Policing Protests in Post-Authoritarian South Korea, 1990-1991

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Abstract   Social movement scholars have extensively discussed how protest policing has developed in mature democratic countries. Meanwhile, there exists little systematic effort to empirically examine the development of protest policing in young democracies. To address this gap, this paper explores how protest policing in South Korea has developed and operated in the early 1990s in a broader context of a democratic transition. In post-authoritarian South Korea, the escalated force style of policing suddenly collapsed with the political liberalization of 1987. But the country's protest policing has not shifted to negotiated management as observed in the U.S. and elsewhere. Instead, selective incapacitation has emerged, as police use a limited amount of organizational resources to repress threatening, but weaker protest groups that are isolated from a wider movement environment. Based upon statistical analysis, it is claimed that police's use of arrest is particularly better explained with the combination of the threat model and the weakness model in post-authoritarian South Korea.

Keywords   Protest Policing · Public Order Policing · Protest Events · Social Movements · South Korea

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Among scholars of social movements and protest policing, the development of the public order management systems (POMS)—"[m]ore or less highly elaborated institutional templates designed for the management of large gatherings and protest events" (McCarthy, McPhail and Crist 2009: 72)—has been discussed exclusively in contexts of mature democracies (McCarthy, Martin and McPhail 2007; McCarthy et al. 2009; McPhail, Schweingruber and McCarthy 1998). In full-fledged democratic societies such as the U.S., social movements have become ubiquitous as a normal component of the political repertoire, and interactions with the authorities have been highly institutionalized. From this perspective, McPhail et al. (1998) argued that the paradigm of policing protest in the U.S. was transformed from escalated force in the 1960s to negotiated management in the 1980s and 1990s, with a tendency to soften the approach to protest policing over the last few decades.[1]

Despite the rich literature on POMS development in Western democratic societies, the same topic in post-authoritarian contexts has not drawn sufficient attention from scholars thus far. In these young democracies that mushroomed in the third wave of democratization (Huntington 1991), examining how protests are policed is quite important for understanding how these societies reconcile law-and-order with political contentions as well as for predicting the stable consolidation of democratic polity. Much previous literature has addressed protest policing only as a component of larger projects related to the mobilization process in (post-)authoritarian societies or young democracies (Almeida 2014; Beissinger 2002; Jaime-Jiménez and Reinares 1998; Titarenko, McCarthy, McPhail and Augustyn 2001); however, that literature has scarcely focused on the empirical dynamics of how protest policing actually operate in these societies.

Public order policing styles in young democracies are likely to differ from those in mature democratic societies in many aspects. Post-authoritarian states in young democracies face a fundamental challenge in the policing of social movements. Newly opened political opportunities lead to explosive and destabilizing protest waves, yet many have a weak policing apparatus that is not mature enough to deal with these protests. In this context, many post-authoritarian states are then often tempted to use military force to violently repress fledgling movements. Although much theory has been built to explain the policing of protests in mature democracies, little exists to help explain the difficult decisions emerging democracies face.

To fill in these gaps, this paper analyzes public order policing styles in South Korea historically and quantitatively. The first section discusses an historical overview of how protest policing has developed in South Korea from 1980 to the early 1990s. The political liberalization of 1987 was the watershed event that re-shaped protest policing in South Korea—from a no-holds-barred policing style that used escalated force to a more deliberative policing style using selective incapacitation. Although the political liberalization of 1987 legitimized the civil society and secured institutional channels for activists, this change did not require that South Korean police adopt negotiated management policing such as exists in other mature democracies. During this period, four factors led to a growing intensive policing style against protest groups made weak, but still threatening to the state, by isolation from a wider movement environment: (1) the alliance of conservative political leadership, (2) the division among liberal political leadership, (3) the radicalization of student and worker groups, and (4) declining public support

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[1] Meanwhile, Kraska and Kappeler (1997) contended that protest policing in the U.S. became more militant with the recent development of police paramilitary units (PPUs).

for radical activism.

The second section empirically examines the new protest policing style in South Korea in the early 1990s with an emphasis on how a limited policing capacity is selectively allocated by police to specific protest characteristics. A unique protest event data set from South Korea from 1990 to 1991, originally collected by Nam (2006), was recoded by the author to better fit this research purpose. Then, a statistical analysis was conducted to test hypotheses regarding what protest characteristics led to increased arrests at events during this period. The analysis focuses particularly on how South Korean police responded differently according to the extent of protesters' strength by protest size, tactical repertoires, target, and protest waves.

Two Theoretical Models of Protest Policing

Two effective theoretical strands explaining police arrest at protest events have emerged in the literature. Most research has used the threat model, which primarily focuses on the conditions in which police consider protesters a threat to their safety and public security, motivating them to use aggressive repression. Fewer researchers use the weakness model, which suggests that police are more likely to arrest weak protesters who are politically and socially weak or those lack strong external sponsorship. Earl, Soule and McCarthy (2003) refine the model when they say that weakness may come from protesters' lack of material resources, organizational supports, or socio-political status to overcome the repression (the weakness-from-within model) or from the monitoring role of outside audiences who support protesters and thereby discourage police from making aggressive arrests at events (the weakness-from-without model).

Earl et al. (2003) also synthesize the theoretical propositions of the weak and threat models and show that protest size, confrontational tactics, and radical goals led to a greater likelihood of arrest in the protest policing in New York from 1968 to 1973, supporting the threat model. McCarthy et al. (2007) analyzed 384 disorderly campus gatherings across the U.S. from 1985 to 2002, and found physically confrontational behaviors by civilian participants led threatened police to make arrests. Ayoub (2010) conducted a cross-national analysis in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland between 1975 and 1989, with similar results.

