). These were the virtues and the qualities demanded by Mao for the leadership.
Furthermore, Mao stressed greatly the exemplary vanguard role of the Chinese Communists and required that all members of the Party should “show a high degree of initiative in the national war, and show it concretely, that is, they should play an exemplary vanguard role in every sphere” (October, 1938, p. 197). In simple words, for thoroughly and effectively implementing the mass line in all practical tasks, the leadership must have the virtues of being open-minded, just, devoted, selfless, and willing to keep close ties with the masses. These virtues are significant for the leadership to avoid subjectivist decisions in the process of leading the masses to solve any kinds of problems.

4.2.2.3 The mass line leadership and democratic centralism

Carrying out the mass line leadership needs to follow the method of “from the masses, to the masses”. This indicates that the leadership must discuss democratically with the masses and take their ideas as the grounding (democracy) before making centralised decisions, policies, or directives (centralism). When this method is institutionalised into the Party’s political activities and affairs, it is called democratic centralism. In 1937, when Mao was talking about the tasks of winning the Chinese masses for the Anti-Japanese National United Front, he laid great importance on implementing democratic centralism within the Party. The following passage further illustrates this point:

12 Democratic centralism as an institutionalised method of implementing the mass line has been stipulated as a fundamental system that must be followed in all political activities of the Party, as well as in the administrative issues of the government. There are a set of regularised principles for carrying out the democratic centralism system, such as the minority must obey the majority. The method of investigation fits for all activities concerning solving a problem, such as solving the shortage of fresh water, or community safety problems. There are not fixed and institutionalised principles for implementing this method, though Mao had suggested some specific techniques for conducting good investigations.
If we are to make the Party strong, we must practice democratic centralism to stimulate the initiative of the whole membership. There was more centralism during the period of reaction and civil war. In the new period, centralism should be closely linked with democracy. Let us apply democracy, and so give scope to initiative throughout the Party (Mao, May 7, 1937, p. 292).

This passage was taken from Mao’s article *Win the Masses in Their Millions for the Anti-Japanese National United Front* that focused on how the Party could mobilise all forces among the Chinese masses to fight against Japanese invaders. This indicates that implementing the mass line must apply democratic centralism within the Party to first mobilise the masses within the Party, otherwise the Party cannot mobilise the masses outside the Party or the general masses.

Giving full play to inner-Party democracy is essential for properly implementing the democratic centralism within the Party (Mao, April 20, 1945) and the method of criticism and self-criticism is a favoured measure by Mao for achieving such a goal. According to Mao, “conducting criticism and self-criticism is a good measure for exercising mutual supervision among comrades” (Mao, March, 1955, p. 171), which would help to expose and correct mistaken ideas, overcome bad styles of work (such as bureaucracy, commandism, formalism) (Mao, November 29, 1943), with the aim “to learn from past mistakes to avoid futures ones and to cure the sickness to save the patient” (Mao, April 24, 1945, p. 317). Certainly the criticism and self-criticism should be carried out in honest and conscientious ways, and with good intentions (Mao, April 24, 1945, May, 1942). Through conducting such criticisms and self-criticisms, it was expected to strengthen inner-Party democracy, consolidate the unity of the Party, improve the style of work, and forge close ties with the masses. In March, 1949, shortly
before the founding of the PRC, Mao reiterated the importance of democracy in the
democratic centralism leadership style in the following quote:

To lead means not only to decide general and specific policies but also to devise
correct methods of work. Even with correct general and specific policies, troubles
may still arise if methods of work are neglected. To fulfil its task of exercising
leadership, a Party committee must rely on its “squad members” and enable them
to play their parts to the full (Mao, March 13, 1949, p. 377).

Mao warned that if the “squad leader” (the Number 1 leader of the committee)
could not mobilise and unite the “squad members”, it would be difficult to direct the
“squad” to “lead tens of millions of people in fighting and construction” (Mao, March
13, 1949, p. 377). Based on Mao’s statements above, employing a democratic method
of leadership within a Party committee to mobilise the collective efforts of all
committee members is the prerequisite to effectively mobilise and lead the masses
outside the Party. This indicates that even within a Party committee there is also the
question of how to implement the mass line leadership method between the “squad
leader” and the “squad members”. As has been discussed above, an institutionalised
method for implementing the mass line within the Party political work is called the
democratic centralism (Mao, March 13, 1949, May 7, 1937).

For ensuring the correct implementation of democratic centralism, Mao advanced a
number of principles. First, “the minority must obey the majority” (Mao, March 13,
1949, p. 377), which means that every member of the committee, including the “squad
leader”, must obey the collective decision even if he/she has different opinions. This is
different from the relationship between a military squad leader and soldiers, where
soldiers should obey their leader’s orders. Second, it is necessary to “place problems on
the table” (Mao, March 13, 1949, p. 377), which means to discuss problems openly at a meeting, then reach agreements by the majority. The third principle is that “members of a Party committee should keep each other informed and exchange views on matters that have come to their attention” (Mao, March 13, 1949, p. 378).

Finally, it is necessary to “ask your subordinates about matters you don’t understand or don’t know, and do not lightly express your approval or disapproval” (Mao, March 13, 1949, p. 378). According to Mao, leaders at the higher levels should attend to the opinions of cadres at the lower levels, then analyse these opinions and incorporate any reasonable suggestions into decisions; since the decisions embody the opinions from the lower levels, the latter will support and implement them of their own accord (Mao, March 13, 1949). In the same vein, when policies and decisions from the Party and governments incorporate the masses’ opinions and really reflect their interests and needs, the masses will surely support them.

The above analysis shows that implementing democratic centralism is an institutionalised work method of the CPC in implementing the mass line within the Party’s political activities. The aim of such a system is to mobilise and concentrate the collective wisdom and efforts of all Party members so that subjectivism within the Party leadership could be best avoided.

4.2.3 The method of investigation

In Mao’s works, the method of investigation was put in a prominent place. My analysis shows that it is actually the concrete method that explains how to implement the mass line in all practical work. It is through implementing the method of investigation that the
mass line as the method of knowing the world and the method of leadership come to life. In other words, without properly implementing the method of investigation, the mass line will only stay at the theoretical level, or be just an elegant political slogan. If the mass line is a car, the method of investigation is the way of configuring, operating, and maintaining the car in good working condition. Without correct method, the car will sooner or later be damaged, even destroyed.

For better understanding Mao’s method of investigation and its importance in implementing the mass line, the following subsections will focus on three aspects: the significance of investigation, the purpose and content of investigation, and the techniques of investigation. Only when these aspects are clarified can we thoroughly understand why and how to implement the mass line in concrete practice so as to better prevent subjectivist ideas in one’s thinking activities. In the process of implementing the mass line to fulfil any practical work, it is the method of investigation that plays the core role.

4.2.3.1 Significance of the method of investigation

“No investigation, no right to speak” is a well-known slogan that Mao proposed in Oppose Book Worship. Mao laid great stress on the method of investigation, regarding it as the indispensable prerequisite for making good policies and effectively solving problems. He warned cadres or anyone who was in charge of solving a problem, “When you have not probed into a problem, into the present facts and its past history, and know nothing of its essentials, whatever you say about it will undoubtedly be nonsense” (May, 1930, n.p.), that is totally subjectivist comments, suggestions, or decisions. Mao
stated that “only a blockhead cudgels his brains on his own, or together with a group, to ‘find solution’ or ‘evolve an idea’ without making any investigation” (May, 1930, n.p.), because such a method would not likely find any effective solutions but could only lead to wrong ones.

Mao was a lover of fact-finders. He stressed that a thorough investigation was the prerequisite for solving problems because “conclusions invariably come after investigation, and not before” (May, 1930, n.p.). Mao suggested the following for those in charge of solving problems:

Just get moving on your two legs, go the rounds of every section placed under your charge, and “inquire into everything”\(^\text{13}\) as Confucius did, and then you will be able to solve the problems, however little is your ability; for although your head may be empty before you go out of doors, it will be empty no longer when you return but will contain all sorts of material necessary for the solution of the problems, and that is how problems are solved (May, 1930, n.p.).

Due to Mao’s advocacy, the investigation method of solving problems was first developed in the Fourth Red Army, and then gradually spread to the whole Party in every aspect of work. In 1931, Mao developed the slogan into “no investigation, no right to speak; no proper investigation, also no right to speak” (Mao, 1931, pp. 267-268). This indicates that Mao not only required that an investigation be conducted before solving a problem but also that such an investigation be conducted in proper ways, otherwise, the investigation could not achieve the goal of solving problems effectively. In the following years, Mao reiterated the value of the method of investigation on many occasions and defended it firmly against attacks. In 1941, he wrote:

\(^{13}\) See Confucian Analects, Book III, “Pa Yi”: “When Confucius entered the Ancestral Temple he inquired into everything”. This means when you do not know a thing, you should learn modestly from those who know it regardless of whether their social positions are higher or lower than yours.
Although my assertion, “No investigation, no right to speak”, has been ridiculed as “narrow empiricism”, to this day I do not regret having made it; what is more, I still insist that without investigation there cannot possibly be any right to speak. … Today I still feel keenly the necessity for thorough research into Chinese and world affairs; this is related to the scantiness of my own knowledge of Chinese and world affairs and does not imply that I know everything and that others are ignorant. It is my wish to go on being a pupil, learning from the masses, together with all other Party comrades (March and April, 1941, p. 13).

These statements demonstrate that Mao was devoted to the method of investigation because of his firm belief in the wisdom of the masses and his willingness to “go on being a pupil, learning from the masses”. In January 1961, 31 years after the slogan “no investigation, no right to speak” was proposed, Mao made some summaries of the lessons and experiences of implementing investigation. According to his summaries (January 18, 1961), many mistakes made in the past were due to a lack of thorough investigation, and after the Zunyi Conference14, the situation became better until the victory in 1949. Yet according to Mao, “after liberation for several years we did some investigation and study, but not enough, and we didn’t have a very good understanding of circumstances” (January 18, 1961, n.p.). Therefore, Mao urged the comrades to “promote a resurgence of investigation” (January 18, 1961, n.p.) and turn the year of 1961 into a year of seeking truth from facts and a year of conducting investigation.

4.2.3.2 Purpose and content of investigation

Mao explicitly stated that the purpose of investigation was to solve problems: “You can’t solve a problem? Well, get down and investigate the present facts and its past history! When you have investigated the problem thoroughly, you will know how to

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14It was at this historic conference, held in 1935 during the Long March, that Mao established his solid leadership among the Party and the army.
solve it” (May, 1930, n.p.). Mao drew an analogy between investigation and solving a problem: “Investigation may be likened to the long months of pregnancy, and solving a problem to the day of birth. To investigate a problem is, indeed, to solve it” (May, 1930, n.p.). Mao’s statements show that the ultimate aim of investigation is to find a way to solve a problem. This is consistent with Mao’s assertion that knowledge gained from practice should be used to guide further practice and be tested by practice.

The detailed contents of investigation may differ because of the different nature of various problems and, therefore, the different purposes of investigations. Generally, the content of investigation should include the present facts of a problem, the process of its development, and the relationships between present and past, with the ultimate purpose to understand their interrelations so that the problem can be solved (Mao, May, 1930).

4.2.3.3 Techniques of investigation

Mao emphasised the need to employ appropriate techniques in investigation, otherwise the results of investigation might be “as trivial as a grocer's accounts, or resemble the many strange tales a country bumpkin hears when he comes to town, or are like a distant view of a populous city from a mountain top” (May, 1930, n.p.). Inadequate application of investigation is of little use and could not achieve the purpose for which it is meant. This indicates if a problem solver does not adopt proper techniques in conducting investigations, he/she cannot find effective solutions, so does not have the right to speak either, because what they say cannot reflect the real objective facts. The techniques of investigation can be summarised into four aspects: two general ways,
personal participation, preparing a detailed outline, and conducting deep and particular investigation.

The two general ways of investigation can be named as a “field-going research” style and a “fact-finding meeting” style. Mao describes the two styles as follows:

Just get moving your two legs, go the rounds of every section placed under your charge and “inquire into everything” as Confucius did, and then you will be able to solve the problems …. Must you go out of doors? Not necessarily. You can call a fact-finding meeting of people familiar with the situation in order to get at the source of what you call a difficult problem and come to know how it stands now, and then it will be easy to solve your difficult problem (May, 1930, n.p.).

The two styles are interdependent. The field-going research method is fundamental for one to gather first-hand data and form perceptual ideas of a phenomenon under study. The fact-finding meeting method is an alternative tactic to the field-going research method because Mao argued that it was not necessary to go out of doors to conduct investigation, but that “a fact-finding meeting of people familiar with the situation” (May, 1930, n.p.) could be held. In fact, Mao considered holding fact-finding meetings and undertaking investigation through discussions to be “the only way to get near the truth, the only way to draw conclusions” (May, 1930, n.p.). He stressed that:

It is easy to commit mistakes if you do not hold fact-finding meetings for investigation through discussions but simply rely on one individual relating his own experience. You cannot possibly draw more or less correct conclusions at such meetings if you put questions casually instead of raising key-questions for discussion (May, 1930, n.p.).

This passage clearly indicates that if fact-finding meetings were not held in investigations, mistakes would be easily committed. Furthermore, such a fact-finding meeting must involve recruiting enough participants from the masses (not simply
relying on one individual, because the word masses literally refers to at least three people), conducting discussions, and “raising key questions for discussion”. From Mao’s statements we can see that both the “field-going research” style and the “fact-finding meeting” style aim at concentrating adequate facts and ideas from the masses so that more correct leadership decisions can be made.

*Personal participation* or doing it yourself is another important rule Mao proposed for conducting correct investigation.

Everyone with responsibility for giving leadership — from the chairman of the township government to the chairman of the central government, from the detachment leader to the commander-in-chief, from the secretary of a Party branch to the general secretary — must personally undertake investigation into the specific social and economic conditions and not merely rely on reading reports. For investigation and reading reports are two entirely different things (Mao, May, 1930, n.p.).

This quote shows that Mao upheld that everyone with responsibility for giving leadership must personally conduct investigation among the masses, a way of combining leadership with the masses. He further emphasised that investigators should not only preside at fact-finding meetings and give proper guidance to those present but should also make their own notes and record the results (Mao, May, 1930, n.p.). Mao reiterated these ideas in 1961 as follows:

When we go into the work of inspection, we must see with our own eyes, not someone else’s, and hear with our own ears, we must feel with our own hands, discuss with our mouths, holding fact-finding meetings … You don’t have to do it all yourself: if you do one or two yourself you can organize a squad for the rest and lead it yourself. … This is very important: Party committee secretaries and members should all do investigation and study, or they may not have a clear understanding of conditions (January 18, 1961, n.p.).
This passage reflects Mao’s belief that rational knowledge must be based on perceptual knowledge obtained from practice, otherwise subjectivism cannot be effectively prevented. To put it simply, Mao believed that nothing could surpass “personal participation” or “doing it yourself” in conducting effective investigation among the masses because genuine knowledge originates from direct experiences (Mao, July, 1937). In other words, any leadership method divorced from personal participation in practice is not the mass line leadership method. As Mao has argued, personal participation does not mean the leadership should participate in everything, but they need to do enough to obtain some direct experiences. This is consistent with Mao’s beliefs that genuine knowledge comes from direct experiences in practice and personal cognition must combine with mass cognition.

Preparing a detailed outline is also essential for an effective investigation. According to Mao, a detailed outline should be prepared beforehand and should include the main subjects and sub-headings and also detailed items (Mao, May, 1930). Mao gave an example to show how to prepare a detailed outline of the content of investigation: “taking commerce as a main subject, it can have such sub-headings as cloth, grain, other necessities and medicinal herbs; again, under cloth, there can be such detailed items as calico, homespun and silk and satin” (Mao, May, 1930, n.p.). Moreover, Mao suggested investigators consider participants’ age, their experience, their occupations, their acquaintance with social and economic conditions, and the investigators’ own abilities and skills for holding such a meeting (Mao, May, 1930).

In 1942, at a cadres’ conference, Mao re-stressed the importance of investigation and raised some detailed questions. For instance, he required the cadres to learn the
language of the masses and to use it in practical work. “We do not always know how to speak simply, concretely, in images which are familiar and intelligible to the masses” (Mao, February 8, 1942, p. 65). According to Mao, the masses could not participate in and discuss enthusiastically any investigation unless investigators learned to speak in ways that the masses could understand and that could build good rapport between the investigated and the investigators. If the masses do not participate actively, the leadership will not obtain enough information for making correct decisions and the problem will not actually be solved.

*Conducting deep and particular investigation* is critical for a successful investigation. One important aspect of conducting correct investigation is to probe deeply to gain full knowledge of a particular problem so that the investigator can best use the knowledge and experience obtained to guide or inform future investigation. This is consistent with the cognition process Mao described as “the particular-general-particular formula”. Mao suggested that:

Anyone new to investigation work should make one or two thorough investigations in order to gain full knowledge of a particular place (say, a village or a town) of a particular problem (say, the problem of grain or currency). Deep probing into a particular place or problem will make future investigation of other places or problems easier (May, 1930, n.p.).

Mao’s statement above clearly shows that he advocated a thorough investigation, instead of a superficial or formalist one, must be conducted if anyone wanted to gain full knowledge of a particular problem. In the following analogies, we see a vivid description of the investigation method depicted by Mao:

There are two ways of making investigations. One is to look at flowers on horseback and the other is to get off your horse and look at them. If you look at
flowers on horseback, you’ll only get a superficial impression …. and so the
second way has to be adopted, that is, to get off your horse and look at the flowers,
observed them closely and analyse one “flower”, or dissect one “sparrow”
(September 25, 1956, p. 327).

For the ways of making investigations, Mao suggested conducting a deep,
thorough, and particular investigation to make a break-through at a certain point before
forming a whole picture of the whole problem, thus working out effective solutions.
Mao likened conducting a thorough investigation to dissecting a sparrow. He argued
that it is not necessary to catch all the sparrows and dissect them before proving the fact
that “small as it is, the sparrow has all the vital organs” (October 11, 1955, p. 222).

