

KEATS-SHELLEY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, Inc.

ROOM 226, THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

FIFTH AVENUE AT 42nd STREET

NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10018-2788 U.S.A.

12 September 1991

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Professor Shigetoshi Ishikawa
11-5, Yagiyamakasumicho,
Taihaku-ku,
Sendai 982
Japan

Dear Professor Ishikawa:

Although plans have been unfolding for many months to hold a major celebration of Shelley's bicentennial in New York--**Shelley: Poet and Legislator of the World**--only now have we firm word that the U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities has granted us funds in order to mount the conference on an international scale. Our purpose is to consider Shelley as poet, philosopher, political visionary, and cultural reformer against a world backdrop. Specific concerns might be the sources and aim of Shelley's internationalism, his idea of poets as unacknowledged legislators, his legacy within nationalist reform struggles of the nineteenth century and passive resistance movements of the twentieth century, his recent emergence as a forerunner of poststructuralist philosophy and linguistics and how that notion can be reconciled with his politics, the effect of new textual scholarship, the diversity of Shelley's impact and the enduring value of his poetry on a world scale. Our conference is timely in this apparent era of liberation, promising for the first time in memory a free exchange across discarded boundaries. We hope you will be able to join us in this long overdue effort.

The program will run from Wednesday afternoon, 20 May, to Saturday evening, 23 May 1992, in New York City; with afternoon sessions planned for the Trustees' Room of the New York Public Library at Fifth Avenue and 42nd Street and morning sessions in the auditorium of the City University of New York, directly across 42nd Street. As academic schedules vary, we have chosen these dates as feasible for North Americans and at least possible for most Europeans. We expect 40-45 speakers drawn about equally from the United States and other countries. The three-and-a-half days of sessions allow many modes of organization. Some sessions will juxtapose two thirty-minute papers on a theme, followed by analysis of a moderator and extensive discussion from the floor; others will bring together a number of us in panels where, after brief statements of position by each member, the group can engage in collective exploration of the topic. These might include: changes in emphasis or conception of the "Shelleyan"; differences between an English (and European?) and North American Shelley; what Shelley means in Central and Eastern European, in Asian/African contexts; effects from the new textual scholarship; Shelley's future as artist and thinker. So we can interact as a community there will be no doubling-up of sessions.

Feel free to propose any subject or format, and write either of the conference organizers. We naturally hope you will give us the benefit of your knowledge of Shelley's impact in Japan, which Professor Tokoo has

warmly recommended we ask of you. We emphasize, once again, that we hope for a substantial number of panels, rather than simply formal papers. For our initial plans a short statement detailing subject and desired approach will suffice. Indicate as well if you foresee problems with the conference time-frame. In New York we can rely on the good offices of members of the Keats-Shelley Association of America to provide a hospitable atmosphere for this first-ever conjunction of a world community of Shelley scholars. We hope to have help, particularly for those coming from a far distance, in securing the most reasonable transportation possible; and since expenses in New York are comparable to those of other world capitals, we will seek as we can to minimize them. In the next weeks we will be surveying New York hostelries to secure the best rates we can find. If you have particular needs in accommodation, we would of course want to know them. Or, if you have private resources here and do not need a hotel, please do tell us.

The NEH grant will allow us to defray, if not wholly to match, the costs of 41 participating speakers. Since some adjustments are possible within the budget, should you have other funding at your disposal that would adequately cover your expenses so that you would not need (or not fully need) our provision, please tell us in order that it might be applied to the needs of participants without such means. As you are retired, we suppose you may not have access to usual university or government resources. Thus, we will provide up to \$2000 for round-trip airfare (grant regulations require that where possible you fly by a U.S. carrier), and \$500 towards a per diem over the five days (19-23 May). If you should have access to some subvention, let us know how much and we then might be able to ask yet a third scholar from Japan to participate too.

Once we have a roster of participants and subjects, we will circulate it so that all have an advance sense of the shape of the conference. For there to be informed response by the moderators of the sessions, they will need at least an early version of the papers so involved by 1 May 1992; we will issue reminders in due time. At this point, though, our main concern is insuring that the large aim of the conference, which is to usher a great mind and major literary artist into a new century, is fulfilled. We look forward to your help in what will be a collective endeavor by citizens of one world.

Cordial good wishes,



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