

## **Reports by the Participants of the 14<sup>th</sup> EAJIS PhD Workshop**

The EAJIS PhD Workshop, which took place 8–11 October 2018 at the University of Belgrade, provided a fantastic opportunity for the participating young researchers to share their findings and views in a fruitful dialogue. I believe that it is crucial for a researcher not to confine himself to his very narrow area of specialisation, but to take a broader look on what their fellow researchers are working on. The guidance provided by the senior advisors during the workshop was of great help. Moreover, the communication during the workshop's panels and also in informal moments was open and honest. It seemed to me that everyone openly contributed their research as well as their worldview. The diversity of the topics presented, the wide range of specialists from different fields of Japanese Studies, the variety of participants coming from different countries and universities – all this made this year's workshop extremely interesting and helpful. Moreover, in addition to the results already mentioned, the workshop will hopefully also have the positive benefit that the network both between the doctoral students themselves and with their advisors will be the kind of connection that will exist long after the workshop is over, which is really valuable. I would also like to mention the excellent organisation of the event and express our truest gratitude to the EAJIS office who responded friendly to every question and planned the logistics. I would also like to thank all the organisations supporting the event, namely the Toshiba International Foundation and the Japan Foundation, and, of course, the University of Belgrade, where we were welcomed with all the possible sincerity and hospitality. For me it is a great example of an event that truly broadens the boundaries of the mind, which is so important, especially in the world of scientific research.

*Anastasia Borkina*  
*Saint Petersburg State University, Russia*

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My participation in the EAJIS PhD Workshop was a valuable experience. We had the opportunity to meet with colleagues from other parts of Europe, share our thoughts about each other's work, and get feedback from established senior scholars in the field of Japanese Studies. In the process of writing a PhD thesis, it is very important to exchange opinions and get feedback from colleagues who are facing the same task. Since most of the participants had different academic backgrounds, it was helpful to receive constructive comments from them. The comments from the academic advisors were very helpful for progressing my doctoral thesis. I am therefore very grateful for having been able to work with them and receive their feedback during the workshop. The organisation was perfect – all the information and instructions for preparing the reports, submitting them as well as the rules for participation were clear and easy to follow. Overall, this was a great academic experience and I am very glad to have participated in the workshop and to have met all these wonderful and successful colleagues from all over Europe.

*Marko Bozovic*  
*University of Belgrade, Serbia*

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I had the pleasure of attending the 14th EAJS PhD workshop in Belgrade in October 2018. I applied for the workshop to receive feedback on my research progress. I found the opportunity to be among colleagues in the same field to be invaluable. Although participants were doing research on a wide range of topics and did not specialise in my particular area, the insight they provided through their comments and questions were very useful. Through the perspectives of the other participants and the senior advisors, I was able to improve areas of my research where my methodology had proven weak. Thanks to this, I was able to enrich my research in a way I would not have thought of if I had not received this feedback. I am grateful to have had the chance to receive guidance from such esteemed scholars. Although I was assigned to one in particular, the other four advisors were also available to guide me, and comment on my research.

The first day we had the pleasure of getting to know each other at dinner at one of the most beautiful venues I have ever seen; Aeroklub Roestoran Beograd. It was lovely to spend the evening getting to know the participants and mentors, and to kick-start the workshop with a good atmosphere. The next few days we spent at the University of Belgrade listening to and discussing each other's topics. It was a very productive workshop.

The organisation was great, and everything ran smoothly. The organisers made sure we had enough time to spend together discussing and enjoying ourselves in a very relaxed and yet professional setting.

I would like to thank EAJS for the wonderful opportunity to further my research through the guidance of experts in the field, and for making it all possible.

*Hanna Mejab Chouchane*  
*The University of Tsukuba, Japan*

The EAJS PhD workshop was a memorable experience that I expect to see as one of the highlights of my time as a doctoral student. I travelled to Belgrade with great anticipation and expectations, and I was glad that they were fully met. First of all, I can feel the positive impact the workshop had on my research. To prepare for the workshop, I had to sit down and systematically think about my project and put the essential aspects of my research into words. At the workshop itself, I received valuable feedback that helped me guide the future course of my thesis. What is more, the positive resonance I felt was an important motivational factor for my next stage of research.

