

First EAJS Publication Workshop

FU Berlin, Germany

16 – 18 November 2015

Reports by the EAJS Publication Workshop Participants

I was very glad to receive the possibility of visiting FU Berlin for the publication workshop. The three-day-stay in Berlin was a hard work, which brought a lot of new information and skills. The advisors, who represented different fields of interest in Japanese studies, gave great feedback to all participants and encouraged young scholars to present their research in renowned English-language peer-reviewed journals.

First of all, I really appreciate the idea of the workshop. As a researcher based in Poland, I usually publish my papers in Polish academic journal, both in Polish and English. Receiving information about the process of publishing in foreign journals is a great opportunity to promote my research among scholars who do research on Japan all over the world.

Secondly, the way how the workshop was organized should be emphasised in this report. Receiving all articles before the workshop made me become familiar with other participants' work and encouraged me to comment and ask questions during the workshop. It was very helpful for developing my knowledge not only in Japanese history and politics, which are in my field of interest, but also in Japanese culture and literature.

Regarding my paper, receiving feedback from many scholar (advisors and participants) was something that wouldn't be possible during a regular conference or seminar. Additional discussions were possible during the breaks and made me gain specific information regarding my research and my paper. An additional benefit was being introduced to other scholars who start their scientific career. It was great to meet them all and to find people who have similar academic interests. This enables us to start thinking about international research projects on Japan that can be conducted among our universities.

I am really grateful to the Japan Foundation for the financial support, to the advisers for the help and feedback on my paper, and to the participants for fruitful discussions. I look forward to other activities that help advancing research on Japan.

Olga Anna Barbasiewicz

Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures, Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland

First of all I would like to thank you for inviting me to the 1st EAJS Publication Workshop.

It was a great pleasure and, at the same time, a very challenging event for me. The workshop was one of the most useful experiences I have had during my PhD studies. During only three

days I was given a lot of constructive feedback and kind advice that had a positive impact on my motivation and self-confidence.

One of the most valuable features of the workshop was undoubtedly the possibility to learn how to write a proper paper in English that may be chosen by academic journals for publication. I believe that this is really important knowledge for young scholars without an English-speaking background who want to present the results of their research in English.

I also appreciated the form of the workshop and its interdisciplinary approach. All the papers were discussed as if they were presented to the editorial board that decides whether the paper is publishable or not. Each author received a number of comments not only from supervisors but also from other participants. This process may help the author to see what kind of problems there were in the discussed paper and indicate possible ways of improvement. The interdisciplinary facet of the workshop gave me a chance to look at my paper from different angles and taught me how to combine different aspects of my research to create a more complex methodological framework. Breaks between sessions and time for meals were nice opportunities to share and exchange ideas with supervisors and participants, enabling a fresh look at our work.

The 1st EAJS Publication Workshop was a very well-organized academic event. I really appreciate the friendly atmosphere of the workshop. I would like to express my deepest thanks to the EAJS, especially the organizers of this workshop at FU Berlin, and to Professor Stanca Scholz-Cionca for the instructive feedback that I received not only about my submitted paper but also on the methodological framework of my PhD project. I would like also to thank Professor Stephen Dodd for all his constructive advice. This workshop was an invaluable experience for me. Last but not least, my gratitude goes also to the Japan Foundation, whose generous support made this workshop possible. Thank you very much!

*Karolina Broma-Smenda
University of Warsaw, Poland*

I attended the EAJS Publication Workshop and received advice on publishing my article titled “‘Self’ and ‘Other’ in Language: Ideas of ‘East’ and ‘West’ in the Development of the National Language in Japan”, which is an overview of the evolving notion of the national language in the recent history of Japan. I also benefited from learning about publishing in the field of Japanese studies more generally. The opportunity was given to me at an ideal time as I was just considering where to publish my article and I wanted to get some experts’ comments and advice before submitting it to any journal. It was a rare occasion for me to get feedback from the ‘mock editorial board’ and the assistance provided by the advisors was extremely useful in improving my article and identifying potential journals for submission. It was also very inspiring to have discussions with other young scholars from various disciplines. As my article is highly interdisciplinary, the diversity of the participants was valuable in helping me understand different points of view from across the academy. Furthermore, I appreciated that the workshop provided us with an opportunity to read our own articles in a critical way,

placing a very strong focus on writing itself. I now have much clearer ideas about academic publication and greater confidence in writing journal articles. I would like to take this opportunity to thank once again the EAJS and the Japan Foundation, the sponsors, organisers and advisors who made the workshop possible, as well as fellow participants for their comments and advice.

