

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910787618803321
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Titolo	Forging romantic China : Sino-British cultural exchange, 1760-1840 // Peter J. Kitson [[electronic resource]]
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge : , : Cambridge University Press, , 2013
ISBN	1-107-50306-X 1-139-89377-7 1-107-50142-3 1-107-50678-6 1-107-51443-6 1-107-49750-7 1-107-51720-6 1-107-50411-2 1-107-05380-3
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (vii, 312 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Collana	Cambridge studies in Romanticism ; ; 105
Classificazione	LIT004120
Disciplina	303.48/241051
Soggetti	English literature - 18th century - History and criticism English literature - 19th century - History and criticism Romanticism - Great Britain China In literature China Civilization Great Britain Civilization Chinese influences Great Britain Civilization 18th century Great Britain Civilization 19th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	1. Thomas Percy and the forging of Romantic China -- 2. 'A wonderful stateliness': William Jones, Joshua Marshman, and the Bengal School of Sinology -- 3. 'They thought that Jesus and Confucius were alike': Robert Morrison, Malacca, and the missionary reading of China -- 4. 'Fruits of the highest culture may be improved and varied by foreign grafts': the Canton School of Romantic Sinology: Staunton and Davis --

5. Establishing the 'Great Divide': scientific exchange and the Macartney Embassy -- 6. 'You will be taking a trip into China, I suppose': kowtows, tea cups, and the evasions of British Romantic writing on China -- 7. Chinese gardens, Confucius, and the prelude -- 8. 'Not a bit like the Chinese figures that adorn our chimney-pieces': orphans and travellers: China on stage.

Sommario/riassunto

The first major cultural study to focus exclusively on this decisive period in modern British-Chinese relations. Based on extensive archival investigations, Peter J. Kitson shows how British knowledge of China was constructed from the writings and translations of a diverse range of missionaries, diplomats, travellers, traders, and literary men and women during the Romantic period. The new perceptions of China that it gave rise to were mediated via a dynamic print culture to a diverse range of poets, novelists, essayists, dramatists and reviewers, including Jane Austen, Thomas Percy, William Jones, S. T. Coleridge, George Colman, Robert Southey, Charles Lamb, William and Dorothy Wordsworth and others, informing new British understandings and imaginings of China on the eve of the Opium War of 1839-42. Kitson aims to restore China to its true global presence in our understandings of the culture and literature of Britain in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.