Traveller, Nomadic and Migrant Education

Edited by Patrick Alan Danaher,
Máirín Kenny and Judith Remy Leder

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For our families, who make us what we are,
with love, affection and gratitude.

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Acronyms

ACERT	Advisory Council for the Education of Romanies and other Travellers (England)
AsfL Act	Additional Support for Learning Act (Scotland)
CIDEAD	Centre for Innovation and Development in Distance Learning (Spain)
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families (England)
DES	Department of Education and Science (England)
DES	Department of Education and Science (Ireland)
DfES	Department for Education and Skills (England)
DoE	Department of the Environment (England)
DOH	Department of Health and Children (Ireland)
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme (India)
ECOTEC	ECOTEC Research and Consulting Limited
EFA	Education for All
EFECOT	European Federation for the Education of the Children of Occupational Travellers
EGS	Education Guarantee Scheme (India)
ESL	English as a Second Language
EU	European Union
EUMC	European Union Monitoring Committee on Racism and Xenophobia (now the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights [FRA])
FCNM	Framework Convention for National Minorities
FSGG	Fundación Secretariado General Gitano
GSHDR	Gujarat State Human Development Report (India)
G/TEIP	Gypsy/Traveller Education and Information Programme (Scotland)
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector/ate (England)
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office (England)
ICTs	Information and communication technologies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LEA	Local Education Authority (England)
LTS	Learning and Teaching Scotland (Scotland)

NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training (India)
NCNE	National Commission for Nomadic Education (Nigeria)
NGO	Non-government organisation
NPE	National Policy on Education (India)
NSI	Nordic Sami Institute (Norway)
OBCs	Other Backward Castes (India)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education (England)
OSI	Open Society Institute (Hungary)
SAAL	Sami Administration Area for Language (Norway)
SEED	Scottish Executive Education Department
SCs	Scheduled Castes (India)
STEP	Scottish Traveller Education Programme (Scotland)
STs	Scheduled Tribes (India)
TAFE	Technical and Further Education (Australia)
TENET	Traveller Education Network (Scotland)
TESS	Traveller Education Support Service (England)
UBE	Universal Basic Education (Nigeria)
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education (Nigeria)
WAMIP	World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples

Foreword

Educating Migrants: A Model for the World

Jean-Pierre Liégeois

Throughout history, and even through the middle of the 20th century, nomads, itinerants and migrants were seen as marginalised, a threat, outside the social norm, living an outmoded life. The desire to control these groups, and an ethnocentric belief in social evolution, led to the effort to assimilate them into the majority population. Education and social work were viewed as the perfect vectors for this assimilation. Because moving from place to place was considered an obstacle to schooling, the political project was to settle the nomads for the 'good' of their children. The high-mindedness of the end concealed the error of the means, and the nobility of the purposes masked the vice of the forms of educational provision.

From the 1980s onwards, a desire to affirm cultural realities was allied with a wish to achieve the 'integration' of marginalised populations. This alliance drew on the development of an intercultural education, the idea for which had been devised about 15 years earlier but had not been applied. It was in this context that in 1984, in the Member States of the European Union (EU), the first transnational study of the education of Gypsy and Traveller children was conducted. Five years later, on the basis of this critical study, the Ministers of Education of the EU adopted an innovative Resolution based on an approach that took account of culture. One of its first sentences stresses that the "culture and language [of Gypsies and Travellers] have formed part of the [European] Community's cultural and linguistic heritage for over 500 years". The text then proposed initiatives respectful of this concept, aimed at improving the conditions of a difficult area of education. At the same time, the Ministers adopted another Resolution concerning the education of children whose parents move from place to place for professional reasons: fairground workers, barge dwellers and circus employees.

Also in 1989, UNESCO organised for the first time a "meeting of national experts on the conditions of schooling for children of mobile groups". Participants from Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Kenya, Sudan, Mali, Mongolia, Peru, France, Spain and Hungary were asked to share their experiences. The group concluded:

> A first for UNESCO, this meeting confirms the anxiety of this Organisation to take on the problems in order to fight against exclusion. . . . As

> far as education policies are concerned, questions remain about consulting with travelling peoples and the possibilities of adaptability, as well as about the transition from macro to micro-planning. Would the response not be easier if it was admitted that a country is comprised of diverse populations? . . . Travelling peoples have a way of life which must be taken into account.

Thus it was proposed that schools, teaching materials, teachers and their training should adapt to embrace the variety of the cultures of the pupils. Schooling was seen as a source of equality for all. But the education system was not ready, its evolution was slow and its openness was merely superficial. The idea of intercultural education was still at the experimental stage; it needed to be allied with a global intercultural policy. Schools continued to be part of the problem rather than the vectors in which the question of the schooling of mobile families' children would be addressed.

