

Ayutthaya-trade economy: reference from the drama
(เศรษฐกิจการค้าสมัยอยุธยา: ดูละครแล้วลองมองงานวิจัย)

Currently, the Thai history tends to be an interesting topic because of the Thai famous soap opera “ Buppessannivas” which focuses on the Ayutthaya Period and the trading among foreign countries. With this, the conference that I am interested in is about “ Ayutthaya-trade economy: reference from the drama” (เศรษฐกิจการค้าสมัยอยุธยา: ดูละครแล้วลองมองงานวิจัย) on April 4, 2018 at Faculty of economics, Thammasat University which is organized by CRISP and the speakers are Dhirawat na-Pombejra, Ph.D. and Winai Pongsripiean, Ph.D.

The purpose of this conference is to present the information on the trading in Ayutthaya Period. The drama is one of the important factors that could make people to understand more about Thai history but the history and the soap opera do not seem to be similar. I have learnt that the most important way for trading is the river and Ayutthaya had huge nine markets in the city. According to that time, Ayutthaya had a lot of cruise ships to import and export. Ayutthaya had received various types of products from foreign suppliers especially from China, Japan, India, and Europe. For example, when Ayutthaya bought the fabric from India, they will sell them to Phitsanulok by King Narai’s warehouse. Furthermore, the best selling products at that time were from the jungle such as woods which made a huge profit to Ayutthaya. Ayutthaya also imported the elephants to India by the ships. Everytime that had selling the products to other countries, Ayutthaya will buy the famous products of that countries back because it will not waste the time for coming back with empty ships. In the past, the trading was by products-by-products which implied that there was no money at that time. After that, Ayutthaya had changed the way of trading by using the money and it was easier to value the products. Therefore, Ayutthaya period was a prosperous era and it was almost same as Bangkok in nowadays.

According to “ Buppessannivas”, after the death of King Narai, King Phetracha seems to disagree with trading between Ayutthaya and foreign countries. However, in reality, King Phetracha still traded with foreign countries such as China, Japan, and India. Furthermore, Constantine Phaulkon played an important role in that time since he was a favorite person of King Narai because he is clever and could speak many languages, but King Phetracha did not like him that much. He tended to act like he has more powerful by inviting other foreigners to come in Ayutthaya. In the end, he was caught up by cheating the imported products.

In conclusion, in my opinion, I think in Ayutthaya Period, it was a monopoly market because Ayutthaya tended to have a high barrier to entry and the market was controlled by King. Furthermore, I think Ayutthaya at that time is same as Bangkok which it has a lot of outflow and inflow of various products and earns a high profit from exporting to foreign countries. Therefore, it can be clearly seen that Thailand has developed the transportation a lot from shipping by ships change to shipping by airplanes which have more convenient and faster.