

## Report on Participation in Thailand Field Trip

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From November 20<sup>th</sup> to November 26<sup>th</sup> 2019, together with other students and faculty members of the Graduate School of Economics, I experienced an unforgettable field trip to Thailand. I want to begin by saying that I greatly appreciate the warmhearted support from Kyoto University and the considerate hosts Thammasat University and Kasetsart University.

Over a week long time period, the Thailand field trip was both well-organized and offered a diversified program each day. Besides listening to lectures given by renowned professors from the two host universities, we also had the precious opportunity to visit organizations such as UNESCAP and the Bank of Thailand, have discussions with student representatives, as well as conduct field trips to get closer to local communities. Through these activities, we were able to explore Thailand's economy, politics and society by ourselves via communication with people of different occupations and standpoints. This kind of independent information collecting process undoubtedly trained our critical thinking ability, which is more valuable than directly being given a fixed answer. Also, not only did we go to the glorious institutions such as universities or national bank, we went to see the backward corner faced with urgent development issues as well. The comparison between different development levels was very distinct, which reminded me that the sustainable development effort is an eternal but difficult target for developing countries with, at present, a relatively low scientific innovation capability. Rather than covering up and only showing the glamorous face, to expose it to public and actively seek for solutions is always the better approach. And this is what Thailand is doing right now. Only by doing so can they move onto the right track toward the sustainable development goals (SDG), which is highly advocated by the UNESCAP.

During the whole trip, what impressed me the most was the active role played by young people in Thai society, or in more widely, in Southeast Asia. Not only do they have comprehensive and abundant knowledge about their own countries' situation and challenges, they also have strong intention to make a contribution through practical means such as being an activist or by participating in politics. I was deeply moved by their exuberant face and optimistic attitude towards making a better future.

Besides being passionate about their own country's issues, the students and faculty members from our host universities also actively participated in the discussion regarding students' own research on the last day in which we held a workshop. This was another surprising and fruitful opportunity for me during the field trip. Although my research was about migration history in China, several questions and feedback I collected from the audiences still helped me to rethink about my research topic from a more international perspective and expand my future research possibility to a large extent. A kind professor at Kasetsart University whose research field is labor history told me an interesting migrant story in the Northern part of Thailand during the lunch time, and further gave me advice on the techniques when conducting researches about migrants. I really enjoyed this kind of passionate academic communication process and here I express my sincerest gratitude towards these audiences and professors.

The Thailand field trip was fruitful and left many vivid impressions on me. I think this is what overseas studies can bring to us. The time might have been short, but via seeing a different landscape, getting in touch with different people, and absorbing new viewpoints, many changes will happen inside of your mind and influence your attitude

and opinions. This can make you become more encompassing and further influence your research design. I will cherish every overseas study opportunity and remember to be open and inclusive all the time.