

## KEYNOTE LECTURE

### *Captain John Saris and the First British Voyage to Japan*

Richmond Barbour

Among the challenges to beset the first British voyage to Japan were recurrent conflicts with another fleet from the London East India Company. In its opening years, the corporation funded each voyage separately. That such investment made rivals of supposed colleagues became disturbingly clear in the Red Sea and Java in 1612, as Captain John Saris of the Eighth Voyage, destined for Japan, found himself at cross purposes with Sir Henry Middleton of the Sixth Voyage, who had lately been imprisoned in Yemen, where Saris hoped to establish a factory. Their conflicts precipitated an important change in the company's finances: the creation of an ongoing joint stock. The new method of capital accumulation, a decisive advance in corporate power, was introduced in London the year Saris landed in Japan, 1613. The different iterations of his journal speak variously to the events of the voyage and the themes of our anniversary celebration. Of the two surviving manuscripts, one in London, the other in Tokyo, only the British Library document details the critical problems of command that compromised the opening eighteen months. Samuel Purchas' 1625 edition, which overlaps extensively with the Tokyo manuscript, also omits demoralizing episodes of the early months. When Takanobu Otsuka published the Tokyo journal in 1941, he could not visit London and consulted Ernest Satow's 1900 edition of the BL manuscript, which begins mid-voyage as the *Clove* leaves Java for Japan. Drawing on the voluminous unpublished section the BL journal, which I am editing for the Hakluyt Society, I will enlarge and interrogate the compelling story of this foundational voyage and its controversial captain, whose pious overseers publicly burned the erotic art he carried home from Japan and never employed him again.

***'To the Honour of our Nation abroad': the merchant as adventurer in civic pageantry***

**Tracey Hill**

My paper addresses the representation of the venturing merchant and the English trading companies in Stuart Lord Mayors' Shows, c. 1613-39. Since the Shows were the chief vehicle for the public celebration of the City's oligarchs, one might expect them to have painted these merchants and their trading endeavours in idealistic and glowing colours. The reality was rather more complex. Whilst the rhetoric of the Shows tended to celebrate rather than obscure the economic imperative behind early Stuart trading ventures – Heywood's 1632 *Londini Artium & Scientiarum Scaturigo*, for example, highlights the 'singular Profits redounding to the Realme at home' – civic pageantry did not entirely refrain from depicting the dangers inherent in such voyages overseas. Indeed, although they did not engage with specifics such as the debate over the East India Company in 1615, the Shows often stressed the generalised risk of overseas venturing as a means by which the alleged heroism of the merchant could be underlined.

One might also imagine that the producers of the Shows would have been keen to trumpet the expansion of the City's trading reach, which after 1613, of course, extended to Japan. In fact, although the City's livery and trading companies are frequently referenced in civic pageantry, there is no mention whatsoever of Japan in any of these texts. The treatment of Asia, more generally, is neither extensive nor very current or well-informed; where it does exist, it's often conflated with a vague notion of 'India'. John Squire's 1620 text *The Trymphes of Peace*, for example, describes Asia with little geographical or national specificity: she is 'attired in an antique habit of peach coloured Sattin, and buskins of the same, a Coronet on her head, and a censor in her hand reaking [sic] with Panchayian spices'.

The gaps and ambiguities in the treatment of overseas venturing in the early modern Lord Mayor's Show are indicative of a period of economic ascendancy mixed with uncertainty, controversy and risk. The figure of the venturing merchant, his motives, destinations and achievements, thus works as a focal point – on a very public stage – for the articulation of a moment of mixed fortunes for the City and its constituent bodies.

## ***Speaking in passing: England and Japan before 1613***

**Nandini Das**

'I heard them speake in passing along through the streetes: their words are almost all of one syllable, their speech princely, thundering, proud, glorious, and marvellous loftie.'

