

## Reports by the participants of the 4<sup>th</sup> EAJS Publication Workshop

When I concluded my PhD journey some months ago, I realized that I had lots and lots of materials I did not include in my dissertation which could be packaged into shorter articles. However, my publishing experience was very limited, and I did not feel confident enough in my writing to start sending articles to journals. In addition, my PhD project was highly interdisciplinary, and I struggled to get a grasp on how to strike a balance between Japanese studies related content and discipline-specific methodologies and theories to develop texts that could speak to scholars and researchers in the field of Japanese studies. The 4th EAJS Publication Workshop came exactly at the right time.

It was exciting to get the chance to spend two days with so many promising young scholars working on different topics and developing new approaches to answer compelling questions. Reading a variety of papers and listening to the senior advisors' comments provided insights on the publication process as well as on common mistakes and how to avoid them. The relaxed atmosphere and positive approach to asking questions and providing feedback created a safe space in which everyone felt comfortable enough to express their reflections and it made the emergence of creative suggestions possible. The roundtable with journal editors made for an open and sincere conversation which touched on topics we are often too shy to discuss openly in other academic settings.

I am extremely grateful to have been a part of this workshop as it motivated me to work on my manuscript with renewed enthusiasm and provided me with the confidence necessary to present my work to journals. I would like to express my gratitude to the organizers at Freie Universitaet Berlin for their warm welcome and kind guidance throughout the workshop; thank you also to the Japan Foundation for their support of this initiative which is essential for young scholars and researchers. It was a productive and encouraging workshop, and I sincerely hope that many more PhD students will have the chance to experience such a well-organized, heartwarming, kind, and academically motivating event in the future!

*Giulia Baquè*

*Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy / Heidelberg University, Germany*

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Being invited to the EAJS Publication Workshop has been a privilege and a challenge, given the relatively short amount of time for producing an article manuscript. Receiving feedback for my

humble manuscript from experienced academics was a great opportunity to see my own work in a new light and get ideas for expanding and improving on it. Being able to read and hear the feedback for other manuscripts was also useful, giving a glimpse into how one might go about producing and giving peer review.

The schedule of the workshop was especially well thought-out, giving plenty of breaks and ample opportunity to further discuss our manuscripts with professors and peers in a more relaxed manner. The shared dinners were also a simple but much appreciated addition to the formal event, allowing for a cordial exchange of ideas. My personal highlight was the opportunity to hear from the editors of prominent journals. The general introductions and practical advice were invaluable to someone who is just starting out on their academic career.

My only slight point of criticism is that throughout the workshop we neglected to discuss the current broader issues with academic publishing in general. In light of the current lawsuit filed against six major academic publishers in the US, the workshop might have been enriched by a discussion on how the academic publishing ecosystem could be improved upon in the future, to help emerging scholars avoid having to simply integrate into a flawed system.

As a doctoral candidate approaching the end of my program, I have been feeling anxious about my future career as a scholar in an increasingly competitive academic environment. The workshop has successfully unveiled the process of academic publishing, making it less daunting and less intimidating.

*Gunde Dauksyte*  
*Heidelberg University, Germany*

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I am honoured to have participated in the 4th EAJIS Publication Workshop. I feel particularly grateful because I was also chosen as a participant for the EAJIS PhD Workshop in Leuven in 2023.

The workshop fostered a collaborative and collegial environment among around ten participants. The small scale encouraged connections through various subjects like literature, history, sociology, and pedagogy with different methodological approaches—from extended participant observation to textual analysis. The diverse backgrounds of advisors and participants from multiple universities and academic specialisations helped us learn more about each other's respective fields. Interactive, peer-led discussions were enlightening and provided invaluable perspectives to rethink our projects with fresh insights.

To make the most of the workshop, it was important for me to present my project and receive constructive feedback from both peers and experts, which inspired in-depth conversations around my research. Comments, especially those written by Dr. Chris Perkins, were particularly valuable, as they provided guidance I could revisit and reflect upon after the workshop. The supportive atmosphere created by Dr. Sebastian Maslow and others brought with it a feeling of teamwork and encouragement, helping me orientate myself in regards to what I want to do with my career.

Attending the workshop gave me the confidence to pursue academic publishing. The practical advice on preparing manuscripts, choosing journals, and handling the submission process clarified many worries I had and helped me in taking a more strategic approach. Discussions surrounding

my research allowed me to reflect on some of the uncertainties surrounding, but also on the opportunities provided by academia.

I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Verena Blechinger-Talcott, Prof. Dr. Urs Matthias Zachmann, Mr. Lorenz Denninger, and the entire team at Freie Universitaet Berlin for their efforts and hospitality in organising the event. I also extend my sincere gratitude to EAJS, the Japan Foundation, the Toshiba International Foundation, and everyone who helped make this remarkable event possible. The EAJS Publication Workshop was an incredibly rewarding experience that has had a profound impact on my academic journey.

The knowledge gained, relationships formed, and inspiration received are all things I will carry with me in my future endeavours. I eagerly look forward to participating in more EAJS events and staying engaged in this vibrant academic community.

*Shih-cheng Huang*  
*SOAS University of London, United Kingdom*

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Last year, I was selected to participate in the EAJS Doctoral Workshop in Leuven, Belgium. That remarkable academic and personal experience motivated me to apply for this year's Publication Workshop in Berlin, for which I had very high expectations. These expectations were not only met but greatly exceeded. Attending the 4th EAJS Publication Workshop was a remarkably enriching experience for my academic development.

The workshop was excellently organized, with smooth logistical coordination covering everything from the venue and accommodation to the abundant meals provided. The schedule was clear and well-structured, ensuring a balanced and "relaxed" pace that allowed participants to fully engage with the sessions and discussions. The hosting members, particularly Prof. Verena Blechinger-Talcott and Prof. Matthias Zachmann, were active in creating a welcoming and supportive environment. Their efforts, along with the student assistants, fostered a spirit of exchange, making the atmosphere not only collegial but also genuinely friendly and open.

One of the aspects I appreciated most was the limited number of selected young scholars (nine in total), which facilitated the formation of a small, close-knit group. This setting provided a "safe" and more focused environment, allowing each participant to share opinions, comments, and experiences, as well as concerns and doubts. The small group size also ensured that everyone could read the papers in advance and come prepared with comments and questions, enabling meaningful exchanges throughout. The papers presented were diverse and of high quality, offering insights across various fields. This heterogeneity enriched the discussions and provided participants with inspiration for their own research projects. The senior scholars involved were not only knowledgeable and generous with their advice on the assigned papers but also contributed to a supportive and friendly atmosphere.

The journal editors' panel deserves special recognition for significantly enhancing the experience. Listening to presentations from editors of leading journals such as Japan Forum, Contemporary Japan, and the Social Science Japan Journal was enlightening. The panel also allowed for questions and constructive debates, giving participants a deeper understanding of both the opportunities and challenges associated with the publication process.

The format designed by the organizers was highly efficient and ensured that every participant had ample time to present their work and receive comprehensive feedback, a process that extended beyond the sessions to include informal opportunities for further discussion, from hotel breakfasts to dinners and walks to the workshop venue. Overall, I am extremely satisfied with the experience at Freie Universität Berlin. Participating in a workshop organized by the EAJIS once again proved to be a highly valuable opportunity that I would recommend not only to PhD candidates but also to any other scholar aiming to engage with the international publication landscape. I returned to my home university with renewed motivation and a wealth of ideas, suggestions, and advice that will significantly enhance my current and future papers.

*Ludovica Marincioni*  
*Sapienza University of Rome, Italy*

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The structure of this year's EAJIS Publication Workshop was very well-planned, and I benefited greatly from each component—whether it was the advance sharing of drafts, the presentation-comment-discussion panels, or the warm and engaging dinner gatherings. I not only received insightful and scholarly critiques as well as warm encouragement on my manuscript from my discussant, but also learned from the enlightening case studies and constructive advice shared by other peers and mentors.

I gained valuable, first-hand insights and direct guidance from the invited editors on selecting appropriate journals for academic article submissions, a topic on which I previously had very limited knowledge. As a direct beneficiary, I believe the workshop successfully achieved its goal: helping participants accurately position their research within the current academic literature and guiding them in navigating a path toward publication that lays the foundation for their future academic careers in the diverse fields related to Japanese studies. Also, as a student from Heidelberg University, this workshop provided me with an excellent opportunity to explore Freie Universität Berlin and the city of Berlin itself, deepening my understanding and feeding my curiosity about German history.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude once again to the organizing committee for their thoughtful hosting and excellent organization of the entire workshop. Also, I would like to thank the EAJIS and the Japan Foundation for their generous financial support. I sincerely hope this workshop will be organized again, wherever it may take place next time.

*Datong Qin*  
*Heidelberg University, Germany*

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My experience at the 4th EAJIS Publication Workshop was overwhelmingly positive, and I felt it was a very enriching experience, as I had yet to be part of an event that was uniquely tailored to fine-tuning the papers of early career scholars in Japanese Studies.

