



On.Line.Dates // Episode 04 // Full English Transcript **Broadening Horizons and Bringing Europe Closer Together: The First EUTOPIA Summer School in Dresden**

Benjamin Lehmann: Welcome to the Online Dates, the interview podcast of the Digital Teaching GSW team. Welcome and good morning to our Online Dates. Today we have two nice guests with us for the interview, Wiebke Voigt and Dr. Johannes Schütz. They are research assistants at the Institute of History at TU Dresden and have organized the first Utopia Summer School at TU Dresden in summer 2023 together with their colleagues from Warwick.

TU Dresden has been a member of the European University EUTOPIA since September 2021, making it one of ten universities in the association. The Summer School was, for the Institute of History and the Faculty of Philosophy at TUD, the beginning of the collaboration in the EUTOPIA network and also the first of its kind at TU Dresden. The summer school on the history of violence is aimed at students from the EUTOPIA network, who gratefully accepted the offer.

26 mainly undergraduate students from seven European universities - Dresden, Warwick, Brussels, Paris, Lisbon, Cruz and Venice - spent a week in Dresden and took part in seminars and excursions dealing with violence from various thematic perspectives, for example gender-specific violence, colonial violence, etc., across all eras. So now I would like to welcome you to our interview. My name is Benjamin Lehmann and yes, I already have the first question for you. So, whoever wants to answer can answer first. Why did you decide to start the joint work at the European University with this type of event, this Summer School?

Wiebke Voigt: Yes, first of all, hello to the audience, also from me. Yes, the idea for the summer school actually arose from the fact that there has been cooperation between the University of Warwick and TU Dresden for a number of years, particularly in the Institutes of History. And again, in particular within the Chair of Early Modern History. Gerd Schwerhoff and Beat Kümin in particular have already held a number of joint workshops etc.

And yes, we had had the idea for some time that we would like to organize a joint event. And now that both universities are members of this EUTOPIA network, we simply seized this opportunity and thought it would be a great platform, a great banner under which we could hold a joint event. And we've never done a summer school in this form before.

As I said, there were workshops and some doctoral students at Warwick also worked on part of their dissertation. We have already done that, but something like the summer school was actually a pilot project and we deliberately wanted to address undergraduate students in the Bachelor's program. We also had some Master's students taking part, but up till this point, it had been more at the level of staff and doctoral students, so we thought it would be a great opportunity to make the whole thing a bit bigger and involve other European universities as well.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: Yes, there was also the EUTOPIA program. This will only really be fully developed over the next few years. It only started in the last few years and when the call came for ideas from the institutes as to how this EUTOPIA framework program could be designed, we felt spoken to, because the idea was that so-called learning communities could be formed

at the beginning of the term and we thought, okay, we can also create such a learning unit with this summer school, so that a Europe-wide meeting of students is possible.

They can then also meet teachers from these various EUTOPIA universities, work together on historical subjects, discuss the current state of research and work on their own projects. It was actually very appealing to us that there was this call from the EUTOPIA Universities. And then, due to our long collaboration, we came together in a preliminary meeting, discussed the possibilities and then came up with this summer school, because it's a really nice way to get started, where you can meet in a condensed form within a week,

Intensively work on something and hopefully this will lead to a longer collaboration, which may then develop over a semester or in line with other forms of university timetables.

Benjamin Lehmann: So, in general, it's simply networking in the hope of working together internationally in the longer term and also gaining access to inter-European university connections as a student, so to speak.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: Exactly. So, the classic way to study within Europe is the Erasmus program. It's relatively time-consuming and requires a lot of preparation. And at the Summer School you can compress that into a week, so to speak. Of course, it can't replace that, but it is nevertheless a nice addition due to the fact that you can bring students and lecturers together for a short period of time across Europe. And they can then work on a specific theme.

Wiebke Voigt: Yes, it was also very valuable for British students in particular, because Brexit led to the withdrawal from the Erasmus plus program. And so on. And it's no longer so easy for students there to spend a semester or two in another European country, so this summer school may not have been a complete replacement, but it was a nice alternative.