At the end of the 20th century, two developments created a totally new situation: first, the movement of people from state to state intensified and took on new forms; second, minority groups began to appear in places where they had never been active before. The 1993 Vienna Summit was focused on the issue of minorities, and several fundamental texts were adopted. The Heads of State stressed, "The national minorities which the turbulence of history has established in Europe have to be protected and respected in order to contribute to stability and peace . . .". The decisions taken by the Vienna Summit were followed by the adoption of major texts such as the "Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities", which have become essential references for the 47 Member States of the Council of Europe.

The coming together of these two phenomena—increased mobility and the emergence of heretofore unknown minority groups—reshaped the social, cultural and political landscape. Pluriculturalism and multiculturalism had become a world reality. But pluriculturalism and multiculturalism are only static descriptions of a demographic reality. In effect, because of the fluid situation caused by the mobility of people, the givens are changing; the mosaic of peoples is constantly being transformed into an international kaleidoscope. The task of developing new policies that will address the situation in the 21st century necessitates moving from the juxtaposition of pluriculturalism to the dynamic coming together introduced by interculturalism.

States find themselves faced with the need to manage an ever-changing cultural diversity. In a reversal of perspectives, the cultural groups formerly considered outside the norm or marginal now become a source of inspiration. The activities begun for them become a source of innovation. In a delightful twist of fate, the programs for teaching Gypsy and Traveller children have now become valuable paradigms that are revealing, motivating and symbolic. The fact of this shift is assumed: for instance, the Steering Committee that is piloting the 2002–2009 Council of Europe project, "The Education of Roma Children in Europe", asserts:

> The education of Roma, in the European context, must be recognised as the source of necessary renewal in the domain of Education. A renewal of teaching approaches can and should be one of the effects of the Project, at a time when education is running out of steam. (Council of Europe, 2006)

Thus the process of persuading schools to make Traveller children welcome has created a movement that introduces new pedagogical approaches, new perspectives in teacher training and the development of new teaching methods like open and distance learning. The response to the educational needs of the children of travelling peoples requires flexibility and openness to diversity. Travelling families serve as a reminder that school-based education is not an end in itself or a goal in its own right; it is a means of achieving personal balance, professional training, social adaptation and cultural development.

Recognising that travelling groups serve as particularly effective examples of distinct cultures is to validate their presence and to see their existence as a positive. They become a good example, in some ways a model example (Liégeois, 1998, 2007). Thus those who formerly were marginalised become central and play a vital role in enacting a mainstream policy.

The advances in this effort to achieve true interculturalism are often only experimental; their consolidation, like their dissemination into the education system, requires time and the clearance of many obstacles. Flexibility is needed so that the best innovations can emerge from among diverse initiatives. The creative attempts that have been made in the education of travelling people can play an invaluable role in this area. Policy-makers must move from ethnocentric categorisation to pedagogical pluralism; they must be open to the participation of concerned parents; they must take into account the total situation and participate in the establishment of a global intercultural policy, at the heart of which intercultural teaching will easily find its place.

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Preface

William Binchy

This is a difficult and challenging book. It interrogates not only the ingrained prejudices of settled society relating to nomads and nomadism but also the assumption that there are easy and uncontroversial solutions that will help to overcome this prejudice. Its focus is on the education system, where discrimination against migrant and nomadic populations is notorious. Ingrained assumptions about the importance of sedentarism underlie educational policy, so that mobility is regarded, in itself, as oppositional to the norms of education and the provision of educational services. The measurable failure of educational systems to accommodate nomadic culture is attributed to the deviancy of those on the move rather than the failure to acknowledge the deep legitimacy of non-sedentary life choices.

The book has broad horizons, with contributions from authors relating to a very wide range of people on the move in countries in four continents. What emerges are common patterns of discrimination and lack of understanding but also some new initiatives that give some cause for hope. There is, however, no false sense of inevitable progress. Moreover, there is a frank acknowledgment by contributors that a shared experience of discrimination does not mean that the several groups of mobile people have any developed sense of homogeneity.

This feature of the book is perhaps worth stressing since the range of peoples whom it studies is so broad as not to come within the comfortable categories under which international human rights issues are debated. Circus and fairground people tend to fall outside statutory definitions of ethnicity; migrant farm workers may not all be able to invoke the provisions of the Migrant Workers Convention. Indigenous Peoples are diversifying their cultural practices, and many no longer fit established understandings of these peoples. Groups in the Roma/Traveller spectrum are recognised internationally as ethnic, but their ethnic status is often contested at national levels. Yet in terms of the discriminations that they face, in relation to their right to education and a range of other rights, these groups have a great deal in common.