The above techniques (or tactics, or concrete methods) best characterise the
esential requirements for conducting a “proper investigation” advocated by Mao. From
this ground, if a leader or a problem solver fails to follow these basic requirements, they
are not conducting a proper investigation and their decisions will be overwhelmed by
enormous subjectivist ideas, hence not implementing the mass line thoroughly and
effectively.

4.3 Chapter summary

The analyses of Mao’s works show that the mass line in essence refers to a set of
methods aiming at objectively concentrating the ideas and efforts of the masses to
maximally avoid personal subjectivism in the process of forming judgements, decisions,
policies, or theories for effectively solving problems. During this process, leaders or
problem-solvers should know who the masses are and what groups of masses they
should rely on in concrete conditions so that more accurate and objective leadership
decisions will be made. The concept of masses, though usually referring to the ordinary people of a society, like workers and peasants, needs to be defined in the concrete conditions of specific leadership and the led situations. In Mao’s mass line context, any groups of people who may provide help to the leadership or the person in charge of solving a problem all belong to the category of the masses. In all and in short, the ultimate aim of implementing the mass line is to concentrate the wisdom and efforts of the masses to solve problems.
Chapter 5  Analysis of the mass line in criminal investigation

In this chapter, I will present findings about the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation work. The findings in Section 5.1 consist of important principles drawn from Mao’s works and Luo’s speeches. As has been noted in Chapter 3, Mao’s works on implementing the mass line in criminal investigation are few. As the number one leader at that time being responsible for all work in a chaotic China, Mao could only propose general guidelines and instructions directing criminal investigation work, which mainly focused on, but were not limited to, fighting against espionage activities and counter-revolutionary sabotages. These crimes were manifested in various forms including murders, explosions, robberies, thefts, riots, and rapes that greatly threatened the safety of the masses and the governance of the CPC (Luo, October 19, 1950). It was Luo, the first police minister of the PRC appointed by Mao, who not only implemented Mao’s guidelines and instructions into criminal investigation work but further developed and enriched them. Luo’s speeches embody more specific issues on carrying out the mass line in police work, particularly with regard to understanding the mass line from the practical perspective of how to implement it in criminal investigation. Therefore, Mao’s works and Luo’s speeches on implementing the mass line in criminal investigation work were analysed together to see what principles had been established in Mao’s era by these two.

Section 5.2 describes the findings from analysing interviews with Chinese frontline police officers. These findings provide significant empirical knowledge about frontline
police officers’ understanding of the mass line and their experiences and suggestions for implementing it in criminal investigation operations.

5.1 Principles drawn from Mao’s works and Luo’s speeches

Among Mao’s works, the following three documents, *On Policy* (1940), *The Two Lines in Preventing Espionage* (1943), and *The Party’s Mass Line Must Be Followed in Suppressing Counter-Revolutionaries* (1951), are most closely associated with implementing the mass line in criminal investigation work. Among Luo’s speeches, seven documents are most closely related to implementing the mass line in criminal investigation work. These seven selected documents and the main ideas in each are listed in Table 3.3 in Chapter 3.

These documents embody essential principles for implementing the mass line in suppressing counter-revolutionary sabotage and other crimes, which have later produced profound effects on implementing the mass line in criminal investigation work in China (J. Li, 2006; Meng, 2008; Shi & Hou, 1999; Sui, 2007a; S. Wu, 2009). The following two instructions from Mao best illustrate his ideas of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation work that focused on fighting various forms of espionage, counter-revolutionary sabotages and crimes.

One instruction is known as the “Nine Guidelines” and was proposed in 1943 focusing on fighting espionage sabotages and crimes in the areas under the control of the CPC. Mao pointed out that there were two lines in the work of anti-espionage

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1 This document is titled *Fangjian gongzuo de liangtiao luxian*, but is not included in the SWM. It is included in the Collected Works of Mao Zedong, Vol. III, p. 35. Since it is a very important document in Chinese police studies, it was selected for this research.
(hereafter *The Anti-Espionage Instruction*). The wrong line was “coercion, confession, conviction”\(^2\) (Mao, 1943, p. 35). The right line was

the leading cadres themselves assume responsibility, and participate personally, that the leading group links itself closely with the masses, that general calls are combined with particular and specific guidance, that investigation and study are undertaken, that priority is given to what is urgent and important, that the wrongdoers are to be won over, that cadres are to be trained, and that the masses are to be educated (Mao, 1943, p. 35).

The Anti-Espionage Instruction has produced profound effects on criminal investigation work throughout the Chinese Communist history under Mao’s leadership, and up to the present (Luo, October 19, 1950; Mao, 1943; Meng, 2008; Sui, 2007b). In 1951, Mao put forward the other instruction that focused on suppressing counter-revolutionary crimes. In this instruction, Mao claimed evidently and firmly that the mass line had proved effective everywhere and must be followed.

This means leadership by Party committees, mobilization of the entire Party membership, mobilization of the masses, participation by the democratic parties and by personages from all circles, unified planning, unified action, strict examination of the lists of persons to be arrested or executed, attention to tactics in different phases of the struggle, widespread propaganda and education (holding various kinds of conferences, cadre meetings, forums and mass rallies, at all of which victims can bring their accusations and evidence of crimes can be displayed, and making propaganda through films, lantern-slides, stage performances, newspapers, pamphlets and leaflets, in order to make the movement known to every household and individual), a break with the practice of working behind closed doors and being secretive, and determined opposition to the deviation of rashness (May, 1951, p. 50).

This instruction was part of Mao’s reports to the *Third National Conference on Public Security Work* in 1951 (Mao, May, 1951) and was documented as *The Party’s Mass Line Must Be Followed in Suppressing Counter-Revolutionaries* (hereafter *The

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\(^2\) This is written as “逼，供，信 (bi, gong, xin)” in Chinese, which means to extort confessions by torture, then give credence to the confessions and pass the conviction.
Suppressing Counter-Revolutionaries Instruction). This has become an important document for studying the implementation of the mass line in fighting against various counter-revolutionary crimes in Mao’s era as well as its effects on carrying out the mass line in current criminal investigation work in China (J. Li, 2006; Luo, June 3, 1958; Meng, 2008; Sui, 2007a; S. Wu, 2009).

I will analyse Mao’s two instructions and other quotes both from Mao and Luo in the following sections. Based on such analyses, I will present my main findings about the principles Mao and Luo established for carrying out the mass line in criminal investigation work.

5.1.1 Police commanders must link themselves closely with police officers

This principle was drawn from Mao’s guideline of “the leading group links itself closely with the masses” in The Anti-Espionage Instruction. In this instruction, although Mao did not explain who the masses were, based on the analysis of the concept of the masses in Mao’s works in Chapter 4, the masses referred to in this context include those rank and file police officers in addition to those masses outside the police force. In Mao’s works, the leading group refers to leaders and cadres of an organisation in leadership posts compared to those rank and file members. This was explicitly expressed by Mao who said that, for ensuring the mass line being thoroughly and effectively implemented, the leading group of the Party must above all maintain close ties with the masses within the Party (Mao, April 20, 1945, p. 208). Consequently, Mao’s mass line in criminal investigation intrinsically included issues of how police commanders (the police leading group in criminal investigation operations) should link themselves with the rank and file
police officers. This is one very important aspect of applying Mao’s mass line leadership method of “combining the leadership with the masses” to criminal investigation.

Mao upheld that one important way for the police leading group to maintain close ties with the rank and file officers is that leading cadres “participate personally” in the practice of criminal investigation (Mao, 1943). According to Mao’s mass line philosophy (see Chapter 4), leaders participating personally in social practice among the masses is essential for obtaining genuine knowledge through direct experiences of themselves, learning experiences from the masses, maintaining close ties with them, and winning their support (Mao, July, 1937, June 12, 1943, May, 1930).

When stressing the importance of thoroughly implementing the mass line in police work, Luo also emphasised that police leadership groups, particular leaders at higher levels within the police organisations, must link themselves closely with the subordinates among the grassroots police agencies. The following quote from Luo better illustrates this point.

There must be substantial and practical reforms in methods of leadership … the leading group in police agencies must be organized to go to the grassroots, to the most frontward fronts of the struggle, directly participate in the practical struggles there … Leaders within the Ministry of Public Security must often go down to grassroots police agencies to inspect work, and must hold right attitude during the inspection, that is to get down from your high horse, consult earnestly and learn from your subordinates, from the masses, make every effort to obtain experiences and methods from practical struggles and from the masses (Luo, June 3, 1958, pp. 382-383).

This quote was part of Luo’s suggestions for implementing the mass line more thoroughly in the public security work, including criminal investigation work. From
Luo’s suggestions it can be inferred that police leaders must link themselves with their subordinates – the rank and file police officers in lower or grassroots police agencies – through participating in the practical struggles, consulting and learning earnestly from their subordinates and the masses. Luo’s suggestions more comprehensively illustrate the application of Mao’s mass line method of “combining the leadership with the masses” to criminal investigation work.

The above analyses show that police commanders linking themselves with the rank and file police officers through personal practice with them is an important principle in implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. However, this principle has been much neglected in current studies on implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. Current studies almost all focused on issues of maintaining close ties between the police and the masses, and the combination of the police with the masses in criminal investigation operations (Jing & Wang, 2011; G. Li, 1993; Pan, 1996; Ren, 2010; Wang, 2004).

5.1.2 Combination of the special force with the masses

As has been analysed above, police commanders linking themselves closely with police officers is one important aspect of applying the mass line leadership method of “combining the leadership with the masses” (Mao, June 12, 1943, p. 120) to criminal investigation work. The other aspect of applying this method to criminal investigation is called “combining the special force with the masses” (Luo, July 31, 1958, p. 408). The “special force” refers to the police because they are “empowered to make arrests” (Mao, December 25, 1940, p. 447) whereas other governmental or non-governmental
organisations and citizens are not. This means that the police are taking the leadership position and bearing major responsibility for investigating crimes. Then those organisations and citizens bearing no function and duty of investigating crimes are the masses in the position of the led. According to Mao’s mass line method of combining the leadership with the masses, the police as the leading force in criminal investigation should combine its own professional operations with the support of the masses outside the police force.

The principle of combining the special force with the masses reflects Mao’s beliefs that the masses are the real subjects of knowledge, that the masses’ practices are the origin of cognition, so the leadership must have faith in and rely on them in all practical work (Mao, August, 1937, July, 1937, June 12, 1943), including criminal investigation work. These ideas were further demonstrated by Luo in his speeches as follows:

Seen through the perspectives of criminal investigation, there still exist shortcomings of non-thoroughly implementing the mass line … the remnants of isolationism and mystificationism can still be seen. Such problems mainly manifest as only having faith in selves, having no faith in the masses; only having faith in leaders at higher levels, having no faith in subordinates at lower levels; having blind faith in certain techniques, seeing no roles of people. Some criminal investigators failed to truly understand that the combination of the special agencies with the broad masses will enable us to conduct better investigations, will ensure us to fight a better struggle against those hidden enemies. As for whether criminal investigation work can rely on the masses, some criminal investigators still, in their mind, hold suspicious attitudes. With this problem unsolved, the criminal investigation work will not display its due power in the struggle against enemies (Luo, June 3, 1958, pp. 376-377).

This passage was extracted from Luo’s speech titled The Mass Line Must be Further Implemented in Public Security Work. In this passage, Luo clearly and firmly criticised the remnants of isolationism and mystificationsim (mainly manifested as only
having faith in selves, only having faith in police leaders at higher levels, and having blind faith in certain techniques) in the practice of criminal investigation, which was described as “the practice of working behind closed doors and being secretive” by Mao in The Suppressing Counter-Revolutionaries Instruction (May, 1951, p. 50). According to Luo’s arguments above, for thoroughly implementing the mass line in criminal investigation, criminal investigators should combine themselves with the masses, combine special criminal investigation techniques with support of the masses, and combine ideas of police commanders/leaders at high levels with that of police investigators at lower levels. Through such combinations, criminal investigators can extensively collect sufficient information, clues, and ideas from more sources to form well-informed but less subjective judgements and conclusions about the crime under investigation. I argue that this is the very essence of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation.

Then how to combine the special force with the masses? One important method is to mobilise the masses (Mao, May, 1951). Certainly, the mobilisation of all masses needs effective organising and propagating methods. The organising methods Mao listed include holding “conferences, cadre meetings, forums and mass rallies”; and the propagating methods include “making propaganda through films, lantern-slides, stage performances, newspapers, pamphlets and leaflets” (Mao, May, 1951, p. 50). The method that best fits the relevant people, place, and phase is determined by the needs of each specific situation.

The mass campaign was Mao’s favourite style of mobilising the masses. As a result, nationwide mass campaigns had been broadly carried out in suppressing
counter-revolutionaries as well as in dealing with other kinds of crime. Luo commented
that the mass campaign was an important form for implementing the mass line in
criminal investigation, but it was not the only form. A mass campaign could be
launched on different scales, such as at town level, county level, province level,
cross-province level, or nationwide (Luo, July 31, 1958). The following quotation
illustrates Luo’s views about the relations between the mass campaign and the
implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation work.

As for whether it is necessary to launch a mass campaign, as well as the questions
of what time, what place, and what scale, should be decided in accordance with
the need of the situation, the need of the struggle … neither the believing that the
public security agencies can only use mass campaigns to realise the combination
of the police professional work with the mass support, nor the believing that once
the campaign passed away the police professional work will not be necessary to
emphasise the implementation of the mass line is appropriate (Luo, July 31, 1958,
p. 425).

As shown here, Luo clearly articulated that the mass campaign should be launched
only when it was necessary. According to Luo, it is incorrect to simply regard
implementing the mass line in criminal investigation work as launching mass campaigns.
In other words, implementing the mass line in criminal investigation work involves
more than launching a mass campaign.

5.1.3 Persevering in the method of investigation, prohibiting extortion of
confessions

Although Mao maintained that confirmed traitors and spies must be firmly suppressed,
he strongly opposed the practice of extorting confessions by torture (Mao, December
25, 1940). Instead, he emphasised that the method of investigation should be undertaken.
From this evolved an important principle of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation: persevering in the method of investigation, prohibiting extortion of confessions. This principle was embodied both in Mao’s works and Luo’s speeches.

In 1940, when drawing up the anti-espionage policy, Mao clearly proposed that “Corporal punishment must be abolished in trying criminals; the stress must be on the weight of evidence and confessions should not be taken on trust” (Mao, December 25, 1940, p. 446). In The Anti-Espionage Instruction, Mao reemphasised that the method of “coercion, confession, conviction” was wrong and must be abolished (Mao, 1943, p. 35). Instead, he pointed out that the mass line method of conducting investigation be undertaken. These requirements for conducting criminal investigations are identical with Mao’s mass line theory of knowledge that upholds that the origin of the cognition comes from the practice of the masses, from the facts in the material world, rather than from subjective, one-sided, or biased personal suppositions (Mao, August, 1937, July, 1937). The method of “coercion, confession, conviction” is driven by personal subjective suppositions, which is totally against the method of investigation (Luo, September 19, 1956). The following quotation from Luo further demonstrates these viewpoints.

Opposing “coercion, confession, conviction” means corporal punishment and any other kinds of disguised corporal punishment must be strictly prohibited … because extorting confessions by torture can only impel us to make mistakes, doing nothing good for defeating enemies. … Our Party has always put stress on the weight of evidence, and credence shall not be readily given to oral statements. Evidence shall be examined repeatedly, shall be solid and genuine evidence, not false evidence. The work of investigation shall also be examined repeatedly, and reporting problems must be comprehensive and honest, not subjective, one-sided, and biased. Such is the scientific attitude of seeking truth from facts. Only by doing so, can we be really powerful (Luo, September 19, 1956, pp. 312-313).
Luo maintained that the practices of extorting confessions and corporal punishment must be strictly prohibited and abolished. Instead, conducting thorough and repeated investigations among the masses was the necessary condition for solving any criminal case effectively and correctly. When summarising the experiences of implementing the mass line in suppressing the counter-revolutionary sabotages and crimes, Luo (September 19, 1956) argued that the work of suppressing counter-revolutionaries must not only mobilise all the Party membership and the masses but also put stress on the work of investigation. He further explained that the truth in Mao’s teaching “no investigation, no right to speak” was important in every respect, particularly in the struggle to suppress the counter-revolutionary sabotages and crimes. Luo explained that conducting thorough investigations among the masses was essential not only for discovering those well-hidden enemies but also obtaining solid and genuine evidence to prove their crimes (Luo, September 19, 1956).

The statements of Mao and Luo indicate that persevering in the method of investigation and prohibiting extortion of confessions is essential for properly implementing the mass line in criminal investigations. When proper and thorough investigations are conducted, criminal investigators will collect enough information, clues, and evidence for making objective and accurate analyses and drawing correct conclusions on a criminal case. Then they will realise that the brutal method of extorting confessions is not necessary at all, and will be willing to accept the laws that prohibit such methods. This will to a great extent help them to conduct proper and thorough investigations among the masses of their own free will.
5.2 Findings from the interviews with police officers

My interviews with the frontline police officers focused on six general questions (see below). Within each general question, corresponding probing questions were also asked where necessary for obtaining further information (probing questions will be mentioned in the following subsections where they fit best).

1. Could you please talk about your understandings of the mass line in criminal investigation?

2. Who do you think the masses are in the context of criminal investigation?

3. In practical work, how do you usually implement the mass line in criminal investigation?

4. As has been reported, extorting confessions was one of the main reasons that led to the two wrongful cases of “She Xianglin” and “Zhao Zuohai”. Is the method of extorting confessions against the mass line? Why or why not?

5. As a criminal investigator, how could you better implement the mass line method of work in solving a criminal case?

6. If as a police commander, how could you better implement the mass line method of leadership in commanding the investigation of a criminal case?

