

Reflection on Wangdong Xiang trip (2018.08.24-26)

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This is my last summer holiday before graduation, I'm glad that I made good use of it by joining again a Mingde service trip. The trip is a follow up to the previous Wangdong Bridge feasibility study.

This time the trip is especially meaningful as I had the privilege to do the assessment side by side with several knowledgeable scholars. It is valuable lesson to listen to their spontaneous judgements on why a structure would fail and how we could mitigate. For example, under their guidance, I quickly realized the potential slope failure and occurred differential settlement concerning a school dormitory by making sense of geotechnical knowledge. We students also made better decisions with the feedbacks given from the teachers, such as our justifications on mitigating the slope and renovating the bridges.

Apart from doing the assessments, we students and teachers also spend a great time enjoying local traditions. During the Zhongyuan Jie, a festival not commonly celebrated in Hong Kong, we experienced the tradition dance show of Miao Zhu at Rongshui Zheng, where we students participated in a tug of war, and the Baijia Yan in Liaohe Dun, where the locals greeted us with a lot of delicious food. It was thanks to Kelu and Wu Laoban that we got to have such a marvelous experience.

The only disappointment in this trip was that a new bridge was built next to the bridge we originally intended to renovate, making it less necessary to execute our plan. However, I'm glad to see the efforts

the local government has put into easing the travel between the village and the outside world. It is not surprising to see how the roads we used to travel into Wangdong Xiang have changed drastically by becoming much less bumpy. The budget for the bridge solution we are going to propose is significant, but I'm certain of the changes it can make.