International human rights discourse is useful in framing specific questions that must trouble those of nomadic culture. How can the right to education be reconciled with practices of involving children in work at an

early age? How can traditional gender roles be modified to give true meaning to that right? At a deeper level, there is a need for debate about the very meaning of education, enlightened by a nomadic perspective.

Perhaps it would be useful for those engaged in the debate about the education of people on the move to invoke the concept of human dignity, which is at the heart of contemporary human rights philosophy and appears in the leading international human rights instruments. Human dignity recognises the inherent and equal value of every human being; it rises above social prejudice and acknowledges the legitimacy of pluralism in culture. It should be the banner under which those seeking the kinds of change advocated by the several authors in this book should assemble.

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Editorial Introduction
Three Dimensions of Changing Schools

Máirín Kenny and Patrick Alan Danaher

INTRODUCTION

In most countries of the world, there are minority populations who have a tradition of migrancy. These include many recognised "Indigenous Peoples"—nomadic pastoralists, hunters, herders, fisherpeople—but also migrant farm workers, entertainers (circus and fairground people) and Gypsy/Travellers. The level to which these peoples still maintain a mobile lifestyle varies hugely from place to place, and within each group: some groups or group members opted to live in fixed places generations ago, some are in transition and some are actively committed to maintaining their prized tradition.

This book grew out of the editors' growing awareness of the wide diversity of these nomadic and migrant cultures, the paucity of research registering their perspectives and experiences, and the even greater lack of comparative research. By focusing on educational provision, and bringing together a range of contributions from widely scattered countries, we hope to contribute to the initiation of such a project. We asked potential contributors to consider the challenges facing these communities and the education system as they engage with each other. The term "changing schools" catches three key dimensions of this engagement.

Firstly, the children from mobile families change schools, sometimes on a monthly or even weekly basis; the knowledge that they come from this tradition colours school attitudes even to those who are no longer mobile. This places them in conflict with traditional forms of educational provision, which are predicated on permanently resident children attending the same school or studying via distance education. This mismatch exacerbates the already severe marginalisation of Travellers, nomads and migrant workers in the local 'host' community context, by placing the migrant learners between the 'two worlds' of home and school.

Secondly, "changing schools" refers to the way that the schools' demographics are changed as these group of pupils arrive and depart at varying

times over the school year. Many schools see this changing demographic as a problem: the mobile children's difference makes them deviants from the norm of fixed residence and therefore needs to be controlled or (re)solved. In England, for example, a perception exists that there is sometimes pressure for Traveller children to be absent on the days of centralised tests used to compare schools' effectiveness, on the grounds that they might lower a school's scores on the tests (Currie & Danaher, 2001). Often efforts are expended to change the children so that they fit in more closely with the 'normal' school population. This situation clearly does nothing to redress the mobile people's marginalisation and in fact extends and perpetuates that marginalisation.

Thirdly, and by contrast, there is evidence, particularly in the past 15 to 20 years, that schools themselves are actually being changed in fundamental ways as a consequence of their interactions with Travellers, nomads and migrant workers. Largely as a result of determined lobbying by mobile people themselves, aided by knowledgeable teachers, officials and policy-makers, there are now several examples of 'best practice' in many countries in relation to the education of mobile learners. These examples not only demonstrate fundamental changes to the institutions and structures of schooling but also constitute the best chance to date of transforming the marginalisation of mobility into its acceptance and celebration as a valid, viable and valuable mode of existence. The transformation, as will be seen, is necessary even where the groups in question have almost ceased to "change schools" in the sense of moving from one to the other: their heritage and cultural distinctiveness remain a challenge to the sedentarist mindset still informing intercultural policy and practice.

Traveller, Nomadic and Migrant Education presents 14 accounts of educational provision for these sectors in 10 countries—Spain, Italy, England, Scotland, Ireland, Norway, the Russian Federation, India, Nigeria and Australia—on four continents: Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia. Contributions relate to nine groups of mobile people: circus people, fairground people, farm workers, fisherpeople, herders, hunters, nomadic pastoralists, Roma and Travellers. The thread holding together this diversity of location and group is the common focus on the triple dimensions of educational change noted above: the client group changing schools; those schools having their demographics changed and seeking to change the mobile learners; and these learners contributing to fundamental change to the nature of schooling.

