

PRE-PROPOSITION (5 pages max.)

**The Archives of the Institut franco-chinois de Lyon (IFCL): A Case Study of the Cultural and Academic Heritage of Global Modernity in the Age of Digital Humanities (<http://ifcl.bid>)**

### **1. Objectifs scientifiques et technologiques/Academic and technological objectives**

We plan to organize, classify and digitize the archives of the former Institut franco-chinois de Lyon (Lyon Sino-French Institute, hereafter IFCL) so as to raise questions relevant to our own research project on the social and cultural life, intellectual imaginary and epistemologies related to the young Chinese scholars of the IFCL, but also so as to create an accessible digital archive that will facilitate further projects aimed at disseminating a broader public acquaintance with this heritage.

The IFCL was a specialized establishment, and a constituent part of the University of Lyon, whose purpose was to integrate into, and mentor Chinese students within, the French university system. Founded in 1921, the Institute hosted 473 students during its 25 years of existence. After their studies in France, the majority of students returned to China and provided the skilled intellectuals China lacked. At least a quarter of them returned to China with a doctorate. Many of them had outstanding careers as writers, artists, scientists, university professors or politicians, and thus made a considerable contribution to the development of modern Chinese society and its intellectual and epistemological landscape.

The Institute left behind an impressive collection of archives and documents, which are now the property of the University of Lyon (Jean Moulin) and are kept in Lyon’s Municipal library, a major national library. The collection constitutes a unique example of the heritage of the cultural and scientific dimension of global modernity. The main rationale for launching this project is the noticeable lack of research specifically concerning this Institute despite several studies regarding the Work-study movement – an earlier programme aimed at providing a French education to Chinese students - and the activities of Chinese intellectual and political celebrities in France. Research interests on the Work-study movement are mainly concerned with its political implications and significance (Brandt, 1962; Kriegel, 1974; Zhang Yunhou, 1980; Chen San-jing, 1981, 1988; John Kong-Cheong Leung, 1982; Bailey, 1988; Barman, Dulioust, 1988; Levine, 1993, Wang, 2003). Much of this research focuses on the issues of communism and the Chinese diaspora in France. Articles and monographs directly related to the Sino-French Institute are still sparse; a few academic studies (Bouilly, 1995; Ge Fuping, 2000; Villard, 2011; *Transtext(e)s-Transcultures* special issue on the IFCL, 2014) and Master’s theses defended in Lyon 3 dealing with this subject from the perspective of cultural history (Bellegarde, 1989; Yann, 1998; Brault-Xu, 2003; Zhao Likai, 2003).

Since the 1980s, much work has been done on this remarkable collection by the Municipal library archivists and members of the Lyon 3 Chinese Department (classification, cataloguing, indexation of the Institute’s library), but the lack of financial and technical support and a dearth of qualified personnel have not permitted the exploitation of the archives in a systematic and comprehensive way. The proposed academic and technological project will allow us to go a step further and facilitate access to this heritage both to researchers and the general public. While the Institute’s library collection has been catalogued and is available in the Lyon Municipal Library, most of the administrative and academic archives still need to be classified, catalogued and digitized. In this regard, the organization, classification and digitization of the archives, is not only indispensable to academic research, but also will give public access to a selection of Institute’s documents via different digital media.

The work will be divided into two packages:

The **first work package** will embrace the management, classification and digitization of a selected part of the archives. The work package will concern the following four components:

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- 1) selected students’ files including letters between the students and the administration of the Institute, registration forms, and diplomas ;
- 2) Ph.D. dissertations, about 140 PhD theses in all then major disciplines: law, science, literature, history, medicine, pharmacology and ethnology;
- 3) administrative records of the Institute regarding student life and their studies;
- 4) the journal of the Institute (*Annales de l’Institut franco-chinois*).

The digitized archive will not only be essential for this specific research project but also for further research projects. If the digitization process necessarily implies a technical dimension requiring professional intervention, this stage cannot be seen as totally separate from the research work package itself (see below). The prior management and organization of the archives must be considered as a core part of the research work since it will have ramifications for the further analysis and interpretation of this cultural and intellectual heritage. The preparatory work prior to the digitization needs supervision by researchers who have a close understanding of the cultural, political and intellectual context of the production of the documents to be digitized. Moreover, the process of creating a digital collection, that would constitute the main corpus of our study, involves crucial theoretical and historiographic questions which will be raised by our research.

**The second work package** will focus on the academic analysis and exploitation of the resultant digitized archive. Through this project, we hope to exploit these archives to raise crucial questions related to the building of the cultural and national identity of the students in the historical context of an asymmetrical geopolitics of knowledge between the “West and the rest”.