Empirical studies supporting the weakness model are relatively scarce. Exceptions include research that reveals that police arrest marginalized groups such as racial and ethnic minorities at higher rates than other groups, consistent with the weakness-from-within model (Davenport, Soule, and Armstrong 2011; Warner and McCarthy 2014). Similarly, Ayoub (2010) found that organizational supports from church or unions decrease the arrests at events in Germany. Wisler and Giugni (1999), studying protests in the four largest Swiss cities from 1968 to1994 found that media attention during protest campaigns leads police to be more vulnerable and less likely to repress protests, supporting the weakness-from-without model.

Empirical literature on protest policing in the context of non-democracies or young democracies is quite rare. Titarenko et al. (2001) studied protest policing in Minsk, Belarus from 1990 to 1995, when the state was transitioning from Soviet government. They found that police arrest protesters more often at events sponsored by weaker social actors. Chang and Vitale (2013) examined the protest policing in 1970s South Korea and generally supported the threat model, but they also found that protests initiated by some weak status groups such as

students were more likely to involve police repression, which support the weakness-from-within model. Interestingly, Titarenko et al. (2001) and Chang and Vitale (2013) both found that protesters' weakness had a significant effect in arrests at protest events. This may suggest that the weakness model is particularly more useful in relation to young democracies such as South Korea than established democracies where researchers have concentrated.

Changing Protest Policing Styles in Post-Authoritarian South Korea

Authoritarian regimes had continued in South Korea since 1945, with a few intermittent changes in dictatorships. The end of authoritarian regimes was finally achieved with the political liberalization of 1987, which was the direct outcome of social movements that persisted against the brutal state violence and repression (Katsiaficas 2012; Kim 2000) and was also a component of the third wave of democracy (Huntington 1991).

The collapse of escalated force called for the introduction of a new protest policing style in the post-authoritarian setting. Negotiated management was not, however, a necessary result of the end of escalated force. More than forty years ago, Oberschall (1973: 248) had already recognized that the state should properly allocate their resources to the means of social control that would effectively handle mass demonstrations, just as protesters' groups should mobilize their resources for their movements' purposes. Public order policing skills and properly trained manpower in post-authoritarian South Korea were far from sufficient to stabilize roaring protest waves during this period. The selective incapacitation model therefore appeared to be an effective alternative for policing public order in post-authoritarian South Korea.

The heyday of escalated force, 1980-1983

Under the authoritarian rule of Chun Doo-hwan in the early 1980s, any attempts to organize and mobilize social movements were brutally repressed by that regime. The government maintained a gulag (*samchong-kyoyukdae*) to imprison lumpen (the homeless and criminals), riotous citizens, and anti-government activists. Conscientious students, professors, labor activists, teachers, and journalists who planned to mobilize anti-government protests were under permanent threat of surveillance, arrest, being expelled from their schools/jobs, torture, and even murder. As the opposition party's freedom of association was also heavily repressed, the protestors could expect no institutional alliance or external support. Ultra-conservative propaganda—the so-called "social cleansing movement" (*sahoe-jonghwa-undong*)—swept over the entire society and intolerantly quelled any protests (Kim 2000).

After this repressive political environment reached its peak in 1983, at which point the indictment rate for violating the Assembly and Demonstration Act was over 85 percent (as shown in Figure 1), an important change toward political liberalization was implemented in 1984. A series of appeasement policies (*yuhwa-jochi*)—including lifting curfew, allowing activist students (and professors) to come back to their schools, weakening censorship, pardoning political criminals, and lifting a ban on political activities by opposition politicians —was effected by the Chun regime (Kim 2000).

The collapse of escalated force, 1984-1987

Appeasement policies undertaken by Chun's regime in 1984 partially opened political opportunities in favor of anti-government activists. Activist students went back to their campuses and organized movement groups. Pro-democracy civil dissidents and opposition leaders (*jaeya*)[2] began to engage in organizing the opposition parties or movement groups that directly focused on protest against Chun's regime. The protest waves led by students and *jaeya* continued through the late 1980s and escalated quickly when the deaths of Park Jong-chul and Yi Han-yol during the protests turned numerous bystanders into anti-government demonstrators (the so-called "Necktie Brigade"). This event resulted in the political liberalization of 1987, which introduced the direct election of the South Korean President (for a single 4-year term).

　　With the 1987 amendment to Constitutional Law, the risk of descending into another dictatorship had been dramatically reduced. Freedoms of expression, association, and demonstration began to flourish; and Korean citizens became (partially) able to criticize their government without the fear of going to prison or even a gulag. The 1988 Seoul Olympics drew the media attention of the whole world to South Korea, and the Korean government became vulnerable to worldwide condemnation of violations of protesters' human rights. By the end of 1987, as Katsiaficas (2012: 335) noted, "[n]o more did police arrest people *en masse* for being in the wrong place at the wrong time." Following the political liberalization of 1987, the South Korean government had no option but to dismiss escalated force as a timeworn policing doctrine.

## Structural conditions for the new protest policing style, 1988-1991

As a civil society gains greater legitimacy, a new protest policing style in the post-authoritarian setting emerged with several unprecedented changes in structural conditions.

Constitutional and judicial changes

The first institutional change was at the constitutional level. Most importantly, Article 21(2) of the Constitutional Law of 1987 states that "[l]icensing or censorship of speech and the press, and licensing of assembly and association shall not be recognized." It was a drastic change under the new Constitutional Law and the new Assembly and Demonstration Act that any meeting or demonstration could be held simply by *reporting* the event to the police *a priori* with no requirement to obtain permission. In the beginning of Roh's regime, the Assembly and Demonstration Act of 1989 prohibited any type of *a priori* permit system for public gatherings or demonstrations (except for a few groups that served special public interests and in a few public places) and adopted the peace keeper system. Another important change towards a greater tolerance was made with respect to judicial actions. The state prosecutors had become more broadly tolerant of (even disruptive) protests. Figure 1 shows how the indictment rate by the state prosecutors drastically declined with the end of escalated force in the mid-1980s.