Given this focus on the triple dimensions of educational change, the authors reject a 'progressivist' or teleological interpretation of such change. Rather than assuming that progress is natural or inevitable, the contributors argue, in the contexts of their respective research projects, that educational policy is as likely to regress as it is to progress, in response to changed government funding models and recurring social prejudice against minorities. Gains in provision for Travellers, nomads and migrant workers, therefore, can be more properly understood as 'moments' of the coincidence of

interests, and accordingly as temporary and provisional settlements rather than fixed and guaranteed reforms.

This book was assembled by means of calls for chapters, sent out through a wide range of academic and research channels. Many potential contributors who initially expressed strong interest were prohibited by pressure of time or other factors from completing their chapters. So regions and even continents that are unfortunately missing on this occasion include the Middle East, Mongolia, Central Europe and the Americas; we hope to address these gaps in future publications.

Some scholars felt that the book's nomadism/mobility focus precluded their contribution. For instance, many Roma and Traveller groups in Europe no longer travel—in some regions they have not done so for centuries. However, others believed that, whether or not the group is currently nomadic, the nomadic heritage introduces profound challenges into the domain of educational provision, challenges that warrant discussion.

Such is the range and diversity of these mobile peoples worldwide that coverage even of regions that are included is necessarily minimal. Europe is covered by peoples in peripheral states/regions—Spain (Roma), Italy (attractionists/showground people), the United Kingdom and Ireland (Roma, Travellers and fairground people), Norway (Samis) and the Republic of Yakutia in the Russian Federation (reindeer herders, fisherpeople and hunters). Asia is represented by the inclusion of the Rabaris in India; Africa by the inclusion of nomadic pastoralists and fisherpeople in Nigeria. From Australia come studies of Roma, farm workers, circus people and showground people. The particular geographical and sectoral spread of the chapters in this book means that the perspective is from local and lesser-known levels; the findings here endorse those in studies of more written-about groups—for instance, the majority Roma population (Liégeois, 1998, 2008) or United States migrant farm workers (Gouwens, 2001). ECOTEC's (2008) survey of educational provision for the full range of mobile peoples in Europe highlights the value of taking this cross-sectoral approach.

There are issues of authorship. Chapters by members of the communities in question were sought, but in the end all the chapters came from 'majority' scholars. However, community members have worked as co-researchers with most if not all the authors included here, and we believe that these authors were sensitive to and have registered the voices of the peoples whose experiences they were privileged to access.

A note on terminology is also necessary. Here, and in the conclusion, the editors use the terms "nomadic", "migrant" and "mobile" interchangeably. The term "Roma" is used in preference to "Gypsy". In the individual chapters, each contributor uses the terminology currently accepted in her/his country and research setting. In keeping with current practice (for example, ECOTEC, 2008), when referring to Travellers who are part of the Roma/Traveller ethnic spectrum, the title "Travellers" is capitalised, but the title "occupational travellers" (groups on the economic migrant spectrum) is not.

Finally, the process of gathering contributions to this book highlighted conceptual gaps in policy and research literature regarding these peoples, particularly around the issue of the hybridity and fluidity of group identities. These peoples have shadowy status. Three areas require comment: identities and understandings of migrancy/nomadism; the status of these peoples in public perception and policy; and the nature of anti-migrant/nomadic prejudice.

IDENTITIES AND MOBILITIES

"Cultures tend to be systems of meaning and custom that are blurred at the edges" (Cashmore, 1988, p. 68). Nomadism or migrancy is a key element in the heritage of all the peoples whose experiences are reflected in this book—whether or not they continue with this cultural practice. Cultural practices are constantly changing; to ignore this in relation to traditionally nomadic groups poses the danger that:

> . . . ethnicity theorists may reify nomadism, as some Travellers walk away from it; but though a group may leave traditional practices far behind, historic experiences of nomadism profoundly shape their 'sedimented consciousness' (Giroux, 1983). This layering is not easily shed (Cashmore, 1988). (Kenny, 1997, p. 40)

Reflecting Cashmore's (1988) point about the difficulty of shedding ethnic identities, Jean-Pierre Liégeois (2008) argues that a "nomadic mindset" shapes the cultural practices of Roma and Travellers, whether or not they maintain travel as a current cultural practice. Even those who have definitively rejected nomadism as totally an experience of poverty and denigration maintain, as the core of their group identity, a primacy of network over place.

