

COMMUNITY STUDIES CENTER

SPRING / SUMMER 2018

Climate Change and Human Security in Nepal, Fall 2017 Dickinson

Global Mosaic—Climate Change and Human Security in Nepal, Fall 2017
by Marina Morton '18



Storytelling is useful because people are not all attuned to the same issues, but the issues are all connected.

— From a reflection essay after a discussion with Peterson Toscano (performance artist and scholar) in Marina Morton's Nepal Mosaic ePortfolio

What resources and capacities exist in Nepal to build resilience to weather and climate change related events and disasters? This was our primary research question as we prepared for and ventured to Nepal to conduct community-based research in the hill villages. Fourteen students participated in the full-course semester co-taught by Professors Beevers, Fratantuono, and Leary. We engaged in four semester-long courses: Global Environmental Change and Human Security; Collaboration as a Vehicle for Value; Climate Resilience and Risks in Nepal; and an Independent Research course that focused on Climate Change and Human Security in Nepal. In preparation for the field research, we participated in workshops and discussions with field experts, and did practice interviews and online training in ethical principles for human subjects' research.

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CPC Africana Studies Conference Presentation

Crossing the Black Mediterranean: Migration from Africa to Southern Europe

Hyla Jacobson, '18, Sara Johnson, '18, Madigan Kay, '18, and Jessica Smith, '18 presented their research at the 11th CPC Africana Studies Conference at Franklin and Marshall College on March 31, 2018.

The Mediterranean has witnessed the circulation of ideas, people, and goods between Northern Africa and Southern Europe for centuries. These Dickinson seniors, who had participated in Dickinson's "2nd Mediterranean Mosaic: Italy at the Crossroads," presented their fieldwork that focused on contemporary migrations from northern and sub-Saharan Africa to southern Europe. Through a multi-media presentation, including two documentary shorts, they focused on the humanitarian crisis fueled by the political economy of nation-states. Focusing on migration from Libya to Lampedusa, they shared some of the stories they heard from those seeking refugee and asylum status in Italy; migrants' motivation and reception; and the policies put in place by the EU and Italian officials. You can read more about this Mosaic on their blog (<http://blogs.dickinson.edu/mediterraneanmigrationmosaic/>).



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CSC Student Research Grants

Indian Integral Rural Development and a Collaborative Enterprise Model

by Michelle Zhang '18



Women leaders and program coordinators with SARVAM with Michelle Zhang in the center. (Most of the women are interview-

My research in Pondicherry, India focused on the role of education and the empowerment of women, and how these two factors contribute to sustainable development in rural areas. With a previous connection I developed during my study abroad semester, I conducted research with the Sri Aurobindo Rural and Village Action and Movement program (SARVAM), a major development initiative that involves education, women's empowerment, health, infrastructure building, and economic development in the rural areas. Another part of my research is related to Professor Michael Fratantuono's Collaborative Enterprise Model, developed to understand and analyze what kinds of collaboration are successful and the essential factors that make such collaborations successful. Since SARVAM is a very interdisciplinary and collaborative project, part of the research examined how this framework affirms or re-

futes Professor Fratantuono's Collaborative Enterprise Model.

With a grant from the Community Studies Center, I had the opportunity to work with the Sri Aurobindo Society (SAS) in Pondicherry in January. Initially established as a research institute that explored education development and spirituality in 1960, SAS developed into a multidimensional organization with a wide spectrum of initiatives related to social development and transformation. SARVAM is one of their major initiatives.

Although Pondicherry is relatively wealthy and developed in Southern India, the neighboring state, Tamil Nadu, still has a large number of people who live below the poverty line and suffer from poor sanitary conditions. Villages do not have basic infrastructures to ensure most people healthy living conditions, clean food, basic education, and sustainable working opportunities. Hoping to change these conditions and build the best model for village development in India, SAS started the SARVAM program. From Poothurai, a village in Tamil Nadu, SARVAM's development model has been adapted to 18 villages in the span of 13 years. Its two main components are "livelihoods diversification of adults" and "children's education support." The program faced a variety of challenges besides poverty. Similar to other villages in India, religion, caste, and gender play highly divisive roles in these communities. However, SARVAM has made significant progress in empowering women, youth, increasing family income by multiple means, and improving the social and economic conditions in the villages. Understanding the success of SARVAM in these villages and the scalability of this model have significant value for other villages in India.

As explained in one report about SARVAM published within the SAS, the concept of "Integral Rural Development" is based on human consciousness and family values:

"The approach is to begin any development intervention with children in any given village; move on to get the mothers of those children involved in development initi-



Zhang helping to paint the porch outside the front door of a Tamil family in the morning for their New Years celebration. This is a tradition followed by all Tamil families.

