CLOSING REPORT

Faculty Research Grant

“The Ethics of Empire: Protestant Christianity, Moral Culture, and Imperialism in Meiji Japan”
Yosuke Nirei, Department of History, Indiana University South Bend

1) Description of Activity Conducted with the Grant

Thanks to a Faculty Research Grant, during the summer of 2011, I was able to conduct my research in Japan on my project titled, “The Ethics of Empire: Protestant Christianity, Moral Culture, and Imperialism in Meiji Japan.” This is a historical study of leading Japanese Protestants during the Meiji period (1868–1912) and examines the ways in which Japanese Protestants like leaders of the churches and Christian journalists accommodated themselves practically and theoretically to Japan’s national-imperial development. Most of the sources (in fact most of the sources related to the study of Meiji Japan) are available in and around the University of Tokyo, particularly at the Meiji Newspapers and Magazine Archives and the Social Science Japan Journal. I spent two and a half weeks in July reading the contents of several Christian organs and collected writings of leading intellectuals published during the Meiji and importantly photocopied them. Upon my return to the United States, I parsed the material. The figures that I paid most attention are Uchimura Kanzō who represented an important Christian view of pacifism against the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5), and Yamaji Aizan who supported the war. I read their materials in the past, but this time, I was able to delve much more deeply into their theoretical connections as well as their conflicts, and the evolution of their ideas over time. I also needed to read several monographs and articles I spend the bulk of the time in organizing my notes and constructing my interpretations and arguments about the subject, and a

2) Completion of the Activity and Difficulty

As mentioned above, I finished reading and writing on the materials concerning the two Japanese Protestant journalists, Uchimura Kanzō and Yamaji Aizan. But I was not able to complete reading or writing on the entire collections of writings on other Protestant leaders. The task clearly needs a much longer commitment in time and effort. One of the toughest parts of my work was writing. English is not my first language and historical work requires extensive editing and elaboration. Furthermore, I had to consider seriously other existing scholarship regarding imperialism, Christianity, and political philosophy and tried to incorporate its theoretical implications into my work. However, I was able to complete my article draft on Uchimura Kanzō.

3) Result

I was invited to offer a lecture on my research at the East Asian Studies Center at Indiana
University Bloomington in September 2010. Moreover, I submitted an article manuscript to the peer-reviewed scholarly journal, Social Science Japan Journal in September. Since then, I received four critical peer-reviews and based on them, I revised the manuscript and resubmitted in December. The article was formally accepted and published in January 2012.

Invited Talk:

Yosuke Nirei, “Globalism and Liberal Expansionism: Uchimura Kanzō and His Journalistic Milieu”

East Asian Studies Colloquium, Indiana University Bloomington, September 2011.

Publication:


Oxford University Press, Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo.