



# To whom who might be reading this report...

After you have finished going through it, you might think that this report is not 'formal' enough, it's not how 'others do it'. Yes, point taken. And that's the reason why I wanted to write this report in the first place. In the following 11 pages, there won't be sentences like 'it's very tiring' or 'rewarding' or any perfunctory way of expressing myself. But instead, I will make use of vivid and lively pictures taken during activities to show you my indescribably magnificent experience in SJYC.

The Sino-Japanese Youth Conference 2016 was the continuation of a non-partisan conference organised by students and graduates from United World Colleges around the world.

The conference brought together 25 Chinese (15 from Mainland China and 10 from Hong Kong including me) and 15 Japanese secondary school students, aided by 30 facilitators, to Li Po Chun United World College of Hong Kong, from July 22 to July 28, 2016.

It provided a unique platform for Chinese and Japanese students to come together to engage in cultural understanding, historical interpretation, problem-solving and community service within the framework of the Sino-Japanese relationship.

To me, the 7 days in SJYC made an irreversibly profound impact on my attitude towards learning and other different aspects.

First, it's the first time that I got to engage in down-to-Earth cultural exchange with my dorm mates for 7 days! I solved myths and truly

broadened my horizons. Before the conference, Hong Kong seemed to be where my eyes set on.

Second, it taught me one very important skill: to think from others' perspective. You might have heard this phrase from time to time, but how often are you willing to apply it? During the conference ,we were asked to practise it every day, in every activity. And bit by bit, I started to see just how little that I seldom saw the full picture. It reminded me how to compromise and negotiate with others better in the future. And more importantly, to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings.

Third, for my observation, people were very willing to take the initiative. All the barnstorming, writing and presentation methods, implementation was 100% directed by the participants, we didn't even need much assistance form the facilitators. The teamwork was remarkable, not to mention the efficiency. It made a very sarcastic contrast with our classrooms.

To make everything even better, I went there alone that so nobody knew about my past. I could put the communication skills into practice. Meeting all the beautiful people in SJYC, that strong bond of helping each other out and encouraging each other will always fill up my eyes with tears of joy when I reminisced about it.

Douglas Tam Tsz Lok 2016.8.31

## Down-to-Earth Gultural Exchange

With My Roommates

Upon the arrival of my Japanese roommates in the first day, Hideo and Yuki, we had a three-hour chat before dinner. The first people that I met in SJYC have already shook my world! We discussed about what led to cramp schools in both Japan and HK after learning each other's education system briefly. I also knew about the details of the Meiji Revolution, i.e. how famous Japanese traditional companies such as Mitsubishi were formed under the assistance and protection from the Meiji Government.



And when Eddie arrived on the second day, I was even upset about how ignorant I was. Actually, Eddie from China knew A LOT about Tiananmen and other businesses of the Chinese Government. I have always thought that these information were censored in China. Turns out, for the last few years, the government has already reduced its influence over the internet, so basically you can look those all up on the web!



7 days seemed like a very long period of time, unless you spent countless hours to analyse materials, write proposals, presentation notes, and give group hugs and take group photos.

#### Gultural Session

#### Getting Ready For The Game

Cultural Session evolves around one word in particular: STEREOTYPE.

How do students from Japan, China and Hong Kong



mind is of

perceive each other? Instead of giving a plain presentation with a whiteboard, we used short dramas. As the theme of this year's conference was 'peace', it was crucial that we put ourselves into each other's shoes, to learn empathy before making critics. Therefore, in this warm-up session, our group was assigned to reenact major stereotypes of, not Mainlanders or the Japanese, but Hongkongers in the eyes of them two.

When your brain receives the message 'stereotype', the first thing that comes to course stereotypes from your point of

view. In SJYC, the programme taught me to flip it and re-examine this deep-seated idea from a whole new perspective.