John Eliot's *Ortho-epia Gallica* (1593) is a remarkably idiosyncratic French language manual for Elizabethan English readers, designed as a series of semi-satiric dialogues. In the middle of its vignettes of urban life in Europe, set out in parallel columns of lively conversation in colloquial French and English, there is a fleeting reference to the Tenshō embassy (1582-90) that had brought four young Japanese men to the centre of attention for much of Europe. Taking cue from Eliot's text, my aim in this paper is firstly to explore the knowledge about Japan that circulated 'in passing' in England before the 1613 voyage. In the process, I hope also to examine some of the fleeting intersections and near-forgotten moments when travellers from the two nations came into each other's circuit prior to 1613.

## ***The East India Company, Religion and European Overseas Expansion***

**Derek Massarella**

Short of the discovery of new source material about the English East India Company's presence in Japan from 1613 to 1623, there is nothing substantially new to add to the familiar narrative of the early English presence in Japan. However, a lot more can be said about the East India Company's part in the larger encounter between Europe and Asia in the early modern period, particularly about the religious encounter, or rather, in the case of the English company, the apparent lack of such an encounter. My paper will explore the question of why, at a time when at home religion was an issue of burning importance bitterly dividing the English polity during the seventeenth century, religion appears to be largely irrelevant to the East India Company's activities in Asia.

***'Wonders rudely described': Richard Cocks, English Merchant and Intelligencer in Japan***  
**Samuli Kaislaniemi**

The surviving records of the English East India Company venture to Japan (1613-1623) have long been recognized as a treasure trove of information on the encounter of Early Modern Japan and Europe. The most prominent voice in the records belongs to the head of the trading post, Richard Cocks. Cocks is primarily known for his journal, which contains detailed descriptions of Japan, from the lay of the land and its climate to the inhabitants and their strange customs. Such descriptions can also be found in Cocks's letters – not in the letters he wrote from Japan to his employers, but in those he sent to his erstwhile patron Sir Thomas Wilson, and to the Secretary of State, Sir Robert Cecil.

These letters can be explained by Cocks's earlier career. It is less well known that another collection of letters from Cocks survives, dating from before he joined the EIC. For some ten years, Cocks worked as a merchant in Bayonne in France, and a hundred-odd letters from him survive from 1603-1609. When placed in their context, these letters can be seen to form a part of the voluminous correspondence generated by the intelligence network under Cecil.

In this paper, I will describe Cocks's role in the intelligence network of Sir Robert Cecil. I will then reflect on his EIC career and later writings in the light of his earlier activities. Cocks was employed in the intelligence network as a middleman, and his early letters give us new insights into the intertwining networks of commerce, diplomacy and intelligence. But they also show that his later letters to Wilson and Cecil from Japan can now be seen as a continuation of his services of providing intelligence from and on foreign states.

## ***The Men of the English Factory at Hirado***

**Margaret Makepeace**

When John Saris sailed from Hirado in December 1613, he left behind seven Englishmen to trade on behalf of the East India Company assisted by William Adams. The paper will examine this disparate group of individuals, looking at their different backgrounds and skills and at the way they interacted during their time in Japan. Has any new information about them come to light since Anthony Farrington published his ground-breaking research?

## ***Storms and Foreign Relations in the Japanese Domain of Tosa***

**Luke Roberts**

Foreign relations in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century Japan often resulted from accidents of the sea. The domain of Tosa on the island of Shikoku faced the Pacific, and damaged vessels from China, the Ryūkyū kingdom and--around the early 17<sup>th</sup> century--Spain were occasionally carried by the Kuroshio Current to its shores. The first Spanish arrival occurred in 1596 when the storm damaged San Felipe drifted in and sparked an incident that led to intensified suppression of Christianity in Japan. My talk will focus on two less well known incidents involving storm damaged Spanish vessels: The arrival of and sudden violent departure of the *Espiritu Santo* in 1602, an incident that nevertheless allowed Tokugawa Ieyasu to establish trading relations with Manilla; and the 1616 arrival of a Spanish vessel that departed on cordial terms. This later vessel likely had some Englishmen on board.

## ***Hirado and Beyond: The British Trade with Japan in the Seventeenth Century***

**Ryuto Shimada**

The research of my presentation deals with the British trade in the seventeenth century. After the establishment of the official diplomatic relations between Japan and Britain in 1613, the English East India Company began to be engaged in the Japan trade based in Hirado. First, my presentation provides a general survey of the British intra-Asian trade by setting the Hirado trade in the Asian and global trading network of the English East India Company.

