Simeto River Valley

Professor Antonio Raciti
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Ecological Cycles are today the consequence of 5-millenium-long complex interaction between humans and the powerful natural processes.
Governor Salvatore Cuffaro
EU special commissioner for the “waste emergency”

2002 WASTE MANAGEMENT REGIONAL PLAN

Call for tender for 4 privately-owned waste-to-energy facilities

Ask “Regions” to change their waste management approach

WASTE → RESOURCE
No! Let’s Stop Them!!
Bronte
Adrano
Biancavilla
S. M. di Licodia
Paternò
Motta S. Anastasia
Centuripe
Catania
The March of 5000 in Adrano

Informal Mobilization

Coalition for the Sustainable Development of the Simeto Valley

Formal Organizations

Successful Anti-incinerator Campaign

Not just legal action but broader community organizing and political strategy
“The reason why somebody can decide to build an incinerator on our river is because there is not a better vision of the future”
10-year-long Community-University Partnership
Collective Reflective Practices

The “Casa delle Acque” fall retreat
November 2010

Stakeholders
Support the local economy through policy design

Community members
Historic preservation
Environmental issues

Researchers
What strategy makes the most sense?

Grass-roots groups
Improving the area
Strengthen the sense of community
Community Mapping Initiative
The large collective maps
Mapping activities have been carried out:

- In 10 different locations, in the countryside and in 4 small towns along the river;
- improving the tools used each time;
- involving more than 500 individuals; among them: representatives of 22 community groups and non-profit associations and City Officials from three of the four small towns.
Community Mapping Initiative
Community Mapping Initiative

How?

- Produce "papers" more difficult for local politicians to ignore
  - Final product: much more than a simple map
- Help the community know and then love their place
- Community mapping = educational campaign
- The follow-up projects are identified as part of something bigger
- Create a portfolio of community projects ready to be funded by EU (with and without institutional partnerships)
- Enlarge the base supporting the partnership
- Networking and involving other association in the steering committee of the initiative
The Design Contribution

- Implementing pilot projects included in the community map
- Expand possibilities for local firms and designers
- Make it “happen”!
The Community Design Experience in “contrada Nicoló”, Paternò
Co-creation of design proposal for a riparian garden
Final draft of the design
Inspired by a NEW model of "development"
PARTICIPATORY PRESIDIO
(hundreds of association + businesses + individuals)

LABORATORY
(technical support)

ASSEMBLY + EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
(majors + representatives of the presidium)

PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE
Revolutionary Governance Structure

“THE SIMETO RIVER AGREEMENT”
General Legal Framework

Signed on May 18th, 2015
Simeto River Agreement
Implementation Strategies

**MOBILITY**
Accessibility/Security/Connection
Enhancement of existing structures/Sustainability

**CULTURE**
Historic-Environmental Assets/Public Spaces/Historic Centers/Identity

**AGRICULTURE**
Agro-District/CSA/Training and Education/Ethics

**WASTE**
Zero-Waste Strategies/Growing Strategy for Municipal Management/Participant Observatory

**WATER**
Participatory Observatory + Regional Management Authorities
WELCOME TO SICILY!
study abroad program
June 6-18, 2017

Set in the beautiful Siracusa Valley, in Eastern Sicily, UM students and faculty will engage with Siracusa residents and officials in an action-research project aimed at revitalizing a declining baroque community through advanced community development strategies. The main challenge is to preserve the existing cultural values and authenticity while addressing economic and population decline.

In this class we will use various research activities (ethnographic research, spatial analysis, box-practice research, etc.) to contribute to a participatory community process that is committed to environmental sustainability and social justice.

This engaged-learning experience is part of an ongoing collaboration between the University of Memphis and the Siracusa University, within the framework of an internationally recognized community development plan for the Siracusa Valley, called the SIMETO RIVER AGREEMENT. Within the broad framework offered by this Agreement, the class offers students the opportunity to link economic sustainability with socio-cultural and environmental dimensions of development.

Students are eligible for 3 credits via exam. 
The cost is $3,300 + airfare (approx. $1,500-1,700) + $60 credit exam fee. 
Scholarships are available up to $2,000.

To Apply go to http://www.memphis.edu/studyabroad/
"click on ‘find a program’ search for ‘Environmental Planning’‘ click ‘Apply Now.’

At the end of your application for the program, you can apply for the Study Abroad Scholarship (at go to: http://www.memphis.edu/studyabroad/ and click on ‘Scholarships’). The deadline for applying and requeiring a scholarship is March 1st.

For more info contact the instructors:
Dr. Antonio Radii (aradii@memphis.edu)
Dr. Laura Sosa (lsosa@memphis.edu)
Dr. Katherine Lintern (plintern@memphis.edu)

To Discuss Summer Financial Aid, contact the Study Abroad Financial Aid Office, Joanna DeHaden (jdehaden@memphis.edu / 103 Wilder Tower)