Naoko Hosokawa
University of Oxford, UK

First of all, I would like to thank the organizers for enabling the first EAJS Publication Workshop to take place, as well as the EAJS and the Japan Foundation who provided financial support. During the course of my short career as an academic and time as a PhD student I have attended many conferences and workshops which have allowed me to share my research with fellow academics and benefit from their feedback. Nonetheless, the format of fifteen to twenty minute presentations followed by brief Q&A sessions is the norm, and in many ways limits the depth of discussion. Furthermore, whilst the standard workshop format does provide young scholars with the opportunity to polish their presentation skills, when it comes to writing-up and eventual publications, workshops based on oral presentation have limited value. This is why the first EAJS Publication Workshop was an especially useful and enjoyable experience. All participants shared written work in advance, and were assigned mentors, receiving detailed comments and advice on their written work, specifically with publication in mind. Without presentations, each paper was addressed as if by an editorial board and in this way really gave each participant—who have until now limited experience in how academic journals operate—a strong sense of the publication process, what journal editors are looking for, and how to address their concerns. Overall, I would say that this workshop was a great success and of great value to participants, serving as a practical, “hands-on” introduction to the world of publishing. For later stage PhD students and postdoctoral researchers this workshop strikes me as particularly beneficial, and I do hope it will be organized again.

Steven Ivings
Heidelberg University, Germany

Having recently completed my PhD thesis and now looking to submit my research to peer-reviewed journals, this opportunity to participate in the EAJS Publication Workshop could not have come at a better time. Although I had felt a bit uneasy about how the proposed format of the event would play out, my initial doubts were soon removed and the experiment to initiate a mock editors’ meeting turned out rather enjoyable. I believe an overall good balance was maintained between addressing the shortcomings of the participants’ work by honest and sometimes harsh criticism and at the same time friendly and supportive atmosphere in which suggestions to improve were laid out. If anything could be improved about the current format perhaps it could be made clearer next time that an advanced, proof-read draft is required: this would save some time and enable focusing the discussion solely on the content level. The

prohibitively broad range of topic discussed in these more than dozen papers which fell under various fields of inquiry seemed like a lot of work at first but I was happy to find out that each one of them offered some points and insights to relate to within a wider field of Japanese studies. From this experience I would strongly argue that this pattern of bringing together scholars from different fields in the humanities and social sciences should be maintained for future workshops as it seems truly crucial for one's development as a scholar to have a grasp of ongoing debates and methodological options currently employed in adjacent fields of study. I also think that a significant benefit of such events is the chance of meeting fellow emerging young scholars while being guided by a team of more experienced colleagues in a relaxed yet professional milieu.

Lauri Kitsnik
University of Cambridge, UK

For the first EAJS Publication Workshop in Berlin, I presented a paper about my PhD research about illuminated scrolls and books and the pictures of the *Bunshô sôshi* tale in the 17th century. As I am in my fourth PhD year and haven't yet had the chance to submit a paper, it was my first paper written in English. Therefore this first EAJS Publication Workshop was a good opportunity to introduce my work to the European research community and to learn the methodology about how to write a paper and how to submit it to a journal. Actually, before the workshop my publications were papers written in Japanese for university journals and not academic papers.

The EAJS workshop was precisely what I was searching for: a group of young researchers and experienced scholars who shared their experience in publication and human relationships in the research community. They rebuilt my confidence in the relevance of my research and taught me how to make my research more appealing and understandable for publication. It taught me particularly to not compress all of my research in one illegible paper. I also have learned that my struggle was very common for researchers and this workshop let me see the future more peacefully.

Taking to heart the lessons I have learned in this workshop, I will complete the writing of my PhD thesis next year and would like in the very near future to publish some of those results.

Delphine Mulard
INALCO, Paris, France

I was privileged to participate in the first EAJS Publication Workshop in Berlin. During the three days of the workshop, I learned a great deal about how to publish an article in an academic journal and how to improve my own writing. This experience would not have been possible without the financial support from the Japan Foundation and the EAJS.

I am a second year PhD student and the topic of my PhD thesis is long-term community reconstruction after the tsunami of 3.11 in Tohoku, Japan. I concentrate mainly on local

understandings of place and community building and my research is a case study of the town Yamamoto, where I conducted my fieldwork of eight months between October 2014 and May 2015. During the fieldwork, I collected qualitative data for my thesis research. This included 66 interviews with local actors in Yamamoto, observation of local activities and events as well as acquisition of locally produced textual material concerning community building after the 3.11. Differing from the monograph PhD thesis concept, my thesis will most probably be a compilation thesis, which consists of three or four articles published in international journals and of introduction, methodology and conclusion chapters. The article draft I submitted to the workshop was the first article I have written for the thesis.

Aiming at finishing this form of thesis, the call for applications for the workshop seemed more than welcome. I am grateful to be accepted and the workshop met all my expectations and even more. The first and last sessions by the senior advisor Stephen Dodd accompanied by other advisors gave practical advice on publication, something that at least my home university does not deal with explicitly or in depth. The format of feedback sessions was well functioning and I learned a great deal not only from the feedback on my own paper, but also from comments made about other participants' papers.

To summarize, I gained much during the three days of the workshop: practical awareness about how to publish, scholarly advice on the content and form of article writing, self-confidence to pursue my path towards the compilation thesis, and also valuable contacts with my fellow workshop participants.

Thank you for the workshop. I truly look forward to seeing the second EAJS Publication Workshop being organized.

