

**July 1, 2008 Featured Speaker**

## **Social Movement Change Urban Governance**

**A study to the social movement for urban conservation in China (1990's-)**

### **Speaker**

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Yao Yuan is a Ph.D. Student of the Double Degree Program of Peking-Waseda University, major in Comparative Politics. He is now conducting the doctoral research on Chinese social movement about urban conservation issue. Around this topic, he has already published dozens of articles both in academic journals and newspapers, including Harvard China Review, South Weekend, or China Youth Daily. He is also the editor-in-chief of the UNESCO book Beijing and Beijing: A Critical Dialogue (2005).

### **Abstract**

During rapid urbanization since early 1990's, Chinese local governments launched a nationwide Urban Renovation Campaign to historic cities and towns in order to serve the real estate development. Unfortunately, this campaign not only led to irreversible cultural, environmental, and scenic loss, but also created serious social, economical, and legal disputes.

However, Chinese public is more actively participating in urban affairs in order to protect the Old City. Inhabitants, volunteers and NGOs discuss and act for protecting the culture heritage, while numerous Websites, BBS and blogs offer them such a platform. Increasingly independent media actively spread their appeals to the public. The rising social movement for urban conservation becomes possible to influence policy process, which was nearly closed to the public for a long time.

Why the social movement for urban preservation can succeed in influence policy process, even change the models of urban governance? How the movement really moves? I will explain it through four factors of the movement: its **origins**, its **mobilization**, its **strategy**, and its **outcome**. Through this research we may: 1) understand the *raison d'être* of contemporary political system, and evaluate how it works; 2) reveal what is changing in China politics; 3) Point out what might be the orientation of political reform.

### **Commentator**

**TBA**