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atives of SARVAM; and then slowly get the man in the family involved himself by making them recognize that it is by educating the children in every family that the poverty cycle can be arrested. For children to do well in studies, parents should demonstrate desirable family values. This enables positive energy to become transmittable from children to mothers; from mothers to men in the family; and from one family to another and thus in the entire neighbourhood."

When asking about the changes SARVAM has brought to the villages and to them, besides mentioning the infrastructure improvement and life skills training, everyone from the village emphasized how SARVAM empowered them by changing their mindset and boosting their confidence. Most women were dependent on their husbands before; they had no skills nor desire to generate income. Their husbands made most of the decisions. Even with the loans and skill training workshops SARVAM offered, most women were hesitant to take the loans. Even the most enthusiastic women who engaged in the beginning dropped out after a while. The Participatory Livelihood Analysis, a survey conducted with every family in the village, collected demographic, financial, and family dynamic information. This survey identified the following setbacks for the micro-loan programs: conditioned mindset, risk-aversion, lack of capability, uncertainty about obtaining financial support and the weight of existing debts, lack of family support, lack of exposure and poor confidence levels and motivation. Therefore, besides the basic skills training, SARVAM added motivational programs and hands-on practice, and connected villagers with people in the professional field who provided workshops about risk management, computer skills, and financial literacy. In addition to the women themselves, the men I interviewed showed much respect and clear understanding of the importance of women's education, economic status, and gender equality.



Visiting an archeological historical site with Kavitta, a researcher in Sri Aurobindo Society, who works to discover and protects these sites.



SARVAM formed multi-lateral partnerships with both private and public sectors, including the District Rural Development Agency, US Embassy, local universities, HDFC bank, the TATA Trust (one of the major multinational information technology companies in India). This cooperation has helped with the children's integral education program, education for the girl child, scholarship assistance for the underprivileged, English access program, toilet building, rural computer/adult education, teacher's trainings, community radio and journal, and income generation for previously unskilled villagers. Today, all the major project coordinators and workshop trainers are villagers themselves, SARVAM

has transformed from an initiator to a facilitator. This program truly empowered the villagers by changing their mindset and teaching them the skills to support themselves.

When not in the field interviewing and observing, I worked in the Sri Aurobindo Office, reading their research reports and talking to researchers who work in different fields. I also visited the school, ashram, and the school garden where all kids go plant twice every week and learn about the nature. The calming and peaceful atmosphere, the sincerity of people and that place, the respect for knowledge, truth, self-reflection, the love, spirituality, have all inspired me in different ways. My learning experience went beyond my expectation during this research project. Pondicherry really touched my soul.

Michelle Zhang, a senior IS major, hails from Yunnan China and will be working with communities rising in India after she graduates in May.

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CSC Student Research Grants cont.

Fieldwork in Morocco: Riffi Exceptionalism?

By Sarah Sloan '18 and McKinley Knoop '18



Thanks to a grant from the Community Studies Center, we were able to spend three weeks during December in the Rif, a region of northern Morocco, conducting sixteen oral history interviews about the intersection of dissidence, identity and politics. We also spent time researching the history of the region, focusing on the city of Tetouan, which became our base. After finishing our studies abroad in Morocco during our junior year, we both had a deepened interest in activism in the Rif. This shared passion led us to self-design an independent study during the Fall of 2017, focusing on the history of identity in the Rif.

Although we began our research focused on Amazigh Jewry, as we analyzed various sources, read books on the subject, and progressed in our work, our topic began to shift and focused more on the historical presence of intersectional identities in the Rif, not solely based on religion and ethnicity. Our scope of research began to broaden, in part due to the accessibility of sources and existing research, but also because of the relationship between Amazigh resistance and Amazigh Jewry. Historically, particularly during the Spanish protectorate, intersectional identities in the Rif have led foreigners and Moroccans to believe in Riffi exceptionalism.

Although we found no basis for the claim, we realized that proof of exceptionalism was not as important as the cultural belief in this theory. In conducting interviews with local leaders and identity entrepreneurs, and then analyzing individual identity markers, we realized that a multitude of identities in Tetouan contributes to perceptions of exceptionalism in the region.

We used seven dichotomous identity markers, such as rural/urban, female/male, educated/ uneducated, in order to further understand how these identities played into the notion of exceptionalism. Through a series of intensive, in-depth interviews, we gleaned information about personal experiences and political opinions. We spoke with highly influential local leaders, those with no formal education, and college students throughout the region.