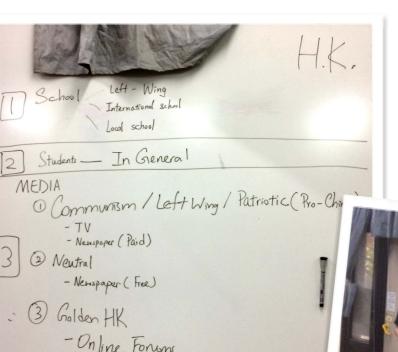
# History Session Sensitive~~

"It was so eerily quiet that I could almost hear my own heart pumping and a sheen of sweat covering my palm". This Session included a discussion and of course, another presentation during the twilight hours. We were divided according to our regions and were assigned to give a briefing on the voices from our regions regarding the Nanking Massacre.

As expected, the Chinese group was 'overly sentimental and emotional', I could feel how they were connected to the Massacre, it's like their own family members were allegedly killed during the Incident.

To my surprise, the Japanese knew a lot more than I thought (Stereotyping right in the spot). They were clearly about the time line and concept of the event. Mostly, They acknowledged that

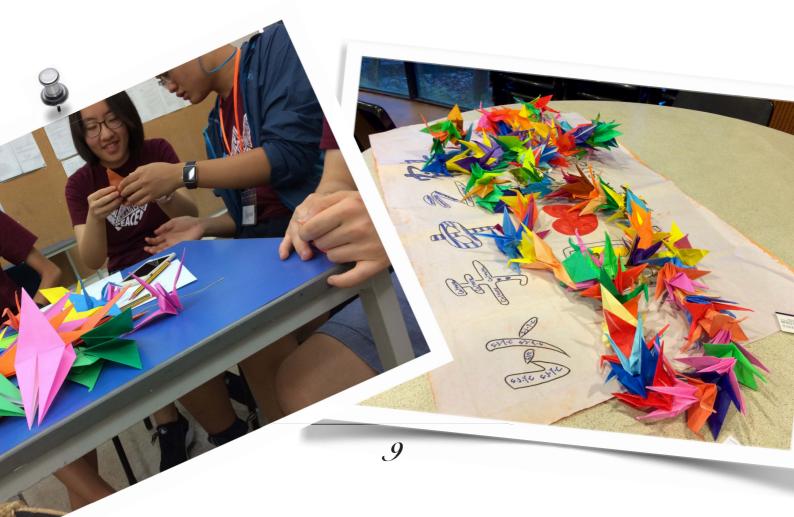
these ethical burdens belonged to their ancestors, not them. And as a Hongkonger who knew the fuller picture, I couldn't find a reason to disagree with it. After all, it's forgiveness that unites people and help them move on.



### Peace Initiative

Carrying Our Message To The Public

This was truly the highlight of the Conference. Our team woke up together with the Sun, brainstorming on how to promote the idea of 'peace between China and Japan' at the Ma On Shan Plaza Bus Terminal. It's really a headache as Hongkongers live a brisk pace and we were sure that they would not have time to stop and listen to our lecture for 15 minutes. After much consideration, we came out with a plan; using what we have learnt. Previously in the Cultural Session, all of us have learnt how to fold a Japanese paper crane. What if we ask the pedestrians to fold them with us and sign their names on it? According to the Japanese tradition, if we can fold 1,000 paper cranes, our wish will come true and of course our wish is PEACE! Due to practicality concerns, we lowered the goal to 100 paper cranes since it's more about the symbolic meaning than folding paper cranes.



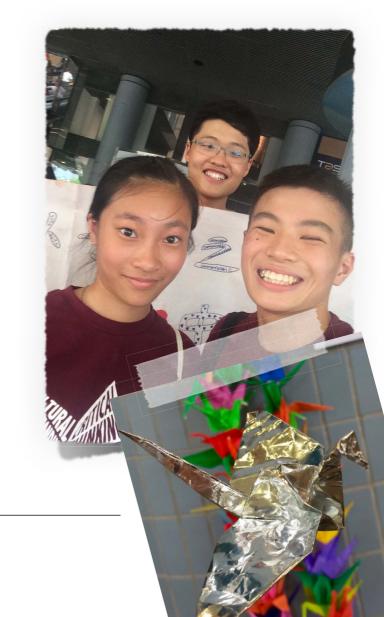


#### Morning

As Hong Kong is all about efficiency, we started burying our heads into prefolding the paper cranes for the pedestrians so that they could use less time. After 4 hours of labour, we successfully (not counting the ones that went wrong) pre-finished 100 paper cranes, in all colours, and drew sharp posters, all ready for our afternoon initiative.