Through constant reading, comparing, and analysing, the interviewees’ responses to the six questions and subsequent probes were grouped into the following categories: interviewees’ understandings of the concept of the masses (questions 1 and 2), interviewees’ views on the need to rely on the masses (questions 1, 2 and 3), interviewees’ views about extorting confessions and implementing the mass line
(question 4), interviewees’ views on neighbourhood canvasses among the masses (questions 1, 3 and 5), interviewees’ views on mobilising the masses (questions 1, 3 and 5), and interviewees suggested mass line leadership styles in criminal investigation (question 6). These findings provide important empirical knowledge for understanding the limits on comprehensively implementing the mass line in criminal investigation work from the insider perspective.

5.2.1 Interviewees’ understandings of the concept of the masses

The police interviewees’ understandings of the concept of the masses were abstracted from their responses to questions 1 and 2, followed by probing questions like “Are the rank and file police officers also the masses to a criminal investigation commander? Why or why not? Why do/don’t you think criminal suspects are also the masses to a criminal investigator?” Probing questions were raised flexibly in accordance with each interviewee’s responses to the questions asked.

When the interviewees first responded to questions 1 and 2, they usually indicated the masses as those people outside the police force who might provide information, clues, or help to the police investigators in the process of solving criminal cases. The masses they referred to included both individuals as natural beings and entities such as social organisations. This concept of the masses was expressed unanimously by all eleven interviewees. However, when responding to the probing questions, the interviewees upheld different views. Though the majority of the interviewees acknowledged that the rank and file police officers and criminal suspects were also the masses in concrete conditions, some interviewees upheld that they were not.
Through constant comparison of the interviewees’ responses and based on the analysis of the concept of the masses in Mao’s works, I grouped the interviewees’ understandings of the masses into two main categories: non-police masses and police masses. Non-police masses refer to those people outside the police force who do not have special power and obligatory duties stipulated by law for investigating crimes. The non-police masses are in the position of the led that may help the police in different ways in the process of solving criminal cases. In contrast, the police masses refer to the rank and file police officers who do have special power and obligatory duties by law to conduct criminal investigation and bear major responsibilities for it. Since the police as a whole have such special power and duties, bearing major responsibilities in conducting criminal investigation, they are the leading force and hence in the position of the leadership compared to the non-police masses. At the same time, the rank and file police officers are also ordinary members within the police force who are in the position of the led compared to their commanders. In this sense, they are also the masses. This categorisation is consistent with the analysis of the concept of the masses in Mao’s works: defining the masses in concrete relations between the leadership and the led (see Chapter 4.1 for details).

5.2.1.1 Non-police masses

Generally speaking, the police interviewees expressed a unanimous view that the masses referred to all those people who are not working as police officers. This was categorised as the non-police masses in my analysis of the interviews. The non-police
masses do not have specific police functions and usually act as supporters or witnesses for the police investigators in solving crimes.

The words they usually used to refer to the non-masses include *Laobaixing*, citizens, residents, or the people, the majority of the masses who usually act as eyewitnesses and informers in the process of criminal investigation. Officer A claimed that “citizens who are not working as police officers are the masses. … Those groups bearing no police functions are all the masses in police work”. Officer A’s view suggests a dichotomy perspective in classifying the masses and the police based on the function of what they do. This was further demonstrated by Officer B who said that “in the process of solving criminal cases, except for the police, all other people are the masses. … Any witnesses, a mayor or a bureau director, regardless of their ranks, if they may provide us with help in solving cases, all belongs to the masses”. Similarly, Officer C believed that “anyone who can help us in criminal investigation all belongs to the masses, including criminal suspects and released convicts”. Also Officer D argued that “all residents, including foreigners, all groups of individuals outside the criminal investigation force or outside the police force, who are all masses because they are all the objects that our criminal investigation work may involve”. In a similar vein, Officer J said that “each individual, each citizen, together, forms the masses. The masses include any individuals that we police may contact with and may interview in conducting criminal investigation work”. In light of the officers’ understandings, anyone (a citizen, an expert, a mayor, or a foreigner) who may provide potential help to the police in criminal investigation can be seen as a member of the masses.

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3 This phrase in Chinese usually refers to ordinary people from different surnames.
Specifically speaking, some interviewees did express distinctive views on three particular types of the non-police masses: the expert masses, the criminal suspect masses, and the foreigner masses. Though all interviewees regarded (non-police) experts also as a type of the masses, some interviewees did have a very specific understanding of the concept of experts in criminal investigation. Officer B maintained that experts not only included those elites in various science and technology fields, but also any persons who had particular knowledge, particular experiences in certain areas. He said that fishermen might provide criminal investigators with expert knowledge about the law of the sea tides in certain areas, experienced welders might provide very expert knowledge about what types of welding tools a criminal suspect used to cut a bank safe open, and a peasant worker might help police find out the exact meaning of some peasant slang. Officer B argued that “criminal investigators are not experts of knowing-all; we must rely on experts among the masses from all walks of life”. Officer I held similar opinions, saying “in my opinion, criminal investigation work is to take over the knowledge from all kinds of experts, from different professions and trades, to fulfil our tasks”. This means that experts are also a type of the masses that criminal investigators can rely on in solving a particular criminal case.

Interestingly, though Officer B expressed a very unique understanding of the expert masses, he was the only one who thought that criminal suspects did not belong to the category of the masses. This is contradictory to his statement that “in the process of solving criminal cases, except for the police, all other people are the masses”. He argued that the suspect(s) in a given case should not be considered as the masses, because “the suspects are the objects we are to find out. … But if a criminal suspect informs about
others’ crimes, he/she may be regarded as a member of the masses”. Officer B’s responses suggest that whether you are a member of the masses is a function of what you do – rather than, for instance, who you are. All other interviewees regarded criminal suspects as also being the masses. Officer A argued that “criminal suspects are also the masses, because they are ordinary citizens before the trial of the courts, they are members of laobaixing”. Similarly, Officer J said that “a criminal suspect is also a member of the masses, who also comes from the masses, and returns back to the masses after committing a crime, and hides among the masses”. These statements suggest that criminal suspects as a particular group of individuals in the process of criminal investigation should not be excluded from the categories of the masses. Therefore, the explanations and defences of a criminal suspect should also be considered as an important source of ideas from the masses that criminal investigators should objectively collect and analyse in the process of conducting criminal investigations.

Officer D was the only one who explicitly expressed the view that the masses also included foreigners staying in China. He said that “the masses in a broad sense embody all Chinese public and also foreigners staying in China. In the process of criminal investigation, anyone may be a member of the masses only if he/she is an object of our criminal investigation work”. Two other officers, namely Officer H and Officer J, argued that the masses included anyone police might interview in the process of conducting criminal investigations, which implied that a foreigner staying in China was also a member of the masses in criminal investigation. These statements suggest that whether an individual is a member of the masses in criminal investigation depends on
whether he/she is an object that police investigators may interview for obtaining potential crime clues.

Furthermore, when talking about the concept of the masses in criminal investigation, the police interviewees also listed some entities as the masses, which included both government agencies and other social organisations bearing no compulsory responsibilities and functions of criminal investigation. According to Officer A, relying on social technology groups, such as companies and enterprises, to increase technological knowledge in criminal investigation is in fact reliance on the masses in the area of improving criminal investigation technology, but “this is a different concept from relying on the ordinary laobaixing”. Similarly, Officer C said that the masses could be either natural beings, or units, or other social resources. Officer H argued that, speaking from the position of a criminal investigation squad, “the masses can also include local government agencies, and other organisations … it is impossible to break through all technological difficulties only relying on the wisdom of the criminal investigation squad”. Officer L also maintained that “the concept of the masses today, speaking from the perspective of criminal investigation, does no longer refer only to natural individuals, but encompasses the collective, units, and social organisations”.

The view that entities or organisations are also the masses is consistent with the findings about the concept of the masses embodied in Mao’s works. It has been discussed and accepted by some scholars as well. According to Liu (2004), the criminal investigation agencies were the main professional force in solving criminal cases and all other agencies might be regarded as the masses. Similarly, Zhang argued that the masses in criminal investigation not only included groups of individuals but also organisational
groups such as economic companies, institutes, schools, and other social organisations (Zhang, 2008). The finding that entities and organisations were also regarded as a type of the masses shows that the concept of the masses in criminal investigation has a wide extension, which usually needs to be defined in concrete conditions.

5.2.1.2 The police masses

The most debated, but one of the most significant, probing questions raised during the interviews for this research related to whether the rank and file police officers were also the masses to a criminal investigation commander — in other words whether the concept of the masses within the police force, or the concept of the police masses (as compared to worker masses, peasant masses, student masses, etc.), is essential. Based on my literature review of current studies, I predicted that when the probing question of “Are the rank and file police officers also the masses to a criminal investigation commander? Why or why not?” was raised, most police officers would say that the rank and file police officers are not the masses, with only some saying that they are.

Officers A and B both denied the rank and file police officers were also the masses when it was raised for the first time in the interviews, because they interpreted the masses as those not working as police officers. They argued that criminal investigation commanders and the ordinary police officers all belonged to the same organisation bearing special police functions, yet the masses were those people outside the police organisations bearing no special police functions. Later during their interviews, when there was a focus on the mass line as a method of leadership, they acknowledged that when discussing the mass line from this perspective, the ordinary police officers may be
considered as the masses as well, but “this is a different perspective” (Officer A), and
the concept of the masses within the police is a “specific concept, which is different
from the common concept of the masses – laobaixing, which we are talking about in
daily work” (Officer B).

Surprisingly, the other nine interviewees all agreed with the concept of the masses
within the police when the question was raised. For example, Officer D said that “to a
criminal investigation commander, the investigators are his masses. The commander
shall have faith in them … know how to rely on them and mobilise their initiative in
solving a criminal case”. Officer L, the officer with 26-years of police experience, said
that police are just a specific group of the masses, “nothing but masses in uniform, that
is, the masses enforcing laws”.

The findings show a big deviation from my prediction because only two out of
eleven interviewees, instead of most interviewees, did not think that the rank and file
police officers were also the masses to a criminal investigation commander when the
question was raised first. When the concept of the masses within the police was
discussed in the context of the mass line as a method of leadership between the police
commander and the ordinary police officers, all police interviewees agreed it was
essential for thoroughly and comprehensively understanding, and implementing, the
mass line in criminal investigation.

It should be noted that, in a general sense, the masses in the context of conducting
criminal investigations refer to those non-police masses. Also when the police
interviewees mentioned the masses, they referred to the non-police masses in their
statements. The specific concept of the “police masses” is proposed in this research for
discussing how to thoroughly implement the mass line in criminal investigation, with a focus on the aspect of the relation between police commanders and ordinary police officers. For the purpose of complying with the general use of the masses, hereafter, where the word “masses” is used, it refers to the non-police masses unless the specific meaning of the police masses is clarified.

5.2.2 Interviewees’ views on the need to rely on the masses

All interviewees had claimed that criminal investigation work must rely on the masses because the masses were the richest source of information for solving criminal cases. When arguing the reasons for relying on the masses, they shared the common view that criminals, as members of the masses, could not survive without having contact with others. Therefore, someone among the masses must have some knowledge about criminals and their conduct. The following narrative is indicative.

If a being were a being, then, he/she should eat, live and make contact with other persons — contact with the masses. If we want to know about his/her information, we must rely on the masses, conduct investigations and interviews among the masses, until we arrest that person. In this process, it is inevitable to make various contacts with the masses, manage to obtain support from the masses (Officer B).

Similarly, Officer J said that criminal suspects were also members of the masses, living among the masses, so someone among the masses would have some knowledge about these criminals and their activities. He further argued that, if the mass line were accurately and thoroughly implemented in criminal investigation, “theoretically speaking, no criminal case could not be solved”. Officer L reasoned that “the police manpower is limited, the social areas you can make contact with are limited, the time
you can spend contacting the society is also limited, so most information comes from
the masses”. He also argued that human beings were “social beings” who could not
survive without contacting others; so “everyone [uttered with stress] will leave some
record, some traces among the society and among the masses”; if the masses did not
report these records and information to the police, then the police were “blind-eyed and
deaf-eared” (Officer L).

The rationale that the police interviewees stated above is consistent with Mao’s
philosophy that the origin of cognition comes from the practice of the masses, and that
the correct way to know a thing or solve a problem is to conduct thorough investigations
among the masses and learn from them, from the social practice. In the same vein, to
find out the truth of a criminal case, it is necessary to conduct comprehensive, repeated,
and thorough investigations among the masses to collect sufficient and genuine
evidence.

5.2.3 Interviewees’ views on extorting confessions and implementing the mass
line

The preceding findings from Mao’s works and Luo’s speeches clearly show that
implementing the mass line in criminal investigation work needs to strictly abolish the
method of extorting confessions by corporal torture (like beating or burning with a
cigarette) and any other means of punishment in any disguised ways (like standing in
flaming sunlight, starvation, or deprivation of sleeping). Instead, the method of
investigation should be adopted in the whole process of conducting a criminal
investigation. However, the findings from the interviews indicate that not all police
officers have clear knowledge about the correlations between implementing the mass line and opposing the extortion of confession by torture.

When discussing the reasons that led to the two notorious wrongful convictions in the She Xianglin Case, and the Zhao Zuohai Case (see Appendix C), all interviewees acknowledged that the method of extorting confessions was the main reason. Yet their responses went into two markedly contrasting opinions when they responded to the probing question of whether the method of extorting confessions by torture deviated from the requirements of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. Nine out of the eleven interviewees acknowledged that extorting confessions was against the mass line. The following narrative best illustrates this point.

… it totally deviates [from the requirements of the mass line]. The method of extorting confessions by torture is a very simple method. Simple as it is, sometimes it does work. Yet it deviates from the principle of conducting thorough investigations, so it is also very easy to lead to problems and errors (Officer H).

This quotation shows that Officer H explicitly expressed the view that extorting confessions by torture was against the mass line because it violated the principle of conducting thorough investigations. As has been discussed previously, conducting investigation is one important principle Mao, and Luo as well, emphasised in implementing the mass line in conducting criminal investigations. Another quotation from Officer I further demonstrates the view that extorting confessions opposes the mass line:

Extorting confessions by torture, in essence, is definitely against the mass line. Extorting confessions, its basis is those case handlers, from the leadership to specific police officers, make subjective supposition, believing the crime was committed by a criminal suspect or someone. Since they are too confident and confirmed, enhanced by their subjective supposition, they extort confessions by
torture. They usually extort confessions by torture when a criminal suspect does not confess, or challenges their subjective supposition, particularly when they lack other types of direct evidence … Speaking of the root cause, it’s still subjective supposition, adopting simple method [of handling a case], credence is readily given to confessions (Officer I).

This shows that Officer I believes extorting confessions is in essence against the mass line, and the main reason behind the extortion is subjective supposition, which is exactly what Mao’s mass line aims to overcome. Together, the views of Officer H and Officer I represent the views of the other seven interviewees who all believe that the extortion of confessions is against the mass line. According to their views, the extortion of confessions violates the principle of persevering in the mass line method of investigation, and is the manifestation of subjectivism. These views are consistent with Mao’s and Luo’s views on persevering in the method of investigation, opposing corporal punishment and prohibiting extortion of confession.

However, Officer D and Officer K (from the two police forces respectively) explicitly denied that implementing the mass line was required to oppose the extortion of confessions, though they both believed that extorting confessions was illegal. When the probing question of “Adhering to the mass line, should the method of extorting confessions by torture be strictly opposed?” was raised, Officer D responded: “Well, my personal opinion, extorting confessions by torture has nothing to do with implementing the mass line”. The subsequent probing question of “Do they oppose each other?” produced the following response:

Not opposing [to each other], but not definitely. ... Believing in the mass line and extorting confessions by torture are two different things. Extorting confessions occurs when some officers seek quick success and instant benefits, wanting to achieve something, or subjectively wanting to convict a person, giving an unwarranted charge, so adopting extortion of confessions includes different
circumstances. Well, [implementing] the mass line, we extensively collect some information, verifying some things. This is not necessarily connected to extorting confessions (Officer D).

Quite telling in this passage is that the officer did not have clear knowledge about the opposing relations between implementing the mass line and extorting confessions. Officer K’s responses further illustrate this point.

Is the method of extorting confessions by torture against the mass line? Well, I cannot see any connections … I personally believe, in ancient or modern times, in China or foreign lands, it’s impossible to totally abolish extorting confessions by torture. Yeah, I agree extorting confessions by torture violates human rights, and is illegal according to the Criminal Code. It’s doubtless. However, I think, extorting confessions is not the root cause to wrongful cases … the key point is not coercion and confession, it is conviction. What makes you willing to give credence to the [coerced] confessions? ... After obtaining confessions, you, you at least need to check them up, to collect other relevant evidence, seeking corroboration. If extorting confessions just for oral statements, I think such a police officer has no intelligence quotient at all.

This passage indicates that Officer K not only denied the opposing relation between implementing the mass line and extorting confessions by torture in criminal investigation, but also suggested that extorting confessions was acceptable if it was skilfully undertaken to provide corroboration (via extorted oral confessions) with other types of evidence. In other words, if the extorted confessions could be verified by other evidence, that would be acceptable. Such views suggest that some frontline officers do not have thorough understandings of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation work, particularly on the principle of “persevering in the method of investigation, prohibiting extortion of confessions” that had been emphasised many times both by Mao and Luo.
5.2.4 Interviewees’ views on neighbourhood canvasses among the masses

The analyses of the interviews show that all interviewees listed the neighbourhood canvass as one essential method of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. They argued that conducting neighbourhood canvasses was the most frequently used method of combining the police professional investigation with the support of the masses in criminal investigation and is still a very useful and indispensable investigation measure even in the society today where hi-technology is playing an increasingly important role in criminal investigation.

However, the interviewees also acknowledged that the masses had become increasingly unwilling to be interviewed when police officers were conducting neighbourhood canvasses. Although they complained that this tendency was caused by various reasons (such as some masses were caring about only their own business, fearing revenge from the criminal suspects, and worrying about economic loss once they became witnesses), they all strongly argued that the main reason that led to the unwillingness of the masses to be interviewed was the improper methods and skills adopted by the police officers themselves. Drawing from their experiences, they gave their suggestions for effectively conducting neighbourhood canvasses – the most frequently used method of conducting investigation among the masses.