And overall, our aim was not to imitate a degree course, but to actually offer an experience outside of the regular course of study. That's why we ran the Research Summer School, to be closer to the actual research. To give students an insight into how academic work is carried out, even outside of their studies. We also went to the city archives, for example, where we worked on sources and so on.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: Exactly, and I'd like to add to that that summer schools, workshops, conferences are more or less part of everyday research life for most people working at universities. But for students, we thought that there was actually not enough of that. And then this summer school should also be an opportunity for them to get to know this space, this summer school research space.

For undergraduates because they often don't have these opportunities. And so, they were able to explore their feelings, so to speak. To what extent this different form of meeting, which is common in research networks, also appeals to you, so that you can perhaps think about what to do after graduation, whether you want to go into research.

Benjamin Lehmann: Okay, so getting the feel for whether working at a university is also something for me, because after doing a bit of research most people go into the private sector after all. So, this is more or less the alternative to a professional internship, if you want to, so to speak. So, you can understand it that way, a bit, well, not quite, but kind of.

Wiebke Voigt: It at least gives you an insight, I would say. And the nice thing about the summer school was that we had actually organized it in such a way that all levels of the academic career were actually represented somewhere among the lecturers. So yes, there were PhD students, including myself, and then there was Imogen Knox from Warwick. We also had postdocs, like Johannes, and of course professors.

And with Felipe Mello, we also had one of our Dresden students with us who works as an SHK (student research assistant), which perhaps does not exist in this form in all other European

countries. And yes, there was of course the opportunity for the students to exchange ideas with people who are already working in science at different stages of their careers in order to gather impressions, quite simply.

Benjamin Lehmann: We've already talked here about the program and so on. And of course, you can also read a lot about the EUTOPIA Summer School afterwards, what exactly happened. But it's still different to being there. Perhaps you could give us a brief overview of the program and what was actually done. Or what were perhaps your personal highlights?

Wiebke Voigt: Yes, the whole thing was roughly divided into modules, so there was violence, violence is really a very, very big topic. The nice thing about it is that it can be very, very fruitful across epochs and also across disciplines. So of course, the summer school was mainly aimed at history students, but we also had students from other disciplines.

And that works wonderfully with the theme of violence, because you can really work on a wide range of different topics, different connections between disciplines and even eras. And of course, we couldn't cover the whole spectrum in one week. But we still tried to cover as many perspectives and key topics as possible in the modules, to bring in as much diversity as possible and to reflect as broad a picture of this field of research as possible.

So, what we have. We started off with very general, above all theoretical and methodological questions. So, what is violence anyway and then we involved the students directly in the discussion, so that, well, we made it less frontal, at least at the beginning, so that, yes, violence was discussed in the first place.

And what are the methodological approaches in historical studies? Then, for example, there was a module on the long-term development of violence. Is it even possible to historicize it? And then, of course, there were many different thematic approaches and perspectives. Dagmar Ellerbrock and I looked at the whole thing from a gender-historical perspective, for example. What was also very, very exciting in this respect was that we had this mixture of the contemporary historical view and the early modern view.

For example, I discussed an early modern source with the students, and at the beginning I didn't know exactly how they would cope with it, because it's not something that everyone necessarily comes into contact with when studying history. Unless you are explicitly interested in this period. Depending on how the degree courses are structured in individual countries. And that worked quite well, even though they were confronted with this source relatively spontaneously.

They were also very general, very open to discussion. And then, of course, we also had other early modern topics, for example Drink Related Violence, a module that Beat Kümin from Warwick did, but also the more modern view of the history of violence, colonial violence, ethnically motivated violence and pogroms and what I also offer a bit in Dresden. So, violence narratives with regard to political discourse. And as Johannes developed a very exciting module in the city archive on that subject, perhaps he can tell us a bit more about it.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: Yes, I would like to do that, to supplement and perhaps expand it. We didn't just sit in the classroom and discuss the material; we also spent a lot of time out and about with the students. We went to the Military History Museum and looked at the museumization of acts of violence and how discourses are actually translated into an exhibition.

We looked at how this can be read from the city's history and topography and went on a tour of the city with the students, which Alex Kästner in particular prepared and led. Then we had a movie night and talked about the cinematic staging of violence, because that's also an

important topic. For most of them, that's likely what violence is, or they are most likely to be introduced to violence through films and therefore also confronted with violence.