My presentation also focuses on a fact that “invisible” economic links continued between Japan and Britain although the English East India Company closed the trading post in Hirado in 1623. When we look at Asian waters, we find economic relations between these two nations. For example, at Ayutthaya in Siam, present-day Thailand, British country traders purchased Japanese copper, which was brought by Chinese traders from Nagasaki, and then they carried it to South Asia port cities until the beginning of the eighteenth century. This kind of British transit trade in Japanese commodities contributed to the maintaining the British presence in South Asia.

## ***Using and Losing the Sinosphere: Japanese Diplomacy and Statecraft circa 1613***

**Kiri Paramore**

The year 1613 represents an historic peak in diplomatic activity and correspondence between the pre-modern Japanese state and its Asian neighbors. The period saw an unprecedented volume of multilateral diplomatic correspondence exchanged with states like Vietnam, others further into maritime South-East Asia, across the Pacific in Mexico, and especially frequently with the coastal provincial governments of China, and the provincial and royal offices of Korea. This was not related to any sudden increase in activity abroad. The Japanese had been active in trans-Asian trade for at least the three centuries beforehand. The early seventeenth century explosion in diplomatic activity rather illustrates Japanese rulers' increasing literacy in the vocabularies of trans-Asian

diplomacy, and their new willingness to play along with Confucian norms associated with interstate relations and Ming Chinese statecraft. Ultimately, although embracing these trans-Asian diplomatic frameworks and continuing to use them in various forms over the coming two centuries, Japan ultimately rejected most forms of Confucian statecraft and ritual associated with the Ming Chinese state. This paper considers how and why Chinese Confucian norms came to be utilized in diplomacy but rejected in the prime systems of governance of the emerging unified Japanese state of the early seventeenth century.

***The Globalization of Taste in the New World: Cross-Cultural Exchange and Japanese Art in Seventeenth-Century Mexico City***  
**Sofía Sanabrais**

Spanish America was profoundly affected by the influx of luxury goods from Asia that arrived from across the seas, especially on the famous Manila galleons that made annual trips from Manila to the port of Acapulco in the viceroyalty of New Spain (Mexico) from 1565 to 1815. The ships were filled with luxury commodities, and many of these objects were distributed to local merchants for sale in Mexico City. Exotic materials — such as shell, ivory, tortoise shell and lacquer— and works of art like the Japanese folding screen aroused wonder and curiosity in the Americas spawning what I call the “globalization of taste” for Asian goods. It should therefore come as no surprise that the vogue for Asian objects, and the copying and adapting of Asian styles and motifs in the Americas predated by a century that of *Chinoiserie* and *Japonisme* in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In the early seventeenth century, the Japanese were not strangers to the American continent; the Nahua historian Chimalpáhin wrote eyewitness accounts of the visits made by Japanese delegations to New Spain in 1610 and 1614. Chimalpáhin’s testimony paints a new picture about the cultural and material exchanges between Japan and Mexico, and the availability of Japanese imports in the colonial marketplace. This paper will discuss the Mexican *biombo* or folding screen and explore how the Japanese folding screen was adapted, recontextualized and reinterpreted in colonial Mexico.

## ***Competing diplomacies in 1613: King James' Embassy to Japan and the Date Masamune Embassy to Spain (1613-1620)***

**Carla Tronu**

This paper explores the consequences that the embassy of King James I to the Japanese shogun in 1613 had for the relations between Japan and the Iberian catholic countries, i.e. Portugal and Spain, and more specifically, for the Japanese embassy to Spain that left Japan in 1613. The expedition had been planned by the lord of Sendai Date Masamune, who was interested in establishing regular trade with the Spaniards and the Franciscan priest Luis Sotelo, who aimed at dividing Japan in two bishoprics and becoming the bishop of northern Japan. The embassy's main objectives were not achieved for several reasons, but by the time it returned to Japan in 1620 Christianity was forbidden and the Tokugawa shogun had established new alliances with the English and the Dutch, that would prove fatal for the Iberian catholic countries.

