

Fellowship ID : BR230404

2024 年 1 月 5 日

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独立行政法人日本学術振興会理事長 殿

To: President, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science

研究活動報告書

Research Report

1. 受入研究者/ Host researcher

受入研究機関・部局・職

Name of Host Institution, Department and Title

津田塾大学 学芸学部 多文化・国際協力学科 教授

受入研究者氏名

Host Researcher's Name

木村朗子

2. 外国人招へい研究者/ Fellow

所属研究機関・部局・職

Name of Institution, Department and Title

Associate Professor, Dept. of Asian Studies, University of British Columbia

外国人招へい研究者氏名

Fellow's Name

Christina Charlotte LAFFIN

3. 採用期間/ Fellowship Period

2023 年 10 月 17 日

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2023 年 11 月 15 日

4. 研究課題/ Research Theme

Medieval Japanese women and court life through the lens of *Abutsu's Letter* (Abutsu no fumi)

5. 研究活動報告/ Research Report

(1) 研究活動の概要・成果/ Summary of Research Results

Through this month-long period of research I was able to (1) gain access to written materials required for translation of the thirteenth-century text *Abutsu no fumi* (Abutsu's Letter) via institutional libraries in Japan; (2) consult with eminent Japan-based experts of women's writing and material culture, (3) visit and document a number of locations related to court life, pilgrimage, and poetry in Western Japan, (4) present on my own research and the work of colleagues in Japan studies at the University of British Columbia with the aim of fostering future ties with institutions in Japan.

(1) Materials accessed

Thanks to an institutional agreement with the Waseda University Library, I was able to access all books and periodicals required to complete the translation of *Abutsu no fumi*. Much time was dedicated to searching Japan-based collections

(注) 採用期間終了後 3 ヶ月以内に提出

※ (Note) Submit the form within 3 months after the expiration of fellowship.

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related to medieval Japanese court life, women's education and socialization, epistolary writing, and the history of didactic works. Having produced a book on the life of Abutsu-ni (Nun Abutsu, 1225–1283) in 2013 it was important to ensure I had accounted for new scholarship produced over the past decade in the field. The month-long research period offered an invaluable opportunity to fully access collections in Japan and to source new contributions, including a collaboratively produced annotated translation of the text into modern Japanese.

(2) Consultations

In addition to consulting with host research Dr. Kimura Saeko, I was able to meet with the following scholars.

Early in my visit, Drs. Watanabe Yumiko and Tabuchi Kumiko joined me for a meeting together with Yale University graduate student Eric Esteban. Dr. Tabuchi kindly provided me with her new, collaboratively-produced annotation and translation of *Abutsu no fumi* which will serve as a key reference as I complete the English-language translation.

Dr. Sasaki Takahiro, a leading scholar of book history, met with me to discuss aspects of epistolary writing and future opportunities for collaboration with temple-based collections in Japan, including the possibility of brining students from the University of British Columbia for a research visit.

Waseda scholars Drs. Jinno Hidenori and Kono Kimiko met with me, together with UBC graduate student Helena Xavier to discuss current research on *The Tale of Genji*, my current research, and ongoing collaboration with our two universities.

I was also able to gather all UBC students studying at the Inter-University Center for Japanese Studies for a meal in order to check on the progress of their language studies and to consult closely with one student in terms of her research on premodern narrative and music.

During museum visits, such as to the Tokyo National Museum, I coordinated to meet Japan-based scholars and foreign scholars temporary in Japan, including Aoyama Gakuin University instructor Victoria Stoilova, University of Alberta professor Anne Commons, and University of Melbourne professor Claire Marou.

(3) Research travel

The intent of the research trip to sites in Western Japan was to visit and document a number of locations relevant to ancient and medieval Japanese court life. I thus visited locations in Kyoto such as the imperial villas, as well as the region of Saga and the location where Nun Abutsu lived for part of her life. Since the Jidai Matsuri (Festival of the Ages) was also held in Kyoto during my visit, I was able to see a reenactment of Nun Abutsu during the procession.

My trip to the famous site for poetry production and religious pilgrimage and retreat, Mount Yoshino enabled me to see famous locations along the pilgrimage route and to stop at three key barriers associated with the prohibition of female pilgrims. I was aided in this trip by a practitioner associated with the temple Kinpusenji who drove me, along with a photographer friend, to various key sites and guided us up the mountain.

(4) Research presentation

On October 26, 2023 I had the opportunity to present (in Japanese) on my current research project and share the research of colleagues with faculty members at Doshisha Women's University. I presented on two projects, my current

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translation and analysis of *Abutsu's Letter* and my ongoing research interest in ecoculture and narrative in premodern Japan. I provided some examples for why such research was needed today and what it might contribute, then offered applied pedagogy case studies of how Japanese premodern literature and culture was taught in and beyond the classroom through my courses at the University of British Columbia. Finally, I described some of the public humanities projects being I have been carrying out collaboratively with graduate students, including a StoryMap of the manuscript *Yoshino kikō* (Record of a Journey to Yoshino, mid 17th century) and the video series *Exploring Premodern Japan* (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfMvm0JFBb-tv68-nzl_y-A).

(2) 主な研究発表 (雑誌論文、学会、集会、知的財産権等) / Main Research Publications

The primary result of this research will be a book manuscript to be submitted to a university press in 2025. The manuscript will consist of a full translation of *Abutsu's Letter* along with three contextual chapters and relevant appendices.

A preliminary presentation of the research will be offered as a key note presentation entitled “Motherly Advice for Courtly Success in Thirteenth-Century Japan: Abutsu’s Letter as Career Guide” at the international conference “Shifting Paradigms: Women, Rhetoric, and Power, c. 700–c. 1300” to be held at London Global Gateway University of Notre Dame in February 2024.

As an extension of my first visit to Mount Yoshino (revisited during the JSPS research period for the purpose of better understanding locations prohibited to women past and present), I produced a public-facing, brief reflection on the pilgrimage route and my encounter with a practicing mountain ascetic. This reflective piece was published in December in the *Royal Ontario Museum Friends of East Asia Newsletter*:
https://www.rom.on.ca/sites/default/files/imce/bwc_fall_2023_newsletter_final_1.pdf.

Following the conclusion of my sabbatical, I look forward to presenting my completed research to the UBC Japan studies research community as part of our ongoing lecture series.

(3) その他/Remarks

Thank you for enabling this opportunity to carry out my research and to consult with a broad spectrum of experts while accessing necessary materials.

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