Three findings from the interview analyses are most informative about how to conduct neighbourhood canvasses in criminal investigation: considering the convenience of the masses, tempering the art of communication with the masses, and conducting thorough canvasses. Since conducting neighbourhood canvasses is the most frequently used method of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation and is
conducted in almost all criminal investigations (some in large scale, some in small scale), these suggestions also fit for all other criminal investigation activities when police investigators make contact with the masses.

5.2.4.1 Considering the convenience of the masses

From the interviews it can be seen that in the process of conducting a neighbourhood canvass, considering the convenience of the masses is very important and sometimes the key determinant for obtaining a valuable lead. Choosing appropriate interview times and places are the two factors that should be considered in conducting any neighbourhood canvasses whether large scale or small scale.

Police officer F argued that interviewing the masses should be conducted flexibly in accordance with the concrete circumstances of each individual witness, choosing appropriate opportunities, thinking considerately from the perspective of the witnesses, and helping them to solve practical difficulties they may encounter during the process of an interview. He gave the following example about considering the convenience of the masses and the reasons.

If a witness is really busy, we’d better come to him/her. We can ask about where he/she works and visit him/her at the workplace. It’s time that we need to change our thought about our work, stop taking it for granted that when you say you are police, then the masses will come to you. Sometimes, they may be too busy to leave from their work, or sometimes they may not know where the police bureau is at all.

Similarly, Officer J also mentioned the importance of thoughtfully choosing the timing of interviewing the masses when conducting a neighbourhood canvass. For example, he said that if the interviewees were having a meal when the police come to
interview, police should not simply say “We are police. We want to ask you about some things.” Instead, police should learn to handle such circumstances. He suggested that if the police officer was a friend or acquaintance of the interviewee, he/she could join them, at their invitation of course, and try to obtain the information wanted through a friendly chat. If the police officers did not know them at all, they should offer to come back at a later time. Otherwise, with the “unexpected visitor”, witnesses were most likely to be reluctant to respond to police questions, or even refuse to tell what they know.

These statements indicate that showing thoughtfulness to the masses in the process of conducting criminal investigations is the precondition for obtaining effective communication with the masses. This is consistent with Mao’s views that only by adopting proper techniques of conducting investigations among the masses (Mao, May, 1930) and paying attention to the method of work can the leadership successfully win the support of the masses in fulfilling a task (Mao, January 27, 1934).

5.2.4.2 Tempering the art of communication with the masses

It was argued that communicating with the masses was the indispensable and the most important element in conducting neighbourhood canvasses and the art of communication with the masses embodied many aspects (Officer B, Officer J, and Officer K). However, using language and style that the masses preferred, showing sincerity and respect, and adopting patient and persuasive methods were the ones that the police interviewees emphasised constantly. These skills needed to be strictly
observed yet flexibly manoeuvred for any successful communication with the masses in criminal investigation.

According to Officer B, to obtain information from the masses, police officers should study their life experiences, language, and hobbies, “you need to use the language they use, you must seek styles they like, not the style you like, otherwise who will respond to you?” Officer J proposed that police investigators learn to communicate with the masses, and to have a heart-to-heart talk:

Most seasoned police officers are adept at chatting; communication with the masses is an art, definitely an art … First chitchat, then talk business. You need to consider their convenience, choosing appropriate opportunity to talk with them.

Communicating in mass language and mass style was a good way to establish rapport with the masses, yet there was still more to be considered. Showing sincerity and respect was the most essential quality that police investigators must show to every mass witness (Officer H, Officer K, and Officer L). The police interviewees argued that police investigators should show their sincerity in asking help from the witnesses and should manage to convey how potentially important the witness’s knowledge might be for solving a criminal case even though it might seem insignificant to them.

Officer K told of a case that clearly indicated the significance of showing respect and sincerity to a potential witness. In the early 1990s in a city in China, several burglars robbed a tobacco company of half a truckload of cigarettes. Opposite the tobacco company was the night watchman room of another factory. An aged man in his 60s was on duty that night and the following day. Officer K recounted the impolite, if not rude, words and acts of the first group of police investigators as follows:
Impolite police: Hi, old man, were you here last night?
Watchman did not reply. [The watchman looked to be annoyed by the impolite manner of the police.]
Impolite police: I am asking you questions. We’re police investigators. The place opposite was robbed. We’re conducting a canvass. Did you stay here last night?
Watchman: Eng. [The watchman answered in an indifferent way with a sound uttered from the nose]
Impolite police: Did ya see anything, or hear anything?
Watchman: No. Slept.
Impolite police: If you recall anything, remember to tell us.

The first group left obtaining nothing from the watchman. Then a second group of investigators came and behaved in a similar way as the first group had done. Again the watchman responded uncooperatively. Several days passed with no progress. Then two seasoned police investigators were sent to interview the watchman. The two seasoned police investigators were very polite and started with a friendly chitchat.

Seasoned police: Respected Elder⁴, how are you today?
Watchman: Where are you from?
Seasoned police: Criminal investigation squad.
Watchman: Oh, two groups have come already.
Seasoned police: Ah, we don’t want to bother you too much. Well, Respected Elder, you smoke, do you? Try this brand, my favourite.

The police officer handed a cigarette to the watchman and lit it for him and chatted for a while, then continued:

But this case is really a big one, our pressure is so heavy. Several days passed, no progress at all. Respected Elder, you stay so near to that company, didn’t you notice something?
Watchman: Of course I did. Late that night, I saw a truck driving out of the company yard, the car beams were flashing dazzlingly. It felt strange, so late, you know, so I took a careful watch and wrote down its plate number. You are a good officer, you may have it.

⁴ This is a respectful phrase for speaking with elders in China.
The case was soon solved with the help of the lead that the watchman provided. Officer K said that the lessons obtained from this case had been passed down for several “generations” among his colleagues. It is a simple case but it embodies a profound truth: showing sincerity and respect to the masses is an essential art in collecting information and clues from the masses. This is an important aspect of properly implementing the mass line in criminal investigation.

In addition, police interviewees recommended that the patient and persuasive method should be adopted in communicating with the masses. They acknowledged that, in most cases, patience and persuasion were the only keys to open the mouths of any unresponsive or uncooperative masses encountered in neighbourhood canvasses. Officer K listed two ways of responding to masses reluctant to open their doors to police investigators. One way is to use “high pressure and hard-handed method” to force them to open the door to be interviewed. Under such circumstances, most witnesses probably would not tell the truth. Officer K suggested an alternative:

The other way is to make the masses being moved slowly, by showing your patience and efforts. If they do not open their door today, we may go tomorrow, persuading them, affecting them, and moving them. If they do not open their doors today, the following early morning, say at five o’clock, we may wait outside their houses. When they come out, we may try to talk with them again. … Anyway, I think if our efforts have been conducted persuasively and patiently enough, nobody will make no response all the time.

This passage shows clearly that showing patience in the process of persuading witnesses most probably moves them to provide information. Using the method of persuasion is also one important aspect Mao had emphasised many times for implementing the mass line method of work during contact with the masses (Mao, April
Therefore, for thoroughly and properly implementing the mass line in criminal investigation, the method of persuasion must be observed. The following narrative from Officer H further illustrates this point.

When we are approaching the masses, or the witnesses, they may not readily tell us true words. Under such circumstances, we must conduct patient persuasion. … moving them with sincerity, making friends with them, making friendly contacts, making them feel blameworthy and sorry if they still do not tell the truth to police investigators.

The findings indicate that having heart-to-heart talks, showing sincerity and respect, being patient and persuasive at all times will move most witnesses. These may not sound like profound strategies, but in the case of conducting neighbourhood canvasses among the masses in criminal investigation, they are. As Mao emphasised, to ensure that the mass line is really and thoroughly implemented in practice, there must be close ties between the leadership and the masses (Mao, April 20, 1945); and this requires the leadership – the police, in the case of conducting criminal investigation – to communicate effectively with the masses through learning to use the language of the masses and make friends with them, otherwise no masses will listen to you, let alone support you (Mao, February 8, 1942).

5.2.4.3 Conducting thorough investigation among the masses

As has been stated, the police interviewees regarded conducting the neighbourhood canvasses as an essential method of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. They argued that conducting neighbourhood canvasses was a joint criminal investigation operation that required every police investigator to conduct the
canvass as thoroughly as possible. A thorough neighbourhood canvass required that no single lane in a district was left uncanvassed, no single household on a lane was left unvisited, no single person in a household was left unchecked (Officer A, Officer C, Officer D, Officer J, and Officer L). To fulfil these goals, every police investigator must be highly responsible lest one investigator’s irresponsibility lead to the failure of all the others’ efforts (Officer C, Officer J, and Officer L). These views are consistent with Mao’s mass line method of conducting investigations: adopting proper techniques and conducting thorough investigations (see Chapter 4).

In describing the experiences and lessons of conducting neighbourhood canvasses, Officer D borrowed some geometric terms to explain how to conduct effective and thorough neighbourhood canvasses: “being wide in area, being thorough on point”. He said this phrase was a succinct and appropriate term for generalising the requirements for conducting a thorough and effective neighbourhood canvass:

At the early stage of criminal investigation, any clues, any possibilities should all be considered. Therefore, you need to send investigators out, conducting extensive canvasses among the masses, collecting all sorts of information. Then all investigators come back and sit around together, concentrate and analyse the information collected to focus on some points, then every point should be checked thoroughly, and concentrate again. Gradually, the final point that has been focused on is usually the key point for breaking the case.

This quotation indicates that conducting a thorough canvass among the masses needs to consider questions of “area” and “point”. If either is neglected, a thorough canvass has not occurred. Particularly, some officers emphasised the importance of conducting thorough and responsible canvasses. The following narrative is indicative.

In reality, our criminal investigation work is like the “encircling hunt”, surrounding a target from all directions. In practice, if a person at a certain exit is
irresponsible, clues may be left out, and criminal suspects probably escape from that exit. Then others’ efforts are made in vain, amounting to zero. This is what we say “1,000 – 1 = 0”. In a certain case, if some investigators are irresponsible, it may make the whole work fail, you know. For example, a problem should have been solved in the first round of canvass, but due to some investigator’s lack of responsibility, a second round may have to be launched. And the failure of the first round usually leads to double or multiple efforts to be paid in the second round (Officer C).

Officer C’s “encircling hunt” analogy shares similar views with Officer D’s analogy of “being wide in area, being thorough on point”. To conduct a thorough canvass, criminal investigators should “encircle” wide enough “areas” for “hunting the criminals”. This depends on the efforts of the whole police force. At the same time, any individual officer should investigate their respective “point” as thoroughly as possible. This depends on the responsibility of individual officers. If any police officer who is responsible for investigating a specific point on the circle is irresponsible that may lead to the failure of the whole investigation. This means that in conducting an effective neighbourhood canvass, thoroughness can never be overstated.

Conducting a thorough neighbourhood canvass also needs a police officer to adopt appropriate methods, tactics, and skills. A method of “witness canvass relay” was suggested in the responses of some officers (Officer J and Officer L). According to Officer J, “it is also a common method of relying on the masses by asking your acquaintances, your old relationship networks, such as comrades-in-arms, colleagues, and schoolmates, to help obtain clues from the witnesses”. Officer L with 26 years’ police experience described the witness canvass relay as follows:

… you must pay attention to methods, tactics, and skills. … I am not familiar with this area, but I have relatives, schoolmates, and friends. Once a key witness opens his mouth, the case may come to light. … Generally speaking, one key opens one lock. However hard I tried to persuade him [the witness], he just does not want to
tell me, because of lacking trust. You need to work out some ideas: Who is his best friend? Aha, he is working at the horse running field. I have a classmate whose uncle, a reputable gent, is working there too. Okay, I will adopt a different tactic, charging the stronghold from a different angle.

In essence, then, the “witness canvass relay” is based on using an officer’s personal contacts and networks to gain access to people among the masses who have learned about the criminal activities in one way or another (Officers A, B, J, and L). In other words, if a witness claims to have no knowledge of the crime, the police may be able to test this by approaching the witness through a shared acquaintance.

When conducting neighbourhood canvasses fails to obtain progress, the strategy of mobilising the masses is usually considered. This is another important way of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation in China.

5.2.5 Interviewees’ views on mobilising the masses

All police interviewees mentioned mobilising the masses as another important method of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. But they pointed out that the method of mobilising the masses fitted only for investigating certain cases and should only be launched at a given stage of criminal investigation. The following subsections will present the views of the police interviewees on mobilising the masses in criminal investigations.

5.2.5.1 Types of crimes require mobilisation of the masses

In regard to criminal investigation, the types of crimes about which it is necessary to mobilise the masses are usually those cases categorised as felonies, such as murder,
robbery, rape, explosion, and particularly serial crimes (e.g., serial robberies, rapes, and murders) that engender fear and terror among the masses (Officer A, Officer D, Officer J, and Officer L). The rationale for prioritising felonies as the types of crimes that require mobilising the masses is not hard to understand. According to Officer C, due to the limitations of criminal investigation resources, criminal investigation work must give priority to those cases that concern the masses most, that have seriously affected the daily lives and sense of security of the masses. Officer J held similar views and argued that whether it was necessary to mobilise the masses depended on the nature of the case and the cost of the mobilisation, because mobilisation required significant manpower input and financial support.

Certainly, in reality, a small case may turn into a big one because of some particular factor(s). Officer J provided an example that showed how a small case transformed into a big one, which was finally solved through mobilising the masses. The story goes as follows.

In a city of nearly seven million people, the crime of stealing valuables by smashing car windows has become an endemic problem. Such crimes are categorised as a new form of theft, which usually do not constitute felonies that require mobilising the masses on a large scale. Since such crimes are usually committed outdoors at night time by roaming offenders choosing cars randomly, the difficulties in solving such crimes are compounded, and hence there is a very low clearance rate. However, in one particular case, the stolen property from the car included a highly confidential document. The only valuable lead collected from the crime scene was electronic surveillance footage that showed two figures smashing the car and taking away something, but no facial features
could be identified. No sooner had the police chief received the report than he demanded all police officers give priority to this case without delay. After two days of conducting neighbourhood canvasses and other technological investigation measures, there had been no significant progress. The police authorities decided to mobilise the masses in the whole city and promised a reward for reporting the criminals of a million Yuan (Chinese currency). The masses provided thousands of clues that helped the police to gradually narrow down the focus of the investigation areas to several communities. Before long, an informer, the criminals’ neighbour and intimate friend, after being reassured that the reward would be paid and his privacy would be strictly protected, came to the police.

Case solved, criminals arrested, confidential document retrieved, no breaches of confidentiality, reward paid, and of course, this particular round of mobilising the masses completed. This case suggests that mobilising the masses is still an important way, sometimes it may be the only way, of obtaining clues from the masses to solve a criminal case even when modern technologies have been broadly applied to criminal investigation. This case also suggests that mobilising the masses through the stimulus of financial reward seems to be an effective way in the new market economy society in China.

5.2.5.2 The timing of mobilising the masses

The interviewees all believed that the decision to mobilise the masses should be made only after police have conducted substantial initial investigations (Officer A, Officer C, and Officer J). This view is consistent with Mao’s views that “no investigation, no right
to speak” (Mao, May, 1930) and conducting thorough and proper investigation is the prerequisite for drawing up any conclusions and forming any general calls (Mao, June 12, 1943, May, 1930).

In reality, criminal investigators needed to analyse the specific details of each case when deciding the opportune timing to mobilise the masses. In the case of conducting criminal investigation, some necessary information should be presented to the masses where mobilising the masses to help was needed (Officer A, Officer B, Officer C, and Officer J). For example, in the process of investigating a murder case, police might want the masses to help identify the victim (Officer A). Then the police enquiries, whether via radio, television, or newspapers, should include the sex, age (estimated), height, clothing, belongings on body, and distinguishing features if any. If police wanted the masses to help locate a car, basic information such as colour, model, make, or unusual features should be made known (Officer J). These items of information could be obtained only through initial crime scene investigation, neighbourhood canvasses, and/or police professional analyses (Officer A, Officer B, and Officer J).

Furthermore, the interviewees argued that the police forces and the masses were shouldering different responsibilities in solving criminal cases (Officer A, Officer B, Officer C, and Officer L). Police were special masses paid by the masses (Officer L) to give full-time attention to the security and safety of all the masses. In other words, police as a whole were the first groups of people who were responsible for investigating criminal cases because that was their obligatory function and duty (Officer A, Officer B, Officer C, and Officer L). The masses were the reserve power that should be used only when necessary. According to Officer C, in criminal investigation, the professional
police forces should be considered first, and the forces of the masses second; if police could solve the problem themselves, the general masses should not be mobilised.

Officer A also said that:

…If clues can be obtained through more direct, more efficient professional investigation measures, we certainly will use professional methods to solve criminal cases. One the one hand, it can improve efficiency and reduce the input of manpower. On the other hand, we also hope to reduce the impact on society, keep it more controllable, and reduce unnecessary terror, worries, or other negative effects among the masses caused by the crime.

This paragraph indicates when implementing the mass line method of combining the police forces with the masses in criminal investigation, mobilising the general masses is only one optional method adopted at a certain stage in solving a specific criminal case. This should not be interpreted as belittling the strength and power of the general masses; instead, it should be viewed as police managing to improve their efficiency and proficiency so as to better fulfil their duties of fighting crime, protecting the general masses, and providing them with safety and convenience.

In other words, improving police efficiency in criminal investigation is generally regarded by the interviewees as the integral part of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. This concerns issues about how a criminal investigation commander should properly implement the mass line leadership methods or work styles within a criminal investigation squad so as to effectively mobilise the police masses to work efficiently. On the contrary, if a criminal investigation commander fails to demonstrate proper methods of implementing the mass line but only requires his/her subordinates to implement the mass line in criminal investigation, it would be difficult
to see the mass line as truly implemented. This is to be discussed in the following section.

