

“Docent of the Day”

An unique experience at the Korean Folk Village

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On February 24th, when spring was about to come, I had a special experience at the Korean Folk Village. A chance was given to be a docent of the day at the Korean Folk Village, guiding the EPIK teachers from all over the world. At first, when I was offered the chance to explain about the Korean Folk Village, I felt both nervous and exciting. It could be a great burden to a high school third grader, but on the other hand, it was a chance to meet and communicate with foreign teachers, and also a chance to broaden my knowledge about Korean culture. While preparing for the presentation, I researched about Korean traditional houses and gardens. My friends and I practiced, rehearsing the script for the day.

The day arrived, and I started the day by greeting each EPIK teachers one by one. Everyone was amiable, and some of them even asked me questions about the Korean Folk Village. Although I forgot some lines, I tried my best to explain about the Korean Folk Village, and the traditions of Korea.



Thanks to the uniqueness of the EPIK program, I was able to meet various people from different countries. It was amazing how they formed their interest in Korea. During lunch, I had a chance to meet with some EPIK teachers, and some of them knew Korea even before the EPIK program. It was amazing how they enjoyed Korean culture, including the Bibimbab we had.

Through this experience, I learned more about the Korean Folk Village. I have visited the Folk Village since elementary school, but I have never found interest in specific houses or buildings, nor tried to research about it. The main purpose was just to 'enjoy' how the people of the past had lived. However, with the responsibility of being a docent, I actively collected information about the Korean Folk Village. It was a great chance for me to learn more about my culture. The EPIK program was impressive and special because it showed 'the globalization of culture.' The culture that can represent Korea should become the icon of Korea in the global market. The docent program made me think once again about who I am, and what culture I should be proud of.

I hope this EPIK program to become an annual program, with high school students involved. It is not just a chance to meet people from diverse background, but also a chance to recognize my own background and the culture where I was nurtured. Thank again to the NIED(National Institute for International Education)and Northeast Asian History Foundation for giving us the opportunity.

EPIK's volunteer work

권재윤
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The volunteer work I participated in on the 24th of February was one of the most inspirational and meaningful experiences I have ever had. When I look back at the experience now, and think of the cold weather that day and all of the research and studying we had to do about Korean history, it wasn't an easy job. But now, looking back, I can surely conclude that that day would last in my memory forever.

I have been to the Korean Folk Village when I was very young, like in elementary school and had forgotten most of the important facts about the place and buildings in the village. Because I didn't have sufficient knowledge of what I had to introduce to other people, I didn't have the confidence to actually lead a group of foreigners who were going to become teachers here in Korea. Also, I worried a lot about the character of the teachers and how they would react to my mistakes if I should ever make one. But when I actually got there and started the actual tour, I immediately realized that all those worries had been in vain. The teachers were all so nice and had good manners. They were just excited to be there, and hopeful about learning new information of a different country. So with the help of the assistant teacher from EPIK, I finished my duty successfully, in a better quality than I had expected. It was a very short time, not even a full day, and I wish it had been longer. But even during that short period of time, I felt affection and attachment to all the teachers that had been there.



About the English speaking and learning part, I have a lot to say too. I have always loved talking in English and always try to have all the conversations in my daily life in English. Whether it is formal English or not doesn't matter, I just loved the language. And I had always imagined myself speaking with foreigners and giving them information about our country. EPIK's volunteer work fulfilled my dreams of doing this and I am very grateful for the chance that they had given me. The time was invaluable; I got a chance to rethink and go over Korean history in the most fun way and I also had the chance to teach foreigners and acquaint them while doing it. Also I would like to recommend this volunteer work to other students who are fluent in English and who are willing to give help to other people and want to have a chance to learn something meaningful.

At the end of the day, I chatted with my team's assistant teacher about my dreams and plans for the future. When I told him that I wanted to work as a news reader at CNN, he said these kinds of experiences, like the one I had in the Korean Folk Village, are exactly what I had to do if I wanted to have prior experiences to my dream. Explaining information, letting other people know what I know, helping them if they required my assistance; these are the responsibilities of the reporters and story tellers of the 21st century. And these are what I am hoping to do in the future. Thus, as a student who had had the experience already, I can assure all the other students out there that this is a chance to get your epiphany, enlightenment and to grow a new perspective on things. I will always be ready to have such an experience whenever people need my aid and are willing to do it most sincerely.



