

CHINA CROSSROADS

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From Citizens to Experts: Changing Patterns of Participatory Policymaking in Urban China

Ceren Ergenc

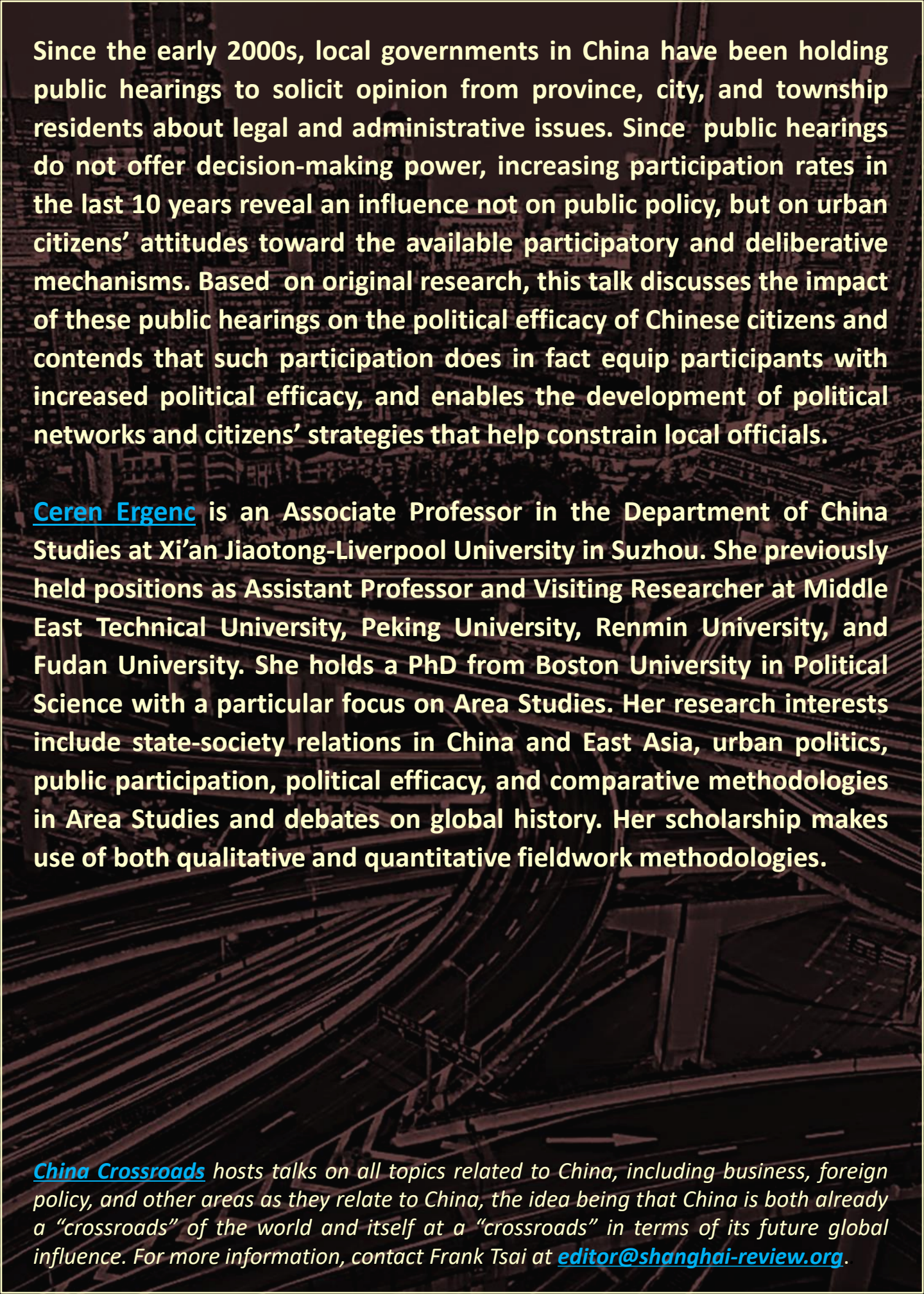
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Since the early 2000s, local governments in China have been holding public hearings to solicit opinion from province, city, and township residents about legal and administrative issues. Since public hearings do not offer decision-making power, increasing participation rates in the last 10 years reveal an influence not on public policy, but on urban citizens' attitudes toward the available participatory and deliberative mechanisms. Based on original research, this talk discusses the impact of these public hearings on the political efficacy of Chinese citizens and contends that such participation does in fact equip participants with increased political efficacy, and enables the development of political networks and citizens' strategies that help constrain local officials.

[Ceren Ergenc](#) is an Associate Professor in the Department of China Studies at Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University in Suzhou. She previously held positions as Assistant Professor and Visiting Researcher at Middle East Technical University, Peking University, Renmin University, and Fudan University. She holds a PhD from Boston University in Political Science with a particular focus on Area Studies. Her research interests include state-society relations in China and East Asia, urban politics, public participation, political efficacy, and comparative methodologies in Area Studies and debates on global history. Her scholarship makes use of both qualitative and quantitative fieldwork methodologies.

[China Crossroads](#) hosts talks on all topics related to China, including business, foreign policy, and other areas as they relate to China, the idea being that China is both already a "crossroads" of the world and itself at a "crossroads" in terms of its future global influence. For more information, contact Frank Tsai at editor@shanghai-review.org.