The archives and the collection of the Institute’s library can be considered as a “metatext” representing the intellectual and editorial activities of this Chinese institute in France but also of the students’ everyday cultural and social life. We raise the hypothesis that this institution can be interpreted as a set of practices, discourses and institutions, what Foucault termed a “dispositif”, contributing to the fabrication of subjectivities, in this case the construction of “Chinese modern subjects.”

This textual and synchronic approach from the perspective of cultural history will be supplemented by in-depth socio-historical research – using a prosopographical methodology - into the background of the students. The incoming students had different cultural, linguistic and geographic backgrounds, but the particular political and socio-cultural conditions of the Institute contributed to homogenized practices (constructing and consolidating the national language for instance) and representations, and to the constitution of a Chinese cultural imaginary within the Institute. At a micro-level, we can read the Institute as synecdoche of the modern construction of China as a Nation-State and of its population as national subjects. From this perspective, our research would facilitate a better understanding of contemporary Chinese national consciousness in the historical context of a Eurocentric global modernity (D. Chakrabarty, R. Karl).

## **2. Organisation du projet et moyens mis en oeuvre/Project Organization and Means to be Used**

The Institute of Transtextual and Transcultural Studies ([IETT](#)-Lyon 3, EA 4186) and the Lyon Institute of East Asian Studies ([IAO](#)-ENS, UMR 5062) together constitute the main French platform for research in Chinese Studies outside Paris bringing together complementary competences from the humanities and the social sciences; the two partners have collaborated together for over a decade in the [EastAsiaNet](#) research network.

The IETT team will contribute its long-term methodological and theoretical expertise on research dedicated to transcultural and diaspora studies, literary and cultural history, geopolitics of knowledge and epistemology. As a core member of the Federative Research Structure on “Migration and Citizenship” MC3M SFR 4070 (Lyon University), the IETT initiated the academic dimension of this project by organizing an international workshop in Lyon on “Migration of knowledge: the Case of the Lyon Sino-

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French Institute (1921-1946)” (January, 2012). In July 2012, a six-strong group of Taiwan scholars held a workshop in France with their Lyon counterparts Europe-China historical cultural flows and in particular how collaborative research on the archives and the history of the Institut franco-chinois might be organized and conducted. Following the MC3M workshop, *Transtext(e)s-Transcultures: Journal of Global Cultural Studies* - The academic journal of the IETT - published a special issue (n°9, 2014 consultable [transtexts.revues.org](http://transtexts.revues.org)) on the IFCL entitled “Geopolitics of Knowledge and Cultural Displacements”.

The research team leader for this project, Gregory LEE, Professor of Chinese and Transcultural Studies at the University of Lyon (Jean Moulin), Director of the IETT EA 4168,, and a specialist in French-Chinese intertextual and transcultural studies. His first major work, *Dai Wangshu: The Life and Poetry of a Chinese Modernist* (Hong Kong: CUP, 1989) focused on one of the most prominent graduates of the Lyon Institut franco-chinois. His subsequent work has expanded and developed his reflexion on cultural and intellectual flows between China and the West (*Troubadours, Trumpeters, Troubled Makers*, Durham, NC: Duke UP, 1996; *Chinas Unlimited: Making the Imaginaries of China and Chineseness*, Honolulu: Hawaii UP, 2003; "Le Cadeau empoisonné de Versailles ou la Chine à la manivelle de l'orgue de barbarie," *Mouvements* 2012/4, n° 72 : « Décoloniser les savoirs », pp 79-88. His publication “‘La Marche sur Lyon’ ou le conte des deux forts”, *Transtext(e)s-Transcultures*, numéro 9, 2014, is dedicated to the pre-history of the Institute. Most recently he published the iBook *China Dreaming* (2015).

Director of the Chinese Department of the University of Lyon 3, Florent VILLARD conducts research in Chinese and Transcultural studies. His research focuses on Sino-French cultural history, orientalist and nationalist discourses, and modern Chinese intellectual History. His latest publication focuses on Edward Said’s reception in China and Chinese Studies: “L’Orientalisme, la Chine et les Etudes chinoises” in Laurent Dartigues, Makram Abbès (Dir.), *Orientalismes/Occidentalismes : A propos de l’œuvre d’Edward Said*, Paris, Hermann, 2016. He published a comparative analysis of French and Chinese nationalist narratives called “Lost Territories of France and China: Nationalist Narratives, Connected Histories and Colonial Difference” (University Jean-Moulin Editions, 2011) and his current research project is on the cultural and intellectual imaginary of Lyon Sino-French Institute’s students from the perspective of postcolonial critique: “Lieu d’énonciation, différence culturelle et conscience nationale: la Chine comme objet d’étude dans les thèses des étudiants de l’Institut franco-chinois de Lyon (1921-1946)” (Tamkang University Press, 2010), “Chineseness and China as an Object of Knowledge in France: Case Study of the Lyon Sino-French Institute (1921-1946)” (Workshop, CUHK, Hong-Kong, 2011); “L’Institut franco-chinois de Lyon ou la fabrique du Chinois moderne” *Transtext(e)s-Transcultures*, numéro 9, 2014.