And then the question was, how is this staged and how can it be interpreted? How can it perhaps be made theoretically fruitful for our own research? And then we went to the city archive. That was the section I had organized, and there we talked about how violence is politically instrumentalized. And then we used the example of February 13th in Dresden to show how this whole debate about the death toll, the uniqueness of the event, the senselessness of whether it was a war crime, how all these discourses, which have always been associated with this date since 1945, worked from different perspectives.

So that was also the advantage of this group, that we were able to discuss it internationally, really internationally. The students from Warwick in particular, from Great Britain, were very interested in comparing their narrative, which they are very familiar with from museums, research and school, with ours and it was really interesting to see how there was such a change, because they were able to move away from this political instrumentalization, which was also and this is another twist, especially from David Irving, a British writer who had great success with a book about the fall of Dresden, but who conveyed very problematic narratives and also problematic figures in it and was just as successful with it in Great Britain as in Germany or in other European countries, where this international right-wing movement also uses the whole thing as an attack against liberal democracy, against a certain political regime or against the narrative or interpretation of the Holocaust. So, it's interesting how you can deduce so much about different narratives from this one example, because it's somehow a hub where a lot of things come together.

Wiebke Voigt: Exactly. And so, all in all, we have tried to make sure that we tie in with these current discourses and, as I said, give them as broad an insight as possible without being too superficial. And also, to make sure that, as Johannes just said, we don't just sit in the seminar room, but also have a good mix of these sessions and excursions.

Yes, with the city tour, the archive and the Military History Museum, and of course free time, the students have time to explore the city for themselves. I think both the students and the lecturers really enjoyed the fact that we were able to socialize, especially in the evenings. And since you asked about the highlights, I find it really difficult to look back and pick out a highlight for myself.

So, I think you could say that it was really the highlight, the experience as such. Especially this, yes, this shared Dresden Summer School spirit, so to speak. The one that somehow captured both the students and the teachers. Because there really was, it was very non-hierarchical, although, of course, we were of course teaching professionally as well, and so on, but it was still very informal even to a certain extent. And it was simply a pleasant exchange and also a nice change from the regular academic routine and everyday life at the university. So, I would say that this whole experience was my personal highlight.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: Yes, we came together on Sunday evening. That was the kick-off. The students had all just arrived. And then we met for dinner together in a restaurant in Dresden and had a really warm welcome. So, it wasn't just a warm day, it was also a warm welcome for the students.

That's how I perceived it, because they were very open, had a lot to talk about, told us a lot about themselves, communicated their expectations, and then on Monday we started shaping the content and the students were involved right from the start. So, they were able to make their own contributions every day. In the form of a blog post for example, or Twitter posts.

At the end, you also wrote your own short essays, which not only reflected your experience, but also always dealt with a topic of your own. As a result, it worked really impressively as a

group right from the start. The students were also really very much together as a group. I had the impression that there was no fragmentation, that there were no small groups that broke away and somehow separated themselves from the others, but that they had a lot of communication with each other. It really was the case that everyone talked with everyone. That's how it seemed. And that's not meant to be idealizing, but it really was like this.

Wiebke Voigt: So there really wasn't any group formation in that sense. And we were actually a bit worried beforehand because there were so many applications from Warwick, more from there than from the other six universities. Yes, of course we accepted many of them because they were good applications. But we still thought a bit, okay, these are the native speakers and they are much more strongly represented in terms of numbers than the students from the other universities.

And whether a bit of a fragmentation develops, simply because of perhaps language deficits or something, but that didn't happen at all. And it worked wonderfully right from the start and I think everyone enjoyed this, yes, this international exchange. So, you noticed that, of course, the research cultures perhaps and the university structures in the different countries, where the students came from, they may differ, but that didn't affect the operation in any way, but rather enriched it.