The social aspect of the workshop – having an opportunity to meet new people from different countries and exchange ideas with them – was a personal priority for me. All participants were extremely motivated and very open; it was a great pleasure to experience such a welcoming atmosphere. This was not only true for the participants, but also for the senior advisors. Both in the seminar room and at the dining table they showed an incredible enthusiasm for each participant's research, and they clearly took their role to support and guide a new generation of researchers very seriously, which I highly appreciated.

I strongly recommend participation in this workshop to other PhD students. Although it was very intense and required much work, it was also a lot of fun and a precious experience – not only on a professional but also on a personal level.

*Alexandra Ciorciaro*  
*University of Zurich, Switzerland*

Being in the early stages of my PhD, I applied to the workshop in the hope of receiving feedback from senior scholars as well as from my peers conducting research in various fields of Japanese Studies. My own research is, at its core, pluridisciplinary: as I examine the representation of minorities in the works of fiction by contemporary female writers in Japan and the Japanese diaspora, I use theories and methodologies inherited not just from Japanese Studies, but also Sociology, Literary Theory, as well as Gender Studies and Queer Studies. Through my participation in the 14th EAJS PhD Workshop, I not only received the feedback I was hoping for, but also gained new perspectives that will profoundly enrich my research.

My advisor during the workshop was Professor Judit Hidasi; I was, however, fortunate enough to receive some excellent feedback from other scholars as well, especially Professor Simon Kaner, Professor Wolfram Manzenreiter, and of course, Professor Andrej Bekeš. I am deeply grateful for all of the advisors' guidance and for the engaging and stimulating conversations that took place between the workshop sessions. Undoubtedly, the presentations themselves were of the utmost interest, but the free time we shared, during meals for instance, also provided space for invaluable academic conversations. The conviviality of this workshop proved to me that the academic community is indeed just that: a community, with interpersonal relationships being one of its most precious assets. It may sound silly, but I am especially delighted that the EAJS Workshop enabled me to forge new friendships with fellow PhD students. All the participants made a conscious effort to stay in touch, for instance through social networks, and in the weeks following the workshop, some of us had already met again in Japan.

I would like to extend my deepest thanks to the European Association for Japanese Studies, the Toshiba International Foundation, as well as the University of Belgrade for organising and hosting the 14th EAJS PhD Workshop. I highly recommend this workshop to any doctoral student looking to broaden the scope of their research.

*Sophie Claudel*  
*Hosei University, Japan*

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I had the honour to participate in the 14th EAJS Workshop for Doctoral Students in 2018, which was hosted by the University of Belgrade. I flew to Belgrade one day earlier to experience a still unknown European capital and to learn about the history and future of Belgrade. The stark contrast of the Old City in the centre with its magnificent fortification, the residential areas of New Belgrade and countless urban redevelopment projects throughout the city and especially around the waterfront area gave me already some inspiration for my future studies, which will deal with the urban structure of a small part of Tokyo. Although Belgrade is obviously completely different from Tokyo in its location and social background, it was interesting to compare some aspects of life in the city between the two cities.

The reception at the university was warm and we stayed in the same hotel as our senior supervisors, providing a good opportunity to continue conversations during the coffee breaks and dive directly into discussions about the presentations we just heard. After a splendid dinner on the first evening, we started the next day with the main part of the workshop, the presentations of the 20 participating doctoral students.

Although our fields of study were so diverse, I left with the impression that everybody got some input from fellow colleagues and especially the senior advisors, who did a great job commenting our abstracts with a lot of insight.

We were able to speak about different topics of academia life and our respective dissertation theses without any pressure – an opportunity that I greatly appreciated. Sharing experiences about everyday life, problems one encounters during the PhD phase, the joy of doing fieldwork and conversation about research is always a valuable experience.

*Michael Drawing*

*Ludwig Maximilian University Munich, Germany*

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I would like to thank EAJIS for accepting me for the 14th PhD Workshop in Belgrade. The travel grant I received was of immense help and gave me the chance to be part of this great event that I would otherwise not have been able to participate in.

The University of Belgrade provided a warm and sophisticated setting for the workshop, starting with the impressive appearance of the University's Faculty of Philology in the historic heart of the city, through the beautiful welcome dinner to the friendly and present catering service, which was always prepared to help the participants.

The workshop itself turned out to be more than I had expected. Although there may have been a certain level of tension when being in a room full of aspiring and ambitious PhD colleagues, the atmosphere was mitigated by the benevolent presence and words of Professor Markovic and Marko Bozovic's caring assistance. The guidance and always focused feedback from the senior advisors also helped us all to refocus or restructure our research, or to simply reassure ourselves of the value of our work.