Even though we broadened the scope of our research, we maintained a specific emphasis on the role that Judaism played in shaping regional identity. One of our interview subjects, Maroua, worked with two organizations - Mimouna and Yala - that focused on promoting awareness of the rich Jewish history in Morocco, specifically in the North. Although she herself is Muslim, Maroua believes in the importance of teaching Jewish history, particularly because it is not included within the public education system.

Mohammed, one of our other interviewees, took us to the cemeteries of Tetouan, where Muslim, Jewish, and Christian cemeteries are intertwined from hundreds of years of religious coexistence. Their locations adjoining one another emphasized the formation of a culture that relied on intersectionality as the cornerstone of its identity.

From our interviews, we were able to conclude that exceptionalism in the Rif was a recent social construction. However, while there might be no empirical evidence to prove such claims, the people we spoke with used the phenomenon and their own identities to reclaim their agency through social activism, education, and community

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building. This benefits the Riffian communities, while simultaneously contributing to a narrative of exceptionalism that benefits the central government.

Building upon decades of dissidence, Hirak al Shabi, a new Riffi Amazigh movement, arose in 2016 to combat the government's treatment of the region with regards to education, employment, and corruption. The government has consistently neglected to provide infrastructure and funding, and in doing so, contributed to the exceptional treatment of the Rif as separate from the rest of Morocco. By providing fewer resources to the region, the state perpetuates the narrative of exceptionalism and therefore defends its failures.



Previous research on this topic has been done almost exclusively by men, about men. This grant gave us the opportunity to be some of the first women to conduct fieldwork on this topic and to include women as important actors. In the future, Riffi identity will continue to be used by the government to justify their treatment of the Rif. Even though we have concluded our fieldwork, our connections and friendships have ensured that we will both maintain an academic and personal interest in the region. In particular, Sarah is writing her thesis on tools the Moroccan government uses to control dissidence movements. We are currently working on an analytical paper based on our interviews and research, which we plan to share with our community partners in Tetouan, including Yala, Mimouna, and Chaymae. The Community Studies grant gave us an experience not normally afforded to undergrads, and allowed us to grow as students through a liberal arts education.

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Then we traveled to rural Nepal to conduct community-based research in four different villages. Four research teams organized interviews and focus groups to collect data about resilience to hazards, predominately weather or climate related. The objective of our research was to produce useful knowledge for the communities with which we worked. A collaborative approach allowed us to adapt our methodology throughout the design and implementation of the study while maintaining our focus on the impact of climate change on human security. This spring, a sub-group of students from the Mosaic are continuing independent research on this project to synthesize the four team reports and produce several overarching articles.

Among the most vulnerable nations to climate change, Nepal is a unique case study for exploring how climate change relates to human security and resilience. The diversity of the country's climatic conditions, from tropical plains to the high Himalayas, leads to complex weather systems. Agricultural dependence ties climate change adaptation to livelihood for farmers and their families. Discriminatory practices increase vulnerability for certain groups and contribute to corruption. Political instability, poverty, and high rates of out-migration put increasing pressure on the population.

Our collaborative approach to research design allowed the class to co-create the research question and questionnaires with Professors Michael Beevers, Michael Fratantuono, and Neil Leary. Our partnership with the Institute of Crisis Management Studies (ICMS) in Kathmandu influenced our methodology and allowed us to learn from Nepali graduate students who helped us translate interviews. Through this research, we developed new friendships with the graduate students and learned how to collect data with translators.

The four research teams spread out in different locations on the ridge and in the valley. A team could spend five to seven hours a day at its research site, hiking the ridge or touring the village to find interview participants and observing community activities. During our semi-structured interviews with households and community leaders,

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we experienced openness, kindness, and respect from community members. Interviewing people in the Nepali communities proved emotionally enriching as we listened to the stories of farmers, teachers, principals, mothers, social mobilizers, and other community stakeholders. Our questions focused on various aspects of human security: governance, risk assessment, knowledge and education, risk management and vulnerability reduction, and preparedness. For most of our interviews, we met community members at their workplace or home.

People told us about the impacts of the 2015 Gorkha Earthquake including infrastructure and crop damage, and water scarcity. Water scarcity tended to be the top priority issue since most of the community depends on agriculture and ani-

mal husbandry for their livelihoods. Stresses in the community such as topography, poverty, the Hindu caste system, changing climate, and outmigration exacerbated these issues and raised questions about the future ability to adapt to changes.

A repeated theme of self-organization and local collaboration among community stakeholders reoccurred in the responses to these hazards. In some cases, institutions seemed to strengthen community response such as microfinancing and neighborhood support networks. Overall, we found that continued work to meet the water and capital needs of the community would build a more solid foundation for resilience in Nepal. Maintaining long-term relationships with external stakeholders, including the central government, NGOs, and other assistance groups could also build community capacity to adapt to change in the future.

