

Report of the Academic Organiser

After the very successful experiences with an annual workshop for doctoral candidates, the European Association for Japanese Studies has launched a new workshop format in 2015, which also aims at the promotion of young scholars in the field of Japanese Studies, i.e. the EAJS Publication Workshop. The aim of the EAJS Publication Workshop is to give young scholars in the field of Japanese Studies the opportunity to assert themselves in the highly competitive academic environment that requires regular publication of their research results in high-quality peer-reviewed journals.

After the 1st EAJS Publication Workshop was held successfully at the Freie Universität Berlin from 16 to 18 November 2015, the 2nd EAJS Publication Workshop was held at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, from 29 September to 2 October 2018.

As with the 1st EAJS Publications Workshop, the aim was to provide doctoral students and young postdoctoral researchers with essential knowledge of the academic publication process by giving them advice on how to find the right journal for their work, how to write letters to the editor during the manuscript submission and review phases, and how to address critical issues raised in the review process.

Experienced senior advisors working in the field of Japanese Studies who could cover both the academic and technical aspects of the publishing process were invited to provide guidance through the often labyrinthine process of writing and dealing with publishers. In organizing this workshop, the EAJS cooperated closely with the Faculty of Arts, Department of Asian Studies, UL, enabling us to use university facilities and other local infrastructure.

The main venue was one of the lecture rooms of the Department of Asian Studies. The advisors were accommodated in the nearby Hotel Mrak and most of the junior participants stayed in the City Hotel, about 10 minutes walk from the department. This made the daily logistics of the workshop as easy as possible.

As advisors, a team of senior academics with experience as reviewers, editorial board members or editors of peer-reviewed journals were invited to participate.

The advisors were as follows:

Prof em Dr Andrej Bekeš, University of Ljubljana (Japanese Linguistics);

Dr Isaac Gagné, German Institute for Japanese Studies, Tokyo (Anthropology, Managing Editor of *Contemporary Japan*);

Dr Mark Hudson, Researcher, Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History; Linguistic and Cultural Evolution (Archaeology, Early History and Anthropology);

Dr Meredith Shaw, Tokyo University, (Politics and International Relations, Managing Editor of *the Social Science Japan Journal*).

Prof Dr Ivo Smits, Leiden University (Literature and Cultural Studies).

The workshop participants were selected by the EAJS Council members, based on online applications which included the applicant's CV, a letter of motivation, and an abstract of the manuscript intended for publication.

Based on the academic quality of the submitted application documents, 12 participants were selected from a total of 15 applicants. Due to unexpected circumstances, one participant had to cancel at the last minute, so that finally 11 young researchers at doctoral (10) and postdoctoral (1) level took part in the workshop. The breakdown of their nationality is as follows: Belgium 1, Bulgaria 1, Estonia 1, Germany 1, Indonesia 1, Italy 2, Japan 1, Romania 1, Spain 1, United Kingdom 1, representing a wide range of young researchers from across Europe and young researchers at European universities.

All selected participants were required to submit a full article manuscript intended for publication in an academic journal prior to the workshop. The manuscripts were distributed among the advisors.

The workshop consisted of three different types of activities. The first type of activity was designed to familiarise participants with various aspects of the publication process. Under this premise, Meredith Shaw and Isaac Gagné addressed questions such as “How do I find the ‘right’ journal for my work? How does the peer review process work? How do I submit my manuscript? How do I read the readers’ reports? How do I revise my manuscript? How do I resubmit? What do I do if my paper is rejected?” in two sessions at the beginning and end of the workshop. The discussions in these sessions focused on various aspects of the publishing process and on what to do at each step to ensure that a manuscript is successfully accepted for publication.

The second type of activity was, needless to say, the intensive discussions of the proposed article manuscripts. All participants had the opportunity to briefly present their paper. However, most of the time was used for the advisors to critically summarise the main points of the proposed manuscripts and to discuss the contents of the articles with the other participants, mimicking to some extent a peer-review process.

The papers were grouped as best as possible by topic. However, since the number of consultants and their areas of expertise were smaller than the number of topics covered, there were unavoidably some proposed manuscripts that were on the margins of the expertise of all the scholars present. Yet, this was not a weak point after all: when discussing manuscripts, the participants became aware

that the Humanities and Social Sciences share many fundamental and important aspects of scientific work. Also, any points of criticism were always discussed constructively and purposefully. What is more, the discussion of the articles in a broader context through the lenses of both the Humanities and Social Sciences contributed to a deeper understanding of the issues presented. The third part of the activities was of a social nature: the welcome reception and the sharing of all subsequent meals contributed to further lively discussions among the participants. It also facilitated the development of academic ties between the participants, providing additional social capital as an important aspect of their academic careers.

At the end of the 2nd EAJS Publication Workshop, participants gave very positive feedback. They confirmed that the workshop contributed to broadening their knowledge on how to shape the content and argumentation of their articles, and how to proceed through the stages of the editorial process, from submission, through replying to peer review comments, to possible initial negative reviews of their manuscripts.

In my eyes, the latest EAJS Publication Workshop has proven that it is indeed an important contribution to the development of a new and capable generation of young scholars in the field of Japanese Studies. I am therefore firmly convinced that this workshop format should be continued in the future.

Last but not least, the organisers and participants would like to thank the Japan Foundation for generously providing funds for travel and accommodation for the workshop. Moreover, many thanks go to the EAJS Office staff for their organisational support, to the Faculty of Arts, Ljubljana University for providing the technical support, and to the staff of the Department of Asian Studies for taking over the bulk of the organisational work on site.

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Workshop Director
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