## ***Speaking Transnationally: Linguistic Worlds in Early English Voyages to Asia***

**Su Fang Ng**

"You taught me language, and my profit on't/ Is, I know how to curse," thus Shakespeare's Caliban accused his master Prospero of linguistic colonialism. But how accurate was this picture of transnational communication? When Europeans entered the sphere of the Indian Ocean, in what language or languages did they speak? This paper considers the linguistic worlds that the English encountered in their early voyages to the East Indies, under whose broad rubric Japan also fell in the period. Travel accounts from the period show use of interpreters, often termed "jurebassos" in these English accounts, a word that comes from Malay. Indeed, Malay is a significant transnational language of the East Indies, used as *lingua franca* in Southeast Asia, but often serving as a bridge language. The interpreter used by John Saris, who led the first East India Company voyage to Japan in 1613, was a Japanese native that he found in Bantam, Java, who in his report Saris notes to be skilled in Malay.

While considerable scholarly ink has been spilled on European representations of the East, little notice has been taken of the



transoceanic languages of the early modern period, including Malay. Even as late as 1725, François Valentijn, vicar of the Dutch Reformed Church in Ambon in the Moluccas, claimed that Portuguese and Malay are understood from Persia to the Philippines. In disregarding non-European transoceanic languages, we run the risk also of ignoring non-European perspectives on the ocean and the cross-cultural exchanges that result from sea voyages. Early modern European voyagers, including the English, however, deemed linguistic training to be important, reliant as they had to be on interpreters.

This paper examines some of the linguistic conditions the English encountered in their efforts to open trade in the East Indies. I read Saris and Richard Cocks' accounts of their mission to Japan to show their dependence on Asian interpreters and translators, but I focus on English and Dutch use and acquisition of Malay in the early accounts of voyages, in particular the writings of John Davis and Frederick de Houtman. Davis piloted the first 1601 voyage of the English East India Company, led by Sir James Lancaster, that reached Aceh in Sumatra, but had also earlier sailed as pilot on a 1598 Dutch voyage to Aceh led by Frederick de Houtman's brother, Cornelis. Frederick de Houtman was a key figure who wrote the first Dutch-Malay dictionary, which was subsequently translated into Latin and into English, becoming an important resource for later eastern voyages. Their experiences suggest the Asian linguistic worlds into which Europeans found themselves. Southeast Asia played a part in the early English voyage to Japan as the English sent the first embassy to Japan from Bantam in Java. As such, even if the English were able to use William Adams, the first Englishman in Japan, as a cultural interpreter, the interpreters and translators whom the English brought with them on that first voyage and on whom they relied were ones they found in Southeast Asia.

## ***1600-1615: Japan's Cold War Era and its Art*** **Jin Matsushima**

Toyotomi Hideyoshi ended a war-torn era of more than a century and united the whole Japan before dying at Fushimi, near Kyoto, in 1598. Shortly after his death, political conflict came to the surface again between Tokugawa Ieyasu, his former rival and a Hideyoshi successor. 1600 saw the mighty battle of Sekigahara with Ieyasu winning and so able to establish his hegemony over the Toyotomi, who nevertheless endured for fifteen further years, so that military tension remained.

From the battle of Sekigahara to the Summer Campaign of Osaka at which the Toyotomi family were destroyed, that is, 1600-1615, there was no overt war. However, in this peaceful interlude, the Tokugawa and the Toyotomi competed over aspects of traditional culture, and fought for cultural supremacy. Culture was none other than a source of traditional authority which created the orthodoxy for rule. This warless fifteen years was a kind of Cold War, high in political tension.

This paper discusses how both Tokugawa and Toyotomi camps contended for cultural hegemony, and especially at how the Toyotomi, even while losing ground politically, projected their orthodoxy in traditional culture. Secondly, we will consider how the Tokugawa side dealt with this. Our focus will be art historical, and specifically important will be the screens of 'scenes in and around the Capital' (*rakuchû-rakugai zu*), or grand, bird's-eye views of Kyoto, and portraits of the deified Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

*Rakuchû-rakugai* screens visualized the dignity and prosperity of the capital as the seat of regal power, and are none other than 'portraits' of the political power by which the Toyotomi idealised themselves. Also, portraits of the deified Toyotomi Hideyoshi, that is, of the divinity Toyokuni Daimyôjin, which were enshrined in a new head temple in the capital with branches throughout Japan, are none other than the image of the supreme god created and worshipped by the Toyotomi camp.

