

Report of the Academic Organizer

The PhD workshops organized by the EAJS are becoming more popular each time, and the 13th workshop in the series, which took place in Arrábida (Portugal) on 27-30 August 2017 again drew a record number of applicants - 93 eligible students from all parts of Europe. While on earlier occasions each application has been reviewed by all members of the council, this time the workload was divided so that each applicant was reviewed by two council members except the academic organizer, who had his say on selection among applicants with near-equal results. All in all, the procedure worked well, because the chosen applicants presented work of superb quality and created, for the academic advisors, an atmosphere of a conference rather than a seminar in class. We were also pleased to note that quite a few among the successful applicants had also been accepted as participants in several sections of the EAJS conference itself. Most participants of the workshop took advantage of the possibility to attend the conference and were seen during sessions and breaks, talking to their more advanced colleagues and thus broadening considerably their scholarly network. Quite a few of them also expressed the wish to remain in contact after the event. All 20 students submitted a report of 5000 words and presented on their topics during 8 sessions, with 2-3 participants each time. These reports had been made available to all participants online and we were again pleased to note that quite a few among them had made use of the opportunity and acquainted themselves with the work of others. The academic advisors to the workshop included:

Prof emer Joy Hendry, Oxford Brookes University / St Antony's College, University of Oxford
Dr Rajashree Pandey, Goldsmith College, University of London
Prof Rein Raud, Tallinn University, academic organizer
Prof Verena Blechinger-Talcott, Freie Universität Berlin
Prof Urs Matthias Zachmann, Freie Universität Berlin

Each academic advisor thus had the task to discuss the work of 4-6 participants, according to their respective fields of research. The range of topics among the selected participants was indeed broad, even if not as broad as during some of the previous workshops, including linguistics, anthropology, modern and classical literature, philosophy, religious studies, social and political issues as well as history of ideas. Fortunately many of the issues addressed in the participants' dissertations were not too far from each other, thus the discussions were always lively and continued after the sessions.

The participants of the workshop gathered at the Lisbon airport on the afternoon of 27 August and were driven by bus to the workshop venue, the Arrábida Convento. During the drive and in

the evening, participants had the first opportunity to get to know each other and to learn about the other participants' projects.

The following two days were filled with presentations and intense discussions of the PhD projects. The convent provided a great working atmosphere and encouraged lively discussions during and after the work-intensive sessions.

Both days, after a joint breakfast, the participants met from 9.15 am to 6.10 pm. Each day, 10 candidates presented, grouped into four panels of 2 or 3, with lunch and coffee breaks in between. Each candidate was given 20 minutes to present, with additional 20 minutes for the advisor to comment and a general discussion.

On 30 August, after a last breakfast together, participants were driven back to Lisbon. Fortunately, the EAJS Conference, which began the same day, provided many opportunities to see and talk to each other during the next days.

We are very grateful for the organizers of the Lisbon conference for assisting us with finding the location for the workshop. The Arrábida convent in the mountains near Lisbon, a site as beautiful as it was isolated, provided a splendid ambiance for the event as well as breathtaking views during our travels there and back. Last but not least, we would once again like to thank the Toshiba International Foundation for its generous support, without which none of this would have been possible.

On behalf of the organizers,

Rein Raud

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