And we were actually all on the same wavelength right from the start and it showed. There was also a panel where the students had to lead a discussion themselves, completely without the involvement of the lecturers. And that was also wonderful. We didn't have to lead or intervene in any way, shape or form. And it was really almost a self-runner.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: Yes, and they were involved in the discussion right from the start. They went in with their own questions, their own theses, even with punctuated statements. That was really impressive to see. Perhaps they were already there because they had already attended one or two courses with one or two lecturers. So, they already had connections to the lecturers who were there, at least the students from Warwick and Dresden.

But they also already had an idea of what exactly they wanted to discuss during the week. And that continued throughout the week. And somehow it felt like there was never a break. So even in the evening over a beer in the beer garden, we continued to discuss and debate various points. And I wasn't always there until one o'clock in the evening. But I've heard that it often went on into the night.

Wiebke Voigt: I was there. It actually reminded me of my own experience abroad when I was still studying for my Bachelor's degree and yes, it was a very nice experience.

Benjamin Lehmann: It certainly sounds like that, it also sounds like a good selection of participants, but I would certainly say that it was also due to good organization. You've already said that there was a bit of networking beforehand and how you put yourselves together and that kind of thing, with such an organization in our extensive program with students from seven different countries, that certainly wasn't easy and it was also the first time for you that you had organized such a large event and I wonder, could the experiences of your British colleagues perhaps have helped?

Were you able to benefit a little from this or was it more like learning by doing? Or was it completely new territory? And what was the biggest challenge in organizing it?

Dr. Johannes Schütz: So, since we organized it in Dresden and Dresden was the city in which the event would be held, it was the Dresden team's main responsibility. And it wasn't just the two of us, but also Tim Buchen, Gerd Schwerhoff, Alexander Kästner, Dagmar Ellerbrock, I think I've got them all now.

Wiebke Voigt: Yes, I hope nobody feels forgotten.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: Exactly. But we then spread it over these shoulders and everyone contributed to it. And a task was distributed to all of them, which meant that we couldn't really profit from the Warwick colleagues this time. But I hope that next time, which is the plan, that there will be another summer school next year, which will then take place in Warwick, that they will perhaps also benefit from our experiences, but also make their own.

And yes, it takes a lot. It starts with the acquisition of funds. You first have to get the money to be able to implement this program. You have to find overnight accommodation, organize catering, not just in the canteen, but also on different evenings and somehow find a location. We had to write to all the cooperation partners, i.e., the museum archive, and book the rooms or the guided tours.

What have I forgotten? But it is definitely an organizationally complex process. But because we were a relatively large team and everyone did their bit, it was manageable alongside the ongoing business.

Wiebke Voigt: Yes, I would say that one of the biggest problems was simply that we could only involve our Warwick colleagues online, which meant that we were always dependent on these Zoom appointments, which of course not everyone could attend. So not everyone always had the time and there were minutes taken every time, but of course that couldn't really replace participation and that's why in the end it was often the case, as Johannes just mentioned, that we in Dresden had to plan a lot internally in advance and I think that distance alone was a challenge.

But at least towards the end, when things got really dicey, it worked surprisingly well with a few organizational points, for example in terms of accommodation for students. But for next time, we definitely know that it's okay, a lot of things simply have to be coordinated internally. We can't wait for these Zoom dates every time.

And it was even just the scheduling, i.e., ensuring that at least the majority of employees had time. That was definitely a bit of a challenge. But it was still fun to organize something like this. It was just something different. Although, of course, to a certain extent, planning courses, organizing conferences and workshops is also part of day-to-day academic business. Yes, but this summer school was a bit of a novelty.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: Yes, and that's a bit due to the nature of things. So, if you're doing a summer school on site, external colleagues can't help organize so much because they don't know the contacts at the university, they don't know the locations, they don't know where they can book student accommodation. They also don't know which caterers to ask or which restaurants to go to.

They were all involved. We also suggested a lot of things and put them up for discussion. But it came out of the situation that we had to do this part of the organization on site. And the Warwick colleagues were very present during the moderation. They moderated a lot of modules from start to finish and really took over a lot of the discussion time.

They were then incredibly present at the summer school, incredibly flexible when it came to the various discussion dynamics. They were really completely focused on the matter. So, it was nice to see how we were sometimes able to take a step back during a module so that we could clarify something else in the background that was on the agenda. And then they carried it really well.

