

The Potential of Learning ~What one summer's memory taught me~

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Every day in Vietnam gave me new discoveries and surprises. Visiting there was a good opportunity to look at myself.

Comparison of water quality in Vietnam and in Japan

It is said that the amount of water people need in a day is about 2 L. Though the amount of water that people need in a day is common to all countries, the amount of water people use each day is different. Also, the priority of water sources and water quality standards are different all over the world because of the difference in their living environments and customs.

I learned about it in the lecture “Know the water” as part of the basis course of ELCAS, and I still remember my deep impression clearly. This experience has greatly changed my view of water.

Water is essential. Until I visited Vietnam, I had been looking forward to the water quality examination on the various water quality indicators and comparing with Japan. Also, through the water quality examination, I strongly wanted to know how water is connected to the lives of local people and the local situation surrounding water. In addition, I was very interested in how water related to the traditional ways of thinking, ethnicity, and cultures in Vietnam. We examined 17 samples collected in Ho Chi Minh City, Hue City, and other places. Table 1 shows part of the results of the water quality examination.

The total hardness of water in Vietnam was lower than that of Japan. I was surprised at the result. This is because the

water had a strange taste when I drank bottled water in Vietnam, so I thought water in Vietnam was hard.

And, the number of colonies of coliform bacteria in the pumping water at a public toilet was high as I expected. There are no colonies of coliform bacteria and general bacteria in tap water

I was very interested in the water quality examination and the analysis of the results. This experience gave me new surprises and impressions. I had a good time learning about water and the life of the people.

Peace learning ~What I learned~

First, touring historical sites in Vietnam helped me appreciate peace. I visited the Reunification Palace and the War Remnants Museum in Ho Chi Minh City. Before traveling, I read many books about the Vietnam War, but the reality was more shocking. The museum was filled with weapons used during the war and pictures of the people involved in the war. A little boy was shot dead while trying to protect his injured younger brother. A woman clung to her husband, who was suspected of being a double agent and taken by U.S. forces. The dead bodies of countless soldiers rolled on the ground...I was speechless. I just remained standing there in a daze. I could almost hear their rage, regret, and sorrow. This was Vietnam only forty years ago. It was hard to imagine so much death while surrounded by the lively atmosphere of Vietnam today.

I also visited one of the countless underground tunnels built during the war. The tunnel was completely dark and wrapped in silence. It was very wintry in there. I had the hardest time

Table 1. Results of water quality analysis

Place	Kansai International Airport	Victory Hotel	Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry	Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry	Toilet at rest area
Sample	Tap water	Tap water	Pond water	Tap water	Pumping water
pH	7.5	7.2	7.7	7.2	6.6
Conductivity [mS/cm]	0	0.098	0.117	0.131	0.89
Total Hardness [mgCaCO ₃ /L]	50	10	35	10	50
Hardness Ca [mgCaCO ₃ /L]	35	20	10	10	7.5
Total Residual Cl [mgCl ₂ /L]	0.4	0.2	0	0	0
Free Residual Cl [mgCl ₂ /L]	0	0.1	0	0	0
Coliform [CFU/mL]	0	0	47	0	128
Total bacteria [CFU/mL]	0	0	4	49	2



Fig. 1. Flag tower beside Hienruon Bridge

walking because of the narrow path and the low ceilings. I slowly made my way forward, one hand on the cold wall and the other holding a flashlight. The underground tunnel was like an ant nest. I felt the nervous tension of the people who came here when they were faced with the terror of death. Time had stopped in this space and the war remained. How great a sacrifice had they made? Leaving the underground tunnel, I was relieved to feel the dazzling sunshine. I was grateful to live in a comparatively peaceful country.

Wonderful encounter with local people

Through my interaction with local high school students, I realized how small my world was. We had fun talking about our hobbies and cultures. In particular, I was impressed by the clear vision of the future held by these Vietnamese high school students. We were the same age, but they already knew what they wanted to do in detail. For many high school students in Japan, the ultimate goal is to enter university, so they do not think seriously about what they will do in the distant future. Can you imagine what they could achieve if they had the same



Fig. 2. Dia Dao Vinh Moc

passion about the future as the Vietnamese students? I broadened my capacities through this interaction, and I was happy to make friends in Vietnam.

Summary

I think learning is not just about accumulating knowledge. It is about having many different experiences and meeting many different people. It changed me. What I learned in Vietnam about the water quality, about the nature of war, about thinking critically, about working hard towards a future goal has changed me. I'd like to keep up with current events and express my opinions. I will read a lot of books, go outside, and gather a variety of experiences. The interactions I have will increase my potential so that it becomes an endless ocean. "To see is to believe." I will pack this phrase in my bag and go on a cruise to my destination called "The Future."

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