The most surprising part of the workshop for me, however, was the camaraderie that developed among all the PhD students who took part in the workshop. By sharing something as personal as our own research projects, we were able to create significant personal connections through our shared experiences and learn from each other's stories. I am certain that this is a network that I want to nurture and a memory that I will value most in the future.

*Marcello Francioni*

*SOAS University of London, UK*

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The workshop was a great opportunity to present my research for doctoral thesis on the "Aesthetics of War" as seen on war motif textiles. I greatly appreciated the comments and suggestions received from the senior advisers. The lively discussion and ideas of the fellow students were also very helpful. Another benefit of such a workshop is preparing the presentation for such a knowledgeable group already requires a careful review of the structure and outline of one's thesis: since one is often stuck in the details, one is forced to look at the overall picture anew.

Overall, the diversity of the workshop was really stimulating: the topics ranged from history, linguistics and literature to anthropological research; the research methods covered everything from long-term participant observation to detailed analysis of a text corpus; all advisers and students had

different subjects and academic specializations, came from various universities and had very different personal backgrounds. It was particularly enriching to look at Japanese culture and life from as many different personal and academic perspectives as were offered by the individual presentations and discussions.

Of course, it is important to mention that the organisation was great and the reception of the participants extremely friendly. I really want to thank Prof Markovic, all professors and the entire organisation team, but also the sponsors for making this workshop possible.

*Klaus Frieze*

*Ludwig Maximilian University Munich, Germany*

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The 14th EAJS PhD workshop opened wonderful gates for my research and network in Japanese Studies. My initial objectives were to receive feedback from scholars in Europe and to contribute to a wider academic community beyond my home institution. The results were even better than expected. Thanks to the friendly and encouraging atmosphere, I was able to better understand the problems and potentials of my project. All the inspiring presentations and discussions filled me with positive feelings about the future of our community.

The exposure of my project to the other participants enabled me to locate my research and other projects on a relative map of Japanese Studies. I was able to relate my own project to research, which shares the same areas of study, disciplines, targeted time of research, and methodology. At the same time, projects from very new areas broadened my perspective and gave me an opportunity to reflect on my way of working. In addition, I was glad to find many ways to become resourceful for my peers in Japanese Studies by being who I am as a Japanese and individual, and through my network. The flexibility of the senior scholars in relation to the wide range of topics has impressively shown us what it is like to be an advanced researcher in Japanese Studies with a high degree of interdisciplinary knowledge and broad interest.

Due to the limited time, it was occasionally difficult for the audience to get involved in the discussions that took place after the feedback from the advisors. However, we were able to exchange opinions informally during the breaks. I also had a great time with my roommate, discussing a wide range of research and life issues in Japan at the hotel. I will treasure the friendships and connections I gained during the workshop.

I sincerely appreciate the EAJS, the Japan Foundation, the Toshiba International Foundation, the University of Belgrade, and everyone involved in the workshop, who made this amazing event possible.

*Ai Fukunaga*

*SOAS University of London, UK*

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First and foremost, I would like to thank the European Association for Japanese Studies, the Toshiba International Foundation and the University of Belgrade for organising and hosting the 14th EAJS PhD Workshop.

Personally, it has been a wonderfully engaging and exciting experience to be among people interested in various fields of Japanese Studies. The workshop provided me with the opportunity to listen to my fellow PhD students' insights on many different and interdisciplinary subjects in Japanese Studies that, in my personal experience, are often and easily overlooked when working on a single topic. In addition, the senior advisors' comments to each of us were thoughtful and stimulating. I really enjoyed the positive energy that filled the room during the days of the workshop.

In brief, my project focusses on the linguistic analysis of passive constructions in Japanese in diachrony. Since the project is still in an early stage of development, I think it really benefited from the exchange at the workshop. In this regard, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the advisor assigned to me, Professor Andrej Bekeš, for the invaluable and helpful feedback he gave me during the workshop, and for his warm comments and interest in the project.

I would therefore recommend fellow students of Japanese Studies to apply for this workshop in the future, as it is a great and invaluable opportunity for personal and academic growth.

