

Summer School at the Graduate School of Economics, Kyoto University

Korboon Petchrueangrong

PBIC, Thammasart University

13 – 20 September 2014

As I am a first year student of ASEAN Studies Program at Pridi Phanomyong International College, Thammasart University, who has held a Bachelor's Degree in Arts, major in Religious Studies, I had a little amount of knowledge of political sciences, economics, and also the international relations topics. I, therefore, have to work harder than others in the class who might have gained some more knowledge in those fields already. The courses provided for us, this time, were so helpful for my current study. They did not only offered useful information that could be able to be applied to my current studies, but also the contents in those topics, which several scholars have given, broadened my range of knowledge more or less, definitely.

Personally, I realized that having a chance to sit in the classes, receiving lectures from expert scholars in Kyoto University which is one of the best universities in Japan, is not easy at all. So I took this chance quite concern and intentionally. The outcomes that I got from attending to all classes have mainly motivated me to seek more knowledge in those related topics that the professors have talked in the class, continually.

"The History and Culture of Kyoto" by Prof. Niels van Steenpaal which was the first class, gave me an eye-opening happening. Generally, people will most likely think of historian teacher would be a native teacher, because he/ she would feel something more familiar with than foreign teacher. However, Prof. Niels was not ethnic Japanese but teaching Japanese history with a lot of things in details, it was my new experience. Also, this class was so helpful for me in generating the understanding of being Kyoto City (history, traditions, and way of people's life) that made my trip in this city even more memorable.

Then, *"the Introduction to the Southeast Asian Political Economy in the era of Asia-Pacific"* by Prof. Okamoto, it made me realizes that politics would come along with economics in terms of international relations at almost all the time. Since I am working as an officer at the International Relations Division at a well-known university in Thailand, this would not affect to my interest in learning to pursue my Master Degree, but also for my career path as well.

The class of Prof. Charnvit *"Japan and Southeast Asia/ ASEAN with Emphasis on Thailand"* also gave me an interesting point of view toward political situations in ASEAN, especially in Thailand. Also, it gave a clearer view of why Japan has been involved with ASEAN matters so far and why they are so interested in studying ASEAN.

Furthermore, in the fields of business and economics dimensions, there were numerous classes were provided during the time in Kyoto University; *"Japanese industries: Competitiveness and its historical roots"* *Japanese Industrial Policy*, *"Technological Change in Global Business History"*, and *"TEPCO and Business Ethics"*. Those classes have affected me to see how much important of economics to run one's nation and it needs to be along with ethics as always, otherwise bad thing would definitely happen. The contents that professors conveyed were really simplified, making students who have not had economics background (like me) easy to understand. The information that I got in the classes of economics is not only the concept of economics, but also what happened around the world and how the impacts spread out the others. It, furthermore, raised my curiosity about what is going to be the next steps of those circumstances.

"An Examination of Modern Energy Use: Presentism as an Embedded Temporal Characteristic of Modernity" and *"Food Security Politics and Alternative Agri-Food Initiatives in Japan"* by Professor Lambino and Prof. Hisano, were my favorite classes. Those two have motivated and encouraged me very much that we should be more concerned about the energy resources including food resource. Not only care for our own nation, but also look after other nations who have suffered from the fundamental factors, especially food. The professors have brought me to see the overview of global power and the origin of power that actually come from human beings and agriculture of food is the first and most important resource of all energies.

For the field trips to *Kiyomizu Temple* and *Yasaka Shrine, Nishijin* and *Kyocera Company*, and a visit to *Ozaki Organic Farm* were very impressive and fulfilled with a bunch of information. Even though, this is not my first time of visiting Kyoto, Japan, but I have never been this close to this city before. Sightseeing in Nishijin, Kyocera and Ozaki organic farm were very distinguished programs. Now, I understand more clearly why Japan has been so successful in terms of economics development. Some of the evidences that prove the hypothesis are the spirit of working showing in Kyocera, the recognition of local products, like Japanese traditional textile that has been preserved all along 1,200 years, expressed by Nishijin, and also the sense of creating the new ideas of Japanese in order to enhance the values of life, expressing by Ozaki-san, the owner of organic farm. So now, I have no doubt about the reasons of what Japan has done so far and so successful that became one of the most powerful countries in terms of economics growth.

In conclusion, before taking this valuable program *"Summer School" at the Graduate School of Economics, Kyoto University*, I, myself, have never looked at the relations between Japan and ASEAN countries this closely before. But after taking those classes which provided so many various points of views towards Japan as a role model and as a good case study for ASEAN countries, it let me see the linkages that bound us together for a long time and still on-going. As a student who is focusing on ASEAN Studies mainly, the result of this summer course does not only affect to my perspective in a short-run (an eye-opening experience), but also in a long-run; my attitude in what international relations studies should be looked like has been totally changed. I started to realize that the effective way of learning is that we cannot only focus on one perspective in the object, individually, but we suppose to integrate the combination of different perspectives to determine so that we can make a decision on the object more precisely and much more effectively. And this change, of course, will encourage my ASEAN Studies in Thammasart University and also to my work as an international relations officer at the Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University. It's going to support me to establish much further collaboration with those oversea countries in terms of education of health care, especially within ASEAN region. Lastly, I would like to thank you for those relevant personnel who are involving with arranging the course to be happened and thank you so much for your all efforts to run this course so smoothly and also very effectively.