

CHABOT-LAS POSITAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

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APPLICATION FOR SABBATICAL LEAVE

VP Academic Services
Las Positas College

(Pursuant to Agreement between Chabot-Las Positas Community College District and Chabot Las Positas Faculty Association)

REVISED 10-26-09
11-6-09

I. General Information (please print or type)

Date of Application 9/4/2009

A. Applicant's Name:
Sato Michael R
(last) (first) (middle)

Address:
[Redacted]
(street)
[Redacted] CA [Redacted]
(city) (state) (ZIP)

Division Arts and Communications Subject Area English

Home Phone [Redacted] Office Phone 925 424 1299

B. Has this proposal ever been approved but not funded, or approved, funded, but not taken by the applicant?

Yes No If "yes," give date of approval _____

C. Period for which leave is requested (please list entire period—see note regarding split leaves on next page.)

Semester Fall Year 2010

Semester Spring Year 2011

D. Do you plan to use banked load to increase your sabbatical leave salary? (See contract section 12A.4.g)

Yes No If yes, use the attached form (also available on the Human Resources website).

Applicant's Signature: [Signature]

Received and Reviewed by: [Signature]

Signature of Dean

Signature of Vice-President, Academic Services

Applications due on September 15 by 5:00 p.m. in the office of the CIO at the applicant's college. (Should this date fall on a holiday, Saturday, or Sunday, the following instructional day shall be the due date.)

Michael Sato : Final Proposal for Review

II. Purpose of Leave

The internment of Japanese immigrants and American citizens during World War II finds itself a vibrantly relevant but shadowed chapter of our country's history, and the stories of most of the people who were in those camps will never be heard. For several years, the basic skills program in the English department of Las Positas College has maintained a focus on the internment as a topic of inquiry through which to develop students' reading, writing, and thinking skills. As a central text, we have used a well-known memoir, *Farewell to Manzanar*. The memoir, like most published internment narratives, describes the experience from the perspective of a second-generation Japanese-American. First generation accounts of the internment, on the other hand, are very rare, for reasons that include a language barrier that affected all communication between most Japanese immigrants and non-Japanese speakers. The paucity of written first-generation accounts of the internment remains a barrier to our own understanding of the event, since the experiences of that first generation were so profoundly different from those of their children.

As it happened, my grandfather was a first-generation internee at the Poston camp, in Arizona, the largest of the Relocation Centers. He also kept a diary, and the volumes from 1941 and 1942 have survived the years intact. In 2002, I was awarded a grant by the California State Library, through the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program, to support translation of the 1942 volume from Japanese to English, and I completed this project, the translation itself, in 2003. The grant was awarded on strength of the translated diary's potential educational value to Californians.

The principal purpose of my sabbatical leave is to create one book-length document by translating four months (September-December) of the 1941 volume, editing, researching, and annotating the 1941 translation, and editing the 1942 translation to 1941 so that the manuscript will be usable, valuable, and accessible to Las Positas College students (the document will be posted on the English department's online resource website).

III. Objectives

My sabbatical leave objective is to produce an approachable, annotated translation of a Japanese immigrant's experience, as recorded in his diaries, of the relocation, internment, and the events leading to them from September 1941 to December 1942.

Plan:

1. Modernize the original Japanese (300 hours; 26 percent). The handwritten diaries contain archaic orthography and syntax (the language was reformed after World War II), and it must be transcribed to a modern, digital text.

Documentation: the transcription will be submitted

Discussion:

The text to be translated is a diary, handwritten in Japanese. With few exceptions, its author, Shinji Sato, wrote daily and usually filled one page. Between September 1 and December 31, 1941, there are 118 entries. In the 1942 translation, about four out of five entries are between 100 and 150 translated words in length. The shortest entries are as brief as one sentence, while the longest entry I sampled is 260 words. The 1941 volume has the same physical dimensions as the 1942 volume, with the majority of entries filling one page. Estimated roughly, my proposal might produce a translation of 14,000 words (to be edited, annotated, and attached to the 1942 translation).

Planning a realistic process for the translation of four months of the 1941 volume is aided by my experience translating 1942. Many translation projects are more or less routine, but because of the unusual character of the document, this one was not. To a high degree, the process emerged out of the obstacles that the project encountered as it went. While this translation will also present unique challenges, I think this process will accommodate many of them and will be in most respects the same.

The 1942 translation was actually the work of two projects. The first project was a translation of three months of 1942 that I did as a culminating project for the MA in Japanese I earned from SFSU; this was a year-long project. The grant I received from the

California State Library supported the translation of the remaining eight months of 1942, and was also a one-year project.

The 1942 translation began with a transcription of the handwritten diary to a digital text. Cursive Japanese has a very different appearance from print Japanese, and it can be difficult to read because, as in Shinji's case, the pen makes fewer departures from the paper, so the strokes that form a character curve into each other and are less distinct. The Japanese that Shinji wrote is also old enough to contain a lot of archaic characters and character forms.