Wiebke Voigt: They were really incredibly committed to making sure that this was the case and, fortunately, we were able to overcome the small technical planning and organizational problems that we might have had behind the scenes. We consistently received feedback from the students that everything was so well organized and that they were so happy to hear, and

that this isn't necessarily something they used to, based on their experiences of other summer schools, they're not used to everything running so smoothly.

And yes, it was a great relief to hear that, at least at the student level, the times that we struggled somewhat, were not noticeable. But on the whole, the organization worked very well, because yes, communication is simply important and I think that was clear to all of us.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: And yes, and in the end, the effect on the students was as if everything was rosy. That's also nice to see, so to speak. And then it's also okay that we might have had a day or two of real stress in the background because something was happening, but in the end, everything worked out really well. We didn't have to cancel anything on the program.

We didn't have to somehow cut anything in the social organization or the bringing together, but in the end, we were able to implement everything as we had planned it from the beginning.

Benjamin Lehmann: Yes, it sounds from the feedback that it was really well received. I'm really pleased about that. But you also said, for example, that the colleagues from Warwick took on other parts, which took the pressure off you again. The partnership between the TUD and the University of Warwick is older than EUTOPIA, for example.

Of course, it's also exciting to see what kind of, I don't know, perhaps emotional or academic relationships there are that may have had a positive impact. On the other hand, I would also be interested in the digital age. You say, of course, that communication is the most important thing. What could perhaps have made this previous communication easier for you? So, you mentioned Zoom, what tools do you use if you want to communicate all the way to Warwick or somewhere else?

What else might you have thought afterwards? What else might you have done? Use "padlets" or something along those lines?

Dr. Johannes Schütz: We also used more than Zoom. We had a shared data folder where we stored our various documents and where everyone always had access to the current planning status. And we also used Opal extensively for the summer school itself. All students had a guest login so that they could access Opal and have a kind of platform where we not only stored texts for the students to read, but where we could also post discussions.

So, there was a forum where it was possible to ask questions, organizationally, but also in terms of content and then exchange ideas, but also to pass on a little more information. We also used Padlets at the beginning, but somehow, we moved away from it a bit because we had the feeling that it would be easier to plan it in a small group in such a way that it would be easier to put a finished discussion proposal in a shared data folder, if I remember correctly.

Wiebke Voigt: Yes, I think there were at least a few problems with Opal, but Alex Kästner managed everything really well. So, we, yes, we did, I'm just thinking about what else we used.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: Perhaps there is a place where this could be brought together. So maybe that's what makes digitality a bit problematic. You have different platforms and different access points, and with a large team, I think it's sometimes difficult to keep track of where things are happening. And if you had a platform where you could do the video conference, but where you could access the data at the same time, where you could perhaps also write texts together, that would make it much easier.

I think that was the biggest challenge with digital communication, that we ended up using different platforms and it wasn't always clear where things were happening. I also got confused sometimes. And when it came to the actual organization and we weren't yet sure whether we would opt for Opal, there were also different platforms under discussion, where

there were different experiences and everyone had somehow already had experience with different platforms.

But somehow, we couldn't really agree on one. So, it was kind of clear to us that we would do it with Opal on site first, because as colleagues from Dresden, we know our way around it quite well and can instruct the others relatively well. But yes, it's still going to be a bit like that and we might have to create our own tool where we can bring communication together so that we don't lose track of things.

Wiebke Voigt: Yes, one for the future in particular. I think such a large joint platform would be helpful. And we had it a bit split into two parts. All the materials for the students were mainly on Opal and we always exchanged our materials in the cloud. Everything was uploaded there and if you didn't immediately know what the current status was, that was always difficult.

Of course, emails were sent all around. With an update on what has been uploaded, etc., but I'd say that things can easily get lost. So maybe one of those big ones where you know, okay, everything that has to do with the summer school can be found there.

Benjamin Lehmann: Yes, in the end it is only an organization via the EUTOPIA itself, of course the question is, now you have to use a system from Warwick or Dresden. Is that also an option? The association certainly has the advantage that you can order, buy and develop a tool via EUTOPIA or is it really more like that? EUTOPIA is the partnership and all other things go through the universities, or how is that normally?

