



September 11, 2012

York University Part of New International PhD Program

“The World in the City: Metropolitanism and Globalization from the Nineteenth Century to the Present” connects researchers at universities in Berlin, New York and Toronto.

York University is part of a consortium of leading universities in Berlin, New York and Toronto to support PhD research through an international exchange program. The International Graduate Research Program titled “The World in the City” is headed by Professor Dorothee Brantz, Director of the Center for Metropolitan Studies (CMS) at the Technische Universität Berlin and is sponsored by the German Research Foundation DFG. Worth almost 3 million Euros, it initially runs from May 2012 until September 2016 with an option to extend it for an additional four and a half years. This graduate research program is a collaboration of Freie Universität Berlin, Humboldt Universität Berlin, TU Berlin, City University of New York, Columbia University, Fordham University, New York University, University of Toronto, and York University.

The rise and development of modern metropolises is closely connected with global economic, ecological, political, cultural, and infrastructural networks. Surprisingly, thus far the historical dimensions of such metropolitan-global connections have been hardly investigated. While scholars in the field of urban studies consider globalization as an essentially contemporary phenomenon, those researchers who are interested in long-term global processes have not paid much attention to the specific role of cities.

A select group of interdisciplinary PhD students and post-doctoral researchers, recruited through an international process, are investigating the historical and contemporary global interdependences of metropolitan areas and their effects on built, lived, imagined, and interpreted metropolitan spaces. They are supervised and supported by an international group of expert scholars, whose research interests span the globe. An elaborate programme of study will allow all fellows to focus on their dissertation research and prepare for the challenges of the international academic market. The program seeks to foster the dialogue between historical and interdisciplinary urban studies in the following four research fields: 1) Building Metropolitanism: Architecture and Urban Planning; 2) Moving Metropolitanism: Migration and Mobility; 3) Thinking Metropolitanism: Knowledge and Communication; 4) Natural Metropolitanism: Environment and Sustainability.



Nine students from the first group in the international PhD program in Metropolitanism and Globalization at the inauguration in Berlin; May 21, 2012.

Professor Ute Lehrer who, with her colleague Professor Roger Keil is representing York University in this consortium, notes that “this kind of international collaboration for the benefit of our best doctoral students is now a sine qua non for the training of junior academics. It provides them with the important experience of gaining academic experience outside of their own institutions and cultural contexts.” Lehrer adds that she is personally also excited about the possibilities of research collaboration with her colleagues in Berlin and New York. The Canadian Centre for German and European Studies, The City Institute at York University, the Faculty of Environmental Studies, the Faculty of Graduate Studies and York International provided support for putting together the York contributions to this program. Seed funding for the program was also received from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). Keil notes that he was particularly delighted about the productive cooperation of York University and University of Toronto colleagues Jennifer Jenkins and Kanishka Goonewardena in putting together the winning application on the Toronto side.



Professor Ute Lehrer representing York University at the inauguration of the international PhD program in Berlin, May 21 2012

In her speech at the inauguration of the international PhD program in Berlin on May 23, Lehrer stressed Toronto's strength as a location for doing cutting-edge research on metropolitanism and globalization. Since then the program got off to a great start with an initial workshop for incoming students. Annual conferences in Berlin (2012), Toronto (2013) and New York (2014) and additional workshops and conferences will provide the framework for extensive academic exchanges between the professors and PhD students from Berlin, New York, and Toronto. Moreover, there will be the opportunity for collaborative research projects among faculty and graduate students.

For more information: Roger Keil (rkeil@yorku.ca) or Ute Lehrer (lehrer@yorku.ca)

Project website: http://www.geschundkunstgesch.tu-berlin.de/fachgebiet_neuere_geschichte/menue/dfg_graduate_research_program_2012-2015/research_program/parameter/en/

Watch trailer:

<http://player.vimeo.com/video/32256614?title=0&byline=0&portrait=0>