Participating in the Nepal Mosaic challenged my assumptions about developing countries; that is I learned that low- and no-regret strategies often use low-tech solutions in developing countries and may be more effective than high-tech solutions. These solutions focus on capacity building in the short-term to increase resiliency in the long-term. Successful implementation of solutions depends on a deep understanding of the community in climate change adaptation work. The ethnographic component of our research helped me better understand climate change in and as context. This experience has inspired me to pursue community-based research in the future and to continue to explore communities as complex systems. I am grateful to Dickinson and the Community Studies Center for the opportunity to participate in a Global Mosaic and learn about the stories of communities in the hills of Nepal.

Thanks to a NHPRC grant, CSC and the Dickinson Archives have been able to launch the Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center (<http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/>) and share it with Native and non-Native communities and schools across the country. This past August 20 teachers from 15 different states, including Arizona, New Mexico, Washington, South Dakota, Iowa, Kansas, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut came to Carlisle for a week-long Teacher's Institute to explore and interrogate the history of American Indian education and the role and legacy of Carlisle as the model for off-reservation boarding schools in the U.S. and Canada. This coming fall (Oct. 2019) we will be commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the closing of the Carlisle Indian School (<http://www.dickinson.edu/carlislejourneys>).



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FUTURE MOSAICS



Cuba mini-Mosaic: The African Diaspora, May 2018

The Cuba mini-Mosaic focuses on developing an historical understanding of the African influence on Cuban culture and life over several centuries. Students will engage with academics & historians, specializing in the multiple branches of Afro-Cuban ancestry: Yoruba, Congo, Arara, and Abakua, as well as strong Haitian & Jamaican traditions. They will immerse themselves in the dance and music of the island, from the Afro-Cuban roots to the Salsa of today.

The mosaic will be working with MetaMovements (MM) in Havana. This mosaic is composed of a one-week trip to Cuba in May 2018 after taking at least one related course in the Spring 2018. Co-taught by Visiting Assistant Professor of Africana Studies, [Trent Masiki](#), and Professor [Sarah Skaggs](#) (Director of Dance, Theatre and Dance).



Brazil Mosaic: São Paulo as a Global City, Spring 2019

This Mosaic will look at the ways in which peoples with a variety of backgrounds, life experiences, and identities have contributed to making São Paulo a global city. It will study the experience of people who created historical immigrant neighborhoods like Bela Vista, Bom Retiro, and Liberdade—created by Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, and Eastern European Jews in the early twentieth century. We will also study the settlement of internal migrants from different regions of Brazil beginning in the mid-twentieth century, their creation

of spaces of their own, and their impact on the city's food, music, and popular culture. This three-course Mosaic integrates a research trip to Brazil to conduct fieldwork with community members, NGOs, (im)migrants, activists, politicians, writers, scholars, and film-makers in January with classes to follow in the Spring semester. For more information contact [Marcelo Borges](#) (History) and [Carolina Castellanos](#) (Spanish and Portuguese)



Haiti Mosaic, January-Spring 2019

As part of a two-course *Mosaic offering*, students will travel to Haiti in January 2019 to gain a deeper understanding of the socio-economic and environmental factors affecting Haiti today. Students will have the opportunity to work with the Grand-Bois health clinic, and visit villages, families, and schools with community health care workers and water technicians. Once they return to campus they will take two courses pertaining to community health centers and sustainability. For more information contact [David Sarcone](#) (INBM) and [Joyce Bylander](#) (Sociology).

More Information on Upcoming Mosaics: <http://www.dickinson.edu/homepage/603/mosaics>

We'd love to hear from you! Please feel free to send your updates and how they relate to your mosaic experiences to Meta Bowman at csc@dickinson.edu, and we will publish it in our next newsletter!

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UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Discovering Community Summer Institute, August 13-16, 2018, Brattleboro, Vermont A Vermont Folklife Center Program

For more information please visit www.discoveringcommunity.org or contact Gregory Sharrow at the Vermont Folklife Center, by e-mail (gsharrow@vermontfolklifecenter.org) or by phone (802) 388-4964.

2018 Oral History Association Annual Meeting, Oct. 10-14, 2018, Montreal, Quebec, Canada Oral History in Our Challenging Times

For more information please visit <http://www.oralhistory.org/annual-meeting/>.

Native American and Indigenous Studies Association Conference, May 17-19, 2018, Los Angeles, California.

For more information please visit <https://www.aisc.ucla.edu/naisa2018/default.aspx>.

Nepal



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