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Doctoral School Research Awards, 2022-23

With the generous funding from the Doctoral School Research Awards, I attended the first inaugural Society for Global Nineteenth Century Studies Congress in Singapore, June 2022. This was a significant event for the field and for my own academic career. Prior to the event, I gained a lot of experience presenting my work at conferences in the UK, though these were often aimed at scholars working across a range of topics in Victorian Studies. My academic network was already good, though it was really important for my doctoral research and career prospects to engage with scholars working more closely in line with global nineteenth-century studies. The SGNCS Congress, then, was an excellent opportunity for me to finally meet and speak with scholars who could offer helpful insights into my work so far.

The Congress itself was busy, lively, and – at times – intimidating! I was meeting and listening to scholars whose work has significantly inspired mine, and who showed me the endless possibilities of research in this exciting field. I attended workshops on Empire and Eco-criticism and Creative Writing for Academics; both have proven to be excellent sources of inspiration for my current activities. For example, I will be delivering an MA seminar this term around the topics of travel and imperial spaces, drawing on ideas I came across at the Eco-criticism workshop. The creative writing workshop was incredibly useful for tapping into the intersections between creative and critical practise (something I was not familiar with before) and has inspired me to organise one, too – this will be at the London Victorian Studies Colloquium 2024, a residential PGR event which I am co-organising.

As for my presentation, I was unfortunately ill on the day I was scheduled to present. This was disappointing, but I am very happy to have gained a wealth of insights from the Congress overall. Most importantly, it has helped me expand my network – one of the most important aims of the trip. I have now had my ideas and work introduced to a number of eminent scholars working in Victorian Literature and Empire, since the Congress. As a result, I am already seeing the benefits of engaging with such excellent colleagues in my field; I am currently producing an article for a peer-reviewed journal and organising a symposium to be held next year. This growth in my skills and experience would not have been possible without having attended the SGNCS Congress and expanding the reach of my work.