

GG2 VISITS RONDINE THE CITADEL OF PEACE

On the 11th and the 12th of May, we had the chance to follow a two-day lecture and to engage in stimulating group activities in Tuscany's countryside over the issues of international conflicts and cooperation in *Rondine The Citadel of Peace*, near Arezzo in Tuscany.



Rondine is a cultural association that promotes conflict resolution and dialogue, through the sharing of different experiences and the cohabitation of young people from diverse backgrounds and nations such as: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Romania, Israel, Palestine, Armenia and Lebanon. The students study at *Rondine's* small village, live together and gradually start to promote peaceful coexistence between their nations. Throughout their time at *Rondine*, students have the opportunity of completing undergraduate or postgraduate courses in nearby Universities, so that with their return home they can advocate for peace in their respective countries.



On our first day, we were introduced to some of *Rondine's* students and to some visiting students from Western University of Ontario, who were spending a month at the association. Then, we attended an interesting lecture from guest speaker Sihem Djebbi, Sciences Po professor of international relations and conflicts and security, on the importance of the concept of identity in regional and international

conflicts. In the afternoon, teamed up in groups with Canadian and international students, we discussed different aspects of conflicts' roots and possible solutions and we provided a short presentation of our findings before starting a Socratic seminar that lasted until dinner.

We had dinner at *Rondine's* canteen and celebrated our new friends GG style: with wine and music. We left the citadel shortly after that, headed back to our hotel to take a well-deserved rest (and brought the celebrations along!).

The next day was devoted to a different kind of activity; we used our remaining hours at *Rondine* to ask to some of the international students, in our case three girls coming from Palestine, Azerbaijan and Armenia, their personal experience at the association and their thoughts on its mission and development. After lunch, we took our bus to Arezzo and spent a couple of hours sightseen it freely, losing ourselves in the magic of Tuscany's small cities' beauty.

When we got back to Tor Vergata, we felt extremely lucky, because we were able to know some of their most intimate feelings; they answered all of our questions sincerely and allowed us to get a different perspective on international conflicts of which we had little knowledge or familiarity. It was a great opportunity for us to get a grasp of the diversity that surrounds us, to understand new perspective over shared values and, mostly, to make new friends that share the passion and the ambition to resolve global issues with global ideas.



Delfina Belli
Pietro Cascarino
GG2
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