Because the phenomenon of the nomadic mindset is so central to the discussion in this book, it warrants extensive illustration here. The core value of nomadism is deeply intertwined with experiences of marginalisation. The dominant settled majority have colonised the nomad's core tradition, taking the times and causes of their movement out of their control—forcing nomads to move to the settled majority's timetable, closing off the possibility of living out this tradition in dignity and freedom. This profoundly shapes many members' valuation of their nomadic tradition. The voices of members of migrant communities bring home the impact of the experience. The following are from interviews with Irish Travellers (Kenny & Mc Neela, 2005):

> Martin: In 20 years there'll be very few travelling; it's not a nice lifestyle. . . . No bins [refuse collection service] for a start. You're spotted by every country [= settled] person, making comments to themselves about you because you're living in a caravan, no respect no matter where you go in [the town] in a trailer [= caravan]. . . .

> Patrick: See, years ago, first we had our tents, hadn't we? Ah, they had to be gone by now. Then we had our wagons, hadn't we? Choices around now! Then the next step we had our trailers. Then with the years they're going to start fading off, aren't they? Generations there—tents, to wagon, to trailer, to house. Travelling is dying as a way of living.

On the other hand, recent travel had revived strong, positive memories for these four people:

> Mary: . . . when we'd light the fires, the smell of sticks, it made me think what it must have been like years ago. We're in houses now, but we still go out and light a fire. Lovely. The dark evenings years ago—it must have been lovely. The comfort and companionship, getting along in five to 10 families, everyone pulling together, sharing what they got. The older people must miss that.
>
> Nellie: Other Travellers would laugh at us for having those ideas, for enjoying it. Enjoying frying in open.
>
> Michael: I have good memories of eight years of going to the markets. . . . The comfort, describing what you did today, swapping tips. Singing songs. . . . The longing is always there, good thoughts about it. I remember the road on the way to Y—there was a wagon and I was behind it, no shoes and avoiding the bubbles in the tar. I was only three or four years old that time. The thoughts of those good times—that's one of them, walking behind the wagon on a sunny day with the dog loose.

An Australian showman voiced a very similar perspective to Danaher (1998):

> Q. Where is home?
>
> A. Everybody asks where is home. I'm at home. My family, my children, my home is in the place I live.
>
> Q. With the people you're with.
>
> A. Wherever I am I'm at home. My mum and dad now have a house in Melbourne, and that's my home because my parents live there. But that's not my home because it's in the one place. Do you know what I mean? People have this thing that we're disjointed from what we should belong to. Do you know what I mean? If it's got wheels, and it's not earth, we belong to it. And that's where our roots are and that's what we do. (p. 40)

The phrases "If it's got wheels, and it's not earth . . . that's where our roots are" precisely identify the point of divergence between migrant Indigenous Peoples as commonly perceived and these occupational and cultural migrants. With the exception of the nomadic peoples in Siberia and

Nigeria, and of the Norwegian Sami (although these are diversifying), the cultural identities of the groups considered in this book are not posited on a subsistence relationship with the land through the primary occupations of hunting, gathering or herding. Economically speaking, their mobility is rooted in the cash nexus (this includes the migrant farm workers, who work for wages). This is where those for whom "Travelling is dying as a way of living" come from also. For many who have inherited a migrant tradition, the realities of modernisation and prejudice combine to herald the end of this way of life; the task of education is to ensure that they undertake this cultural journey from mobility to fixed place, with pride in their history, and with the respect of the majority for them as people and for their cultural contribution to the diversity of being human.

Finally, the common tradition/practice of mobility does not indicate homogeneity across the groups. They are as unlike one another, know as much or as little about one another and are as liable to be friendly or hostile to one another as are members of any other disparate occupational, ethnic or national population. Besides a tradition of mobility, what they have in common (and what this book is attempting to address) is the danger of invisibility in state policies, and public assumptions regarding their identity and their status.

STATUS

The second conundrum in the book was to find where these peoples 'belong' in the spectrum of sociocultural studies and policy formulations: do the categories of Indigenous Peoples, Fourth World members, economic migrants or ethnicity have relevance?

The United Nations, the International Labour Organisation and the World Bank define "Indigenous Peoples" (for example, First Nations, Aborigines) in similar terms. The World Bank definition is as follows:

> Indigenous peoples be identified in particular geographical areas by the presence in varying degrees of the five characteristics (close attachment to ancestral land, self identification and identification by others, an indigenous language often different from the national one, presence of customary social and political institutions, and primarily subsistence-oriented production). (World Bank, 1991, as cited in World Bank, n.d.)

In its 2005 definition, recognising changes in cultural practices, the last criterion (subsistence-oriented production) is omitted (World Bank, 2005).

The diversity among nomadic groups such as are the topic of this book is reflected in this statement:

> The indigenous nomadic peoples of South Asia . . . [o]ften subsisting on the outskirts of major society, have played an essential role in the larger economic and social functioning of South Asian society. Traditionally [they] practiced camel breeding, pastoralism, camel driving, buffalo breeding, merchantilism *[sic]*, and farming. . . . Despite their lack of identity through their economic practices, [they] are bound by the common life of nomadism. (Indigenous Peoples: Issues and Resources, n.d.)

However, focus on ancient subsistence economies persists in common understandings of Indigenous Peoples. This understanding has come to the fore in environmental campaigns, and informs the non-governmental organisation World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples (WAMIP) definition of itself:

> [WAMIP] is a global alliance of nomadic peoples and communities practicing various forms of mobility as a livelihood strategy while conserving biological diversity and using natural resources in a sustainable way. (Wiser Earth, n.d.)

This reflects a traditional lifestyle, currently under threat in the same moment as its value is being discovered.

Indigenous Peoples, even Nomadic Indigenous Peoples still immersed in this traditional lifestyle, are not the primary focus of this book. The Norwegian Sami are classified under this heading but, as will be seen, the Sami in the region discussed by Kamil Özerk are moving towards hybridity in lifestyle and economic occupations.

An allied sociopolitical term, the "Fourth World", does not fit either. The "Fourth World" comprises:

> Nations forcefully incorporated into states which maintain a distinct political culture but are internationally unrecognized. . . . These are the 5,000 to 6,000 nations representing a third of the world's population whose descendants maintain a distinct political culture within the states which claim their territories. In all cases the Fourth World nation is engaged in a struggle to maintain or gain some degree of sovereignty over their *[sic]* national homeland. (Griggs, 1992)

Neither are the groups in question "economic migrants" in the predominant policy sense of the term. The United Nations (2006) classifies migrants as settler migrants, migrant workers and students, and refugees and asylum seekers. The occupational migrants who are the focus of this book move *en famille,* not as individuals who migrate either to support the family in its place of origin or to settle and put down roots in their place of destination.

Finally, although some members of groups with nomadic/migrant heritage can of course become displaced (for example, Romanian Roma), the populations are not *per se* comprised of displaced persons.

Ethnic status is not something that occupational travellers (for example, showground and circus people and farm workers) might lay claim to, or be seen as having. Other groups such as the Roma are recognised as ethnic, but within the societies in which they are immersed this status is often called into question. In the case of groups such as the Irish Travellers, the evidence for their cultural distinctiveness is often seen as too delicate or dubious to warrant ethnic status. The argument is ongoing, particularly in the policy domain; most scholars, including the authors in this book, concur that the cultural migrants discussed here constitute ethnic groups.

In short, the groups written about here are diverse, and are engaging to varying degrees in complex cultural transitions to meet the erosion of their traditional occupational niches, and changes in market demands. The Rabaris in India pursue a mixed economy of herding and provision of goods and services to local villages, and the nomadic pastoralists and fisherpeople in Siberia and Nigeria are acquiring skills to diversify their traditional range of economic activities. The Spanish Roma are moving from traditional family occupations towards a broad range of educational and occupational options; the Norwegian Sami are still engaged in traditional reindeer herding, but with growing employment in local towns; United Kingdom Roma and Travellers and Irish Travellers—some still travelling, some settled—pursue a mixed range of economic activities, from traditional self-employment to waged/salaried occupations. The occupational travellers (circus and showground people and farm workers) are also diversifying.

PREJUDICE AND PLACE

As will be seen in the contributions to this book, there are strong common threads uniting official policy regarding all the groups in question. What has been said about Roma/Traveller policy has wider application. Liégeois (2008) says that social policies relating to Roma and Travellers centre on imposing order and fixity. McVeigh (1996) notes that the particular shape of values invoked in the discourse of "new racism"—(local) community, stability and property values—does not fit Traveller culture; "hence, any group of Travelling people require policing . . . and engender widespread distrust" (p. 43).

Anti-Roma/Traveller discrimination warrants the title "racism", and is recognised as the most virulent form of racism in Europe. It shares a key characteristic with discrimination against other migrant populations: all are significantly focused on the mobility of the people being targeted. This form of prejudice has ancient roots in at least Judeo-Christian myths

of origin: Adam's son Cain, the herdsman, killed his brother Abel, the farmer. Cain's shunned descendants, cursed to wander, include "tent-dwellers and owners of livestock . . . all who play the lyre and the flute . . . all metal workers, in bronze or iron" (Book of Genesis, 4: 19–22). Clébert (1963) notes that these are traditional Gypsy occupations, as is fortune-telling, which warranted expulsion and death for Israelites who resorted to it, and the routing of polluting outsiders who practised it (Exodus, 22: 18, Leviticus, 20: 6, 27; Deuteronomy, 18: 10–12). This demonisation of the migrant may well be paralleled in other religious and folk traditions.