There were two aspects that stood out to me in particular: First, I felt that the senior advisors were truly committed towards the aims of the workshop, and always delivered extremely relevant comments and personalized feedback. Their dedication and expertise were evident in every session, making the learning process both insightful and enjoyable. Second, having editors from renowned English-language peer-reviewed journals present allowed for direct questioning and true behind-

the-scenes insight. This access to industry professionals provided a rare opportunity to understand the intricacies of the publication process from those who navigate it daily. I feel I have learned a tremendous amount—both as far as my manuscript is concerned, but also about academic publications (and indeed my career) in general. The practical advice and strategies shared have already begun to influence my approach to writing and submitting papers.

I also want to underscore how interesting it was to hear from my peers in Japanese Studies, who highlighted a very broad range of topics related to Japan, many of which I have never had the chance to engage with academically. The diversity of research presented not only broadened my understanding of the field but also inspired new ideas and potential collaborations.

Finally, the organization of the conference was also excellent. The hotel was comfortable, the food was varied and tasty, and there was always coffee and water available. Thank you to the staff for making this possible.

*Maximilien Xavier Rehm*  
*Doshisha University, Japan*

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I am sincerely grateful for the opportunity to participate in the 4th EAJS Publication Workshop. Receiving feedback on my paper from senior scholars and fellow participants was incredibly valuable, offering new perspectives on my research and approach. The unique chance to have my paper reviewed by editors of major Japanese studies journals provided insights into its strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, the detailed introduction to the journals' profiles and the publishing process, including insider information commonly unavailable to general academia, was immensely beneficial.

Discussing and reading the papers of other participants from various backgrounds and academic fields broadened my knowledge and revealed intriguing intersections with my own research. This led to enthusiastic discussions over dinner and the exchange of ideas regarding our publications. Moreover, I believe the networking opportunity is an asset on its own, and this kind of intensive group experience fosters an inspirational and supportive academic environment. This experience is something I would highly recommend to all PhD students and postdocs in the field, and it would be wonderful to see more events like this in the future.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the entire organizing committee. The event was meticulously prepared, the venue was exceptional, and the overall atmosphere was welcoming, informal, yet highly stimulating.

*Zuzana Rozwarka*  
*Masaryk University, Czech Republic*

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It was a pleasure getting to participate in this event. The feedback I gained from the workshop was very insightful, and I learned many new things, such as the importance of accuracy in choosing concepts, compiling references, and selecting journals. It was an exceptional experience to hear talks from the editors of several journals, and to find out which points they focus on. As publishing my work felt like an uncertain journey for me, their talks shed light on my path and provided me with a clear list of things to focus on. This allowed me to gain new direction for revising my

manuscript and to also now feel more confident in revising and resubmitting my work.

I was also grateful to meet all the participants in this workshop, which was a completely different experience from working alone. I was very interested in learning about Japan through fields I have never explored before based on other's work. I find that Japan has a rich in culture, and there are various aspects we can share our experiences with and learn from together.

The members I met through this event were all passionate about their research, which allowed for lively discussions. I hope this opportunity leads us to future collaborations and contributions to Japanese studies. I am very thankful to the organizers for providing us with such a wonderful opportunity and I hope that future early-career researchers will get the same opportunity.

*Sayaka Saito*  
*University College London, United Kingdom*

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The Workshop was an immensely rewarding experience for me. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to connect with peers and follow students from across Europe working in Japanese Studies and to build deep bonds with them during this three-day event. I have gained insights into the forefront of our research field across diverse disciplines. The Workshop was especially valuable for exchanging our perspectives, difficulties, tips, common challenges, and also for discovering opportunities for collaboration within our field.

One of the highlights for me was the chance to engage closely with mentors and advisors, including the professors at Freie Universitaet Berlin, from whom I have received so many tips regarding study resources and activities in Germany. These interactions offered both immediate and thoughtful feedback on my current writings, as well as practical advice for my future career development in academia. This kind of mentorship is invaluable, and I am grateful to have received guidance that has greatly enhanced my research approach and strengthened my confidence in pursuing further scholarly work.

Another especially valuable aspect was the workshop's direct engagement with journal editors and experienced scholars. Their insights and experience-sharing on the publishing process were highly informative and practical. Additionally, they covered not only industrial standards and detailed procedures, but also specific technical skills and know-how that are rarely emphasized in doctoral programs at our home universities. Learning directly from these experts has provided me firsthand exposure to the system and equipped me with necessary knowledge and tools that are of great value to my own publishing plans and future career development as a scholar-to-be.

The workshop provided an enriching experience that helped me get a clearer understanding of academic production and my own career development plans. I am grateful for the support of the Toshiba International Foundation and Japan Foundation, whose contributions made this unique learning experience possible.

*Hui Wang*  
*University of Heidelberg, Germany*

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