

My Japan experience 1.4-11.6.2012

Lasse Ketonen

My preconception about Japan was that there are a lot of people, who work hard and traditions and culture are highly respected. This preconception was really narrow and now at ending of two and half month work placement I can say that my thinking about Japan as a country and culture has widened a lot.

When I and my friend Martti Sinnela arrived here it was really cold. We had traveled two days in row almost without sleeping. When we arrived Akita Kosen we went straight to dormitory where our rooms were shown. After that we went to dormitory office where Mr. Sugawara told us dormitory rules with dormitory staff. Then we realized first time that only few Japanese speak good English and we didn't understand Japanese so good. In same day we meet Tachta, internship student from Indonesia. Next day we meet Hanif, Malaysian internship student. They showed us where is Grocery shop and helped us with daily problem and get us start in our living in Akita Kosen. After one week three French students; Clement, Kevin, Christophe and Thai internship student Mo arrived in dormitory. In same week our projects started.

I noticed first when I arrived in Japan that people are really kind and always try to help as best as they can, even if they don't know English. Also they were really polite to us and to each other. This was huge difference between European people and Japanese people. And it surprise me positively even if I had told that Japanese really polite and respectful.

Also they nature and respect of it was really nice thing in Japan. There was no trash in the streets or in nature. I made few trips with bicycle to temples near Kosen to see nature and mountains. We also made trip with Mr. Sugawara to Lake Tazawa to bath in onsen and to Kakunodate to see sakura and traditional Japanese buildings. Also Mr. Kurogi and Rugby team President took us in Morioka in Iwate prefecture to see rugby matches.

We made several trips in the Akita city with internship students and that's



how we get known as Japanese food and culture. Also these trips connect us as tight group and I made lot of friends in two and half months. Most memorable trips were to see hanami in Senshu Goen and 30km bicycle trip to other side of city to buy a bag.

I learned in these months how much I care about my family and friends in Finland. Also Japanese culture of respecting each other and also respect nature change my way of thinking. Also multicultural atmosphere in dormitory teach lot about group working and different cultures. Especially get known to Muslim religion and way living was really cheerful experience.

After all I am really happy that I decided to do my work placement here in Akita. It has given a lot of new friends, experiences, professional skills and tons of good memories. Even if the life sometimes was really hard and stressful the positive atmosphere and people give power to go on. I am really thankful for all my friends and family who supported me on my Japan visit. And I want also give my humble thanks to mechanical engineering department, Mr. Kobayashi my, project team members and to Mr. Kurogi and rugby team members for successful trip and good atmosphere.



Figure 1 Kakunodate hanami



Figure 2 Lake Tazawa



Figure 3 Work placement students





Figure 4 Road n.7 and Serion Tower

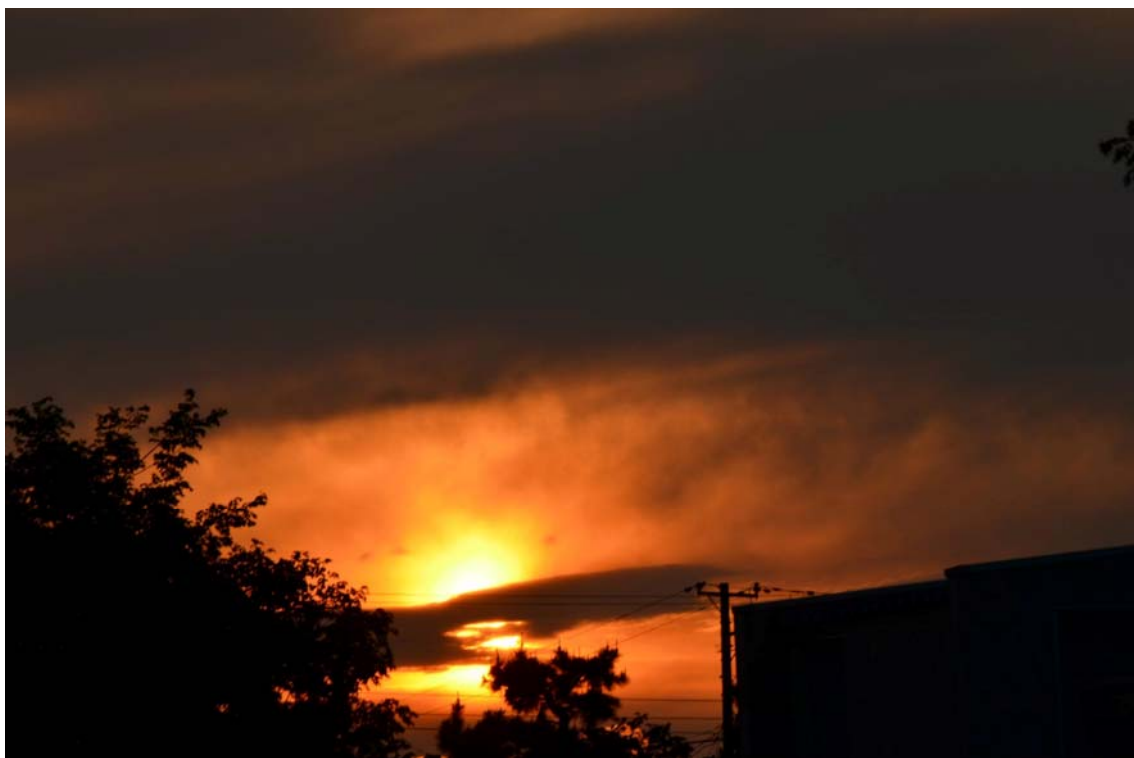


Figure 5 Sunset in Akita Kosen