

Development of American Studies at Nanzan University

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In April 1968, the year when Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy were assassinated, I came to Nanzan University after I had studied for three years at the University of Chicago as a Fulbright Graduate Student. I came to Nanzan because I was asked to build up a substantial American Studies program at the Department of British and American Studies, Faculty of Foreign Studies.

To my surprise, I could not find any American Studies curriculum even in its embryonic stage. What I found was only a course of American History given by two distinguished historians of American History as part-time instructors: One was Prof. Kennichi NAKAYA of the University of Tokyo, under whom I studied American Studies as an undergraduate student, and the other was Prof. Akira IMAZU of Kyoto University.

Incidentally, the Faculty of Foreign Studies of Nanzan was separated from the Faculty of Arts and Letters in 1963 and almost all the faculty members who organized this department came from the Department of English and American Linguistics and Literature. It is no wonder that students who came to the Faculty of Foreign Studies demanded a new curriculum to identify themselves with this new Department. They worked hard to go various colleges and universities where similar departments offer their own curriculum other than that of English and American Linguistics and Literature. I was ready to run any risk to help those students who were very earnest in establishing a new curriculum.

Fortunately, in the spring of 1969, Professor Nakaya moved from the University of Tokyo to Nanzan as a full professor. I asked him whether we could jointly offer a course of "Introduction to American Culture." He was very positive to my proposal and thus the basic course of American Studies started in 1969. However, Professor Nakaya moved back to Tokyo to take the role of high school principal attached to his alma mater. I was very discouraged, but he continued to come to Nanzan as a part-timer.

I tried my best to make this course interdisciplinary inviting distinguished scholars of various fields that could not be found at Nanzan. I invited such professors from Tokyo as well Kyoto such as Makoto SAITO who was decorated by the Order of Culture and Yasuo SAKAKIBARA whose special field was the economics of transportation. The list of such part-time instructors would be that

of the first class scholars of American Studies in Japan at that time.

It was spring of 1974 when another scholar of American Constitutional Law, Kinuko KUBOTA whispered to me on our way to attend the annual meeting of American Studies Association in Tokyo. She said, "The Fulbright Commission is planning on giving an institutional grant. Why don't you apply for that?" After I returned to Nagoya, I had a discussion with the administration to take this chance. Fortunately, Nanzan was selected as a recipient of this grant. The Fulbright Commission was very thoughtful in providing subsidies for recruiting two young scholars of American Studies and a substantial amount of funds for purchasing books and materials on American Studies. With this grant, Nanzan University decided to establish the Center for American Studies which is open to scholars and students of the Chubu area. The official opening was April 1, 1976 and I was nominated Director of the Center.

The burdens upon my shoulders were to find two young faculty members who could come to Nanzan to teach and to build a good library of American Studies. In order to make a good geographical balance of recruitment, I recruited one from Kyoto and the other from Tokyo in the field of American History and American economy respectively. Still, two chairs established with the help of Fulbright Commission are most important asset for promoting and maintaining American Studies at Nanzan University. Gradually we could offer interdisciplinary American Studies program without the substantial help of other universities and colleges. American Studies as one of the area studies became one of the strong pillars of our curriculum together with a good program of language training. We explained that area studies and language are two wheels of our curriculum and helping the development of each other. It is quite safe to say that the American Studies program of undergraduate level was well established by the mid-1980s.

Incidentally, Nanzan is known as an institution of foreign languages or English education. In the mid-1990s, there still existed the Department of British and American Studies and the Department of English and American linguistics and literature. The entire departments related to language and literature learning belonged to Faculty of Arts and Letters except Spanish. When I became Dean of Faculty of Foreign Studies in spring 1994, I was asked by the top administrators to transfer all language departments--English, French, German, and Spanish--to Faculty of Foreign Studies and create a new Department of Asian Studies.

To say is really one thing, but to materialize is quite another. Especially, the integrating of the Departments of British and American Linguistics and Literature and the Departments of British and American Studies into one department was very hard to carry out, for each department has its own identity. However, I persuaded each department to emphasize area studies as an important pillar of

curriculum together with language instruction. Fortunately, I was successful in persuading each department and a new Faculty of Foreign Studies which consisted of the Department of British and American Studies, Department of French Studies, Department of German Studies, Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies and Department of Asian Studies was inaugurated in the year 2000. Naturally, the emphasis was put on area studies in their curriculum.

I served for six years as Dean and I was entitled to take a leave of absence for one academic year from 2001 to 2002. The next task for Nanzan in promoting American Studies and area studies is to build up the graduate school. The burden was mainly put on the shoulders of my successor, current Vice President, Professor Noboru KINOSHITA. I was cooperative in providing materials and papers to submit to the Office of Ministry of Education and Science. In December 2003, the Ministry informed us of their permission to open our Graduate School of International Area and Cultural Studies from April 2004. I was fortunate to serve as a member of the new graduate school for several years before my retirement. Comparatively speaking, those students who major in American Studies consist of almost half of the entire student base. Now they are working hard to develop a doctoral course for this graduate school and we strongly hope that the Ministry may approve the plan for adding a doctoral course late this year.

As I mentioned before, I had worked thirty-nine years when I officially retired in 2007 and the seed I planted seems to have grown and bear fruit called American Studies. Thank you.