## ***Japanese Narrative Paintings Reloaded: Transcultural Adaptations in the Early Seventeenth-Century***

**Melanie Trede**

Japanese pictorial narratives abound in encounters and communications with Asian neighbours ever since the Heian period. While these encounters referred to largely imagined or purported instances, the socially and religiously diverse co-presence of multi-ethnic traders and clerics who set foot on Japanese soil since the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century, gave rise to new pictorial interpretations of cultural and social interaction. By the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, the outlandish figures and motifs related to mercantile activities were imbued with symbolic layers of economic wealth, auspiciousness, and potential threat while at the same time implying Japanese control and superiority.

This paper addresses the significance of inter pictorial adaptations of figures and motifs of these transcultural encounters into radically different and much older narrative subject matters. Focussing on one particular narrative, the following questions will be addressed:

- which scenes were chosen to insert (or avoid) the new iconography?
- how are the different ethnicities and social hierarchies negotiated and translated into the different narrative context?
- how did their inclusion change the understanding of the narrative?
- was there a change in choices of ethnic in- and exclusion over time?
- is there a pattern of specific patronage or preference of pictorial media related to the adaptation of such motifs?

## ***Vessels of Trade: Porcelain as Commodity in Early 17th-century Japan***

**Nicole Coolidge Rousmaniere**

2013 marks the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of both British-Japanese international relations and of the birth of Japanese porcelain. This paper addresses the ever increasing numbers of Chinese predominantly underglaze cobalt blue decorated porcelain entering Japanese shores and the subsequent formation of a domestic industry that within a few decades had supplanted its Chinese counterparts. The circumstances and characteristics of that transition will also be explored.

Particular attention is placed on early seventeenth-century Chinese porcelain fired at the Jingdezhen kilns and tailored for the Japanese markets and the lower cost porcelains from the southern Chinese kilns such as Zhangzhou. Recently a number of these wares have been excavated from such diverse contexts such Deshima, Aikawa in Sado Island and Edo Castle, making it possible to attempt to reconstruct the shifting cultural contexts to which these wares belonged.

The nascent Japanese porcelain industry was born not only for domestic economic reasons but also as a direct result of the international trade routes and the goods exchange in ports such as Nagasaki. Japanese porcelain production began in the early 1610s in the Saga domain and within a few decades with Nabeshima daimyo patronage was able to begin to challenge some of the Chinese markets for lower cost wares in Japan and Southeast Asia. By the 1650s, Japanese porcelain was replacing its Chinese counterparts both domestically and internationally as a result of both a drastic reduction in the Chinese porcelain trade and a large infrastructural push by Saga domain to improve the quality and consistency of the ware. This paper will also discuss a comparison of specific incidents in the formation of the Japanese porcelain industry with events occurring elsewhere in Japan, such as the construction of Deshima to reveal a seemingly conscious plan by the Saga domain to capitalise on the taste for Chinese porcelain both internally and abroad.

***Culture Wars in Japan's Age of Unification: Collecting, Gift Exchange, and Falconry in the Life of Tokugawa Ieyasu***

**Morgan Pitelka**

Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616), the founder of the Tokugawa Shogunate that ruled Japan from 1603 to 1868, is well known for his victories in titanic battles and his establishment of the basic institutions of the early modern state. But these political accomplishments were made possible in part through Ieyasu's participation in social practices such as collecting, gift exchange, the tea ceremony, and falconry. This talk, based on my forthcoming book *Spectacular Accumulation: Material Culture, Tokugawa Ieyasu, and the Politics of Warrior Sociability*, considers the agency of art in the establishment of the Tokugawa warrior government, and the lasting significance of this body of late-medieval material culture in early modern and modern Japan.