

I spent two weeks at the Fondation Hardt from the 9th to the 21st of May, and you will not be surprised to learn that I found it a rewarding visit in every respect. I am extremely grateful to the Fondation for a wonderful stay, and to the Hellenic Society for funding that stay.

The working environment is utopian: the house and gardens are beautiful, the library had everything I needed in an astonishingly small compass, and the domestic arrangements were flawless. The result was that I was not only able to get a lot of work done, but to work faster too: I spent the two weeks revising a particularly technical chapter of my thesis, work that could easily have taken twice as long back in Oxford.

Also promised was the chance to make international contacts, and that was certainly a valuable part of the experience. I learnt about work I needed to read, scholars I needed to meet, methodologies I should explore, as well as a range of more and less serious tidbits about finding a job, getting published, and the general academic culture of different countries. But equally welcome and indeed morale-boosting for a third-year doctoral student was spending two weeks working alongside other scholars wrestling with similar problems. Our happy group of nine exchanged contact details at the end of our time, and have stayed in touch since.

William Guast

