

JSPS Report Professor Peter Kitson: Cross Cultural Negotiations between Britain, Japan and Asia in the Romantic Period, 1780-1830.

I arrived in Japan on Monday 20th of June to take up my JSPS Invitation Fellowship hosted by the University of Tokyo. The Fellowship enables me to work with Professor Stephen Clark of the Department of English at the University of Tokyo on our project relating to cross cultural encounters between Britain and Japan, China and other Asian countries from the eighteenth century onward. This collaboration will result in a jointly edited collection of essays from scholars working in this field including a co-authored essay relating to race and ethnicity in travel writing. During my stay I met with Professor Masashi Suzuki of the *Japanese Association of English Romanticism* and we discussed a series of proposals for enhancing future collaboration between the Japanese Association and the British Association for Romantic Studies, including the possibilities of a jointly organized conference to take place in Japan, possibly in 2014. The proposal resulting from the research collaboration between Professor Clark and myself is now currently being considered for publication by the annual publication *Essays and Studies*, published by the English Association and D.S. Brewer (Oxford). After arriving at Tokyo I engaged in a substantial series of lectures, discussions and talks with colleagues in Japan working in the field of British Romantic period writing. In Tokyo, I gave presentations at the University of Tokyo (23rd June), the Institute for American Studies, Sophia University (24th June), and Gakushin University (27th June). Subsequently, I travelled to Hiroshima University for discussions with Professor David Vallins (30th June) before visiting Nagasaki to investigate the area of Dejima. This island, constructed in 1634, remained as the single place of direct trade and exchange between Japan and the outside world during the Edo period. Originally built to house Portuguese traders, it was used by the Chinese and Dutch as a trading post from 1641 until 1853. In particular, the work of the Swede, Carl Peter Thunberg, who stayed at Dejima between 1775 and 1776 and who penned one of the very few contemporary accounts to Japan to be written in the period, is important to our research project. Thunberg, working as a natural historian for the Dutch East India Company, introduced European medical and scientific learning into Japan as well as transmitting valuable knowledge of Japan back to Europe in his volume *Travels in Europe, Africa and Asia* (London, 1795). Thunberg visited Edo (Tokyo) and esteemed highly Japanese life and customs and is an important writer for our research project. I then travelled to Hiroshima for discussions with Professor David Vallins, before arriving at Kyoto for five days. In the Kyoto area, I gave lectures and presentations of British Romantic subjects at Kwansai Gakuin University (6th July) and Nara Women's University (7th July). I also gave a lecture at Doshisha University, sponsored by the JAER and the Kansei Friends of Coleridge. Next I journeyed, via Tokyo, to Sendai to give a lecture to Tohoku University and the Tohoku branch of the English Literature Society of Japan (13th July). At Sendai, I also visited areas appallingly damaged by the Tsunami and earthquake that proved a moving experience, though I was much heartened to see the tremendous signs of recent recovery and rebuilding in the area. I then travelled to Nagoya University to give a lecture there and discuss Romantic literature with Professor Kaz Oishi, a leading Japanese scholar in the field. After Nagoya I journeyed to Kobe to attend and deliver a full plenary keynote lecture at the major conference "Coleridge, Romanticism, and the Orient: Cultural Negotiations" on Romantic period cultural and literary encounters with China and Asia. The Conference was presented by the JSPS Kaken Project "Aspects of Cultural Negotiations in Coleridge and Romantic Literature" (led by Professor Kaz Oishi of Nagoya University) and supported by the ELSJ and JAERS. A version of my lecture will be printed in a collection of essays based on the presentations delivered at the conference.