

“Melting into it”

A Shaping Careers meeting with Delfino Corti

On 4th October 2016, Delfino Corti chaired the unique Shaping Careers meeting that Global Governance students of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year had the opportunity to attend.

Delfino Corti is a team facilitator and a strategy and organizational development consultant and trainer. He boasts many years of management experience in international and multicultural contexts.

Mr. Corti recently performed the function of Business Executive in a Chinese Group, dealing daily with a multicultural environment. This experience has completely revolutionized his way to perceive the reality and the Other, and therefore it helped him to know himself. However, many years before he had already had the opportunity of increasing his awareness of the surrounding reality. When he was 19 years old, he went to South America (Piura, Peru). He brought with him his own idea of reality that, once arrived at the intended destination, was turned upside down by the “real reality”, the people, the smells, the places and the food.

In some way, this life changing experience, along with professional experiences and achievements, trained him for the role of Head of Sales in Changsha (China), a city that is working to transform the dream of a futurist and modern city into a present reality. This was a new concept that once again destroyed the idea of reality that he had built during the years spent abroad.



Unlike the previous experiences, China represented a true challenge that Mr. Corti had to fight against the new work context, the language and the culture.

At the beginning, his job and his problems seemed to be a very stormy sea where the obstacles he found did not let him weather the storm safely on his little boat which represents all his skills and tools. However as time passed by he realized that what seemed to be initially a stormy sea was actually a high and steep mountain.

How to face the problems, then? As soon as he discovered the difference between what he thought and what it actually was, Mr Corti understood that he had to change strategy to succeed. Working in China became every day increasingly challenging until one day his means were not sufficient to deal with reality. Soon the Chinese language became an obstacle because he was not even able to communicate with his own boss. Therefore, in order to keep working, he had to put the future of his career, and all his trust as well, in the hands of one of his Chinese colleagues who worked as a cultural mediator between him and his chief.

This was a turning point for him. Trying to build such a strong trust required time, but first of all it demanded a great knowledge and a deep understanding of the person Mr. Corti had next to him. So, Mr. Corti’s experience in the Chinese context is something that can happen in everyone’s life. This process of knowing and understanding the Other changed his inner perspective towards the surrounding reality. In some way adsorbing knowledge trying to put ourselves in someone else’s shoes allows us to change ourselves and therefore the tools needed to solve the crisis. Hence, the only way to reach a satisfactory improvement is to work on ourselves and not to modify other’s thinking or even the whole environment in which we are. In fact, every conversation or every person we meet, if we allow it to do so, can leave traces of his passage.

This means that sharing with you his cultural background, the Other can enrich you with different opinions and personal experiences. In other words, “you melt into it”. However, this process depends strongly on our inner condition. How can we melt into someone if we are surrounded by boundaries? If we look at any social context, we can observe how people build their own walls, because this is human nature. Someone puts his earphones trying to get away from the reality, another guy talks to his mate never looking directly into his eyes, and sadly, sometimes, there are those who keep their distances from different or foreign people. However, we can also simply think about walls built in history: the Adrian’s Wall, the Great Chinese Wall, the Berlin’s Wall, and also today’s walls are built in order to ward off someone, such as in Hungary, in Calais or in the United States of America. Those concrete walls in some way reflect our inner condition of closure towards the reality and our self-centred behaviour.

Therefore, Mr. Corti told us that it is impossible to go somewhere far if we look at the world just from what we know, or if we just look at it without experiencing it. It would never work, because “We are the system, and the system is in us!”. Therefore, he encouraged us to open our mind, in order to free ourselves from judging, to open our heart to be able to feel the Other, and to be open so that we can put aside what is useless. Mr. Corti knows and warned us that it is not easy to act like this because human’s mind plants many traps. Frequently, we happen to think that we have understood everything, to believe that we are superior and that we don’t need anyone and anything. Sometimes it happens that we are afraid to not give ourselves the chance to live opportunities, and that we just pretend that we already have so many issues that we don’t open ourselves to new experiences.

Nevertheless, as Mr. Corti said, these are just traps, because the reality, the Other, ourselves, are something different!

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