

Report on Participation in Field Research in Thailand 2016

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Field research in Thailand conducted during 19-28 September, 2016 was a very pleasant and fruitful experience for me.

During the 9-days stay in Thailand, we have visited a lot of organizations and places to learn and feel the Thailand development through our ears, eyes and feet. Firstly, we went to Chiang Mai and stayed there for three days (20-22, September). We visited Faculty of Economics, Chiang Mai University (MCU), Board of Investment (BOI), an organic farm, Japanese Studies Center (CMU), and Fujikura Electronics (Thailand) Ltd. (FETL), and some of us gave presentation in the seminar held by CMU and Kyoto University. Then we moved to Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand. Bangkok is more prosperous and we also have a tighter schedule as well. The most important activity for us is the Joint International Workshop on "Diversity in Sustainable Development of Asia", every student participant made a presentation in this workshop and got some feedback. Before that, we have visited the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation (FAO) Regional Office of Asia and the Pacific, and United Nation Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). Through these international organizations (IOs) visit, we know more about how IOs organized, and work, and we also gain more understanding about what is going on around the world. After the international workshop, we visited an agro-tourism community, near the Maha-Sawat Canal, and several religious shrines. On the last day in Thailand we paid a visit to the Department of Children and Youth, and Department of International Organizations. Then we returned to Kyoto on 28th September.

This field research has benefited me a lot, and I will list four of the most impressive and important influence on me as follows:

Firstly, as my research interest is study on food security from international relation perspective, it is really a very exciting experience for me to visit the FAO Regional Office in Bangkok. This regional office is near our hotel, and it only takes us several minutes getting there by walking. The representatives introduced the FAO, the Regional Office, and the global and regional food security and hunger situation. At the last Q & A part, I also raised a lot of questions. This organization visit offered me a chance to step into the mysterious FAO, know more about how it is organized, how the people work, what their opinions on some hot topics are, and what their focuses are now. This experience offered me a more detailed understanding about the FAO.

Secondly, not only in Chiang Mai, but also in Bangkok, there are some scholars and activists began to raise their concern about the rise of China. They criticized the influence China had put on the Southeast Asian Countries, and a scholar called this "hegemony". These worries and concerns indicate that what the Chinese government did in the past several years has caused the neighboring countries' worry and vigilance. Chinese government should pay more attention to the international cooperation and academic concerning in neighboring countries.

Thirdly, in Thammasat University, Bangkok, we attended a very interesting and inspiring seminar on "The Role of Intellectuals in Modernization amid Cultural Diversity and Differences" given by Mr. S. Sivaraksa and Professor Dr. Thanet Aphornsuvan. Mr. S. Sivaraksa is a scholar, activist and author of more than hundred books, and he was even be put in the prison because of his struggle against the military. And Professor Dr. Thanet Aphornsuvan is the distinguished scholar of Pridi Banomyong International College. They talked about how the word "intellectual" was coined, how it became popular, their own understanding about this word, intellectual in the world today, and what should be done in order to become an intellectual. The lecture has inspired me a lot on what kind of person, or what kind of scholar I want to be. I want to become a real intellectual, so I should have the desire to improve society, and I should not afraid to speak out truth and expose lies. In order to do this, I should have the ability to tell what the "truth"

is, and maintain my independence, and tell others what is the real world.

Fourthly, I feel very honored to be appointed as the group moderator of Group Three in the Joint International Workshop. There were six members in the panel including me. We are from four countries and our researches are in different fields related to Economics. It is a challenge for me, since I had only been the facilitator in China and Japan, and hadn't been a moderator in an international seminar. And it is also a very valuable opportunity for me to practice how to chair at an international seminar. The panel presentation and discussion turned out to be a success, and I have benefited a lot from this experience.

Apart from the things listed above, I have also learned many other things, such as, the diversity of religious in Thailand, the overview of foreign investment in Thailand (among which Japanese investment is the biggest), and so on. At last, please allow me to express my gratitude to Kyoto University, Thammasat University, and all the organizations and staffs that helped us during this field research. Thank you very much.