One day concierge

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Cheong Shim International Academy

About a dozen teenagers gathered up at the entrance of the Korean Folk Village, excitedly chatting away against the crisp late winter breeze. Normally, it would have been quite appropriate to assume that these seemingly young ones were on a field trip, or to learn something for their own, but in this case, things were different. These very students were here to guide- not *to be guided*- the to-be-English teachers of Korean elementary and junior high schools to a brief covering of the traditional culture of Korea. And as the future teachers finally arrived in long, neat rows, the students from CSIA, our concierges for the day, swallowed their last gulp and started running through the scripts they had prepared again in their heads, nervously waiting for their tour to take off.



Like anyone else, it was the first time for me to stand in front of such a large group of adults, let alone lead and explain to them the various traditional Korean houses and buildings and a glimpse of what the society looked like. It was unavoidable for me to feel nervous and I kept on stammering, but as grownups as they were, they soon made me comfortable and got me back on track. I was so appreciative of them for being such good listeners and I did my best to make sure they had a meaningful time that day.

After a brief introductory tour in the morning and some lunch afterwards, we watched a samulnori (Korean traditional percussion quartet) performance. The teachers from foreign countries were not the only ones awed by the performance- even us students watched with astonishment as the performers spun their heads and beat their drums. We watched several more performances after that- rope walking and horseback riding.



After viewing the amazing performances, we went on a few more courses; to the Yang ban house and the Official Government Building, where we actually got to try out the punishments such as flogging and the pillory, and get inside what the jail looked like back then. It was good to see the to-be teachers all enthusiastic about trying out this and that; eager to learn as much as they could about Korean culture. Curious as ever, they asked me how the grinding tool worked and what the thing behind the door handle was, to which I answered sincerely up to the point my knowledge held up.

As much as I hope the same applies for the teachers, for me, this was such a valuable experience. Even though it was only for a day, I felt like I developed some sort of rapport with them from the short conversations we shared. Also, I hoped that today's experience could become a sort of bridge that would narrow the gap between different cultures if not today, then in the near future. And because we didn't share each others' phone numbers or any other form of communication, it would be practically impossible to meet any of them again, but I think that's what makes memories more beautiful and dearer. This way, I would be more careful in letting the day's memories fade away because I know that day was, and will be never like another one.

After successfully bringing the day to an end, we, the students, got on the same bus we rode to get here, to go back to our dormitories. We all agreed that today was a day spent well, and continued to savor it longer in our dreams as we dozed off while the bus rolled ahead steadily to where we belonged.

Tour Guides for Foreigners

주윤정

Cheong Shim International Academy

On February 24th, 18 students from Cheong Shim International Academy(CSIA), including me, gathered at Korean Folk Village with a name tag and small-size microphone hanging on our neck. Korean Folk Village is a place where the constructions from Chosun Dynasty are reproduced and various cultural programs are held. For this day only, we were tour guides for foreigners who were prospective English teachers at Korean public schools. Our mission was to help those teachers to catch a glimpse of Korean tradition and culture so that they could settle in Korea without much difficulty. As the freezing winter breeze blew hard, my face was red and stiff from worries and nervousness. Though speaking in front of a huge group of teachers was overwhelming, I stepped towards them.

Standing and speaking in front of so many teachers, I found myself mumbling and



my heart pounding. Never have I used microphone before nor have I had so many adults following me. However, since I was to guide them, however awkward, I decided to confide in myself.

Watching Korean traditional performances such as Nogak(farmer's music) and Martial art on horseback, Rope-walking was part of our schedule. Even though not many of the teachers understood Korean, they were pumped up by the music and dances. Indescribable titillation that Korean traditional performances arouse seemed to touch their hearts. They even spiced up the performance by shouting "얼썬, 좋다". It seemed they were

becoming more and more familiar with Korea

We explored the ins and outs of Korean Folk Village as I showed my group around the village. Thankfully, the teachers were all avid learners. While visiting traditional Korean government office, they acted as if they were a local governor who served as the judge and prisoners. We also sat around on 정자, enjoying the beauty of Korean garden.

Though, there is one thing that bothers me. Unlike Nogak and Martial art on horseback, Rope-walking had no music or dancing. Moreover, commentary about the tricks was given in Korean only. Unable to understand, the foreign teachers seemed somewhat bored. It would have been much better if they had been provided with English commentary or at least a brochure written in English. Due to a sudden change in schedule, unfortunately, we didn't have enough time to visit all the places as planned. However it was a refreshing experience for me. I eagerly hope that through this program, they have gained a better understanding of Korea and the Korean culture.