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[2] *Jaeya* literally means "(people) out of office" in Korean. It broadly refers to various political groups that could not (or choose not to) gain entry the institutional arena.
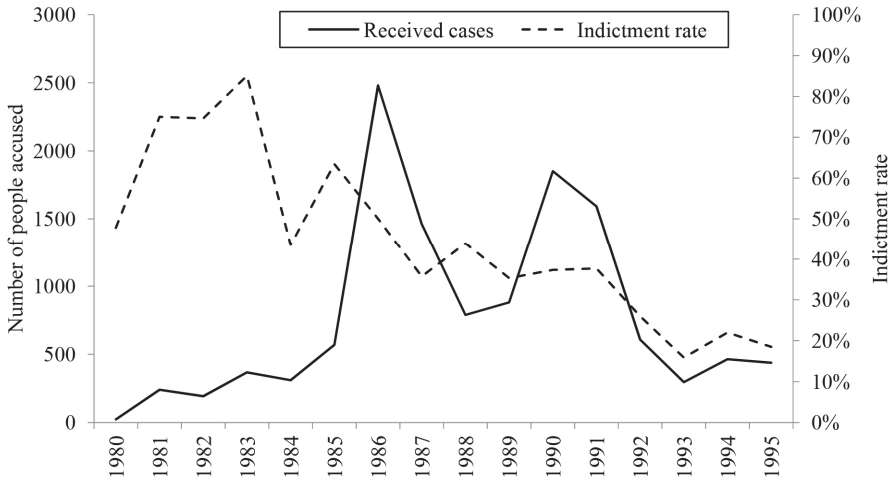
Source: *State Prosecution Yearbook* (*Komchal-yonkam*), various years.

Fig. 1 Trend of the indictment rates by state prosecutors in violation of the Assembly and Demonstration Act in South Korea, 1980-1995

Police organizations

New institutional constraints limited police organizations after 1991. Before the amendment of the Police Act in 1991, the central organization of the Korean police was the Public Security Headquarters, which was directly commanded by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The police at that time were criticized as being lapdogs of Chun's regime by protesters, and *Jaeya* leaders (particularly Kim Dae-jung and Kim Young-sam) had demanded the political neutralization of police organizations. With the Police Act of 1991, the National Police Agency was created, and the National Police Commission at the national level and the Public Security Administration Councils at the province and metropolitan-city levels were established to monitor and control police administration utilizing democratic principles. This institutional constraint on the police was intended to guarantee that the government could not use police to repress anti-government activists or political opponents by arresting them. With the collapse of escalated force, a lack of police manpower was often supplemented by the use of auxiliary police (*jonkyong* or *uikyong*). Auxiliary police were *randomly* recruited from the ordinary army pool (in which nearly all Korean males mandatorily serve at least two years) and deployed to control protests. Auxiliary police were generally trained too poorly in a short time span to effectively control large gatherings, and the use of under-trained auxiliary police has been noted as a factor that has contributed to unnecessary collisions between police and protesters.

Public support for activists

The final constraint that shaped the new protest policing style came from more or less indirect

sources—public support for activists. Given the recurrent high protest waves after the late 1980s, political support for social movements by the majority of South Korean citizens was a critical factor that shaped the new protest policing style in the early 1990s. The end of Chun's authoritarian rule did not imply the end of pro-democracy social movements. Rather, the partial opening of political opportunities in the late 1980s created new protest waves led by *jaeya*—workers, students, and other various social groups who had been forced into silence under the authoritarian regime. In January of 1990, the National Council of Trade Unions (*jonnohyop*) was organized as the umbrella association of democratic labor unions. Radical social and political issues beyond wage increases (that are not designated strike activity in the official statistics) were then raised by labor unions. The radicalization of worker and student groups was closely associated with the declining public support for activism after the political liberalization. Not surprisingly, middle-class public opinion toward anti-government protests gradually became divided. Because the introduction of the direct presidential election already satisfied the majority of the middle-class, approximately half of the middle-class reported that currently prevailing activism went too far in the late 1980s (Yoon 1997). The growing conservative newspapers and declining economic boom also contributed to the isolation of radical anti-government activists from the middle-class and the majority of South Korean citizens (Katsiaficas 2012). This isolation of radical activist groups created a vulnerability that could be exploited by the government to control mass demonstrations (Wisler and Giugni 1999).

Selective Incapacitation Policing Style: Hypothesis

Under the drifting structural conditions of the early 1990s, as discussed above, South Korean police abandoned escalated force in protest policing in favor of selective incapacitation. The post-authoritarian government had an insufficient policing capacity to employ managed negotiation against every protest. The most notable feature of the selective incapacitation it utilized instead in the early-1990s South Korea was the concentrated use of arrests at protest events whose protesters were not only threatening, but also isolated from a wider movement environment.

Protester characteristics

Since the political liberalization of 1987, South Korean citizens could participate in a demonstration without fear of being *arbitrarily* arrested by police, indicted by the state prosecutors, or even being sent to a gulag. Civil dissidents and various interest groups obtained legitimacy in the institutional arena after 1987, introducing various emerging movement issues (including advocating for the environment, anti-nuclear energy, gender equality, economic justice, and other various local issues). Religious leaders, one of the most active classes of *jaeya* leaders, were better protected institutionally, because their belief in God or religious motivation prevented the South Korean government from accusing them of being communists (Katsiaficas 2012: 283). In this period, members of civil dissident groups (*jaeya*) interest groups obtained greater legitimacy in civil society and became difficult to arrest.