Assistant Professor in the Chinese Department of the University of Lyon 3, Jacqueline ESTRAN works on transcultural relations between China and Europe, and gender and writing during the Republican Period. She is interested in the social history of literature (*Poésie et liberté dans la Chine républicaine : la revue Xinyue (1928-1933)*, Harrassowitz Vlg, 2010) and researches the conditions of the emergence of women’s writing and the links between writing and autobiography in a Sino-French context, with articles on women writers such as Chen Xuezhao and the most celebrated woman writer of the IFCL: Su Xuelin (« Su Xuelin et la première vague d’étudiantes à l’IFCL : cartographie d’un désir d’ailleurs », *Transtext(e)s-Transcultures*, numéro 9, 2014; « Différence, distance et prise de conscience : Su Xuelin et la France », *Traits chinois, lignes francophones*, Presses de l’Université de Montréal, 2012).

Ching-Yu LIN is currently postdoctoral researcher at the Institute of Transtextual and Transcultural Studies (IETT) at Jean Moulin University Lyon 3 (sponsored by the Ministry of Science and Technology of Taiwan). She received her PhD in Chinese Literature (2014) at National Chung Hsing University in Taiwan (Dissertation title: Cross-Cultural Interpretative Research on Modern Chinese Diplomats in France). She was awarded a PhD fellowship from the Ministry of Science and Technology of Taiwan in 2009 and was a Visiting Scholar at the IETT in 2010-2011. Her research focuses on Sino-French relations of modern times and intercultural studies, in particular cultural encounters and knowledge translation and transformation at the end of the 19th century. She has investigated Sino-French cultural communication by studying Chinese diplomats in France and the production and dissemination of the image of China in French newspapers.

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Currently, she is working on a project of Chinese modernity through a transcultural lens. Her research paper “A Preliminary Study on Foreign Culture: A French View of Chinese Life in the Eighteenth Century” was published in *Cross-Cultural Studies* (College of Foreign Languages and Literature, NCCU) in September 2014.

The Institute of East Asian Studies (Institut d’Asie Orientale UMR 5062) team will bring to the project their rigorous methodology in historical and archival research. They have worked on urban history and have specialist on Shanghai/Jiangsu/Zhejiang urban studies. The socio-cultural historical approach will contribute to identifying the background of some 500 students by using a prosopographical methodology. This work will illuminate the interaction between Chinese and French academic ambitions in the 1920s and 1930s which produced a seemingly concerted vision of the training of Chinese students in France, and which seemed to correspond to the needs of the Chinese government at that time. From students in Lyon to political actors in China or Taiwan, they illustrated a new and unique form of cooperation between France and China.

Historian of contemporary China, Christine CORNET works on the interaction of French and Chinese in China, especially in Shanghai through the study of the French Concession, its Aurore University and the staff of its police force (“The French Police in Shanghai”, in *New Frontiers: Imperialism's New Communities in East Asia, 1842-1953*, Manchester University Press, 2000). She is a specialist of long-term history in following personal trajectory of people through private and visual archives (La France et la Chine (1248-2014), *De la méconnaissance à la reconnaissance*, ouvrage collectif de Jacques Dumasy, Partie III, « Le déséquilibre, 1850-1949 », pp.174-248, 2013, Editions Nicolas Chaudun). Thus the reconfiguration of “western-made” knowledge by “modern Chinese subjects” constitutes a central axe of this approach in the present project.

