

The Network

The Thematic Network **Principles of Cultural Dynamics (PCD)**, based at Freie Universitaet Berlin, is funded by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). It aims at strengthening transnational cooperation in humanities research between Freie Universitaet Berlin and the following institutions:

- **Harvard University, Mahindra Humanities Center**
- **The Hebrew University of Jerusalem**
- **The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Research Institute for the Humanities**
- **École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris**
- **The Johns Hopkins University, Humanities Center**

We are very happy to welcome the following institutions as associated partners within the network for the second funding period:

- **The Australian National University**
- **University of California, Davis**
- **National Research University/Higher School of Economics, Moscow**

Scholars coming from all partner universities will participate in the Global Humanities Campus as well as the GHDLs.

Contact

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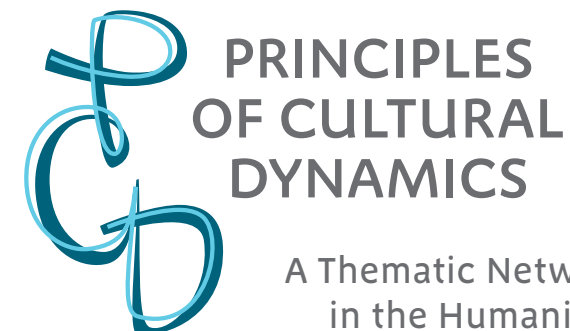
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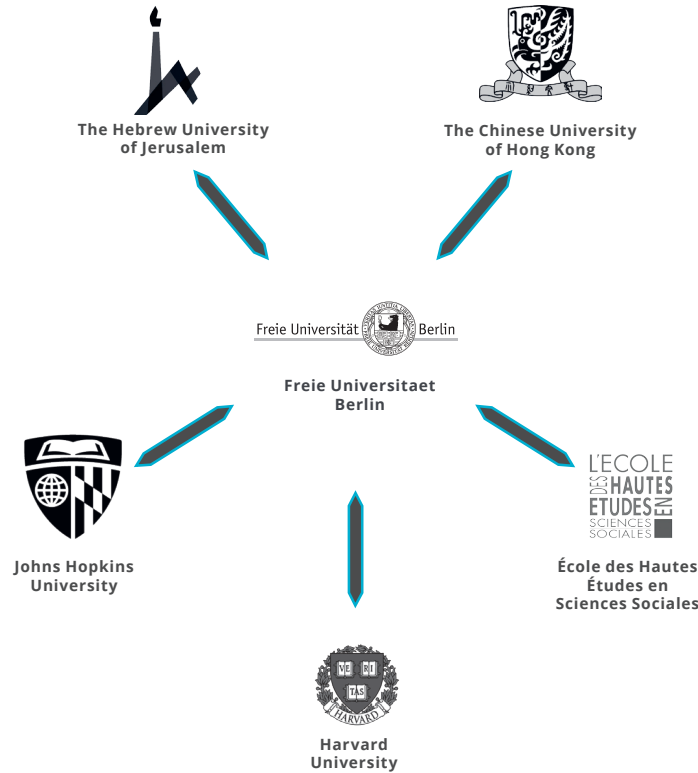


Thematic Focus

The choice of the network's thematic focus, "Principles of Cultural Dynamics", is based on the observation that the dynamics of processes of cultural change and innovation have varied considerably across historical time periods and places. The PCD network aims to research factors that may account for what triggers processes of cultural innovation, what accelerates and hinders them, and what may cause them to subside entirely. It is to stimulate an investigation: of changes in (economic and geo-political) power structures; of influences on the natural habitat, as well as changes in the latter; of the diversity of world views and religions and their authoritativeness; of the existence and effect of what the West has been calling art for three millennia; of the impact of institutional structures (of a political, but also of an educational nature); of coerced or freely chosen mobility – to name a few thematic complexes.

The second funding period's focus is broadened on the basis of previous research results: Interdisciplinary studies beyond humanities are achieved by taking into account social studies' viewpoints. Objects of material quotidian culture are being examined with additional emphasis. Further aspects concern the research methods. Relations between hermeneutic and empirical methods as well as their possible retroactive effects on descriptive models are to be considered. The third factor concerns the epistemological level. More stress is being placed on questioning the relevance of model building categories for process descriptions, such as the categories of causality or of contingency.

These research questions, transcending space and time, virtually call for being investigated cooperatively, and in a transnational context: the network offers the opportunity to integrate individual case studies with a strong local and temporal focus; it likewise opens up a space for larger, interdisciplinary research projects, thereby laying groundwork for a theory of cultural dynamics.



Mobility Program

The network promotes mobility for junior scholars (M.A. and PhD students, as well as PostDocs), in order to further the sustainability of the various forms of research collaboration. On both career levels, FUB hosts one scholar from every partner institution, and one FUB scholar is hosted by every partner institution per academic year.

Activities

Global Humanities Campus (GHC)

The GHC takes place annually, during the summer months, and consists of a two-week summer school, as well as a thematically related two-day workshop. During the Joint Workshop renowned humanities scholars from all partner universities will be presenting new research topics—while enjoying the possibility of discussing these in detail, and of further developing them conjointly. Particularly this workshop is to serve all participating scholars as an incubator for novel (research) initiatives and other forms of collaboration.

As part of the summer school, the mobility program's participants of the PCD network, circulating in the course of the year, convene for two weeks in Berlin. Additionally, graduate and doctoral students from all partner institutions are invited to take part in the summer school. The individual sessions are taught by PostDocs and senior scholars from the cooperating universities, whose research focus pertains to the network's field of study. An accompanying cultural program provides the participants with the possibility of exchanging ideas, thus implementing and strengthening the backbone of the PCD project—the conception of a network.

Global Humanities Distinguished Lecture Series

Each partner institution of the PCD network invites outstanding senior scholars conducting research within the framework of the network's concept. Under the umbrella of this series of lectures, scholars from the humanities discuss various aspects of cultural processes, changes and innovations spanning all historical eras. The invited senior scholars present and discuss their research topics during a series of evening lectures.