Meanwhile, many protests primarily led by radical student and worker groups that had continued even after the political liberalization of 1987 were relentlessly repressed by police

(Katsiaficas 2012; Kim 2000). Activist groups having a radical (often pro-communist) collective identity (such as radical college student and worker groups) were excluded from the zone of negotiation even in this new policing style.[3] South Korean police could concentrate their limited policing skills and manpower on these radical activist groups (which were isolated from public support in a wider movement environment) without being concerned with losing regime legitimacy. In sum, South Korean police were more likely to make arrests at protest events where students or workers led the mobilization than other types of events.

To minimize the possibility of violent collisions between police and protesters, negotiated management necessitates more advanced policing skills and greater manpower (compared with escalated force) and involves contacting and negotiating with protest organizers over the entire protest process. However, immediately after the collapse of escalated force, it was difficult to expect the police to meet such criteria in post-authoritarian South Korea. Unlike the U.S., where protest size correlates with the likelihood of arrest (Earl et al. 2003), South Korean police would likely have a difficult time controlling larger protests and refrain from arresting any protesters when too many people gathered at an event (setting aside the arrests until *after* the event), because it was much more difficult to successfully make arrests during a large event with limited skills and numbers to manage protest events. Therefore, South Korean police would more likely to make arrests at event as the number of protesters increases until the numbers overwhelm police, at which point likelihood of arrests would decrease as numbers climb. In short, the protest size and arrests would have a curvilinear relation.

Characteristics of tactics

Even after the political liberalization of 1987 in South Korea, demonstrations in the public forum were thoroughly monitored by police, because demonstration, as the word literally implies, has a diffusive power in that it exhibits protesters' grievances to a wider public audience. Loosening of the political regulation of the mass media also contributed extensively to demonstrators' words reaching a wider audience as the mass media expanded their protest coverage.

Meanwhile, sit-ins and occupations were, relatively speaking, more static in term of actions' spatial boundaries so that protesters had less power to spread information regarding their grievances. Less supportive public attitudes toward disruptive tactics undermine the effectiveness of sit-ins and occupations compared with demonstrations. In short, demonstrators were a much more difficult target for police to successfully arrest without being attacked by the larger civil society or the mass media.

Target characteristics

In post-authoritarian contexts, challenging the government as the protest target tends to be recognized as a highly disruptive activity. Not surprisingly, anti-government protests were heavily repressed in (post-)authoritarian South Korea (Chang and Vitale 2013; Kim 2000).

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[3] The National Conference of Student Representatives (*jondaehyop*) and the National Council of Trade Unions (*jonnohyop*) were two representative radical students' and workers' groups, respectively, that had been heavily repressed by Roh's regime.

Notably, another sensitive political target was foreign governments—mostly the U.S. government. Anti-U.S. sentiments among Korean protesters have a long history; however, these sentiments grew rapidly in step with South Korea's economic development and political liberalization (Moon 2003). The Korean government has been particularly intolerant of protest events against U.S. military camps, trade tariffs, and agricultural product imports that might jeopardize the country's relations with the U.S. Notoriously, the Assembly and Demonstration Act prohibited any gatherings or demonstrations within 100 meters of major government buildings, which include the U.S. Embassy. Therefore, consistent with the expectation from the threat model (Earl et al. 2003), South Korean police would be more likely to make arrests at a protest event targeting the South Korean government or foreign governments than other protests.

Protest wave characteristics

South Korean police are likely to use different arrest criteria according to the level of protest waves. A strong wave of protest implies a phase of heightened conflict in a society, mobilizing broader external social groups that possess sufficient resources to achieve movement goals (Tarrow 2011). Extensive protest diffusion, innovative use of protest tactics, and creative experiments of movement frames across multiple social movement sectors typically characterize the escalated phase of protest waves. Police may treat an individual protest event with a more generous attitude if it is one of few protests to occur in the jurisdiction. However, police reactions toward a protest event, even if the event has identical protest characteristics, would be much harsher in the intensified political turmoil in which multiple conflicts occurred.

    In post-authoritarian South Korea, escalated protest waves threatened to overthrow Roh's regime as protests did during Chun's regime. The average propensity to make arrests at protest events increases although the protest wave remains high because arrests (and detentions) are effective instruments for preventing social movements in the focal region from being diffused into other regions. Consistent with the prediction of the threat model, police would make more arrests at a protest event as the protest wave increases, independent of other event characteristics.

    Police will also have different attitudes towards anti-government protests at different phases of the protest wave. The threat model predicts that anti-government protesters are so threatening that they draw police attention and therefore more arrests. However, a greater wave of protest events draws on a larger movement and wider support. This increases the cost of protest policing and the government may not be able to repress anti-government protests as easily as at earlier stages. Therefore, combining the predictions from the threat model and the weakness-from-without model, I expect that South Korean police would make fewer arrests at anti-government protest events as protest waves escalate.

Data and Variables

Protest event data

To empirically test the expectations presented above, I analyzed the arrests by police at protest

events. Data were collected from 9 major newspapers published in South Korea (*Chosun Ilbo*, *Dae-Han Daily*, *Dong-A Ilbo*, *Hankook Ilbo*, *Hankyoreh*, *Korea Joongang Daily*, *Kukmin Daily*, *Kyunghyang Shinmun*, and *Segye Times*). The use of newspapers to tally protest events has been widely accepted among social movements (and public order policing) researchers (McCarthy et al. 2007; Rafail, Soule and McCarthy 2012; Ratliff 2011; Warner and McCarthy 2013). Despite their possible bias, daily newspaper reports are the most thorough, inexpensive, and easily accessible data source that covers the characteristics of individual protest events as well as police actions. Beissinger (2002) and Nam (2006) particularly suggested using multiple newspapers to minimize censorship bias when studying (post-)authoritarian societies.