Marie LAUREILLARD, MCF (assistant professor) in Chinese language and civilization in the Lyon 2 University-Lumières, specializes in cultural history and art history of modern and contemporary China. One of her research themes is the representation of society through cartoons and paintings in the Republican period, especially in the work of Feng Zikai and Ye Qianyu. She is about to publish *L’art au fil du pinceau : Feng Zikai, un caricaturiste lyrique*, L’Harmattan, collection « L’univers esthétique », Paris (2015) and, co-edited with Vincent Durand-Dastes, *Ghosts in the Far East in the Past and Present* (Inalco, Spring 2016). In a transcultural perspective, she has focused in several papers on the aesthetic flows between China and the West and on the questions of identity and Chineseness. In this project, she will trace the personal career of several painters who studied in Lyon so as to show the impact of their passage through that city, which is often overlooked, as Professor Wang Yiyan stated it in her paper “Art and Chinese Modernity in connection with Lyon, 1920-1940s”.

Research librarian webmaster and engineer, ZHANG Yu who is in charge of all the Chinese visual and written documents at the IAO will complete our local team. Her archival experience will contribute expertise on how the IFC archives are conserved.

Professor Yiyan WANG is Director of Chinese Programme at Victoria University of Wellington. She has published widely on topics concerning modern Chinese literature and culture, and on Chinese intellectual history. Her current project on art and Chinese modernity has a strong focus on Lyon’s Sino-French Institute and Lyon’s Art School. Dozens of Chinese students received training at Lyon’s Art School with support from the Sino-French Institute. After they returned to China, many played central roles in China’s various art institutions and in introducing Western ideas and practices of art. However, this connection between Lyon and China’s art modernization has to date been neglected by historians both inside and outside of China. Professor Wang’s project will document the instrumental function of Lyon in the process of the “modernization” of China’s art . It will also reveal the significance and impact of those Chinese students who studied in Lyon and France.

The high specifications to which the digitization will be executed will also allow further a post-project phase in which the digitized images can be exploited in a 360-degree stereoscopic interactive visualization

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environment and thus permit an immersive mixed reality capability via an interactive relationship between the viewers and the projected information spaces.

The project plans to make use of the Cluster of excellence IMAGINOVE based nearby in Villeurbanne, and its expertise in the industry of digital content.

The estimated **budget** of the project (48 months)

	Equipment	Staff*	External services expenses**	Travel, accommodation, subsistence expenses***
IETT	1 200	174 000	169 634	7 782,5
IAO	1 200	84 000	60 817	11 060,5

\* 2 postdoctoral fellows and doctorate researcher

\*\* Digitization, webdocumentary; first, mid-term and final events, public-oriented publication

\*\*\* Teamwork meetings in Lyon, field work in China

**Total** = 550 469,52 € (4% of laboratory fees and 4 % of overheads included)

### 3. Impact et retombées du projet/Impact and deliverables

This proposal straddles the scope of the ANR’s “Societal Challenges” themes: “innovative, inclusive and adaptive societies” (*défi* 8) in particular “The Digital Revolution and its relationship to knowledge and culture” (*axe* 7); the SNR Orientation 30 “Cultural studies and the factors of integration”).

The archives of the Sino-French Institute are a testament to the historical, cultural and intellectual entanglement between China and the West. The legacy of this imbricated story is known by very few, as facilities for displaying and making available the archives are severely limited.

The IFCL research project falls within the scope of a dynamic institutional context of valorisation of this common Sino-French cultural heritage. In 2009, the City of Lyon already set up a permanent exhibition on the Institute’s history. With the partnership of Lyon 3’s Department of Chinese Studies, a new version of this exhibition was displayed in China during 2010 world exposition in Shanghai. More significantly, in the wake of the historic Xi Jinping’s presidential visit to Lyon in March 2014, the City of Lyon decided to launch a new manifestation of the Sino-french Institute (“Le Nouvel Institut Franco-chinois de Lyon”). Occupying the building which formerly housed the former IFCL, this new Institute which involves public and private, Chinese and French partners has an economic, cultural and academic dimension. Not only will it contribute to maintaining and to promoting the heritage of the former IFCL, It will also look to the future of Sino-french cultural relations and will function equally as an academic exchange platform between French and Chinese scholars and institutions. Sun Yat-sen University, located in Lyon’s twin city of Guangzhou (Canton) is a principal partner in the new institute and will also collaborate in this project. The new academic platform builds on a 15-year long relationship between Lyon 3 University and Sun Yat-sen University.

The major deliverable will be constituted by the newly digitized archive. The second important deliverable will be a published, comprehensive history of the IFCL and its ramifications in China will ensure the impact of this technological and academic project. A printed version and e-published version of this history will be delivered. In addition, a regularly updated website will log the milestones of the project. Moreover, the outcomes of the ANR project will facilitate and accelerate the development of a cultural and scientific hub dedicated to future transnational, transdisciplinary dialogue and a more elaborate, dynamic and interactive museum space with development potential for local and international tourism-related activities.