'Frankly, I'm very nervous now.' That was the first remark when I met teachers. The day before tour, I checked again and again what I remembered and what I was supposed to say until midnight. However, I still felt nervous and my voices were trembling. But, when I gave pamphlet to teachers, I could feel warm welcome from them. After that, our team went to the place where they can make and play Jeggi(Korean traditional toy). Teachers had bright eyes while they made Jeggi. Although I know it well that I'm not good Jeggi player, I joined the game with teacher. While we played Jeggi, we talked a lot and became closer. Also, teachers encouraged me which made me feel calm. Many of them were very good player and some of them even bounced Jeggi over 20 times. Then there was 'Jeggi tournament'. Some brave teachers volunteered to join the game. Both players and bystanders enjoyed the whole game. After Jeggi program, we watched Nong-ak(Korean traditional music) and Jultagi(a tightrope feat).



When I was in middle school, I joined the Samulnori(Korean traditional music) club and played traditional drum. Nong-ak reminded me of the memory of club activity. Besides, I felt rhythm inside my body and imagined as if I were one of the performers. Then, there was Jultagi which was what I really wanted to see. Surprisingly, there was no safety device and the rope tied really high. Unlikely to Jeggi program, there was no interpretation or explanation about Nong-ak and Jultagi. Thus, teachers just watched the performance without knowing its meaning or what performer said. Then, we started tour though there is little time to see all places where we were supposed to see.

We first went to the Yangbanga where noblemen used to live. When I told



them ‘이리오너라’(Come out here), they were interested and spoke it aloud. When we moved on to the next place, there were Seonangdang, the place where people used to perform rituals and pray their wishes. One

curious teacher asked me, ‘What’s the meaning of that big tree and colorful ties?’ When I explained the meaning of this place, teachers understood and had interest in colorful cloth. After that, we went to Gwana where local executive lived. When I told them severe penalty which served in Gwana, teachers’ eyes were big with surprise. There were many places that visitors can experience the penalty as if they were criminals. However, as many people were in Gwana, teachers just look around and don’t have time to experience. Then, we went to see the performance of horse riding which teachers wanted to see the most. The show made me nervous since I worried if horse riders got hurt by mistake. Also, I were not aware of the time goes with various and extreme performance.

During tour, many teachers asked me about my school life. I told them my subjects, dormitory life and weather in Gangwondo which they would work. Entire program was very interesting and good chance to know tradition of Korea. But, many teachers felt tired since they stood up or walked all day long. Thus I thought reducing the number of programs and giving enough break-time is needed. If these are improved, this tour program would be perfect. Also, I’m sure that this was the good experience to both teachers and I. While I prepare for guide, I deeply have interest in Korean tradition. Furthermore, this was the chance that made me think how to let the world know Korean culture.

EPIK's volunteer work

원은재
청심국제고

On February 24th, my fellow students of Cheongshim International Academy and I were given a chance to participate in the EPIK Orientation, as student guides at their visit at 용인 한국민속촌. Each one of us was assigned to one class of foreign English-teachers-to-be, and we led the group on a tour introducing the basic livelihoods of people in a traditional Korean society. We also got to enjoy traditional Korean performances, including Nong-Ahk (traditional music of farmers), horseback-gymnastics and tightrope walking. Each class took part in an activity session where they got to make traditional Korean items such as masks, Sotdae (an object that is placed at the entrance of a village, believed to protect it) and more. Our group, in particular, made Jegis(a traditional Korean toy) and held our very own Jegi tournament where anyone could challenge the Jegi master to a duel. Every one of us got to make many new friends, and it was an absolutely fun experience for all of us.

Honestly speaking, I didn't realize the value of such an event at first. I merely considered it as a field trip where foreigners can have a taste of Korean culture. My skepticism had rooted from the thought that visiting a traditional culture village wouldn't really provide a better understanding of the Korean society and especially the Korean students that they will be teaching. No one is really interested in their cultural heritage these days, and the kids are only interested in getting the latest models of smart phones. However, only after immersing myself in the experience did I come to realize that it was much, much more than just a field trip.

As I participated in the event I came to realize that the lifestyles of people long ago depicted what has always been laying underneath Korean people-the fundamental set of values.