5.2.6 Interviewees suggested mass line leadership styles in criminal investigation

When responding to the question “If as a police commander, how could you better implement the mass line method of leadership in commanding the investigation of a criminal case?”, the police interviewees stated that criminal investigation commanders or the police leadership should demonstrate the virtues of being just, selfless, democratic, open-minded, willing to share “weal and woe” with their subordinates, experienced in criminal investigation, and competent in making decisions. The interviewees believed that such virtues of the leadership were beneficial for mobilising the morale and initiative of the rank and file officers in conducting criminal investigations. The virtues the interviewees suggested for ensuring the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation were in essence the same as those Mao upheld as essential for implementing the mass line in practical work (See Chapter 4).

Some interviewees also mentioned that in practice some police leaders did act in very bossy, subjective, autocratic, and arrogant ways, and where such leadership styles were implemented, the rank and file officers (the police masses) would act very passively in conducting criminal investigations and were reluctant to express their ideas of how to solve a criminal case (Officer A, Officer K, Officer J, and Officer L). As has been analysed in Chapter 4, the essence of implementing the mass line is to objectively concentrate the wisdom and efforts of the masses to maximally avoid subjectivism in the process of forming decisions for effectively solving problems. This suggests that if
the police leadership cannot demonstrate good leadership styles to effectively and objectively concentrate the ideas of the police masses in commanding criminal investigation, they are not implementing the mass line at all.

Through analysing the police interviewees’ responses, I found that three leadership styles were the most important ones for ensuring the mass line to be thoroughly and effectively implemented within a criminal investigation force between the commander and the police masses. These are an open-minded leadership style, a frontline-approaching command style, and competence in making decisions resolutely.

5.2.6.1 Open-minded leadership style

All police interviewees mentioned that criminal investigation commanders must be open-minded, democratic, and tolerant of different opinions, which was particularly significant when a “case analysis meeting” was held. Some interviewees argued that the case analysis meeting was actually a way of implementing the mass line between the criminal investigation commander and the police officers in which the commander needed to mobilise the police officers and concentrate their ideas so as to make more objective and accurate analyses and decisions on investigating a criminal case (Officer A, Officer D, Officer I, Officer J, and Officer L). If the commander was bossy, autocratic, and unwilling to listen to others’ opinions, nobody would like to express their ideas even though they knew something important. This suggests that whether a police commander adopted an open-minded and democratic style of leadership to combine the leadership cognition with that of the masses usually directly determined the
results of a criminal investigation. The following example told by Officer J will further demonstrate this point.

A police bureau deputy director who was in charge of criminal investigation work was nicknamed “Forehead Patting Director” that meant he was very subjective, opinionated, and autocratic in making analyses and decisions. Whenever a murder case was reported, he was eager to give his own opinions about the crime scene, the nature of the murder, the direction the investigation should take, and the profile of the criminal suspect(s). Then he very “confidently” commanded police investigators to investigate in accordance with his “authoritative” analyses. Because his opinionated and autocratic command style totally blocked different ideas and valuable initiatives from other police officers, the criminal investigation squad developed a record of solving none of the nine murder cases it was faced with within one year under his “brilliant authoritarian” leadership. The deputy director was too “famous” to stay in his post and was removed from the post at the end of the year. The new deputy director adopted an open-minded and democratic style of leadership to mobilise the police masses directly under his command and solved all nine murder cases within a couple of months.

The importance of the leadership being open-minded was also observed by other interviewees. For example, Officer K argued that if a leader did not adopt an open-minded leadership style, “listen to no opinions from subordinates”, it will “lead to an opposing state between the higher and lower levels; the relationship will become frozen, and the subordinates will carry out orders passively and mechanically without thinking”. The following statement from Officer I further illustrates the point.
In these days, open-minded decision-makers are not many, I mean those being truly tolerant and open-minded to different opinions are not many. So now, generally speaking, few people dare to propose different opinions. This is closely related to the work style of decision-makers. If a decision-maker is willing to listen to different opinions, other people will be willing to and brave to express their opinions. If the decision-maker turns deaf ears to other people’s opinions, acting in disregard of other people’s opinions, nobody will propose any ideas next time … It is not easy to be truly open-minded, but if a commander, a decision-maker can truly do so, accurate conclusions will be achieved, and no case cannot be solved, no tasks cannot be fulfilled.

In contrast to Officer I’s view that being truly open-minded is not easy, Officer B expressed a relatively optimistic view saying that “criminal investigation work is the best in implementing democratic and open-minded leadership style” because if the police commander was bossy and autocratic, it would be difficult to solve a criminal case. If criminal cases could not be solved promptly, the “victims won’t pardon you, social media won’t let you feel at ease, leaders at higher levels won’t trust you, your subordinate brothers will doubt your abilities. If so, how can you be a criminal commander anymore” (Officer B). This suggested that non-open-minded leaders would not being able to maintain their autocratic leadership style, given the sorts of problems that result from that style.

Furthermore, Officer B argued that since case-solving rates are the cardinal criterion for assessing the criminal investigation work, this impelled, to a great extent, a criminal commander or leader to adopt an open-minded and democratic leadership style. This suggests that for ensuring the open-minded mass line leadership style to be thoroughly implemented in criminal investigation, some compulsory assessment criteria and institution are advisable.
5.2.6.2 Frontline-approaching command style

Unanimously, the eleven interviewees stated that better implementing the mass line leadership method in criminal investigation required the commander be ready to attend the frontline where necessary to work shoulder-to-shoulder with the subordinates and colleagues, to share weal and woe with the rank and file officers, and to be one with them. This was abstracted as the frontline-approaching command style (*Kaoqian zhihui zuofeng*).

The interviewees argued that the frontline-approaching command style had at least two strengths (Officer F, Officer I, Officer J, and Officer L). First of all, it was a good way to raise the morale of the criminal investigators. According to Officer L, when police officers saw that their commanders, particularly those at higher levels and senior in age, were sharing difficulties with them in the process of investigating a case, they would have no reason to complain about the hardship but would work hard because “a fine example has boundless power”. He said:

A good commander who can achieve successes never sits there watching and waiting. … Only through sharing weal and woe with the rank and file can you establish your prestige and authority. So I reckon that frontline-approaching command is to face the music with the rank and file … is also a manifestation of carrying out the mass line. …When a crime is reported, you should stay in the commanding headquarters. When others are eating instant noodles, you should too. If others stay up late, you should too. All investigators can report to you at any time without being delayed. Such is a good commander, being at one with the masses, going to the masses, and taking on the challenges.

Second, the frontline-approaching command style was also a good way to promptly discover problems and mistakes in order to correct them in a timely manner. All officers interviewed believed that the frontline-approaching command style enables
the commander to have a deeper, more comprehensive, and more accurate perspective of the case under investigation, thus ensuring more accurate analyses and decisions. As has been analysed in Chapter 4, Mao’s mass line leadership method of “from the masses, to the masses” requires the leadership go to the masses, be one with them, and conduct thorough investigations among the masses so as to concentrate the ideas of the masses to effectively solve a problem. In conducting criminal investigation, that the commander goes among the rank and file criminal investigators is to go among the masses (Officer F, Officer I, Officer J, and Officer L).

An example was provided by Officer F for illustrating the importance of the frontline-approaching command style. It involved gang extortions, kidnaps, and robbery through sex lures that were reported by several victims. Based on a salary slip left at the crime scene, the police soon located a man who was a strong suspect. But the man said he was a victim, not a criminal. He did not report the crime to the police because he had not suffered much loss and was eager to go back to work. The police did not believe his excuses and interrogated him for a long time under high-handed confinement measures in tight bindings. The man still persisted in his story. Other victims could not provide valid testimonies because they were victimised in different time periods and their heads were covered during the whole process of the crime. When such circumstances were reported to the commander, a seasoned criminal investigator, he came in person to question the “suspect” and observed his reactions carefully. Then the commander called for another case analysis meeting, discussed with other police officers in detail, and expressed his opinions. The commander concluded that the suspect was most probably a victim and ordered his officers to check the case further from several other aspects.
instead of dwelling on the interrogation. It proved that the commander was right. Officer F said that if the commander did not engage in correct frontline-approaching command style, they might have wronged the victim.

This example manifested a typical mass line leadership method by adopting a proper frontline-approaching command style: the commander combined his own cognition (leadership cognition) with that of his subordinates (mass cognition) through participating personally in questioning the suspect, listening to the suspect and observing his reactions (social practice), then calling for another meeting, discussing with others in detail (concentrating the scattered ideas of the masses), coming to an objective and well-informed decision (forming a theory), and finally guiding the police officers (the masses) successfully and accurately to solve the criminal case.

Certainly, the frontline-approaching command style should never be implemented in a formalistic way, for showing off or just for catching the public eyes. Officer K argued that the frontline-approaching command style was good in itself if implemented properly, but if a leader acted in a formalistic way or commanded blindly without consulting with others, without listening attentively to others’ reports and suggestions, it would do more harm than help. This suggested that the purpose of the frontline-approaching command should be only to ensure the effective combination of the leadership with the masses. This includes that the leadership should work diligently side by side with the led, should be willing to learn from the led, and should be good at integrating the leadership cognition with the mass cognition so that the problem can be solved effectively and efficiently.
5.2.6.3 Competence in making decisions resolutely

The ultimate aim of the mass line is to solve problems effectively and accurately. This requires that the leadership should not only be good at heeding others’ ideas, opinions, and suggestions (being democratic), but also adept at making decisions resolutely at an appropriate time (implementing centralism). In conducting criminal investigations, keeping a dynamic balance between democracy and centralism is particularly important.

The following analogy by Officer A illustrates this point.

For example, a person and an organisation, the leader is like the brain. The grassroots police officers are feet and hands. The brain sends orders to hands and feet, isn’t that right? The information fed back from hands and feet needs to be concentrated, summarised, and analysed [by the brain]. This is like investigating a criminal case, the squad leader must concentrate all sources of information collected by the criminal investigators to make a decision, to make an objective, accurate, and comprehensive judgement of the case, then issue orders for what to do next.

This analogy reveals an interactive relationship between the leadership and the led, like that between the brain (central control system) and limbs (nodal information sources). Such an interactive relation first of all needs effective and correct judgements and orders from the brain, the leadership. If a leader can rarely make resolute decisions for solving problems, even though he/she is willing to listen to others’ opinions, he/she will sooner or later lose the support and trust of the masses (Officer F, Officer I, and Officer J). As well, if a leader cannot make resolute decisions in emergency circumstances to take emergency measures to stop crime, arrest criminal suspects in a timely manner, and protect the interests of the masses, he/she will lose the trust and support of both the police and general masses. The following narrative is indicative.
So, eh … the implementation of the mass line, I reckon the masses, well, usually decide their acts through observing the abilities of the leadership. If the masses don’t believe that the leader is competent, they will be reluctant to communicate with that decision-maker. This is because even though the clue is reported, the leader may also be unable to make accurate decisions. So a leader, a decision-maker, must have real and genuine competence in making decisions. Where does the competence come from? It is built up day after day in routine jobs, from practice (Officer I).

This quote indicates that the competence to make resolute decisions is an indispensable quality that a good criminal investigator should learn to build up. Nonetheless, a criminal investigation commander should always keep in mind that criminal investigation is a kind of battle. In the battle, it is the person in command who is responsible to make the final decisions. An excellent commander must make resolute decisions, not subjective and totalitarian orders.

5.3 Chapter summary

Through analysing Mao’s works and Luo’s speeches, three basic principles for implementing the mass line in criminal investigation work have been abstracted: police commanders must link themselves closely with police officers; combination of the special force with the masses; and persevering in the method of investigation, prohibiting extortion of confessions. All these principles were required both by Mao and Luo to be observed in implementing the mass line in criminal investigations, hence should be taken as a whole for thoroughly understanding the mass line in criminal investigation. However, current studies on implementing the mass line in criminal investigation focus only on the principle of combination of the special force with the masses, with the other two important principles being greatly neglected.
The analyses of the interviews with the frontline police officers reveal more details of how the mass line is carried out in daily criminal investigation activities. The police interviewees expressed similar views on how to implement the mass line in criminal investigation particularly through conducting neighbourhood canvasses among the masses and mobilising the masses. They also expressed similar views on what types of mass line leadership styles worked best in criminal investigation. However, when responding to the question whether the method of extorting confession was against the mass line, their views differed significantly. Though nine out of the eleven interviewees upheld that extorting confessions was against the mass line, the other two denied the opposing relationships between the two. This shows that this principle for implementing the mass line in criminal investigation has not been fully understood by all criminal investigators either.

These findings show that implementing the mass line in criminal investigation encompasses not only issues of how police as a whole can win the support of the non-police masses (mainly the general public), but also issues of how a police commander should concentrate the wisdom and efforts of the police masses (the rank and file officers) to effectively solve a criminal case. These points will be further discussed in the next chapter.
Chapter 6  Discussion and conclusion

Chapter 4 reported the findings of research undertaken to examine the concept of the masses and the meanings of the mass line articulated by Mao. These examinations provided more in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the mass line that were then applied to the issue of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. In Chapter 5, principles of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation were drawn from Mao’s works and Luo’s speeches. From these principles, basic ideas and requirements for implementing the mass line in criminal investigation could be derived. Then the analyses of interviews with Chinese frontline police officers provided more empirical insights on the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation.

The aim of this chapter is to respond to the research questions posed in Chapter 1. As a consequence, this chapter starts the discussion with responding to the research questions which are:

1. What is the mass line?
2. Who are the masses in the context of criminal investigation?
3. What principles should be followed in implementing the mass line in criminal investigation?
4. What are the difficulties in implementing the mass line in criminal investigation?
5. How might the mass line be better implemented in criminal investigation?
Following the responses to the research questions, the limitations of this study are discussed and future directions are provided, followed by concluding remarks about this thesis.

6.1 Responding to the research questions

6.1.1 What is the mass line?

The mass line is regarded as the core of Mao’s legacy (CPC, 1981; Townsend, 1977; Xiong, 2007) and the living soul of Mao’s thought (CPC, 1981). As has been introduced in Chapter 1, the mass line had played a significant role in the history of the CPC and was incorporated into the CPC’s constitution as the fundamental principle for all practical work. In addition, the mass line has an innate connection with the indigenous Minben sixiang (people-as-root ideas) that was deeply rooted in Chinese culture and is still playing a profound role in Chinese society today (Chen, 2004; A. Cheng, 2008; Yaoji Jin, 1993; Q. Liang, 1996; Y. Liu, 2009; Perry, 2001; Townsend, 1977). As a consequence, obtaining a comprehensive and thorough understanding of the mass line is the key to studying any current Chinese issues under the leadership of the CPC.

As has been analysed in Chapter 4, the mass line in essence refers to a set of methods – the method of knowing the world, the method of leadership, and the method of investigation – aiming at objectively concentrating the ideas and efforts of the masses to maximally avoid personal subjectivism in the process of forming judgements, decisions, policies, or theories for effectively solving problems. Each method focuses on a different perspective explaining the meaning of the mass line but is interrelated with the others to form a complete mass line theory.
The mass line as the method of knowing the world emphasises that the social practice of the masses as a whole is the origin of all human knowledge about the world. Thus Mao set the epistemological keynote for explaining why the mass line as the method of leadership requires that correct decisions and policies from the leadership must be combined with the ideas and practices of the masses. The mass line as the method of investigation articulates concrete methods or techniques for linking practice with theory and combining the leadership with the masses.

In the process of solving a concrete problem, leaders or problem-solvers must know who the masses are and how to concentrate their wisdom and efforts. In current studies, people tend to think that the masses refer to those ordinary people who are outside the Party and all the state agencies led by the Party, and that the mass line primarily deals with relations between the Party and those masses, so implementing the mass line simply means how the Party can maintain close ties with them and rely on them in fulfilling the Party’s tasks (Shang, 2008; She, 2010; J. Wei, 2011; S. Yang, 2006). These are surely important aspects concerning the mass line theory and practice, but such understandings are so narrow that they have constrained us from maximising the value of the mass line.

My analyses have shown that the masses in Mao’s mass line context also refer to the rank and file members within the Party. This means that there are also questions concerning how to implement the mass line between the Party leaders and the masses within the Party (the rank and file). Such questions mainly include how the Party’s leading bodies can maintain close ties with the masses within the Party, how to concentrate their ideas, and how to mobilise their efforts to fulfil the Party’s tasks.
As for the methods of implementing the mass line, launching mass campaigns had played a very important role in the CPC’s history and was nearly considered as a substitute term for implementation of the mass line (Harrison, 2010; She, 2010; S. Yang, 2006). However, launching mass campaigns is just one way of implementing the mass line (Luo, July 31, 1958; She, 2010) that is used periodically or occasionally to solve big issues. My study shows that the mass line method of investigation is actually the must-be-adopted method in implementing the mass line all the time to solve a problem. This finding is important in that it reveals the essence of implementing the mass line is to go among the masses to concentrate the ideas and efforts of the masses to solve problems. As Mao has articulated, conducting proper investigations among the masses to concentrate the scattered ideas was the prerequisite for solving any problems encountered in practical work (Mao, March and April, 1941, May, 1930). It is this method that ensures Mao’s mass line leadership of “from the masses, to the masses” is accurately and thoroughly implemented in practice. In fact, having undertaken a thorough examination of the mass line method of investigation (see Chapter 4), we can see that such investigations actually can be broadly applied to solve all practical problems in our daily life. Once we realise this point, we will come to see that the mass line is really a guide to our actions instead of just being an elegant political slogan. Based on such awareness, we will not only be willing to but also know how to carry out the mass line in solving problems encountered in social practice.

These findings about the mass line articulated by Mao in general provide theoretical grounds for studying specific issues concerning the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation. As will be shown in the coming sections, based on
these findings, this study will broaden and deepen the theory about and the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation.