Pilvi Posio

University of Turku, Finland

My preference for narrative approaches that aim at providing interpretations of Sino-Japan-U.S. interaction prompted me to shy away from traditional Political Science peer-reviewed journals that demand a minimalistic structure and mandate limited wording. Moreover, I have shied away from publication in major peer-reviewed international journals for fear of getting bogged down in a tiresome editing and submission process that would have compromised the freshness of my research.

Thanks to the substantial feedback provided by senior and junior colleagues at the EAJS Publication Workshop, I was able to learn the "rules of the (publication) game." I was able to learn how best to frame and how to pitch-sell an article to an international journal devoted to the International Relations of Japan and East Asia more in general. Through the skilled guidance of Professor Verena Blechinger-Talcott, I was able to acquire the skills to devise a social science journal article, with a lean "research puzzle" and a pertinent structure that doesn't get bogged down into details. I now consider myself able to bring portions of my PhD

research as contributions to the field of Japanese foreign and security policy-making, to the question of leadership, and the like.

Given the substantial feedback received during the conference, I have also acknowledged the input in one of the articles I have recently submitted for consideration at a major Poli Sci journal. I owe an eventual (fingers crossed) successful publication also to the EAJS and the Japan Foundation. Thank you very much for your kind support!

Giulio Pugliese
Heidelberg University, Germany

The workshop promised to address almost all of the possible difficulties in the publication process, which have actually made me shelve an idea of sending articles to academic journals. In fact, the workshop provided me with a rather unique opportunity to get practically familiar with the journal publication process. Firstly, the workshop introduced the concrete steps of the publication process. It was a valuable experience to discuss each step with experienced and actual editors and also to hear their own experiences. I was very honored to receive an actual review from experienced editors at the workshop site. Every participant's article was reviewed and discussed individually in a similar manner as an actual peer review. On this point, I really appreciate the amount of time and effort spent on each paper for discussion and for review prepared prior to the workshop. It was interesting to recognize that we participants share, more or less, similar problems in writing for the particular purpose of publication. I found that the common structural prematurity for the specific purpose of journal publication was not simply reducible to the fact that different disciplines have different writing styles. I believe that a continuation of the publication workshop will be especially beneficial for the further advancement of Japanese Studies as an interdisciplinary discipline. If I may suggest a possibility of improvement, it will be one point that we did not explicitly learn how to review an article from a reviewer's perspective, though it was observable in the actual review sessions. I believe that it will be helpful for the future participants because it will enable them to see their own or others' articles from the reviewers' eyes. Finally, I would like to show my gratitude to the Japan Foundation regarding their generous financial support, which made my experience in the workshop multi-cultural, inter-disciplinary, and therefore, meaningful.

Kie Sanada
Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany

One of my academic aims while pursuing a PhD in the UK is to publish the results of my research based on my fieldwork in Japan. While my aim is clear, as I have progressed through the PhD it has become evident that the process of publishing is complex, including selecting journals to approach and navigating the review and editing process. I am very grateful to have been able to participate in the EAJS publication workshop together with a stimulating group of junior and senior scholars, and an editor. Substantially, I learnt how we should think about what academic publications are, how to approach the processes of publications and so forth

through the direct experience of other scholars and the written samples of the participants. In parallel to the group sessions, the workshop offered the great opportunity to receive feedback and comments on our own individual paper from an assigned tutor. The tutor system provided a great chance to discuss more individual issues and solutions. Lastly, I would like to express my gratitude for all other participants and senior scholars for their critical comments and feedback in a friendly collaborative atmosphere, and the Japan Foundation, Freie Universität Berlin and EAJS for their generous funding to support this valuable workshop.

Hiroko Umegaki Costantini
PhD candidate, University of Cambridge

I was very fortunate to be selected for participation in the 1st EAJS Publication Workshop in Berlin. It provided me with a great opportunity to receive feedback on my article manuscript and to interact with PhD students and postdocs from different branches of Japanese Studies.

I had already published some articles in edited volumes but never submitted a manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal. The workshop provided me with answers to general questions like: What journal is appropriate for my article? How do I approach the journal? How does the review process work? And: How do I react to the reviewers' comments?

However, the most valuable experience for me was to receive detailed individual feedback on my manuscript by the advisors and the other participants. The comments helped me to rethink my publication project and sharpen my line of argument. I received valuable advice on which journals to approach and was encouraged to aim for publication in a prestigious journal. Throughout, the workshop was characterized by an open and relaxed atmosphere. Participants were not expected to present their own papers since the manuscripts should speak for themselves. Only at the end of the discussions were authors allowed to answer questions and reply to the others' comments. In this way, the peer-review process was simulated. In my opinion, this procedure helped to focus on the texts and to keep the critiques impersonal.

The workshop convinced me that it is important to receive feedback from persons one can trust before submitting an article. For this reason, some participants of the workshop agreed to critically read each other's manuscripts in the future.

All in all, I received invaluable advice and important suggestions on how to revise my manuscript. I am sure that I will profit from this advice not only for the manuscript which was discussed at the workshop but also for future publication projects.

David Weiß
Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, Germany