The principal investigator of the project for original data collection was Taehyun Nam (2006). In the original data, both protests and repressive events were coded. Protest activities using different tactical repertoires were coded separately, although they arose from the same event. For example, if a group of farmers demonstrated, and another group rallied for the same issue on the same day, the two rallies were coded as two independent events. In addition, events that lasted more than a day were coded separately by day. For example, if an occupy protest lasted ten days, it was coded as ten independent protest events.

For the purpose of my research, I examined and recoded the original data set carefully, following several new recoding principles. First, because direct arrests "on the protest spot" are the events of interest in this study, repressive events were eliminated from my data. Second, given the limited newspaper coverage of extremely small protest events, events with fewer than 10 participants were eliminated. Because strike activities were so poorly covered in the newspaper data, common strike activities were excluded from the data (although political strikes or sympathy strikes remained in my recoded data). Third, following the coding rules of the Dynamics of Collective Action[4], a series of protests using different tactical repertoires were merged into a single event if they arose from the same event (although the multiple use of tactical repertoires was stored as a new variable). Separately coded protests that lasted longer than a day were merged into a single event as well (but protest duration was stored as a new variable). Finally, protest events in which police were not likely to be present by nature (such as statement releases or press conferences) were excluded from my data.

In Nam's original data, there were 11,213 events in South Korea from 1990 to 1991. After my recoding procedure, 2,622 events were identified in the same context. As discussed above, this period was filled with exceptionally vigorous social movements. In my data, the longest interval between protests was only a week (from Jan. 25, 1990 to Feb. 1, 1990). Table 1 presents descriptive statistics of all variables included in the analysis. Each variable is further explained in what follows.

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[4] The principal investigators of this data collection project are Doug McAdam, John McCarthy, Susan Olzak, and Sarah Soule. The data set is publicly available from
http://web.stanford.edu/group/collectiveaction/cgi-bin/drupal.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics

Covariates	Mean	S.D.	Min / Max
Outcome variable			
1 if arrested protesters	0.14	0.35	0/1
Protester characteristics			
Logged number of protesters	5.56	1.75	2.3/13.12
Students/youth	0.48	0.5	0/1
Workers/peasants	0.22	0.41	0/1
*Jaeya/*local residents	0.19	0.4	0/1
Grand movement coalitions	0.05	0.23	0/1
Interest groups/occupational associations	0.06	0.23	0/1
Tactics characteristics			
Demonstration/march/rally	0.55	0.5	0/1
Sit-ins/blockade/occupation	0.25	0.43	0/1
Strike/slowdown	0.05	0.23	0/1
1 if violent behaviors were observed	0.26	0.44	0/1
Protest lasts less than a day	0.12	0.33	0/1
Protest longer than a day, shorter than 7 days	0.04	0.2	0/1
Protest lasts 7 days or longer	0.83	0.37	0/1
Target characteristics			
Government	0.74	0.44	0/1
Foreign governments	0.02	0.15	0/1
Private businesses	0.15	0.36	0/1
Others	0.09	0.29	0/1
Protest wave characteristics			
Weighted protest count	33.19	31.42	0/113.25

Outcome variable

I used arrests at events as the representative index of state repression in South Korea from 1990 to 1991. In fact, arrests can be made at different times (before or after the protest), and there are other types of state repression against protests. However, arrests at the site of the protest merit particular attention because (1) such arrests are a causally clear index of the state's repressive activity against individual protest events and (2) such arrests draw media attention as a highly newsworthy event (Gitlin 1980).

The dependent variable is, therefore, whether any arrest was made by police at the protest event. The unit of analysis is individual protest events. The variable is coded 1 if an arrest was reported at the event, 0 otherwise. In my data, 376 events (14.34%) involved arrests. Because the dependent variable is binary coded, I used logistic regression analysis to estimate the effects of selected independent variables on the likelihood of the police making arrests at protest events. Logistic regression analysis has been widely used by social scientists, because it is known to perform better than linear probability models when addressing with heteroscedasticity and nonsensical prediction issues. Figure 2 shows the monthly trend of protest events and arrests in South Korea from 1990 to 1991 in my data set.
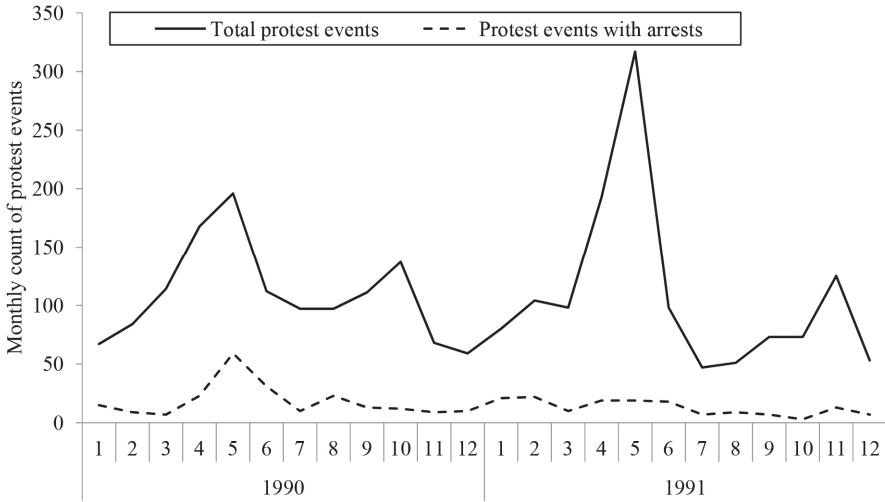
Source: Protest event data originated in Nam (2006) and was recoded by the author.

