

## Invitational Fellowship Report

Okayama University, Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Host: Dr Toshio Ohnuki, Associate Professor

The fellowship at the Okayama University was really rewarding for me – both in terms of short and longer-term research goals, developing institutional cooperation and learning about Japanese University system, Japanese history and culture.

My fellowship incorporated participation in an international conference – and presenting paper there – at Okayama University co-organised by my host (1-2 March) “Pastoral Care and Monasticism: ca. 800-1650” [https://www.okayama-u.ac.jp/up\\_load\\_files/event/20190301flyer.pdf](https://www.okayama-u.ac.jp/up_load_files/event/20190301flyer.pdf) that focused on comparing Japanese and European medieval and early modern monastic culture. At the request of my host I have run a workshop for the Japan Society for Medieval European Studies <http://www.medievalstudies.jp/>, for the Early Career Researchers, at Tokyo University (6 March) on how to make the most from participation in the International Medieval Congress <https://www.imc.leeds.ac.uk/>, that takes place every year at the University of Leeds. It is the largest congress in the world in our field and attracts participants from over 60 countries and I hope my workshops will encourage more Japanese ECRs to take part and present their research. In general, the fellowship gave me an opportunity to meet and talk with many medievalists working at leading universities in Japan and this gave me a very good sense of how vibrant the field is, the range of projects and approaches. Towards the end of my fellowship I have also given a guest seminar for students in the European History MA programme at Okayama University. I have focused on the introduction to medieval Latin palaeography and it was a great experience to see how Okayama students enthusiastically took to the exercises and I hope it has inspired them to do further studies.

Above all, the fellowship gave plenty of opportunity to my host – Dr Ohnuki and me to discuss our research – medieval Cistercian monastic social and cultural history - and many synergies that we have discovered. We have now a detailed plan for a joint article that has grown out of the conference at the beginning of my fellowship. Moreover, we also plan to establish a further formal collaboration between the Institute of Medieval Studies at the University of Leeds and the Japan Society for European Medieval Studies to further develop the ideas that emerged during the workshop.

I cannot thank my host enough, Dr Ohnuki, for their hospitality, warm welcome and introducing me to many important medieval studies scholars in Japan, explaining to me the pre-modern Japanese history and culture and for so many fruitful discussions. It has been a deeply enriching and positive experience I hope that our future cooperation will produce more collaborative research.

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