Dr. Johannes Schütz: I don't think there is a "normal way" yet, because it's only just beginning and there are no direct guidelines yet, relating to this is how a EUTOPIA event should be run, etc., but the call has been more of a bottom-up initiative, i.e., proposals can come from the universities as to how this Europe-wide campus can be designed.

And since everything is still open and not so much framework has been created yet, no infrastructural things have been created for this at all, it was more of an impulse. And then it came from the universities and there really weren't any tools yet. I don't know whether that might happen at some point when it's more permanent. So, if there really is a fixed EUTOPIA event form.

Benjamin Lehmann: This is the ideal segue to my next question: How do you imagine EUTOPIA in ten years' time? What are your wishes for the project?

Wiebke Voigt: Yes, we have already mentioned that we definitely want to continue at least the summer school. Within the EUTOPIA framework and also want to involve other universities in the long term, not only at student level, but also at teacher level. So, the current plan is to try to hold the next summer school in Warwick, as I just mentioned.

In October, an Early Modern delegation consisting of Gerd Schwerhoff, Alex Kästner and myself traveled to Warwick to do another recap and talk about it again. Yes, how the Summer School went, what we could do better and with regard to the future and what the further planning should look like and then we also spoke to those responsible for EUTOPIA on site in Warwick, who were all very interested and showed great interest and were also very positive about the project.

But whether we will actually have the financial means to realize this in Warwick in the summer, time will tell, it's already getting close. So, the year is drawing to a close, time is also running out. It's still questionable. We don't know whether we'll be able to realize it next year. Another idea, however, was that in order to involve colleagues from other universities even more, we could organize something like a workshop, a EUTOPIA workshop at staff level, in order to get to know each other and try to make the planning or participation in this summer school appealing to them, so that they might also get to know each other.

We want to be more involved in the organization in the future and that we don't always have the whole thing take place in Warwick and Dresden, but also in Lisbon, for example, where there are already good connections. Or in Cluj in Romania. That's all been discussed a bit, because there are already contacts there, as well as in Venice. But it's all still in its infancy at the moment.

So, we're only just starting to look at how we can plan this in the future and, as I said, whether there will be a summer school in Warwick next year. It hasn't been decided yet, but we definitely don't want to let it come to an end and then pick it up again the year after next at the latest. Whether that will be in Dresden or Warwick or somewhere else, we'll have to see.

But that's at least for them. For the EUTOPIA Summer School, these are the ideas for the future that we currently have. I don't know. With regard to EUTOPIA in general, a certain degree of continuity would of course also be desirable, so that there are also other projects.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: But if you ask how we envisage this in ten years' time, or if I can speak for myself, it is already the case that all universities will support the rotation of such events, that you really have the opportunity to work together with colleagues from these different partner universities, and then probably also to hold this summer school on site on a rotating basis.

So as a format, I think it works well because you can best organize this dense atmosphere that we had in Dresden this year, these really intensive discussions. When there is also social interaction, when there is something that frames the whole thing. And you can only achieve that if you do it locally. I believe that EUTOPIA works best when you create infrastructures that also facilitate exchange through travel.

So if you were to do it all digitally, then a lot would be lost, because then we can actually meet via Zoom, we can have various digital discussions, but I don't think this intensity is created, because it simply requires this personal exchange and also that you sit together throughout the day, have the opportunity to eat something together in the evening, have a drink somewhere, talk a little more freely, more loosely in small talk - all of this is part of creating such a dense working atmosphere.

And it would be nice if, in ten years' time, it could somehow be taken for granted that you could go there one year, then there the next, and always put together a cycle of events like this with other students and other lecturers.

Wiebke Voigt: Yes, I think we've really noticed again now, especially after the pandemic, how important such face-to-face events are. And we had a module that was held digitally online by Jonathan Davies from Warwick because he couldn't be there. And you could tell from the feedback from the students that, although they found the topic exciting, it made a clear difference compared to the modules that took place in person.