Fig. 2 Trends of protest events and events with (reported) arrests in South Korea, 1990-1991

Protester characteristics

The first set of independent variables is (1) the number of protest participants and (2) the social category of protesters. The logged number of protesters and that number's squared value are used for the size of protests. As for the social category of protesters, I identified four important social categories in post-authoritarian Korea in the early 1990s: (1) students and youth groups, (2) workers and peasants, (3) civil dissidents led by *Jaeya*, including local residents, opposition party members, victims, inmates, and teachers' unions, and (4) interest groups and occupational associations, such as the Motion Pictures Association of Korea or the Korean Publishing Culture Movement Alliance (reference category). In addition to these four categories, I included a movement coalition if the protest was mobilized by more than one social category (for example, workers and *jaeya*). In my data, movement coalitions mobilized approximately 5.4 percent of the total protesters.[5]

Characteristics of tactics

For measuring the tactical repertoires of the protests, I first used three dummy variables representing the most commonly used tactics: (1) demonstration/march/rally; (2) sit-ins/ blockade/occupation; and (3) strike/slowdown. A protest can have multiple 1s for these

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[5] Conceptually, a movement coalition is not a mutually exclusive category. However, South Korean newspaper articles reporting protest events often did not specify the social category of protesters. Therefore, I use a movement coalition as a separate category in the analysis.

variables if it employs multiple tactical repertoires (there is no reference category). More than 55 percent of the total protests in the data used demonstration. Approximately 25 percent used sit-ins, blockade, or occupation. Political strikes or sympathy strikes (including slow-downs) composed approximately 5 percent. Fifteen percent used multiple tactics. To examine the effect of violent behavior, I also included a dummy variable indicating whether violent behavior (including property damages) was observed at the protest site. In my data, 26.2 percent of the total events involved violence. Protest durations were measured in three categories: (1) protest lasted less than a (full) day (83.4%), (2) protest lasted longer than a day but shorter than a week (12.2%), or (3) protest lasted a week or longer (4.3%). The base category is (1) protest lasted less than a (full) day.

Target characteristics

After examining the data, I categorized four targets of protests, allowing multiple coding for protest targets: (1) the South Korean government, (2) foreign governments (mostly the U.S., but also Japan and North Korea), (3) private businesses (including hospitals), and (4) others (such as school/university, religious authority, or a political party). The majority of the protests in both years (1990 and 1991) were anti-government protests (73.5%). Although protests against foreign governments were relatively few (2.3%), that category is included as a separate variable because the category represents a highly salient protest issue. Protests against private business and others were 15.1 percent and 9.5 percent, respectively.

Protest wave characteristics

I measured the protest wave with the aggregate monthly count of protest events in the focal region as well as geographically adjacent regions. By measuring the protest density in the focal region and neighboring regions, protest waves suggest (1) the density of protest events in the focal area and (2) the extent to which the focal region is exposed to protests in adjacent regions. The monthly protest count in the focal regions was weighted by 1 whereas the *average* protest counts in the geographically adjacent regions were weighted by .5. For example, if there were 10 protest events in *Gyeongsangbuk-do*, 15 protests in *Gyeongsangnam-do*, 20 protests in *Busan*, and 25 protests in *Ulsan*, the weighted protest count in *Ulsan* would be 32.5 [=25+ $\left(.5 \times \frac{10+15+20}{3}\right)$]. The geographical unit of observations for protest waves is a province or metropolitan city. As Figure 3 indicates, 9 provinces and 7 metropolitan cities in South Korea were used for counting the protest wave in each province-month unit.[6] Weighted protest counts were calculated for a total of 24 months (from 1990 and 1991), and one month is lagged to consider the effect of previous protest waves on arrests in the current protest events.

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[6] *Jeju* is assumed to be adjacent to *Jeollanam-do*.

Fig. 3 Metropolitan cities and provinces in South Korea

Analysis and Discussion

Table 2 presents the logistic regression estimates of police arrests at events, regressed on individual protest event characteristics as well as aggregate protest waves. Unlike Model 1, an interaction term of weight protest count (continuous variable) and anti-government protest (dummy variable) is included in Model 2.

Protester characteristics

When the protest events were mobilized primarily by students/youth groups or workers/ peasants, such protests were more likely to involve arrests than the protest events that were primarily mobilized by interest groups or occupational associations. Protests mobilized by *jaeya* or local resident groups (compared with those by interest groups) do not have a statistically significant relation with a higher likelihood of arrest. Protest events that were mobilized by multiple social groups (grand movement coalitions) were observed to have approximately 3.7 times higher odds of arrests than the protest events that were mobilized by interest groups or occupational associations.

**Table 2** Logistic regression estimates of arrests at events regressed on protest event characteristics

Covariates	Model 1		Model 2	
	Coef.	S.E.	Coef.	S.E.
Protester characteristics				
Logged number of protesters	-0.745***	(0.158)	-0.746***	(0.159)
Logged number of protesters (sq.)	0.048***	(0.013)	0.049***	(0.013)
Students/youth	0.668*	(0.324)	0.680*	(0.324)
Workers/peasants	0.990**	(0.336)	0.991**	(0.337)
Jaeya/local residents	0.453	(0.343)	0.459	(0.344)
Grand movement coalitions	1.321***	(0.382)	1.350***	(0.383)
Interest groups/occupational associations	(base category)			
Tactics characteristics				
Demonstration/march/rally	0.416**	(0.136)	0.400**	(0.137)
Sit-ins/blockade/occupation	-0.005	(0.165)	-0.022	(0.166)
Strike/slowdown	0.527	(0.321)	0.592	(0.324)
1 if violent behaviors were observed	1.160***	(0.133)	1.140***	(0.133)
Protest lasts less than a day	(base category)			
Protest longer than a day, shorter than 7 days	-0.310	(0.223)	-0.286	(0.223)
Protest lasts 7 days or longer	0.766**	(0.293)	0.809**	(0.295)
Target characteristics				
Government	1.108***	(0.301)	1.656***	(0.364)
Foreign governments	1.859***	(0.420)	1.904***	(0.425)
Private businesses	0.694	(0.355)	0.687	(0.358)
Others	(base category)			
Protest wave characteristics				
Weighted protest count	0.005**	(0.002)	0.016***	(0.004)
Weighted protest count × targeting government			-0.014**	(0.005)
Constant	-1.879**	(0.610)	-2.344***	(0.639)
Pseudo R-squared	0.087		0.091	
Log-likelihood	-950.151		-945.848	
Likelihood-ratio chi-squared test (versus Model 1)			8.61***	