6.1.2 Who are the masses in the context of criminal investigation?

The masses generally refers to ordinary people, but the concrete meaning of the masses, as demonstrated in my analyses in Chapter 4, should be determined in concrete relations between the leadership and the led. As far as the criminal investigation work is concerned, the masses usually refer to those ordinary citizens who may provide information, clues, evidence, or other help to police in the process of investigating crimes (B. Liu, 2004; Wang, 2004; Zhang, 2008). In other words, those ordinary people who do not bear the obligatory function of conducting criminal investigation are the masses compared to the police who bear such an obligatory function (Officer A, Officer B, Officer C, Officer D, and Officer J). This view of the masses was the one most commonly stated by the interviewees. It was also a broadly stated view in current studies (B. Liu, 2004; Wang, 2004; Zhang, 2008). Though some authors also proposed the concept of special masses (including criminal suspects, law-breakers, or experts) (K. Xu et al., 2009; Zhang, 2008), or the organisational masses (like companies, banks, hospitals, etc.) (B. Liu, 2004; Zhang, 2008), they still defined the masses and the police from the perspective of whether they undertook the function of conducting criminal investigation. This is the most basic interpretation of the masses, the one defaulted to when people have not fully understood the mass line. This type of the masses in criminal investigation was named as the non-police masses in my research. The
non-police masses include the general masses (the ordinary citizens), expert masses, and organisational masses.

However, the analysis of Mao’s works shows that the masses include not only those people outside an organisation but also those ordinary members within the organisation (see section 4.1, Chapter 4). Based on such a ground, the rank and file criminal investigators should be regarded as the masses within a criminal investigation squad to the criminal investigation commander. This type of the masses was named the police masses. In concrete situations, the police leadership and the police masses relations could be multi-layered: for example, all staff in a police station would be the masses to the chief officer of the police station; all staff on a shift would be the masses to the shift supervisor; all staff on a team would be the masses to the team leader. I argue that only by being aware that the rank and file officers are also the masses that could and should be relied on in conducting criminal investigation operations, can the police leadership at various levels be willing to listen to and concentrate their opinions to develop well-informed decisions on solving a criminal case. Without such awareness, a police commander will tend to be bossy, opinionated, and autocratic in commanding his/her officers in the process of investigating a criminal case. Such commanding styles will easily result in uncooperative and even opposing relations between the leadership and the led. The “Forehead Patting Director” described by Officer J (see 5.2.6.1) was a typical example of adopting such commanding styles that had been proved to be a failure.

Although my analyses have shown that the rank and file police officers should be categorised as a type of the masses, my literature review shows that this concept has not
been discussed in current studies related to implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. My analysis of the interviews showed that the police interviewees readily stated the masses as those people outside the police force. However when they were presented with a deeper perspective of who counted as the masses (e.g. speaking from the leadership and the led perspective), they were able to expand their views and acknowledged that speaking from the leadership and the led perspective, the rank and file criminal investigators were also the masses to a criminal investigator. Had time allowed, it would have been interesting to probe whether interviewees could distinguish different types of masses within the police masses, given the underlying principle that the masses should be defined in concrete relations between the leadership and the led.

The concept of the police masses is really significant because it emphasises that implementing the mass line in criminal investigation includes not only issues about how criminal investigators should interact effectively with the masses outside the criminal investigation force but also how a criminal investigation commander should interact effectively with the masses within the criminal investigation force. Mao argued that for ensuring the mass line is really implemented in practical work, there must be above all good relations between the leadership and the masses within an organisation (Mao, April 20, 1945), between the number one leader and the members (Mao, March 13, 1949). Mao further articulated that if the leadership could not mobilise and unite the masses within the Party, it would be difficult to direct the Party to “lead tens of millions of people in fighting and construction” (Mao, March 13, 1949, p. 377). This suggests that for ensuring the mass line is thoroughly and effectively implemented in criminal investigation, the mass line leadership method should be first of all be implemented
within a criminal investigation force/squad. This requires much change of the mindset in police commanders. In criminal investigation operations, a commander must be clear that he/she needs first of all to demonstrate to the police masses how to properly and morally implement the mass line leadership styles before he/she requires the rank and file police officers to implement the mass line leadership styles (or work styles) in the process of contacting the non-police masses and winning their support.

When we have a thorough look at Mao’s mass line leadership method of “from the masses, to the masses”, it can be seen that the interaction between the criminal investigators and the non-police masses is only the first stage for collecting the information and clues from the masses. At this stage, the collected information and clues are primarily scattered raw materials held by each investigator for (probably) producing a good product. To turn these raw materials into a good product, there must be a competent processor. Who is the competent and legitimate processor then? It is the criminal investigation squad as a whole. Because of the confidential nature of criminal investigation, this processing stage is usually conducted in a relatively closed environment between the commander and the rank and file criminal investigators. To ensure that this processing stage is done successfully, it requires effective interactions within the criminal investigation squad between the commander and the rank and file criminal investigators. Within such a concrete situation, given the bureaucratic structure of the police force, the commander is in the position of the leadership and the rank and file criminal investigators are in the position of the led or the masses. This process serves as the bridge linking the evaluation of previous criminal investigation activities with the planning of future actions or operations. I argue that this is the core process of
implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. This is because if the commander cannot adopt the mass line leadership styles (such as being open-minded, approaching to the frontline and sharing weal and woe with his/her colleagues) to concentrate the police masses’ ideas and efforts, he/she will most probably turn those valuable raw materials into a pile of waste. The “Forehead Patting Director” described by Officer J was a typical example of making raw materials into a waste because he listened to no others’ opinions, while the commander who adopted the mass line leadership styles proved to be very successful in leading the rank and file officers to solve a number of unsolved cases (see section 5.2.6.1).

Consequently, it is of great importance to categorise the masses in criminal investigation as the non-police masses and the police masses. This concept of the masses in criminal investigation is not only consistent with the concept of the masses in Mao’s mass line philosophy but also will remind police commanders that implementing the mass line leadership styles within the police force is the most important aspect that determines whether the mass line is thoroughly implemented in the whole process of investigating a criminal case.

6.1.3 What principles should be followed in implementing the mass line in criminal investigation?

The analyses of Mao’s works and Luo’s speeches have shown that three important principles should be adhered to if the mass line is to be thoroughly implemented in criminal investigation (see section 5.1). However, current studies only focused on one of the three principles – combination of the special force with the masses, that is, how
police can rely on the masses or the public in the process of solving a criminal case. Specifically speaking, these studies usually focused on discussing the need to rely on the masses, the problems encountered and their causes, and strategies for improvement the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation (see Chapter 2). In these studies, the authors have all narrowly defined the masses as those people outside the police force and implementing the mass line in criminal investigation as an interaction between the police (in the leadership position) and the masses (in the led position).

These were also the views commonly stated by the interviewees when they first responded to the question of “Could you please talk about your understandings of the mass line in criminal investigation?” For instance, Officer F said that “my first response, the mass line in police work is the interaction between the police and the masses …we ask the masses to cooperate, to solve the case.” Similarly, Officer G stated that “implementing the mass line in our work, my understanding, is a process of mobilising the masses, a way of collecting information and clues from the masses”.

From these views it can be seen that the interviewees were actually talking about the principle of combining the special force (the police) with the masses, or the interaction between the police and the masses according to Officer F’s understanding.

However, my analyses show that the other two principles – police commanders must link themselves closely with police officers, and persevering in the method of investigation, prohibiting extortion of confessions – have been much neglected, though these two principles are inseparable component parts in understanding and implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. The finding of the principle that “police commanders must link themselves with police officers” is important because it
not only deepens the understanding of the mass line in criminal investigation but also helps to thoroughly implement it in practice. According to the analyses of Mao’s works (Mao, November 29, 1943, December, 1939, January 27, 1934, June 12, 1943, March 13, 1949, May, 1930, September 25, 1956), thoroughly implementing the mass line in practical work first of all requires leaders demonstrate virtues that are good for maintaining close relations between the leadership and the masses (the ordinary members) within an organisation, then leaders may lead all members of the organisation to maintain close ties with the broad masses outside the organisation and mobilising them to participate actively in fulfilling a task or solving a problem. This means that if police commanders require the rank and file police officers to maintain close ties with the masses so as to effectively implement the mass line in criminal investigations, police commanders themselves must demonstrate exemplary mass line leadership styles to the police officers. This point will be discussed further in the coming section on how to better implement the mass line in criminal investigation.

The finding of the principle that “persevering in the method of investigation, prohibiting extortion of confessions” is even more important than the other two principles in practice. As has been analysed in Chapter 4, Mao’s mass line theory upholds that conducting proper investigations among the masses is the prerequisite for solving any problems, otherwise any comments about a problem will “undoubtedly be nonsense” (May, 1930, n.p.) because they are primarily made on the basis of personal subjective suppositions. Opposing subjectivism is just what Mao’s mass line aims for (see Chapter 4). As has been analysed in Chapter 5, extorting confessions by torture was considered as the derivation of subjective suppositions. If criminal investigators make
subjective suppositions in believing who the criminal suspect should be, they will tend to collect evidence to prove their suppositions, the so-called deductions or hypotheses. When they cannot obtain such evidence, and they face various pressures from public complaints and from superior leaders’ instructions to solve the case as soon as possible, they may turn to the method of extorting confessions (Officer H, Officer I, Officer K, and Officer L). Once they do solve some criminal cases through extorting confessions by torture, they will be encouraged by the “sweetness” of this method to avoid working to conduct proper investigations among the masses. And once that happens, the mass line is totally violated in the practice of conducting criminal investigation. As has been analysed, Mao’s mass line theory upholds that the origin of the cognition comes from the practice of the masses (Mao, August, 1937, July, 1937), and that solving any problems requires proper investigations among the masses to concentrate the masses’ ideas rather than base any solution on subjective, one-sided, or biased personal suppositions (Mao, July, 1937, June 12, 1943, May, 1930). Since the method of extorting confessions is driven by personal subjective suppositions (Luo, July 31, 1958, June 3, 1958; Mao, 1943, December 25, 1940), it is at root contrary to the mass line theory of knowledge. Therefore, the method of extorting confessions must be prohibited and abolished if the mass line is to be implemented thoroughly in criminal investigation.

The importance of the principle of “persevering in the method of investigation, prohibiting extortion of confessions” lies in the fact that when extorting confessions as a way of obtaining evidence is strictly prohibited and effectively cut off, criminal investigators will have to turn to the method of investigation among the masses. This will encourage them to do better and thorough investigations to collect clues and
evidence from the masses, hence implementing the mass line thoroughly in criminal investigation. As for measures for prohibiting the extortion of confessions, these will be discussed later.

As has been shown in my analyses, these three principles are the essential components for comprehensively understanding and implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. Given that implementing the mass line in criminal investigation has been readily interpreted as combining the special force (the police) with the masses both by authors of current academic studies and police interviewees, the findings of the other two principles will undoubtedly deepen our understandings of the mass line in criminal investigation. Such deepened understandings will surely help us get the most out of it both in theoretical studies and in practical operations.

6.1.4 What are the difficulties in implementing the mass line in criminal investigation?

As for the difficulties in implementing the mass line in criminal investigation, my literature review shows that current studies focus on three major problems. The first is the unwillingness of the masses to support the police, which is usually attributed to changes in social values driven by the market economy (B. Liu, 2004; Wang, 2004; L. Wu & Ma, 2002; M. Yang, 1999; Zhang, 2007). The second is the extensive use of modern technology in criminal investigation which to some extent weakens the investigators’ awareness of, and willingness to rely on the masses (Cai et al., 2001; Jing & Wang, 2011; B. Liu, 2004; Wang, 2004; L. Wu & Ma, 2002). The third is that some unethical conduct and lack of professional skills of the criminal investigators in the
process of interacting with the masses has led to estranged police-masses relations (Jing & Wang, 2011; G. Li, 1993; C. Wu, 2001). These studies explored social factors, technological factors, and personal factors that led to the difficulties in implementing the mass line in criminal investigation, but they did not explore whether the mass line system itself had any defects that made it somewhat difficult to implement in practical work.

The police interviewees also acknowledged that the masses became increasingly unwilling to support police and that this was caused by various reasons (such as some masses were caring about only their own business due to the impact of the current commercial economy social context, fearing potential revenge from the criminal suspects, and worrying about economic loss once they became witnesses). However, they all strongly argued that the main cause of the masses’ unwillingness to support the police was in most occasions due to the improper methods and skills adopted by the police officers. In other words, the police interviewees believed that the difficulties of implementing the mass line were mainly caused by the behaviour of the criminal investigators themselves.

The view that the main factors leading to the difficulties in implementing the mass line in criminal investigation are criminal investigators themselves is consistent with Mao’s view that “external causes are the condition of change and internal causes are the basis of change, and that external causes become operative through internal causes” (Mao, August, 1937, p. 314). This means that internal causes are fundamental causes in deciding the development of a thing, while external causes are secondary. When this view is applied to study the causes of the difficulties in implementing the mass line in
criminal investigation, it implies that we should first of all examine the causes within the criminal investigators themselves, within the criminal investigation squad itself, and within the mass line method itself. Only once these causes are thoroughly explored and accurately located, can we find effective measures to solve the difficulties.

In regard to the causes within the criminal investigators themselves, scholars and police interviewees have all mentioned that the unethical conduct, improper methods, and lack of professional skills as the main factors. I will not repeat them again. But I must point out that the remaining tolerance for extorting confessions in the ideology of some criminal investigators is the dominant factor hindering them from thoroughly implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. As the two notorious wrongful convictions in the “She Xiangling Case” and “Zhao Zuohai Case” (see Appendix C) have revealed, those case handlers did not adopt the method of conducting thorough investigations among the masses to search for evidence from facts as Mao and Luo had required for implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. Instead, they used brutal methods of extorting confessions to tailor the confessions to fit their subjective suppositions. These two cases might be just the tip of the iceberg. As has been analysed from the interviews, Officer D and Officer K both denied the opposing relations between implementing the mass line and extorting confessions in criminal investigation, and Officer K even suggested that extorting confessions was acceptable if it was undertaken skilfully to corroborate other types of evidence. Even though other police interviewees claimed that extorting confessions was against the mass line, according to my frequent contacts with Chinese criminal investigators, the belief that extorting confessions is reasonable, at least tolerable, to certain degrees and in certain situations,
is not rare among criminal investigators. With such an ideology in mind, some criminal investigators would turn to the “simple but sometimes very effective method” (Officer H) of extorting confessions driven by their subjective suppositions of who the suspects might be. As has been analysed, the aim of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation is to overcome subjective suppositions. For that reason, where there is extortion of confessions, there is no implementing the mass line in criminal investigation at all.

As for the causes within the criminal investigation squad itself, the police interviewees argued that whether a criminal investigation commander could implement appropriate mass line leadership styles played an important role in determining whether the mass line was thoroughly implemented in any given criminal investigation. This means that, on the one hand, the criminal investigation commander should demonstrate open-minded leadership style and frontline-approaching command style (see Chapter 5). This is the aspect of showing democracy. On the other hand, the commander should demonstrate competence in concentrating the scattered ideas of the masses and drawing rational conclusions. This is the aspect of making good centralised decisions. In simple words, thoroughly implementing the mass line within a criminal investigation squad requires the leadership demonstrate competent skills in keeping a balance between democracy and centralism.

As has been analysed in Chapter 4, democratic centralism is the institutionalised method of implementing the mass line in the Party’s political activities and affairs. This system in itself embodies a dilemma of keeping perfect balance between democracy and centralism. Within the mass line democratic centralism system, “it is the leader who
listens, it is the leader who decides, and it is the leader who persuades” (Barlow, 1981, p. 301). This means that the leadership is always in the dominant and advantageous place in deciding the appropriate “weight” of democracy in a centralised decision. In China, a country with the tradition of feudal centralism having lasted for more than two thousand years, it is very easy to see centralism overrides democracy. On most occasions, democracy is just like a fig leaf covering the bare centralism. And once that happens, the led or the masses will usually choose tolerance and silence, which in turn impels the practice of centralism overriding democracy. This problem had also been observed by Mao who said that “centralism should be closely linked with democracy” (Mao, May 7, 1937, p. 292), otherwise the centralism would be manoeuvred as one individual’s dictatorship (Mao, September 20, 1948).

This suggests that Mao himself also realised that it was difficult to keep a good balance between democracy and centralism in implementing the mass line leadership method in practical work. In commanding criminal investigation, it is even more difficult to do so. If the commander does not listen to other officers’ opinions, he/she would be considered as being bossy and arbitrary and would experience passive resistance from the subordinates. However, even though the commander listened to others’ opinions, if he/she then failed to make rational decisions to guide subsequent criminal investigations, he/she would be labelled as incompetent as a leader. Drawing from Mao’s mass line philosophy, there would be no static and absolute but only dynamic and relative balance between democracy and centralism. The only way that a commander can keep the balance is to open-mindedly adjust their leadership decisions.
with constantly concentrating the ideas of the masses, and with linking their leadership decisions with the practice of the masses.

6.1.5 How might the mass line be better implemented in criminal investigation?

Based on the discussions above and previous analyses, recommendations for better implementing the mass line in criminal investigation were identified. The first four recommendations focus on how the criminal investigation squad as a whole can improve police efficiency and quality because the analyses show that these issues are the most important factors in deciding the implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation, for the internal causes are the fundamental causes determining a thing (Mao, August, 1937). The last recommendation concerns regularising the reward system for reporting crimes. This becomes a necessary method for mobilising the masses in the new market economy social context in China. Offering rewards for providing crime information is considered as an external condition that will help implement the mass line in criminal investigation.

6.1.5.1 Demonstrating exemplary mass line leadership

The findings from Mao's works show that Mao placed great emphasis on the virtues of the leadership because he believed that leaders and cadres were a decisive factor in carrying out the mass line effectively and accurately (see Section 4.2.2). These virtues, *inter alia*, include being just, devoted, selfless, honest, and modest. Particularly, for applying the mass line thoroughly, Mao advocated that leaders should be willing to learn from the masses and their subordinates. For example, in *Oppose Book Worship*,
Mao suggested leaders and cadres should go the rounds of every section placed under their charge, and inquire into everything they did not know (May, 1930, n.p.); in Preface and Postscript to Rural Surveys, he reiterated that “It is my wish to go on being a pupil, learning from the masses, together with all other Party comrades” (March and April, 1941, p. 13); in Methods of Work of Party Committee, he warned the Party leaders, particularly those at higher levels, that they should “be a pupil before you become a teacher; learn from the cadres at the lower levels before you issue orders” (March 13, 1949, p. 378).

