



Alumni Interview

... **Please introduce yourself in a few sentences and tell us what your thesis topic was.**

My name is Eduardo Fernández Guerrero: I am a classical philologist by training but an early modernist by trade, working between book history, cultural and intellectual history, and religious studies. My thesis looks at prophetic discourse in the early modern period, its circulation and censorship, and it questions how alternative religious, political and intellectual orders were articulated by means of prophetic or revealed authority.

... **What inspired you to choose your research topic?**

As an undergraduate I took an elective course on renaissance art history: this was not my topic – nor my period, but I was encouraged by friends and my own interest in Italy. The professor for this course had an interest in the church of San Pietro in Montorio, the church where a famous prophetic text known as Apocalypsis Nova was said to have been discovered and read for the first time. Through that course, further work with said professor, and some less fortunate serendipities I ended up making that text the case-study for my dissertation.

... **Was the IEG your first choice or did you consider other institutes as well? Why did you choose the IEG?**

The IEG was a first and natural choice for a place to finish writing one's thesis: furthermore, there are no other institutions in Europe that I know of that offer dissertation completion grants. My colleagues who had been at the IEG played a crucial role in my decision to apply: they spoke wonders of the collegial atmosphere, and the space to work and think Mainz provided them.

... **What was your biggest fear before starting the fellowship and how did it play out?**

I did not have an explicit fear: perhaps we all worry about settling in, or about not advancing as fast as one would wish: ultimately, neither of these was an issue.

... **What did a typical day at the IEG look like for you?**

In no particular order, days would definitely include walking by the river, often after finishing writing a given section, or just before starting one. Small errands and shopping were also a pleasure, given how centrally located the institute is. Then, depending on one's preference, meals could easily turn into long conversations around the table or a quick bite in the market.



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Do you have any recommendations for places that one should visit in Mainz?

Recommendations are hard to give without further context, but places that I am particularly fond of were the Ali Baba Kebap House by Saint Stephan's church, or Kleines Andechs for a late-night drink.

Did you ever take part in any IEG events or activities that you really enjoyed and why?

Having been at the institute twice, as a doctoral student and as a postdoctoral researcher, I have had a chance to see the institute from several perspectives. And while the weekly colloquium was always stimulating and engaging, I particularly enjoyed the structure given to the meetings of my "Arbeitsbereich", which alternated discussions of historiographic classics, new books, or early drafts of articles / proposals by internal members.

What kind of collaboration or friendship from the IEG do you value the most today?

The mentorship I have received ever since from prof. Stanislaw Paulau has been truly transformative both for the completion of my dissertation and for my current new project, but the support from the director prof. Reinhardt on thinking through and preparing the applications was also key. On a separate level, however, the support, camaraderie and friendships with fellow postdoctoral and doctoral fellows were akin at times to that of a second family and I truly treasure them.

Where did your path take you after the IEG?

After my time at the IEG, I was fortunate to receive a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Warburg Institute in London, where I am now working on the collaboration of Ethiopian and European scholars in the sixteenth century, a topic stemming from my collaboration with prof. Paulau and an application partly prepared during my time at IEG as a postdoctoral fellow.

What advice would you give to your former self at the beginning of your time at the IEG?

To my younger self I would only advise to visit Frankfurt and its museums sooner, and to go more often to the beautiful Martinus Bibliothek.