Note: Number of observations is 2,555. The outcome variable is a dichotomous value indicating 1 if arrest is reported in the protest event in the newspapers, 0 otherwise. Standard errors in parentheses.
* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$.

In the section above, I argued that student and worker groups were the primary targets of state repression, whereas civil dissidents (*jaeya*) and interest groups experienced less repression than the primary targets. These hypotheses indicated that the post-authoritarian regime tended to primarily repress the social groups that were isolated from the support of the majority of citizens. It is important to note that the radicalization of student and worker groups had resulted in the withdrawal of public support for them by the middle-class (Yoon 1997), as opposed to the moderation of *jaeya* and interest groups, which earned greater public support in the post-authoritarian era. As the weakness-from-without model suggests, my findings imply that protesters become weaker as they lose outside audiences and become an easier target for repression by the government.

The number of protest participants was expected to have a curvilinear relation with the likelihood of arrest. However, my findings indicate that a different curvilinear relation between the logged number of protesters and the likelihood of arrests at a protest event. As the logged protest size increases up to 7.75 (which is approximately 2,300 persons), arrest is less likely to occur. Beyond this inflection point, arrest is observed to be more likely as the protest size grows. Figure 4 visually examines this relation. As the gray histogram indicates, 90 percent of the total protest events were smaller than the logged protest size of 7.75. Given that protest events involving more than 2,300 persons were relatively rare, the likelihood of arrests is *by and large* negatively associated with protest size, although a high likelihood of arrest at exceptionally large protests was observed.
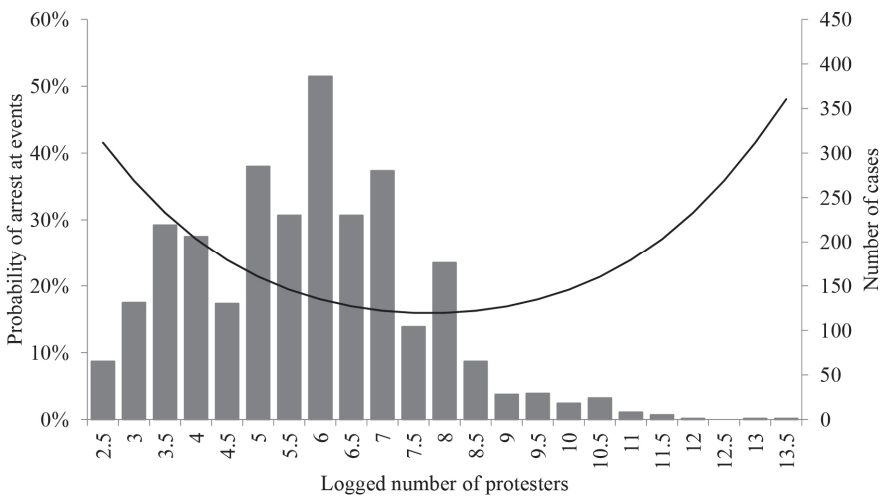
Notes: Model 2 in Table 2 is used for the estimation. Grey histogram shows the data distribution of the logged number of protesters. The inflection point of the curve is approximately 7.75, where $\partial y / \partial x = 0$.

Fig. 4 The curvilinear relationship between the (logged) number of protesters and the probability of arrest making at the protest event

Characteristics of tactics

I posited above that the use of demonstrations, rallies, or marches at protest events is associated with a lower probability of arrest at the event. However, demonstrations, rallies, or marches were observed to increase the odds of arrest at events by 1.5 times. Similar findings were reported not only in authoritarian contexts (Chang and Vitale 2013) but also in the U.S. (Rafail et al. 2012; Ratliff 2011). Police may recognize demonstrations, rallies, or marches as more threatening than sit-ins or occupation; therefore, police have a higher organizational motivation to use arrests at events to immediately control those events. Because a demonstration has a

greater potential to spread grievances to a wider public, a demonstration may also be more likely to be repressed quickly by the post-authoritarian government. Independent of the protest form, the observed violent behaviors by protesters (including property damages) were observed to increase the odds of arrests at an event by more than 3 times. Protests that continued 7 days or longer were also more likely to involve arrests than protests lasting less than a day.

Target characteristics

I expected that anti-government or anti-foreign-government protests would be more likely to involve arrests at events. Targeting the government has an undetermined effect on arrests in the U.S.: depending on the study, it is a statistically significant positive predictor (Warner and McCarthy 2013), a negative predictor (Ratliff 2011), or not a statistically significant predictor (Rafail et al. 2012). Conversely, it is widely known that (post-)authoritarian governments tend to be intolerant of criticism (Chang and Vitale 2013). As expected, protests targeting the government (that is, anti-government protests) were approximately 3 times more likely to involve arrests at the event than protests against other targets. Likewise, protests targeting foreign governments were approximately 6.4 times more likely to involve arrests than other protests.