2. Translation (500 hours; 44 percent). Translate each entry from September 1, 1941 to December 31, 1941 from Japanese to English

Documentation: The translation will be submitted

Discussion:

The digitized and modernized Japanese will be translated through several drafts. In the 1942 project, the first draft was a rough outline of ideas, and the many passages that would require extra attention were left alone. When the first draft was finished, I went back to the beginning and used the rough translation for a context to approach the individual translation problems, one by one.

There were a few types of translation problems. Some problems involved character-level questions of meaning or pronunciation (see objective 3), some involved gaps in context (see objective 4), and some problems were word and sentence-level.

One sentence-level challenge in 1942 was the translation of the poetry that Shinji had sprinkled through the entries. As he wrote them, the lines of poetry sometimes were and sometimes were not written with line breaks, which made them invisible on the page. The poems could only be distinguished from the surrounding text by counting syllables and matching discovered patterns in meter to conventional Japanese poetic forms such as *tanka* and *haiku*.

Also challenging were the neologisms that Shinji occasionally used, that he either created or were very specific to his time and place. For example, during his internment, Shinji began to write the word "block" to refer to a unit of barracks in the camp (which were also political units). In his diary, he spelled the word "block" with the Japanese loan-word alphabet in a nonstandard way in order to make the word phonetically approximate both the English word "block" and the Japanese word "buraku," which

refers to a traditional Japanese village-community. Needless to say, this nonstandard word's meaning could only be inferred from its usage. The significance of the word Shinji may have created is further complicated by the administration's policy of first-generation exclusion. Thus exiled, the first generation could fulfill their culturally prescribed leadership roles only within the boundaries of the blocks, which means that the blocks, rather than the second-generation congress, might have been the more central location of political decision making.

A third and fourth draft, focused on the English text, considered word choice and paragraphing, and smoothed out sentences.

3. Consultation (30 hours; 3 percent). As necessary, I will obtain a native Japanese scholar to assist in evaluating unusual characters or passages. During the grant work described above, I hired a Japanese graduate student in the Japanese language pedagogy program at SFSU, which is where I earned my MA in Japanese.

Documentation: A copy of a receipt for services will be submitted.

Discussion:

As noted above, the diary entries contained some number of archaic characters and character forms (i.e. of characters still in use, but now written differently). From this point in the project, it became helpful to consult with a native-Japanese language speaker. The person I found to work with, Shiho Kanazawa, was also a graduate student in Japanese language pedagogy at my college, and her background (she knows a lot of characters) allowed her to identify, at least tentatively, many of characters in question. During my work on the first-draft translation, Shiho also gave me suggestions on transcribing some names and other proper nouns with ambiguous phonetic values. Some fragments of the original text could not be transcribed because of physical damage to the diary or faded, illegible handwriting, but thanks to that assistance, the transcription was otherwise complete.

4. Research (100 hours; 9 percent). U.C. Berkeley's Bancroft library maintains a large archive of documents from and related to the internment. Inquiries will include the roles of first and second-generation internees, the U.S. government, and camp administrators in development of Poston's governance, relative to the role of Shinji Sato in particular. I will also conduct interviews with Shinji's surviving children.

Documentation: receipts for the microfilm copiers in the Bancroft archives are dated. Summaries of interviews will be submitted.

Discussion:

For a document that, as a personal journal, has no intended audience, Shinji's diary does have a surprising amount of coherent narrative (which also makes the translation a worthwhile project). But, it also refers often to people, issues, and events without describing or contextualizing them, and this presents a barrier to comprehension. Some of these references could be contextualized through research. For example, Shinji played a role in the development of the Poston internment camp's government. The camp administration invited the internees to form democratic institutions, but declared that first-generation Japanese internees could not be elected to represent the blocks (blocks of barracks used for housing internees) in these bodies. The administration's position of excluding the older, first-generation Japanese from political leadership deeply disrupted the hierarchies that were fundamental to the shape of that society and created all kinds of confusion and tension. Shinji was a block representative on the body that the administration had charged to create this second-generation-only congress (after which it would dissolve itself), and he indicated in his diary that he had some role in resolving the conflict between the first-generation internees and the camp administrators. At the Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley, I found copies of the meeting minutes that correspond to some of the meetings referred to in the diary entries, records not only of Shinji's remarks, but related texts such as internee and administrative correspondence that provided a fuller context for understanding the entries and making translation choices.

Finding and collecting the useful documents involved scrolling through mile after mile of microfilm at Bancroft, and these were all primary sources that had to be closely examined to be understood well enough to organize and ultimately link to the diary entries. The Bancroft archive will not be as useful for contextualizing the events of 1941—this research will lean more on the events before and after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, and how the rising tension affected Shinji's life and community in Sacramento. However, a lot of the research to be done to contextualize 1942 had to be left unfinished, so my sabbatical objectives include additional research for 1942.

5. Annotation and editing (200 hours; 18 percent). I will select and contextualize passages for accessibility and usefulness. I expect the final document to be 40,000-50,000 words.

Documentation: The manuscript will be submitted.

Discussion:

The final document will have features that make it as accessible and useful as possible to a general reader. At intervals, probably monthly, the translation will be interrupted with a summary of events and, where helpful, a research-based contextualization of events. I will also create a glossary, a chronology, a table of contents, and an appendix containing any diary entries that were not included in the main text.