

Third prize winner: Sera GANAHA of Kanazawa Medical University

A Distant City Now a Second Home

Although in reality I lived only three hours by plane from Hong Kong, it was not until I participated in the study trip hosted by the Hong Kong government, that it dawned on me that a world full of marvels existed in such proximity. At one of the most prestigious universities in Asia, I was given the chance to casually discuss over dim sum about world politics with a former Japanese ambassador to Greece, take part in a student discussion on China's foreign policy, stroll through the nature-rich campus of CUHK on a sunny day, and encounter interesting students from different walks of life. The two weeks spent at CUHK revolutionized my view of Hong Kong and its people as belonging to a distant world, and left me more curious than ever to revisit the land to discover what more the cosmopolis has to offer.

We Japanese students bonded very quickly with our multilingual Hong Kong counterparts. Our adventures together were not confined to the campus, rather extended to all corners of the city. We experienced having scrumptious curry in one of the shadiest neighborhoods in town, inevitably got lost somewhere in Mongkok, discovered that deer antlers and turtle shell could be consumed, posed to take a picture with a lovely Chinese lady who served us free broth, became regular customers at Gong Cha whose server memorized my order by the end of our stay due to my bubble tea addiction, and last but not least— were badly beat by Hong Kong's Catholic primary school students at step dancing to American hip-hop music. I owe many thanks to the sponsors and coordinators for our program for making Hong Kong feel like a second home to me, and I look forward to being able to bargain in descent Cantonese when I return.