Protest wave characteristics

Based on the threat model, I predicted that the weighted protest count would be positively associated with the likelihood of arrests at events, independent of individual protest event characteristics. In my analysis, an approximately 10 unit increase in the weighted protest count is associated with a 5 percent increase in the odds of arrest at an event. Consistent with my expectation, this finding implies that arrests have been used as a preemptive instrument by police to prevent protest diffusion and curb protests to a minimal level.

Are anti-government protests less likely to involve arrest at events when the protest waves are high? Table 2 shows Model 2, which test this question. It includes an interaction term between weighted protest count and targeting government (1 if so, 0 otherwise). Anti-government protests were positively associated with the likelihood of arrests at events, and this association's positive effect declined as the protest wave escalated. Figure 5 shows how the effects of protest waves on arrests at events differ according to the protest's target—anti-government or other targets. As the decreasing gap between a dashed line and a dotted line in Figure 5 shows, the likelihood of arrests at non-anti-government events grows faster than the likelihood of arrests at anti-government events.

This finding partly explains the disproportional arrest rates at protest events as indicated in Figure 2. In 1990, the ratios of protest waves to arrest occurrences were quite stable over time. However, the rapid escalation of a protest wave in May, 1991 was not followed by rapid increases in arrests at events. My data includes 914 anti-government protest events in 1990 and 1,014 in 1991. The 10.9 percent increase in events accompanied an escalated protest wave, and arrest rates of anti-government protesters fell off because of the escalated protest wave.
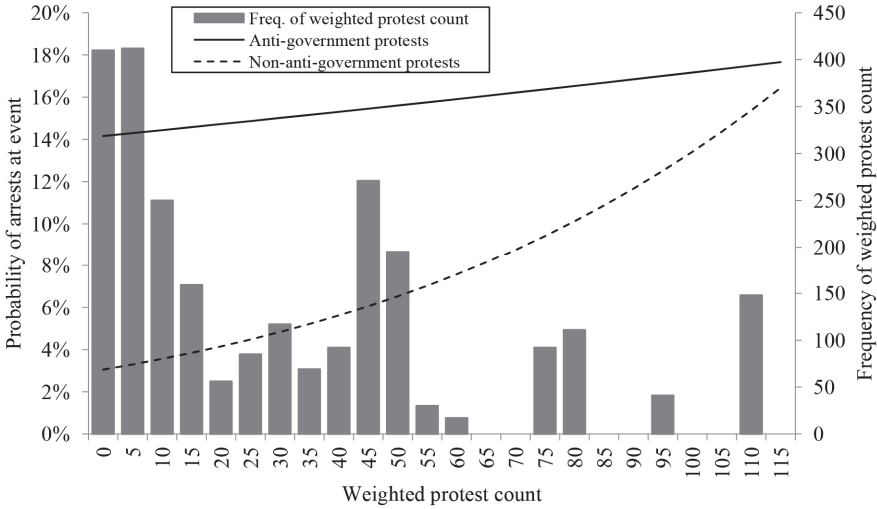
Fig. 5 Visual presentation of the interaction term effect between the weighted protest density and anti-targeting government dummy variable

Conclusion

The U.S. POMS—which established the standard for protest policing style—has been extensively discussed in the previous literature of protest policing. In the U.S., the paradigmatic shift of policing styles from escalated force to negotiated management was widely reported (McCarthy et al. 2009). Under-enforcement of the law, the search for bargaining, and large-scale collection of information in the majority of peaceful protests characterizes negotiated management, but states also deploy paramilitary repression in a relatively few disruptive protests when they use it (Gillham, Edwards and Noakes 2013).

However, the development of a protest policing style differs by political and historical contexts, and it is useful to examine how police control the public order across different countries from a comparative perspective (Earl 2003). The protest policing styles in post-authoritarian societies deserve special attention because, without institutionalized norms of protest-policing interactions, these societies have often failed to control protest waves with the appropriate policing style and intensity. Despite its importance, protest policing in post-authoritarian societies has not been sufficiently discussed in the social movement literature.

From this perspective, this paper explains the structural conditions of a changing protest policing style and how the system in fact operated in post-authoritarian South Korea. The policing style of escalated force declined and collapsed from 1984 to 1987, and a new style emerged after the political liberalization of 1987. The new policing style had a higher tolerance towards protesters. However, a strong conservative coalition in the regime, limited policing capacity, and declining public support for radical movements in post-authoritarian South Korea resulted in the emergence of selective incapacitation policing that primarily arrests radical, but socially isolated protest groups. The statistical analysis regarding the protest event determinants

of arrest-making revealed that both the threat model and the weakness model, have supplementary explanatory power to explain the variation in the patterns of South Korean protest policing.

This study has potentially important implications to explain how policing style would evolve in the context of young democracies other than South Korea. In such contexts, escalated force or indiscriminate repression state authorities used before liberation are no longer politically available. Instead, the state needs to maximize the effects of social and political control by concentrating its scarce resources on vulnerable groups that pose a particular threat. Structural conditions in young democracies―such as the alliance of conservative political leadership, the division among liberal political leadership, the radicalization of protest groups, and declining public support for radical activism―will eventually shape the amount of political resources the state authority dedicates to protest policing.

This paper only examined the arrests at protest events by police. As these are only one component of the multidimensional concept of state repression (Earl 2003). There are various other forms of repression (including counter-intelligence) and actors of repression (including private organizations such as the KKK). Future research is necessary to study various repression dynamics in post-authoritarian societies. Like many other protest policing studies, this paper does not take into consideration the causal endogeneity. If there are factors that simultaneously determine protest event characteristics as well as police arrests, the statistical estimates of the event characteristics' influence on arrests could be biased (Opp and Roehl 1990). Further research will contribute to this field by considering the counterfactual causality between protest event characteristics and police arrests at events.

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