*Shanshan Huang*

*University of Pavia & University of Bergamo, Italy*

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It was a unique experience for me to participate in the EAJS 2018 doctoral workshop. Presenting my PhD thesis on Shintō activities and thoughts within Japanese-occupied Manchuria to senior researchers and to fellow PhD candidates was a good opportunity to identify the most important points of my work. Preparing my presentation especially allowed me to reflect the strengths and weaknesses of my analysis and to think about methodological questions I wanted to share with other research fellows who are all studying the Japanese society from different perspectives.

While sharing one's own research with fellow PhD candidates was already a precious opportunity, we also had the honour to receive insightful advice from senior researchers. I thus received wonderful feedback from my advisor, Professor Simon Kaner, who understood the purpose of my project and kindly gave me many valuable pieces of advice from his own perspective and based on his many years of experience as a researcher in Japanese archaeology. Each exchange that took part during the workshop proved to be very fruitful, whether it was a hint to improve my theories, critical comments to avoid focusing on irrelevant parts, or a kind word to improve my motivation.

Being able to stay together for several days was also a good opportunity to get to know each other, freely exchange information about our research and build a network so that we can share our results in the future. All in all, the workshop was not only a good research experience, but also a wonderful human experience.

*Edouard L'Hérisson*

*INALCO, France*

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I had the great pleasure of being selected to take part in the 14th EAJS PhD Workshop held in Belgrade. It was a great honour for me to give a presentation in front of so many prominent scholars and talented PhD candidates of Japanese Studies.



The 14th EAJS workshop coincided with the completion of my preliminary fieldwork, which I carried out in Japan for 20 days. Therefore, during the workshop I presented not only my research design, but also parts of my findings and preliminary results. The senior advisors and other PhD students gave me a lot of positive feedback and constructive suggestions on the methodology and structure of my thesis. The feedback and suggestions gave me confidence for my future research and helped me to better prepare my next fieldwork. Moreover, the workshop provided a great networking opportunity to get in touch with other PhD researchers of Japanese Studies. Learning about other topics from Linguistics, Literature, History and Sociology is a rewarding experience. The different fields we focus on allow a fruitful and illuminating intellectual exchange, not only during the sessions, but also in casual conversations.

The friendly atmosphere of the workshop, paired with the artistic scenery surrounding the Belgrade University, provided me with unforgettable experiences. As a tiny suggestion, a two-day workshop with 20 presentations is a heavy workload, making it difficult to concentrate on all the presentations. Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the professors and fellow PhD researchers for their invaluable suggestions. I also want to extend my sincere thanks to Toshiba International Foundation and all staff from the Belgrade University for making the workshop happen.

*Bin Li*

*Freie Universitaet Berlin, Germany*

My doctoral project is situated in the field of Applied Linguistics. Particularly, the focus of my research is to:

1. Identify the pragmatic challenges students face when interacting orally with Japanese native speakers;
2. Create material based on the challenges that have been identified under objective 1;
3. Implement these same materials in order to test their effectiveness.

Despite my specific area not being in the field of Japanese Studies, the 14th EAJS Workshop for Doctoral Students provided me with an excellent opportunity to present my research to a knowledgeable and enthusiastic audience. The interdisciplinary nature of the event and the exceptional presentations of the fellow doctoral students highlighted the high standard of research surrounding Japanese Studies in Europe.

The feedback I received during the workshop was also of great value. Thanks to the critical comments that were presented throughout, I am now aware of what needs to be further developed or clarified when disseminating my research to specialists in my field and lay audiences alike. I would especially like to express my gratitude to Prof em. Dr Andrej Bekeš for his insightful criticism of my research project.

Being able to participate in the workshop has been an intellectually stimulating and enriching experience that has helped me grow both academically and professionally. This event was also a fantastic opportunity to broaden my knowledge on Japan, expand my network and establish future collaborations further in the field and beyond. Without hesitation, I would recommend this workshop to other doctoral students, as they will undoubtedly benefit from it.

Finally, I would like to thank the EAJS, the Toshiba International Foundation and the University of Belgrade for such a well-organised event. It was truly a pleasure to be a part of this workshop.