Hansen (2004) links anti-nomadic prejudice in England to the social upheaval flowing from the industrial revolution. As traditional cottage industries and agricultural methods were swept away, huge numbers of people migrated towards the cities. There was great concern among the educated classes that their prized traditions would be swept away also. One response was an intensified hostility to mobile people:

> The civilised man lives not in wheeled houses. He builds stone castles, plants lands, makes life long marriage-contracts;—has long-dated hundred-fold possessions . . . ; has pedigrees, libraries, law-codes; has memories and hopes, even for this Earth, that reach over thousands of years. The Nomad has his very house set on wheels; the Nomad, and in a still higher degree the Ape, are all for 'liberty;'. . . . (Thomas Carlyle, 1843, as cited in Hansen, 2004)

This experience warrants study across the diversity of groups; Goffman's (1970) words about the need for communication across separate research disciplines apply:

> . . . stigmatized persons have enough of their situations in life in common to warrant classifying all these persons together for purposes of analysis. . . . [D]evelopment of coherent analytic perspectives is not likely to come from those who restrict their interest exclusively to one substantive area. (p. 176)

As the chapters in this book suggest, what is common to all with either a cultural or an occupational migrant tradition is that they are most likely the first targets of suspicion if offences are committed during their stay in any locality; and, regardless of how long they have lived in a place or how evident their intent to remain, once they are suspect they are treated as tricky aliens who arrived yesterday and cannot be trusted to stay until tomorrow. Michel de Certeau's (1984) useful distinction between the 'place' of the centre and the 'space' of the margins has literal application to their position. Migrant groups do not ever really 'belong' or have the power to make their voices heard, and any victories that they do achieve in terms of

cultural recognition must be guarded and maintained through struggle. To add to the power of the dominant society's actions, the key instrument in its marginalisation of nomads is literally located in the site of their relationship to place and space.

This note sets the context within which the migrant–school relationship is worked out. As each chapter in this book illustrates, the migrants change to varying degrees to try to fit schooling into their framework; the schools engage to varying degrees with the nomadic tradition and with the children of that tradition; and in the process the administrative complexities and sedentarist mindset of the formal education system are challenged.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS: REPRESENTATIVE OR USEFUL?

This book comprises a brief introduction to a dazzlingly rich, varied and rapidly changing world—grey only in the sense that this world is not sufficiently visible or adequately addressed in current academic and policy understandings of ethnicity, indigenousness, migrancy/nomadism or socioeconomic marginality. Many of the peoples discussed in the book are moving away from their traditional lifestyles and economic activities, moving towards urban areas and modernising their provision of goods and services. This cultural journey makes their world and its intersection with the majority world and its institutions even more complex (similar journeys have been undertaken by majority populations, with many members also living unconscious of their own history). The sociocultural understandings that frame educational provision in all the countries discussed in the book are challenged by the voices of the peoples and the analysis of their experiences presented here—the perspectives and experiences of peoples who do not fit into that framework.

It was to illustrate this crucial point about the absence of fit that we chose to present the chapters in the book in a sequence that deliberately contests the taken-for-granted assumptions about sedentarism and those who deviate from it. Specifically we have eschewed a sequence based either on geography or on typology that might have implied a false homogeneity within and across very diverse communities in favour of one that maximises that diversity while also attending to the commonalities of experience and aspiration among those communities.

We hope this book is useful, but we do not intend its coverage to be at all 'representative'—how could it be? Textual sparseness parallels the geographical: chapters are short, so the discussion of any given issue is introductory. By focusing on specific facets of the communities' experiences in education, the analysis in these chapters achieves depth, where an attempt at an overview would prove simplistic or over-generalised. Comprehensive analytic presentation of the experiences and perspectives of any one of these peoples, and their interaction with educational

provision, would warrant a book in its own right; we hope that this book will open the door to many more studies of the common and distinctive experiences of these peoples, and their relations with majority society and its institutions. Furthermore, we trust that this book and those studies will play their parts in contributing to the third dimension of "changing schools" articulated above.