On the contrary, if a commander likes to make comments and command others the moment he/she arrives at a place without listening modestly to others’ reports and conducting necessary investigations, but acts arrogantly, such a leader is “bound to make a mess of things, lose the confidence of the masses and prove incapable of solving any problem at all” (Mao, May, 1930, n.p.), and neither can they carry out effective leadership and command. Luo also argued when going to the grassroots levels inspecting work, police leaders must “show correct attitude during the inspection, that is to get down from your high horse, consult and learn sincerely from your subordinates, from the masses, make every effort to obtain experiences and methods from struggles, from the masses” (Luo, June 3, 1958, pp. 382-383). The command style of the “Forehead Patting Director” described by Officer J is a typical negative example. Because he was reluctant to learn from, communicate with, or cooperate with his subordinates, his command turned out to be associated with failure.

As Mao articulated, superior leaders should attend to the opinions of subordinate cadres, then analyse these opinions and incorporate any reasonable suggestions into
decisions; since such decisions embody the opinions from the lower levels, the latter will support and implement them of their own accord (March 13, 1949). To make any effective decisions today, collaboration and involvement of the group is the key because consensus-based decisions generate the greatest support (Rush, 2006). In the same vein, when criminal investigation decisions are made through incorporating reasonable analyses, hypotheses, and suggestions from the criminal investigation squad as a whole, all investigators will work more willingly and creatively. It in turn will provide more sources for the leadership to concentrate more accurate criminal investigation decisions.

Mao’s emphasis on the virtues of the leadership reflects a close tie between Mao’s mass line and traditional Chinese Confucian culture. Traditional Chinese Confucian culture values the virtues of rulers and the exemplary roles of superiors, and hence Confucius proposed the official criteria of “benevolent government and virtuous rulers” (Yaoji Jin, 1993; Yong Jin, 2009; Wilson, 1900). Such values are rooted deeply in Chinese culture. The following three sayings are some good examples: 1. If the upper beam is not straight, the lower ones will go aslant (Shangliang buzhen xialiang wai); 2. As the superiors act so will the inferiors imitate (Shang xing xia xiao); 3. A fine example has boundless power (Bangyang de liliang shi wuqiong de). These three sayings all emphasise the impact of the leadership on the led.

According to Chinese folklore, virtuous leaders will guide the led to a virtuous and harmonious world; vicious tyrants will mislead the people into a vicious and chaotic abyss. This is why Confucius and his followers called for the rule of the sage, the rule of the virtuous. Some Confucian scholars also noticed the importance of making laws and rules, hence Mencius, the second Confucian sage, once said that “benevolence alone is
not enough for governance, law alone cannot implement itself” (cited in, Yong Jin, 2009, p. 298; cited in, Q. Liang, 1996, p. 254). If interpreted from the dialectical perspective, Mencius in some ways emphasised the interactive relations between the benevolence of the leadership and the rule by law, but he put particular stress on the importance of the exemplary roles of the leadership.

With the traditional Chinese Confucian political philosophy as social and cultural background, Mao considered it essential to build a virtuous, effective, and strong leadership of the Party for both democratic revolution and socialist construction. Mao stressed the exemplary vanguard role of the Chinese Communists and required that they should “play an exemplary vanguard role in every sphere” (October, 1938, p. 197). In other words, the mass line leadership style puts more stress on the moral and ethical roles of the leadership than on the legislative and compulsory rule of laws and regulations.

Frontline police officers also acknowledged the significant impact of the leadership on the whole criminal investigation force. For example, Officer I argued that “a leader needs to have personal character charms. The styles and integrities of the leadership will influence the styles and moralities of the whole team”. Officer L also mentioned that “a fine example has boundless power”, if a police commander has “strong sense of responsibilities and justice, the whole squad will have too”.

Therefore, a competent criminal investigation commander must know not only how to set compulsory rules and regulations but also how to demonstrate good examples for others. To lead by example and set the tone for the whole criminal
investigation squad is more important than the eloquent words a commander utters on how to implement the mass line in criminal investigation.

### 6.1.5.2 Strengthening police professional interview skills training

As has been discussed above, both scholars and police interviewees regarded the improper methods and skills that criminal investigators adopted in interviewing the masses as important factors that led to the unwillingness of the masses to support criminal investigation work. This indicates that strengthening training in police professional interview skills is essential for building effective police-masses relations and obtaining their trust and support in the process of conducting criminal investigations. This is the basis for implementing the principle of combining the special force with the masses in criminal investigation.

According to my interviews with the police officers, such training may be more effective if it is based on real cases. For example, the case about interviewing the old watchman told by Officer K and other similar cases collected from practice should be incorporated into such training. Certainly, police professional interview skills cannot be obtained in a day. Referring to Mao’s mass line theory, the process of such skill training needs to link theory with practice, move from obtaining experience from a particular case to developing general knowledge, then use the general knowledge to guide further practice, and cycle in endless spirals. This means that the interview skill training is a comprehensive and continuous programme. Such training may be the most difficult but also the most important “software” in implementing the mass line in criminal investigation.
Constrained by my research aims and time limits, interviews concerning how to improve police professional interview skills in contacting with the masses could not be explored in-depth. Further studies on such topics will be necessary and beneficial for proposing more detailed suggestions on better implementing the mass line in criminal investigation through strengthening police professional interview skills training.

6.1.5.3 Adopting comprehensive measures to prohibit extortion of confessions

As has been analysed, both Mao and Luo had strongly opposed the practice of extorting confessions by torture and required it be strictly prohibited. However, Mao and Luo did not give specific measures concerning how to prohibit extorting confessions, though they advocated adopting the method of investigation. Based on my findings about police officers’ views on extorting confessions, the disclosed details in some wrongful convictions, and my personal knowledge about Chinese criminal investigation, I suggest that the following two measures (at least) should be above all taken to strengthen the current legal prohibition on extorting confessions so that the mass line method of investigation can be thoroughly implemented in criminal investigation.

One is that the criminal investigation process must be supervised by external forces, particularly by lawyers because they have mastered sufficient knowledge about criminal justice and have been empowered with certain legal rights other ordinary citizens have not. This kind of supervision should also be regarded as a form of participation of the masses in criminal investigation (Sui, 2007a; C. Wu, 2001; Zhang, 2008). According to the current Chinese criminal investigation system, the interrogation process – the interview with the arrested suspect(s) – is usually conducted in a relatively closed
environment between the police and the suspect(s). Lawyers are not allowed to be present at the place where the police are questioning a criminal suspect, unless the criminal suspect is a youngster under 18 years. Though lawyers can meet criminal suspects after police interrogations, such meetings are subject to strict scrutiny by the police. According to the disclosed wrongful convictions, all extorted confessions were made during this interrogation process. This was also corroborated by the story Officer F told when they questioned a victim who was arrested as a “criminal suspect”, and some high-handed confinement measures⁵ in tight bindings were adopted (see 5.2.6.2).

When effective supervision over the interrogation from outside the police force is missing, or is stipulated in legal regulations but not enforced, it will leave convenient conditions for criminal investigators to engage in the extortion of confessions instead of doing thorough investigation among the masses and collecting actual evidence. Furthermore, when the extortion of confessions has occurred, it is currently very difficult to obtain evidence proving it because there is not a third party present when it occurred. Therefore, improving external supervision, particularly from lawyers, over the police interrogation process is a necessary way to drive criminal investigators to abolish the practice of extorting confessions.

The other is that once any occurrences of extorting confessions are confirmed, confession-extorters and their supervisors must be strictly punished by law. In China, although extorting confessions has been stipulated as a type of crime and some police officers who committed such crimes have been punished, the punishment to them was very lenient compared to what they had done and what damages they brought to the

⁵ According to Chinese police customs, high-handed confinement measures usually indicate somewhat disguised torture or corporal punishment. It is a way of expressing police torture in a soft and cunning way.
victims and to the society. What is more important is that no police chiefs have ever been brought to justice when the extortion of confessions was committed directly under his/her jurisdiction and leadership. At worst a police chief would be simply given a disciplinary warning from within the police authorities or removed from their present posts.

In the Chinese criminal investigation system, where a police chief or a commander has strong centralised power to direct the subordinates, if he/she does not take the major responsibility for the crime of extorting confessions, the practice of extorting confessions will never be effectively prohibited. Those disclosed wrongful convictions showed that most extorted confessions occurred during the process of investigating felonies such as murders, rapes, robberies, and explosions. When investigating such a criminal case, the police chief or the commander was always the one who took overall responsibilities for solving it. This means that the police chief was actually controlling the whole process of investigating such a big case and was aware of what was happening. On most occasions, extortion of confessions was conducted under the direct orders or indirect indications from the police chief. So to prohibit extortion of confessions in criminal investigation, the police leadership should bear the major responsibilities.

Certainly, punishment alone will not thoroughly solve the problem of extorting confessions. As has been discussed, the core aim of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation is to objectively collect information, clues, and evidence from all sources so as to reach more objective less subjective deductions, judgments, and conclusions on the crime being investigated. If the method of extorting confessions is to
be effectively prohibited, police officers need to be aware of all the methods at their disposal so they do not feel unable to do their job. Applying modern technology into criminal investigation is a good choice that will be discussed in the next section.

6.1.5.4 Applying technology to expand ways of combining the special force with the masses

Though some authors argued that the extensive use of modern technology in criminal investigation has to some extent weakened the investigators’ awareness of and willingness to rely on the masses (Cai et al., 2001; Jing & Wang, 2011; B. Liu, 2004; Wang, 2004; L. Wu & Ma, 2002), I argue that the development and application of modern technology provides police with more advantages than disadvantages for better implementing the mass line in criminal investigation. When modern technology is effectively applied to criminal investigation, it provides criminal investigators with more choices in collecting information and clues from the masses so that they can analyse a criminal case more objectively and accurately.

It should be noted that, according to the analyses of my research, the masses in the context of “combining the special force with the masses” include not only those ordinary masses like peasants, workers, or residents, but also expert masses and organisational masses. Therefore when we discuss the role that modern technology plays in relying on the masses in criminal investigation, we need to at least consider the following three aspects.

First, the development and application of modern technology provides more choices for criminal investigators to approach the masses. In Mao’s era, the methods
used for mobilising the masses usually included “making propaganda through films, lantern-slides, stage performances, newspapers, pamphlets and leaflets” (Mao, May, 1951, p. 50). Though some of these methods (like newspapers, pamphlets and leaflets) are still being used today when police want to mobilise the masses to provide crime information, new methods with modern technological supports have been increasingly adopted, including TV broadcasting, internet media, and mobile messages. As some authors have argued, the development of modern technology has provided the police with an alternative way of conducting foot-based neighbourhood canvasses to seek the support of the masses in solving some criminal cases (J. Cheng & Xue, 2011; N. Liu & Hao, 2009; Yao & Guo, 2008). On some occasions, the internet-based neighbourhood canvasses are more effective than the traditional foot-based ones when the interviewees are the netizens or the internet-lovers.

Second, since the masses embody the general masses (the ordinary citizens like peasants and workers), expert masses, and organisational masses, the support of the masses in criminal investigation should include both clues provided by them as eyewitnesses or informers and various technological supports provided by the expert masses or the agencies the expert masses are affiliated to, based on their expertise in a particular field. On most occasions, criminal investigators can only reach more trustworthy conclusions through combining the clues and evidence provided by the general masses with that provided by some expert masses in the process of solving a criminal case. The following case is a good example.

On early morning April 10, 2000 in Hangzhou (hereafter, the “4.10 case”), a city in Zhejiang province in eastern China, police received a telephone report that a young
woman was found dead lying on the grass near the railway. The analyses of the crime scene investigation indicated that the woman was strangled to death by a nylon string. A male style jacket was covering her upper body, sperm was found in her body and a sample was collected, but her clothes were all in a normal condition and no other obvious evidence indicated that she had been raped. No documents or belongings that could prove her identity were found. However, police noticed two particularities in this case: one was the victim’s shoes, the other was her teeth. Her shoes were handmade with particular tie knots that had never been seen in local areas. Her teeth had some brown calculus that had not been discovered on the teeth of local residents.

In solving an unknown body case, finding out the victim’s identity is the key to tracking down the criminal suspect(s). In the following days, police conducted neighbourhood canvasses and then mobilised the general masses through mass media to help identify the victim. Since her shoes had never been seen in local areas, police deduced that she was most probably a transient worker or visitor from another area. Therefore, the police interviewed some transient women workers in Hangzhou and were told by some from Guizhou Province that this style of shoes was made in Bijie County areas, Guizhou Province, in the southwest part of China, thousands of kilometres away from Hangzhou. At the same time, police sent samples of the teeth calculus to a geological and mineral institute for analysis. Police were told that the tooth calculus was formed by a rare element named lanthanum due to the victim having consumed for years a large amount of food and water that was produced on the soil where the element lanthanum was embedded. The element lanthanum is very rare and is also found in Bijie County areas, Guizhou Province. Based on the information and evidence collected from
the masses, the police concluded that Bijie County was most probably the place where the victim came from. Therefore, the police flew to Bijie County and handed out leaflets among the masses there. Two days later, the victim’s brother came to the police, identified the victim, and reported that two brothers in a neighbouring village had taken the victim, his sister, to seek jobs in cities one month ago. Two weeks ago, the two brothers had returned home and said the victim had run away by herself.

At the beginning of the subsequent interrogation, neither of the two brothers acknowledged having sex with the victim or being the owner of the jacket over the victim’s body. However, the DNA examination proved that both the sperm and the jacket belonged to the younger brother. Finally, the brothers confessed their crime: they had attempted to abduct and sell the victim but had failed. Then the younger brother had sex with the victim just before they decided to go back home. Fearing being reported, the elder brother induced the younger to kill the victim. The younger did so but felt sorry and covered the victim with his own jacket before they left the murder scene.

In the “4.10 case”, one example demonstrating the importance of combining the support of the general masses with that of the experts was how the police identified the victim’s residential area. In this process, the analysis of the teeth calculus by the geological and mineral experts provided reliable evidence for judging the victim’s residential area was in Bijie County because the calculus could only be formed when the victim had lived for years in areas where the lanthanum was found. This meant that the victim must have lived in Bijie County for a long time, so some people there should know her. Though the shoes were also made in that county, it could not be concluded that the victim definitely came from that area because she might have bought the shoes
or received them as presents. Yet when these two sources of evidence combined together, they provided more trustworthy evidence for judging where the victim came from.

As has been discussed above, the core aim of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation is to guide criminal investigators to objectively collect information, clues, and evidence from all sources then analyse them creatively but logically to form more objective, less subjective, deductions, judgments, and conclusions on the crime being investigated. In the process of solving the “4.10 case”, the criminal investigators demonstrated a good model of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation through objectively collecting evidence from all sources including crime scene investigation, neighbourhood canvasses, mobilising the masses, and seeking help from expert masses. When these scattered and unsystematic clues and information were processed into concentrated and systematic analyses, they became chains of substantial evidence proving who committed the crime.

Last but not least, the broad application of modern technology to criminal investigation will be beneficial for ultimately abolishing the extortion of confessions. As has been analysed in Chapter 5, both Mao and Luo upheld firmly that implementing the mass line in criminal investigation required the method of investigation should be adopted while the method of extorting confessions should be strictly prohibited and abolished. However, some wrongful convictions have recently been disclosed and the analyses of the interviews show that the practice of extorting confessions is still a problem in China. This was to some extent caused by the limited cognitive means criminal investigators could adopt. The broad application of modern technology into criminal investigation has greatly expanded the cognitive means for solving criminal
cases, and this will help criminal investigators to change their reliance on extorting confessions and finally abolish them. To continue with my example of the “4.10 case”, when the two suspected brothers were arrested, they still refused to confess their crimes. But with the help of modern technology in the form of DNA examination, criminal investigators made them realise it was useless to resist any longer and they should confess their crimes. In old times without DNA technology, extorting confessions might be the preferred way to let them confess.

Therefore, when holding a more comprehensive perspective to see who the masses are in criminal investigation and how to concentrate their ideas and efforts to solve a criminal case, criminal investigators need to understand that technology is actually in the hands of the masses, particularly in the hands of expert masses. When a problem is encountered in criminal investigation, the masses as a whole can always provide sufficient information for the development of a solution by police.

6.1.5.5 Regularising the reward system for reporting crimes

Both my literature review and analysis of the interviews show that the process of commercialisation and marketisation in contemporary China has greatly changed the social values. This indicates that economic gains and losses may become an important index influencing people’s decisions on what to do. Dutton labelled this tendency in Chinese society as “money talks” and claimed that, with such a macro social context, Chinese police have devised their own money-based version of contract responsibility to reinvigorate the mass line (Dutton, 2000, 2005b). In fact, Mao’s mass line has never denied the importance of economic factors in winning support of the masses. Instead,
Mao emphasised that if “the question of the immediate interests, the well-being, of the broad masses” was neglected or underestimated, it would be difficult to mobilise the masses to support in fulfilling a task (Mao, January 27, 1934, p. 147). In Mao’s era, it might be due to the scarcity of money in wartime made it impractical to mobilise the masses through granting monetary rewards. This might to some degree account for why Mao adopted ideological education and moral reward to mobilise the masses. However, in today’s China, when the market economy has dominated all fields of social life, it is natural and necessary to adopt the monetary reward lever to mobilise the masses to support a criminal investigation. This should not be interpreted as the end of the mass line in Chinese policing as predicted by some foreign scholars (Dutton, 2000, 2005a), but as a change of one method of implementing the mass line in police work, including in criminal investigations.

