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With the funds awarded by the Mellon Grant, I was able to carry out field research and establish international institutional connections in Japan and Mexico, both countries serving as fundamental sites for my dissertation research. My ongoing dissertation project focuses on the cultural, political and industrial dynamics inherent in processes of transnational media production and circulation. Media scholarship refers to such relationships as encompassing the concept of media “flow”, with pathways of media circulation mapping closely onto relationships of political and economic international hegemony. At present, there is an established body of work which is focussed on the relationship of cultural production and global political-economic power. It concentrates in particular on either the wide-ranging power of the Anglo-American culture industry, or the growth of regional and/or diasporic umbrellas of mediatic power in such places as East and South Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

My own project seeks to draw connections across pathways of media circulation that, rather than dealing with such evidently asymmetric power relations, speaks to connections across or between relative mediatic peripheries. It focuses in particular on the flow of East Asian Media to Mexico, and from there, to the rest of Latin America. Research into these relationships is in its early stages, and by travelling to both Japan and Mexico, I was able to meet colleagues working on related projects. I was first able to do so by participating in a preconference on “Cool Japan” held in Tokyo as part of July’s ICA (International Communications Studies) conference, held in Fukuoka Japan. I was additionally able to forge similar connections by travelling to Mexico City for field research. This trip to Mexico was particularly fruitful, as it allowed me not only to meet colleagues and experts working in anthropology and popular culture studies, but also allowed me to engage in on-site research of Mexico’s infamous pirate media markets and conduct interviews with members of Mexico’s dubbing industry – one of the largest dubbing industries in both Latin America and worldwide.