*Èrika Marcet i Torrijos*  
*Dublin City University, Ireland*

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It has been a great privilege and experience to participate in the 14th EAJS PhD workshop in Belgrade, Serbia. During this short, yet very well-organised time spent with colleagues and respected advisors from various fields, I have had the opportunity to learn about different methodologies, perspectives and some very interesting research topics that were presented in the workshop. It was a great pleasure and a welcome change of perspective to observe colleagues from the field of Japanese Studies presenting on such a variety of interesting topics. The presence, attention, and guidance of the senior advisors from the field of Japanese Studies has been particularly helpful, and I am certain that their comments have significantly influenced my research and that of my colleagues.

In my particular case, the comments and advice received from advisors and colleagues have proved extremely useful. Not only did they help me steer my research, but they also contributed significantly to changes in my research design the following month. Furthermore, discussions and connections made with colleagues and advisors have paved the way for potentially new research ideas and collaborations.

Lastly, I would like to thank the EAJS for organising this workshop and providing support for PhD students to attend the event.

*Marko Medojevic*  
*University of Tsukuba, Japan*

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I am very grateful for having been selected as one of the participants of the 14th EAJS Workshop for Doctoral Students at the University of Belgrade. The workshop was not only an intellectually enriching event for my doctoral studies, but also a wonderful and valuable opportunity to build a scholarly network of young and established scholars from various areas in Japanese Studies.

First, the workshop provided me with a great opportunity to receive valuable comments and suggestions from my assigned advisor, Prof Ljiljana Markovic, and also the other senior scholars and PhD students, all specialists in Japanese Studies. They helped me to deepen and expand my understanding of the CEFR, a European frame of reference for languages, and reconstruct the theoretical framework of my dissertation. This was my first international academic event to present my paper, but the warm and supportive atmosphere in the workshop encouraged me in my presentation. In addition, it was a great opportunity to get acquainted with fascinating research projects from other fields of study in Japanese Studies. Secondly, the workshop enabled me to build up a multidisciplinary network of PhD students. I am certain that this will be a valuable asset in my entire academic career.

Finally, I would like to show my deep appreciation for all the gracious hospitality of our hosts at the University of Belgrade, as well as the EAJS staff who took care of the practical organisation of the workshop. I highly recommend other PhD students in Japanese Studies to participate in the EAJS



PhD Workshop, which is a great opportunity to develop their studies as well as a wonderful personal experience.

*Oshie Nishimura-Sahi*  
*Tampere University, Finland*

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Participating in the 14th EAJs PhD Workshop in Belgrade was an extremely fruitful and satisfying experience in more ways than might be obvious. The main benefit was of course having my paper analysed and commented on by the senior advisors, from whom I received precious advice on how to further progress my research. Another equally important part of the experience, though, was getting to know the advisors themselves and my fellow PhD students during the four days of the workshop, thus becoming part of an international network of scholars. Being exposed to and aware of different views and ways of thinking is, in my opinion, one of the fundamental skills a researcher should possess to be able to successfully do his job, doubly so when considering that some academic realities can be rather ‘self-contained’ and not offer many opportunities for this kind of interaction. The EAJs PhD Workshop provided just such an opportunity, allowing me to get to know scholars from many different countries and fields of study, and remain in contact even after the end of the workshop itself.

I would heartily recommend this experience to any PhD student, especially those in their first and second years. Applying for such an event can seem like a daunting task for a newcomer, who might be afraid of not being up to the task or of being judged harshly, and I would like to reassure these people that the EAJs workshop is an absolutely positive experience, where criticism naturally plays an important role, but in an unambiguously constructive way.

*Enrico Paolini*  
*University of Naples, Italy*

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I was very grateful to be selected as one of the participants of the 14th EAJs PhD Workshop in Belgrade, Serbia and given the opportunity to present my PhD project there. Although I already was used to presenting my project before an audience due to my affiliation with a doctoral program at the University of Zurich, this was the first time I presented the whole project in front of an international audience, and I was both nervous and excited to do so. Now I am very glad I did, because it was an all-round positive experience for me.

Since the topics as well as the participants of the workshop were from a variety of different disciplines and universities, I was not quite sure what to expect before the start of the workshop. However, I was very pleasantly surprised. While it is quite exhausting to hear twenty presentations in only two days, it was fascinating to learn about all the projects that are currently being worked on. All the workshop participants were extremely motivated and very passionate about their research, and it was a joy to get to know such a diverse group. I am sure that the network that has been established here will help us in the future, perhaps in unexpected ways.