Certainly, China’s current monetary reward method fits only for mobilising the masses to help in solving certain felonious criminal cases. What’s more, the amount of reward money is mainly decided on a case to case basis. So far, a more systematic and complete reward system for reporting crimes has not been established (B. Cheng, 2006; F. Li & Zhao, 2004; H. Liu, 2007; X. Liu, 2007; Peng, 2011). Under the market economy conditions, regularising a more complete reward system for reporting crimes to mobilise the masses to support the criminal investigation work seems to be a necessary and practical option. This may be an interesting topic for further studies on implementing the mass line in criminal investigation in the context of a commercialised and marketised society in China.
6.2 Limitations of study and future directions

This study has been conducted based on systematically analysing Mao’s works, Luo’s speeches, and interviews with Chinese frontline police officers. These triangulated sources of data have effectively prevented potential biases that may have resulted from relying on only one source of data. Thus the validity of the conclusions I reached has been best managed to be guaranteed.

However, I was also aware that some limitations in this study need to be considered. One is that the findings from the interviews were constrained by the small sample size of police officers interviewed in this study. While the use of in-depth interviews and the police interviewees’ professional knowledge in criminal investigation increased confidence in the findings, an extension of this research to include more police officers would further validate the findings reported in this thesis. Particularly, in future studies, police chiefs at higher levels, such as chiefs of metropolitan and/or provincial police agencies, should be recruited and interviewed since they are the superior leaders of local police forces and may provide more thorough views on how to improve the mass line leadership styles in criminal investigation.

Another limitation concerns the identity of the interviewees. In this study, the interviewees all came from frontline police agencies, no interviewees from other fields were interviewed. Further studies recruiting interviewees from other fields, particularly lawyers, criminal suspects, and released convicts may provide other aspects of the story that will enrich the understandings of implementing the mass line in criminal investigation.
Finally, future research might consider the use of a longitudinal design and pre-post testing measures for long-term examination of the changes of mindset of criminal investigators and hence changes to the way they conduct criminal investigations. Potential research questions such as whether more comprehensive and in-depth understandings of the mass line and the concept of the masses do help police officers to better implement this line in criminal investigation could then be examined.

6.3 Concluding remarks

My study has achieved the central aim of obtaining a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the mass line for informing the better implementation of the mass line in criminal investigation and for providing a standard against which that implementation can be judged. It is found that the mass line in essence refers to a set of methods aiming at objectively concentrating the ideas and efforts of the masses to maximally avoid subjectivism in the process of forming judgements, decisions, policies, or theories for effectively solving problems. The ultimate aim of implementing the mass line is to concentrate the masses’ wisdom and efforts to solve problems encountered in social life so as to change the world and make a better life. The masses in Mao’s mass line leadership context include not only those ordinary people outside an organisation but also those rank and file members within the organisation. When the concept of the masses is interpreted in the context of solving a problem, the masses may refer to anybody that may provide information, suggestions, and efforts for objectively analysing and effectively solving the problem.
Consequently, when the mass line is being applied to criminal investigation, its core aim is to guide criminal investigators to objectively collect information, clues, and evidence from all sources then analyse them creatively but logically to form more objective less subjective deductions, judgments, and conclusions on the crime being investigated. During this process it is particularly important for criminal investigators, acting as problem solvers, to objectively treat all information and clues on an equal basis, particularly those explanations of innocence and defences made by criminal suspects. If criminal investigators hold biased attitudes to the explanations a criminal suspect makes or clues he/she provides to defend his or her innocence, they may readily consider such explanations and defences as sophistry or tricks. Hence they will arbitrarily regard a criminal suspect as the “real criminal”, thus impelling a criminal investigator to make biased judgements, even torturing the criminal suspect to tell “the truth”. Treating all information and clues on an equal basis does not mean that the criminal investigators should accept all information and clues without any analyses and discrimination. Instead, it means that whether the information and clues are true or false should be equally verified through conducting thorough and repeated investigations among the masses and comparing these clues against each other before drawing a conclusion.

Therefore, when judging whether the mass line is thoroughly and truly implemented in criminal investigation, the key point is to determine whether criminal investigators have objectively collected sufficient information, clues, and evidence from the masses through adopting all legitimate methods such as conducting thorough and proper neighbourhood canvasses, mobilising the masses, and consulting with mass
experts. Usually, criminal investigators should conduct this process several times to ensure they collect all necessary information and evidence and all that should be and can be collected. Then if they come to conclusions based on objectively and logically analysing this information, clues, and evidence, it can be judged that they have thoroughly implemented the mass line in investigating a criminal case.
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Appendix A: Document Analysis Worksheet

Document title: ________________________________________________________________
Author ______________________
Date of document ________________________________________________

1. For what audience was the document written?
________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

2. Why was the document written? Quoting some sentences that indicate why it was written.
________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

3. What is the document about?
________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

4. What bias/prejudice, if any, of the author could be identified in the document?
________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

5. What is the potential benefit of this document to my study?
________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

6. What is left unanswered in this document to my study?
________________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
### Appendix B: Semi-structured In-depth Interview Guide with Field Notes

**Implementing the Mass Line in Criminal Investigation in China**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Archival #:</th>
<th>Site:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Time Start:</th>
<th>End:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant Code:</td>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td>Age:</td>
<td>Work Yrs:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (circle one):</td>
<td>HG</td>
<td>UG</td>
<td>PG</td>
<td>DG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Questions and notes of responses

Demographic question: Could you please tell something about your age, education background and working years in police force?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My observation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Probes may include but not limited to the following questions: Are the rank and file police officers also the masses to a criminal investigation commander? Why or why not? Why do/don’t you think criminal suspects are also the masses to criminal investigators?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Could you please talk about your understandings of the mass line in criminal investigation?

2. Who do you think the masses are in the context of criminal investigation? (Probes: What problems do we still have in implementing this method? What are the causes behind these problems?)

3. In practical work, how do you usually implement the mass line in criminal investigation? (Probes: What problems do we still have in implementing this method? What are the causes behind these problems?)

4. As has been disclosed, extorting confessions was one of the main reasons that
led to the two wrongful cases of “She Xianglin, Zhao Zuohai”. Is the method of extorting confessions against the mass line? Why or why not? (*Probes: If the mass line is genuinely implemented, could the occurrence of such cases be avoided?*)

5. As a criminal investigator, how could you better implement the mass line method of work in solving a criminal case? (*Probes will be developed in accordance with interviewee’s responses.*)

6. As a police commander, how could you better implement the mass line method of leadership in commanding the investigation of a criminal case? (*Probes will be developed in accordance with interviewee’s responses.*)

Thanks so much for your participation. When analysing the interview, only the participant’s code will be mentioned, no personal name and company will appear.

Archival #=II (in-depth interview) + SX (Shenyang and Xiamen) + two digital serial number, e.g. IIIX01.
Participant code= SX (Shenyang and Xiamen) + two digital serial number, eg. SX01.
HG=high school graduate   UG=university and college graduate   PG=postgraduate
DG =doctoral graduate
Appendix C: The cases used as examples in this research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Titles</th>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Example of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She Xianglin Case</td>
<td>Mass media</td>
<td>Violating the essential requirements of the mass line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zhao Zuohai Case</td>
<td>Mass media</td>
<td>Violating the essential requirements of the mass line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10 Case</td>
<td>Mass media</td>
<td>Relying on the various “expertises” of the masses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Lure Robbery Case</td>
<td>Officer F</td>
<td>The importance of the personal participation of the police commander in criminal investigation practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smashing Car Window Case</td>
<td>Officer J</td>
<td>Mobilising the masses (on a metropolitan scale) for a particular case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forehead Patting Director Case</td>
<td>Officer J</td>
<td>Commanding methods that deviated from the mass line leadership method</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Watchman Case</td>
<td>Officer K</td>
<td>Art of communication in interviewing the masses, both unsuccessful and successful performances of the investigators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

She Xianglin Case and Zhao Zuohai Case were two cases in China in which wrongful convictions were later disclosed. They were so well-known that they almost became “nicknames” for the process of extorting confessions thus leading to wrongful convictions.

She Xianglin was charged with murdering his wife and served his sentence in jail from 1994 to 2005.

Zhao Zuohai was charged with murdering a man who had some conflict with him and served his sentences in jail from 1999 to 2010.

In these cases, the two so-called victims were found to be alive after the accused had served ten years of their sentences in jail. Fortunately, the “victims” came to the rescue of those who had been accused. Although the two “murderers” finally obtained their freedom and innocence, the damage had been done. Discussions of such cases provide in-depth reflections on the significance of correctly implementing the mass line in criminal investigation.
Appendix D: Approval Letter

Mr William Yongtao Li
Charles Sturt University
Goulburn

Dear William

Thank you for the additional information forwarded in response to a request from the School of Policing Studies Human Research Ethics Committee.

The Committee has now approved your proposal entitled “Implementing the Mass Line Principle in Criminal Investigation in China” for a twelve month period beginning 8 June 2011. The protocol number issued with respect to the project is 2011-108-05. Please be sure to quote this number when responding to any request made by the Committee.

You must notify the Committee immediately should your research differ in any way from that proposed.

You are also required to complete a Progress Report form, which can be downloaded from www.csu.edu.au/research/forms/ehrc_annrep.doc, and return it on completion of your research or by 8 June 2012 if your research has not been completed by that date.

Please don’t hesitate to contact Vanessa Layden telephone 02 48242507 or email vladen@csu.edu.au if you have any enquiries about this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Susan Robinnson
Presiding officer
School of Policing Studies Human Research Ethics Committee
Direct Telephone: 02 48242580
Email: surobinson@csu.edu.au

Cc Anna Corbo Crehan, supervisor
Appendix E:  Information Statement (English version)

INFORMATION STATEMENT

Project: Implementing mass line in criminal investigation in China

Contact details for the research

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Who is the researcher?
The researcher, Yongtao Li, is an associate professor at China Criminal Police University, teaching criminal investigation courses for over ten years there. Now the researcher is a PhD student at Charles Sturt University, the leading education and training provider in law enforcement in Australia. Charles Sturt University is responsible for recruit and ongoing training for NSW Police Force and other agencies, and are involved with research into policing and law enforcement across Australia and internationally.

What is this research about?
This is an academic doctoral research project conducted in my role as a PhD student. The central aim of this research is to build a theoretical model for informing the implementation of the mass line principle in criminal investigations in China and against which the practice of criminal investigations can be judged.
I am interested in interviewing you because I would like to find out about your views, experiences and suggestions regarding the implementation of the mass line principle in criminal investigations in China. Your enriched experience in police work and in criminal investigations means you will have important insights into the research topic. I value your input and would be very grateful for your help.

What is expected of the research participants?
If you agree to take part, please contact me via email: lyt1207@163.com or on mobile 18959200056 (from July 8 to August 5, 2011). I will consult with you about when and where to conduct the interview. The research will employ an informal conversational interview with you. You are free to express your own opinions concerning the questions raised by the researcher. You have the final
right to decide whether the interview is tape-recorded.
Taking part in my project is voluntary. This means that you can decide to say no if you like and no one can make you take part. You may withdraw from the interview at any time and there will be no adverse consequences. The interview is expected to be about 50 minutes. Yet you are always welcome to extend the interview and communicate further with the researcher.

**Will anyone know what we talk about?**
All of the research is completely confidential. This means that the researcher will not identify you by name or other personal information when analysing the interviews and discussing the results. Where the interviews are audio recorded, the tapes or audio materials will be transcribed by the researcher himself so that maximum confidentiality can be maintained. All transcripts and digital recordings will be held securely, and will be destroyed on completion of this work (after 5 years) in line with CSU ethical guidelines. You may request to check your own transcripts and delete anything you want before the researcher begins the analysis.

**What happens afterwards?**
The researcher would like to keep contact with you and inform you about the research findings. If you would like to find out the results of the research project, please let me know when we meet for the interview and I will make a note of your contact details.

---

**Note:** The School of Policing Studies' Ethics Committee has approved this project, reference 2011-108-05. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this project, you may contact the Committee through the Presiding Officer:

Dr. Sue Robinson  
School of Policing Studies  
Locked Bag 2005  
Goulburn 2580, NSW  
Phone: 61 2 4824 2580  
Fax: 61 2 4824 2599

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.
项目：中国刑侦工作的群众路线

情况说明函

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该项目研究人，李永涛，中国刑事警察学院副教授，主讲刑事案件侦查课程。现为查尔斯特
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关机构人员的招募与继续教育培训，并参与全澳洲及国际警务与执法研究活动。

项目研究目的
此为博士生学术研究项目。主要目的是构建中国刑侦工作贯彻群众路线的理论模型，为侦查
实战提供借鉴，接受实践的检验。
我非常希望通过采访，了解您对于贯彻刑侦工作群众路线的观点、经历和建议。您的丰富的
从警经历，尤其是关于刑侦工作的经历，意味着您对该研究项目定会有深入、独到的见解。
我非常珍惜您的投入，不胜感激您对此项研究的帮助。

采访对象要求
如果您同意接受采访，请与我联系，电子邮箱：lyt1207@163.com 或者拨打我的手机，
18959200056 (2011年7月8日至8月5日)。我将与您协商采访的时间和地点。该采访为非
正式场合，聊天式采访。对相关问题的回答不受任何限制。您对采访可否录音有最终决定权。
参加本项目完全是自愿的。您可以拒绝参加，任何人不得强迫您参加。您可以在采访的任何
阶段退出，而不会导致任何不利于您的后果。本次采访预计在50分钟左右，更欢迎您延长采
访时间，进一步探讨。

采访内容保密
采访绝对保密。就是说，在分析采访内容和讨论结果时，研究人不能提及您的姓名或其它个
人信息。如果采访进行了录音，录音带或数字资料将由研究人本人翻译整理，以最大限度地
保守秘密。所有翻译、数字资料都将安全保存，在研究结束后5年，根据查尔斯特大学职业
道德规定进行销毁。采访对象可以在研究人分析资料之前核对誊本，删除任何他们想要删除的内容。

采访后记
研究人非常愿意与您保持联络，并告知研究结果。如果您想了解本研究的最终成果，请在采访中声明，我会记下您的具体联系方式。

注：警务研究所道德委员会已经批准该项目，编号2011-108-05。如您对该项目中涉及的有关职业道德的行为有抱怨或保留，您可以通过联系执行负责人向该委员会反映：

苏·鲁宾逊 博士
警务研究所
2005 邮袋
高奔 2580，新南威尔士州
电话：61 2 4824 2580
传真：61 2 4824 2599

我们对您提出的任何事宜都会保守保密，全面调查，并告知调查结果。
Appendix G: Consent Form (English Version)

Project: Implementing mass line in criminal investigation in China

Yongtao Li                                          Supervisor
PhD Student                                         Dr. Anna Corbo Crehan
School of Policing Studies                          School of Policing Studies
Charles Sturt University, Australia                 Charles Sturt University, Australia
Locked bag 2005                                     Locked bag 2005
NSW Police College                                  NSW Police College
McDermott Dr, Goulburn 2580                         McDermott Dr, Goulburn 2580
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Mobile: 18959200056 (China)                         Mobile: 18959200056 (China)
lyt1207@163.com                                     acorbocrehan@csu.edu.au

CONSENT FORM

I, __________________________ (name in print letters), acknowledge that, before the start of the interview, I:

● have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the research and received satisfactory answers
● understand that I am free to withdraw from the interview at any time with no adverse results
● understand that the research result may be published.
● understand that this is an informal interview yet any information or personal details gathered in the course of this research are confidential and that neither my name nor any other identifying information will be used or published without my written permission
● agree[   ] disagree[   ] (please tick √ in the [   ]) that the interview can be audio-taped

Interviewee's statement
I understand the information I have been given and agree to be interviewed.

Signature ………………… Date ……………

Note: The School of Policing Studies’ Ethics Committee has approved this project, reference 2011-108-05. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this project, you may contact the Committee through the Presiding Officer:
Dr. Sue Robinson
School of Policing Studies
Locked Bag 2005
Goulburn 2580, NSW
Phone: 61 2 4824 2580
Fax: 61 2 4824 2599
项目：中国刑侦工作的群众路线

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同意采访函件

本人，…………………………………………………………………………………（印刷体姓名），声明，在接受采访前，本人：

● 已获得机会，询问该研究的相关问题，并且得到了满意的答复
● 知道自己可以在任何时候推辞采访，而不会有导致任何不利后果
● 知道研究成果可能发表
● 获悉这是非正式场合采访，但采访中获得的任何信息及个人情况都得以保密，未经本人书面授权，不得使用本人姓名或发表任何可以认定本人身份的信息。
● 同意[   ]不同意[   ]（请在[   ]画√）采访中进行录音

被采访人声明

本人对相关事宜已经清楚，同意接受采访。

签字 …………………………… 日期 ……………

注：警务研究所道德委员会已经批准该项目，编号2011-108-05。如对该项目中涉及的有关职业道德的行为有抱怨或保留，您可以通过联系执行负责人向该委员会反映：

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我们对您提出的任何事宜都会保守保密，全面调查，并告知调查结果。
Appendix I: Interview Guide (Chinese revised version)

半框架深度采访提纲

1. 能否介绍一下您的年龄、现有的学历以及从警年限？

2. 能谈谈您对刑侦工作群众路线的理解吗？

3. 毛主席在《关于领导方法的若干问题》中指出，“在我党的一切实际工作中，凡属正确的领导，必须是从群众中来，到群众中去”。对于这段论述，不同的人有不同的理解，您是如何理解的？

4. 在刑侦实际工作中，我们是如何贯彻“从群众中来，到群众去”原则的？

5. 如果不坚持“从群众中来，到群众中去”的这种领导方法和工作方法，会带来什么样的危害？

6. 我们知道，刑讯逼供是导致“佘祥林、赵作海”两起冤案的主要原因之一。那么，刑讯逼供是否违背了群众路线？为什么？

7. 如果您是负责案件侦破的具体办案人员，您将如何在案件侦破中更好地运用“从群众中来，到群众中去”的工作方法破获案件呢？

8. 作为负责案件侦破的侦查指挥员，您如何在案件侦破中更好地运用“从群众中来，到群众中去”的领导方法指挥侦查呢？