



Profile for Doctoral Position

Research framework

Work-Package: "Producing the "ordinary" city"

Heads:

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Position description

**"The housing supply for rural migrants in medium-sized Chinese cities:
between developmentalist and social objectives"**

Research Proposal:

The twofold economic and urban transition in China has resulted in a spectacular rise in real estate values. This situation has an impact in particular on the hundreds of millions of migrants from rural regions who are not eligible for social benefits in urban areas. Forced to promote social inclusion, the central government launched an ambitious medium-sized city urbanization program for 2004-2010 based on the massive integration of rural migrants. The incentive to migrate to 3rd and 4th tier cities takes the form of the delivery of an urban *hukou* ("passport") and public subsidies to acquire housing.

Several bodies of research have revealed the central position of residential production in the Chinese economy and its focus on property ownership (Wu, 2015; Theurillat, 2015). Such choices arise from strategies shared by "developmental States" in northeastern Asia (*Developmental States*, Johnson, 1995), marked by "residual" development of social protection (Ronald and Doling, 2010, 2012) and "financial repression" (maintaining the level of low-interest savings) that makes housing both an essential consumption good and a favored savings tool. However, these policies compete with or even contradict the goal of social inclusion that the central government wishes to promote in medium-sized cities and that it intends to impose on local governments already facing financial stress. With precarious poorly-paid jobs, migrants are no better candidates for property ownership than the sub-prime borrowers were in the United States.

The research presented by the "Producing the "ordinary" city" Work-Package aims to reveal the tensions between these contradictory visions while showing the dynamics that they trigger in the process of residential production in medium-sized cities in China. Such an approach—which should



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provide a significant contribution to the understanding of dynamics at work in the production of “ordinary cities”—breaks away from the frequent approach to social housing in China focused on inequalities in access to housing. The analysis will cover two differing case studies: Datong, a mining city with a population of 1.5 million undergoing industrial reconversion, and Zhuhai, an urban entity covering a population of 830,000 within a very dynamic conurbation in the Pearl River Delta.

Initially, the candidate will be invited to use a qualitative method to provide a multi-scale and relational reading in each of the areas studied allowing understanding of how housing policy choices are arbitrated between developmentalist and social visions based on interaction dynamics among the various levels of government (central, provincial, municipal and district governments) and with local stakeholders (private and public promoters, credit establishments and industry, notably). Then, the research shall focus on a detailed description of these affordable housing supply chains, whether official (housing aided by the government authorities) or “de facto social” (private rental housing). At the conclusion of the thesis, the doctoral student shall be encouraged to draw up a diagnostic of each city’s affordable housing supply structure and potential housing stock—notably vacant housing held by multi-property households—to house migrants. This applied dimension of the thesis, which also calls on quantitative methods (statistical data processing, GIS), is explained by the fact that the doctoral contract is part of a European project (MEDIUM, see below) that aims, among other things, to create dialogue between researchers and decision makers in the area of urban planning.

Planned collaborations

The doctoral contract is part of the “New Pathways for Sustainable Urban Development in China’s Medium-Sized Cities” (MEDIUM) project. Carried by the UMR *Géographie-Cités* (coordinator Natacha AVELINE) where the doctoral fellow will be assigned, MEDIUM brings together six European institutions (CNRS, Science Po Aix, Ca’ Foscari University of Venice, University of Lausanne, University of Neuchâtel, Spatial Foresight Luxembourg) and three Chinese universities (Hangzhou Normal University, University Sun Yat Sen in Zhuhai, and the University of Shanxi Datong). The Complex City Lab in Shanghai has recently joined the consortium; Complex City Lab is a Franco-Chinese cooperation structure between the University of Technology in Compiègne and the University of Shanghai specialized in big data modeling. Financed by the EuropeAid program, MEDIUM grants *per diems* (flat-rate of €2,100/month) for two years to European doctoral students wishing to live in China to study the urbanization process in medium-sized cities provided that they are the recipients of doctoral contracts. The different aspects of (social and environmental) “urban sustainability” are addressed in the three partner cities and the principles of collaborative urban planning are introduced with representatives of the socioeconomic world in the form of stakeholder workshops.

The inclusion of the doctoral contract in the framework of the MEDIUM project has major advantages. It allows the doctoral student to be welcomed at two of the three partner universities in China (in Zhuhai and Datong), facilitating acquisition of Chinese language and culture, as well as facilitating access to local socioeconomic stakeholders—a decisive advantage in China where field surveys are very difficult to conduct without initial contacts. Another advantage is the possibility of combining the mainly qualitative thesis approach with a quantitative approach based on MEDIUM’s resources: access to the socioeconomic databases on Chinese cities at the detailed scale provided by the University of Lausanne, technical support (in statistics and mapping) from a research engineer



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specialized in GISs from the UMR *Géographie-Cités* assigned to MEDIUM, and data from the social networks by Complex City Lab, which are particularly useful to document conditions in the private rental stock. In exchange, the doctoral student commits to participating in the organization of MEDIUM's activities, which include a seminar and a conference in Zhuhai in 2016-2017 and in Datong in 2017-2018, plus three stakeholder workshops in the two cities.

Required skills and abilities

The candidate must hold a Master's degree in geography, development/urban planning, or any other Master's degree with an urban specialization. He/she have good command of written and spoken English.

Prior knowledge of Chinese is not required insomuch as interpreters are available for the MEDIUM project but it will be a "plus", as will the candidate's interest in Chinese culture. In addition, the candidate will be required to take Chinese language classes at one of the partner universities, in compliance with the requirements of the MEDIUM project.

Experience with field surveys is strongly desired, as is an interest in (but not necessarily mastery of) quantitative approaches.

Additional Information

Contract Start Date	01/09/2016
Length of Contract	3 years
Host Laboratory	<p>Laboratory Name: <i>Géographie-cités</i> (UMR 8504) – CNRS / Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University / Paris Diderot University</p> <p>Address: 13 rue du Four – 75006 Paris</p> <p>Possible Thesis Supervisor(s): Natacha AVELINE DR CNRS</p>
Assigned University	<p>Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne University</p> <p>Paris School of Geography – Environment, Society,</p>



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	Development (Doctoral School ED 434)
Net Monthly Remuneration	approximately € 1 350 (additional teaching assignments possible) ¹
Contact	contact@labex-dynamite.com aveline@jp.cnrs.fr

Recommendations for the candidate(s):

Recruitment procedure and schedule:

- **The application must be submitted electronically by application form** (<http://www.form-labex-dynamite.com/doc/en/>). It must demonstrate that the candidate fulfils the requirements indicated in the position profile (specified tasks and skills).

The application will include:

- a description of the doctoral project (2 to 5 pages maximum) indicating the theoretical basis of the research, the tests to be carried out on empirical materials, the methodology to be used, a feasibility report and project schedule;
- curriculum vitae;
- transcript of higher education record for first year of masters studies (*Master 1*) and the first semester of research masters (*Master 2*);
- a letter of recommendation from the supervisor of the research master's thesis;
- a letter confirming the forthcoming defence of the candidate's master's thesis (prior to **31 August 2016**).

It is recommended (but not mandatory) for the candidate to establish contact with the potential thesis supervisor in advance.

- **The deadline for the submission of applications is 4 May 2016 (inclusive).**

For your information: When the deadline for applications has passed, the LabEx DynamiTe will contact the potential director(s) of the potential host unit(s) and will add one letter of invitation to the application.

- The candidate(s) appointed following the evaluation of the applications and interviews (which will take place during the week of 13 June 2016) will be informed of the results of the application process from 20 June 2016.

¹ depending on the host establishment.