I would also like to extend my deepest gratitude to all the organisers and the supervisors of the PhD workshop. Everything was perfectly organised, and I did not have to worry about anything during the trip to Belgrade. Additionally, the supervisors were extremely motivated and did an excellent job

when it came to feedback – sometimes I even profited from feedback that was originally meant for another participant. I would most definitely recommend other PhD students to participate as well if they have the opportunity.

*Sarah Rebecca Schmid*  
*University of Zurich, Switzerland*

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I am very grateful for having been accepted to participate in the 14th EAJS Workshop for Doctoral Students. It was very beneficial to have the opportunity to reconsider my findings, the theoretical approach and the structure through gaining the critical opinions of others in the workshop, as I am currently in the final phase of writing my doctoral thesis.

My research comprises ethnographic investigations of the communication and behaviour of listeners in various Japanese cultural contexts, such as hostess clubs, university lectures, cafés and bars. In this workshop, I focused on the presentation of ethnographies of hostesses in Ginza, Tokyo and my respective findings. Since my research is close to linguistic research, I had always wanted to obtain critical opinions from linguists about my research; therefore, it was very valuable to receive detailed and constructive advice from my advisor Professor Andrej Bekeš. In addition, I had many opportunities to talk about hostesses and research methods during coffee breaks and other free time, as well as to receive useful literature recommendations. It was quite surprising that although the other participants focussed on a variety of different topics, I was able to find many connections between my research and others' research in terms of focus, method and aim.

The workshop also helped me to establish an academic network in the field of Japanese Studies. The atmosphere of the workshop was very friendly and relaxing, not only among PhD students, but also with the advisors. I have learned the importance of networking not only for exchanging critical opinions and information, but also for building a support network of peers to help me stay enthusiastic about my work.

I would like to thank the organisers, the EAJS, the Toshiba International Foundation, the Japan Foundation, the participants and the advisors, who made this possible.

*Nanase Shiota*  
*University of Cambridge, UK*

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As a PhD candidate who works fulltime and does not reside in the same country as her supervisor, I do not have regular contact with academia. Therefore, I was thrilled to learn that I had been selected to take part in the 14th EAJS PhD Workshop in Belgrade to present my dissertation project to senior scholars and fellow PhD candidates.

Writing the project report before the actual workshop started was already a highly enlightening process, as it forced me to explain the current state of my dissertation and made me more aware of its strengths and weaknesses.

The two very intensive workshop days spent at the University of Belgrade provided an excellent opportunity to receive constructive comments and immensely valuable feedback. The atmosphere of the workshop was very relaxed and all the participants were highly concentrated and very supportive of each other.

I found it highly stimulating to hear presentations from a wide variety of research fields, backgrounds and cultures, and it was also a great opportunity to network with fellow PhD candidates currently working on (or struggling with) their theses, and to share ideas - not only during the actual workshop, but also during breakfast, lunch and dinners.

I am deeply grateful that I had this precious opportunity and would like to thank Prof Dr Marković, Prof Dr Hidasi and all senior scholars for their incredibly helpful comments and insights as well as the EAJS, the Japan Foundation and the Toshiba International Foundation for their support.

Already now, I am very much looking forward to meet all participants at the EAJS Japan conference next year and/or in Ghent in 2020!

*Sarah Stark*  
*Ghent University, Belgium*

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I would like to express my gratitude for having been offered the chance to attend the 14th EAJS PhD Workshop in Belgrade this year. It was indeed a rewarding and inspiring experience.

Since I am in the early stages of my research project on the role of Japan in the reception of Japanese and Chinese painting in the West, the feedback from my supervisor, Prof Kaner, and other senior scholars and fellow students was insightful, allowing me to reflect on my current approach and further develop my ideas.

Furthermore, presentations from fellow students were very interesting and encouraged me to broaden my view of Japanese Studies. The multi-disciplinary approach also allowed me to gain new perspectives for my research. However, it might be advantageous to shorten the time allocated for presentations to allow more discussion, as we often ran out of time for the question part. Sharing our projects with others is important, but listening to comments and learning from others can be especially helpful for future studies.

In addition, the convivial atmosphere enabled us to carry out informal discussions during the coffee breaks, lunch and dinnertime, which turned out to be very fruitful and encouraging. I was glad to build new connections with my future colleagues in such a relaxed way.

Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude to the local organisers at the University of Belgrade, the Toshiba International Foundation and the Japan Foundation for making this unique experience possible.

*Yue Yu*  
*University of Lille, France*

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