#### Afternoon

After setting up our stall beside the bus stop of Ma On Shan Station, Carly (my teammate) and I began to run around and invited the public to join us. Strangely, many of the pedestrians only accepted our offer when we introduced the initiative in 'English' and claimed that we were 'Japanese'! (Super xenophillic). We took turns teaching the pedestrians to fold the cranes while explaining our objective and goal! it's the very first time that I was given the opportunity to meet the public!







#### Gonclusion

We were drenched with sweat! Guess what! In 1 hour, we folded 113 cranes!!! That surge of satisfaction was indescribable! I was truly grateful to have met such helping and loving people through the project.



### Final Event

Sino-Japanese War?!

Yes. The last whole-day activity of SJYC was to first simulate different parties of China and Japan fighting for the governing party, and then initiating war on Shikoku Islands!

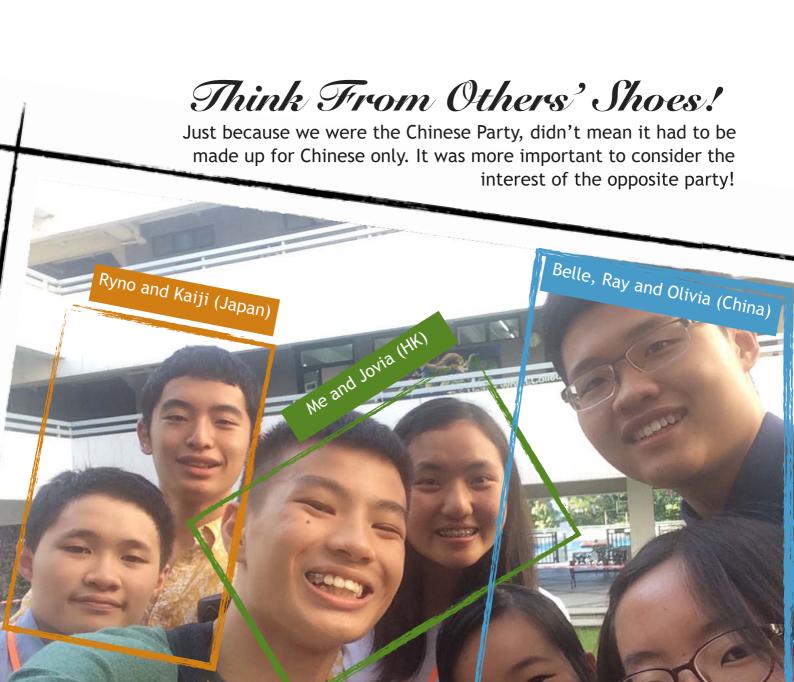


#### Writing Lublic Address

In order to be the governing party, our party (China Party A) had to respond to 4 topics regarding to Sino-Japanese conflicts, while considering their interests and options. And then convinced the public, companies and the UN (all played by the organisers) to vote for us.

Although this was just a mock debate between parties, some of our participants felt sick to swindle on these subjects as it hurt their feelings to the country! As a student who grew up in a pro-colony, it's hard to imagine this level of patriotism!





#### WAR!!!

#### **Negotiation and Aggression**

There were 4 rounds of attack and defence. You would have a feeling of playing Battleship. For our group, we both tried to gain more islands on Shikoku, but at the end, we used a compromising tactic to finally evenly divide the islands, and because of our act of kindness, although our group did not get as much islands as China vs Japan B & C, we won! (Thanks to the UN's votes)