And yes, as Johannes has just said, the personal informal exchange is also important. Whether that's on an excursion or in the evening in a beer garden, there's no substitute for that. And then, of course, it would be nice to be able to rotate and visit different European cities again and again.

And yes, let's not kid ourselves, it's also natural. Teaching is the focus of something like this. But it's also always a personally enriching experience and you always have at least a certain amount of free time. And I think for many people it's a great opportunity to discover and experience other cities.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: And with this Europe really does move closer together. That's how you create a European atmosphere, so that it's a matter of course to visit such and such a place, to exchange ideas with one another and then to live there for an intensive week. That's how

something like, and that's what this EUTOPIA idea stands for, a Europe-wide campus is created.

Benjamin Lehmann: Okay, thank you very much for the answer. And now we have a lot. We've already talked a lot about outcomes, benefits for different status groups and things like that. You've already mentioned the personal connection. And of course, the focus is on academic teaching, on academic work, but that's what inspires academic work, this pleasant atmosphere.

It's not just about the dry stuff, but it spices up, so to speak, what we actually consider to be important enormously. Perhaps as a final question to summarize, what would you say for students as well as for lecturers or doctoral students and all status groups involved? What would you say is the reason to go to the Summer School?

What is the outcome for me? Perhaps scientifically on the one hand, we've already talked a lot about it personally, but perhaps also that. So new cities, getting to know new people. How big is the exchange of information, for example? Was it perhaps professors saying "Oh, I'm going to Warwick, the guest lecturer tour or something like that" and for students anyway it is beneficial? Yes.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: I think I could sum it up in one term and it covers everything. It's a broadening of horizons, and that applies to all the levels you mentioned. So, it means that you get to know new research contexts, new and international issues, how certain topics are dealt with, methods, approaches, everything that is on the academic side, but also on the social side, that you get to know other social contexts, other cultural rules, new places, all of that is there quasi together.

So, it's a huge opportunity to experience something within a dense period of time that you would otherwise often have to gather together, which you can then perhaps also experience, but then rather individually and separately. And so, you can bring it all together.

Wiebke Voigt: Yes, I would agree with that one hundred percent. This broadening of horizons and perspectives is, I think, the greatest benefit for all sides and also the fact that you have an experience like this in a relatively relaxed and informal setting, where something like a sense of community quickly develops. So, if you start studying somewhere else straight away, you might feel a bit alone at first and I think the summer school is a great opportunity for students. It's easy to test something like this on a smaller, protected scale. And yes.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: And if I may add, and this just occurred to me, this is of course also a broadening of horizons for the teachers. Because the questions are completely different. The students' backgrounds are completely different. The perspectives on the material we worked on with them were completely different. And I, for example, also benefited a lot from this because I looked at the sources we read together in a completely different way.

And that also broadened my horizons because I was able to see other things or develop other questions. So, it really is a mutual benefit.

Wiebke Voigt: Yes, definitely. It's also simply a change from the regular teaching routine for the lecturers. Simply because you have a group of students who, in this case, have really traveled all the way to Dresden. Some of them have come from far away, some of them have made strenuous journeys, taken long train journeys etcetera. And of course, the mindset is completely different.

And I also believe that it is not yet common practice at our institute to teach in English. It does happen from time to time, Dagmar Ellerbrock and Alex Kästner offer something from time to time, but it hasn't yet become so established and I think that's a good opportunity for us to get

out of our comfort zone and simply, yes, ask the question, “how do I conceptualize it in English”, especially in the humanities.

That’s it, for sure, terms are incredibly important, so you wonder “how can one express this adequately?” And that is a challenge, but also definitely an enrichment.

Benjamin Lehmann: All right, then thank you very much for the conversation. I’m very curious to see what we’ll hear next from the next Summer School and how it all develops. And of course, I wish you all the best for the future and that it continues to be so exciting and that you can be part of it.

Dr. Johannes Schütz: Thank you very much. Thank you for allowing us to report on it here too.

Wiebke Voigt: Yes, thank you very much. It was a lot of fun.

Benjamin Lehmann: This was our latest episode of Online Dates. This time on the topic of EUTOPIA Summer School. We are excited to see what new developments there will be in the future, and look forward to hearing from you again next time. Until then, see you soon.