

Re-Inventing Japan Project  
2016 Long-Term Program  
Universidad Autonoma Chapingo (Mexico)  
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It has been passed 6 months from 10<sup>th</sup> August when my life in Mexico started. I feel relieved that my life of studying abroad for about 5 months has been finished in safety without any injured. I felt this 5 months was passed rapidly, but sometime the flow of time passed so slowly. Now good memories which I really enjoyed campus life of Chapingo university, my friends, my teachers and their families took care me well, come across my mind. And I think great that I could join the project of studying abroad. However, I have experienced some troubles about VISA, property loss and the stress between different culture from Japan. And sometime I also felt that it is hard that the people from developed country live in advancing country. But anyway, I could be grown up in spiritual side, facet of living and of course facet of studying by this project.

I feed back this project and I think there are 4 good points that I experienced in Mexico. First, I could learn what I am interested in. I took 3 classes and especially the class of “Frutales Perennifolios” and “Cultivo in vitro de celulas y tejidos vegetales” were so interesting for me. In the class of Frutales Perennifolios, I learned about the tropical fruits which I am always interested in and I make the great impression about the classes of mango and avocado. In japan, all people know the names of these fruits but we don't have opportunity to learn about the process of cultivation and characteristic of breed varieties because these fruits are heavily dependent on the import. The teachers used in Spanish in class so I couldn't understand all but I think this was good opportunities I could learned about the process of cross fertilization in famous variety as we know them today. My teacher gave me some data about the class so I will use them if I get chance to study about tropical fruits.

In the class of Cultivo in vitro de celulas y tejidos vegetales, I could learn practically about cultivation in vitro which I was interested in before I entered university. I cultivated not only horticultural crops like tomato and eggplant that we can breed in Japan but also the crops like tequila and mescal that they can be grown in Mexico. I have experienced practice of cultivation in vitro twice in class of Nodai, and I have only learned the basic like the way of making culture medium and procedure of cultivation. However, in this class, we had experimented under various conditions which are different from kind of culture medium and parts of plants, so I think I could know about

application of cultivation. In addition, we were pestered with contamination in cultivation of callus and the experiments couldn't be done. At that time, we thought the reason and experimented with making adjustment. I think this process will be happened when I work graduation thesis, and also it was a good chance to experience before.

Next, it was good for me to join the study trip as a part of class, and I saw the real situation of agriculture in Mexico and listened the voice of farm producer. Especially, I am impressed the tell about import of avocado. The farm producers who we visited product avocado which export to Japan and they talked us that it is very strict rule of export in Japan. This study trip was enriched because I could learn the real situation in the exporter which we can't learn directly in japan. As one of the person in importer, I felt that we have to understand the actual condition in exporter and think what we can do in regard to advancement of agriculture in advancing countries and safety of food.



The third good point is that I could learned Spanish and I believe that it is useful for my future. Before I went to Mexico I thought I could live in Mexico only with English but in actually, all the classes are used in Spanish and almost classmates and teachers can't speak English. In fact, I had a hard time and I regretted studying seriously before studying abroad. But now I can understand daily conversation thanks to the Spanish class at UCh and studying by myself. I don't know the all words and grammar but I want to continue the contact with Mexican friends on SNS not to lost the skill of Spanish.

Finally, it was also great time to experience Mexican cultures. I felt different between Japan and Mexico though daily life but I was surprised at difference of Christmas and New year in Mexico. On winter vacation, two of my friends invited me their family house, one is from Oaxaca and the other is from Chiapas.

From 19<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> December, I went to the small village “San Sion Almolongas” in Oaxaca. Soon when I arrived there, I felt I transported myself back in time to the Showa period because the flow life is so slowly and it was very inconvenient, there aren't internet, TV, running water, gas, key of house and so on. But I could accustom to inconvenience soon and I was glad to spend a lot of time with wonderful nature and warm people in this village. And I also spent Christmas in this village. Mexico is Christian country so Christmas is important for people. 9 nights before Christmas, there are precious event named “Posada”. The mother of Christ (Jesus), Maria looks for the house to stay every night to escape from the king's hunt and in this event, we have to held parties and sing songs in the house where is chosen by Maria. In Posada, children play piñatas which is traditional playing in Mexico and it looks like decorative paper ball in Japan. Before the date change from 24<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>, we gather in church to pray. And after the date change to 25<sup>th</sup>, the fireworks are set off, many people drink alcohol and dance. The celebration is contained to first hours of morning but they don't celebrate in the daytime of 25<sup>th</sup>. In japan, we only celebrate Christmas two days, 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, and only stay with family, friends, and couple. On the other hands, they have a lot of events not only before Christmas but also after the day and they have important meanings in Mexico. I had never thought the real meaning of Christmas until I experienced Christmas in Mexico but I felt that there are deep history and meaning at that time.



From 26<sup>th</sup> December to 7<sup>th</sup> January, I stayed in Chiapas. At there, of course I enjoyed sightseeing. Chiapas has many great places and some of the buildings are related to Maya. This is the first time I learned about Maya so I was impressed by the mysterious culture, especially Palenque and Tonina. But I was really surprised at new year and 6<sup>th</sup> January, they call this day “the second Christmas”. On 31<sup>st</sup> December and 1<sup>st</sup> January, they don't have traditional culture like Osyogatsu. They gather with family and celebrate new year like festival. I think it is better for me Japanese style because I was scared Mexican style. The same time change the date to 1<sup>st</sup> January, they throw up many

fireworks and firecracker. I couldn't believe that the extent of them, all houses have many powders and they use them in the middle of road, so it is very dangerous. After they enjoyed firecrackers, we couldn't see the sky because of their smoke. I had only stayed peacefully in new year for 20 years, so I felt as it was in war. Then, on 6<sup>th</sup> January, is called "Dia de los Reyes Magos", when los Reyes Magos bring some presents to celebrate Jesus who is bear in Christmas. We celebrated with only family and ate traditional cake (pan). The cake has small dolls, and it is said that the person, who get this small doll when he or she cut the cake, will get the lucky in this year. This event is held every year in this family, thsy warmed up in this event. Since I came to Mexico, I have image that the Christian is so seriously but in this event, I really enjoyed.



However, I have some regrettable things in this studying abroad. Especially I couldn't do the experiment of graduation thesis. I had talked about this experiment with my teachers since after 1 month I arrived here, but it was difficult to get mango because the picking season was finished and the winter vacation was longer than initial plan so I couldn't get the enough time of doing experiment. I was really regret about this because it is difficult to do experiment of mango in Japan. there are some problem, it is so expensive to get them and the treatment I can do is so limited because the imported fruits have already done some treatment. So I thought it was best to do in Mexico. But I want to say thanks for my teacher and the people who were kind and helped me when I planned experiment.

I think it is nice that I will get the opportunity to use this studying abroad in my future. Now my aim is to study in the graduate college and I hope that I can support the agriculture in Latin America and research the food guarantee of security to improve agricultural products in Latin America in my future. One of the people who studied in Latin America like

Mexico, I 'm looking forward to help them and in addition, I hope that I use Spanish when I work in the graduate college or social world.

Finally, the teachers in Chapingo university, classmate, the Japanese who live in Mexico, teacher in Nodai, Prof, Yamaguchi and Baba, thank you for supporting my studying abroad. I have lot of memories in this life but I would like to use advantage of this experience and expect my growth in my future.