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1 Moving Lives

A Reflective Account of a Three Generation Travelling Attractionist Family in Italy

Francesca Gobbo

INTRODUCTION

Among the many minority groups of Italy are numbered the *esercenti di attrazioni viaggianti,* literally, the proprietors of travelling attractions, or *attrazionisti viaggianti*. My reasons for studying Italian travelling attractionists[1] were twofold. The first was a civic urge to understand how the right to education was implemented for pupils whose travelling allowed them only a patchy learning experience. As an educator, I was puzzled by the fact that the Italian educational debate on intercultural education made no mention of the problems that attractionists' children had with school attendance. Even a discussion of Roma pupils' limited school attendance[2] did not lead policy-makers to view the regular classroom from a sociopolitical perspective.

My second reason for studying the attractionists was my interest in late 20th century anthropological research, which had been influenced by the demand of minority groups across Europe and North America that respect for diversity be recognised as a way to attain social and educational justice (see Berube, 1994; Gobbo, 1977). Concerned cultural anthropologists had objected to attempts to explain the 'unsuccessful' performance of minority students purely in terms of cultural deprivation. These anthropologists theorised that minority students experienced cultural discontinuity in schools in which cultural diversity received little consideration. Ethnographic research pointed out that schools are "cultural environments" (Gobbo, 2000) characterised by majority norms, rules and expectations that may well conflict with the cultural standards that minority children have learned within their own families (see also Gobbo, 2000; Gomes, 1998; Philips, 1993; Saletti Salza, 2007, 2008; Sidoti, 2007; Willis, 1977; Wolcott, 1974). Ethnographers emphasised, moreover, how failure to acknowledge diversity calls into question a nation's *de jure* responsibility to pursue social and educational justice.

From this theoretical point of view, I hypothesised that there would be a considerable degree of discontinuity between what children of attractionist families were taught at home and the national curricula that had

been established for an overwhelmingly settled school population. As my fieldwork proceeded, the theory of anthropologist John U. Ogbu appeared more fitting: a community's attitude towards education, and the students' expectations of it, are affected by the minority–majority historical relationship. Differing minority groups will manifest different levels of trust and cultural "accommodation" to schooling that will result in differing educational performance and success (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). This perspective invited me to see attractionists as "autonomous human beings who actively interpret and respond to their situation" (p. 158), and who construct their distinctive work and family environment, as far as circumstances allow. I thus aimed to understand what schooling meant for those who are defined as minorities, though they present themselves as fully fledged members of Italian society (see also Gobbo, 2003a, 2006). It is the cyclical presence of the attractionists among settled people that highlights what I would call their *separate participation* in ongoing sedentary life. Thanks to their communication skills, many attractionists are respected in each village that they visit. Still, given their peripatetic lives, attractionists do not—*cannot*—fit the *order* of a sedentary society.

Finally, I wondered what ethnographic research might offer to educational theory. My fieldwork[3] indicated that the process of enculturation could explain only partly the relatively gratifying schooling experience among children of attractionist families. A nuanced interpretation was needed that would take into account the travelling families' sophisticated knowledge of the sedentary population's habits and values[4], and the schools' inability to acknowledge the attractionist cultural experience in any fashion (see also Gobbo, 2007b).

SCHOOLING THE CHILDREN OF TRAVELLING ATTRACTIONISTS

Because attractionists[5] move from fair to fair during most of the school year, their children change schools almost weekly[6]. Still, because families tend to plan their circuit to cover the same fairs every year, their children return to the same schools, often becoming a familiar presence for teachers and peers in particular classrooms. The attractionist families whom I interviewed all recognised the importance of schooling, but saw no alternative to limited and fragmented school attendance, unless sedentary relatives took care of the children for the whole school year (see also Gobbo, 2003a, 2006, 2007a, 2007b). For their part, teachers sounded as frustrated as the attractionist families and children (Gobbo, 2007a, 2007b). Teachers claimed that the booklet (*quadernino*) in which attendance is certified, and in which teachers are encouraged to give a detailed description of each student's performance, rarely bears enough content to help the next instructor to draw up an effective instructional plan. Teachers felt helpless and discouraged because they did not have enough time "to follow" those children and fill their "gaps".

I must add that the teachers' accounts of their experience with attractionist pupils helped me realise that contemporary educational theory could paradoxically raise an unexpected barrier for Travellers. Intercultural education emphasises the importance of familiarity with the cultural differences present in most societies. Unfortunately, an abstract understanding of cultural diversity can lead even well-meaning teachers to interpret the *dialectics* of students' cultural identities as a fixed cultural *distance* between mobile and sedentary lifestyles (Gobbo, 2007c; Piasere, 2007). The teachers whom I interviewed warmly praised the attractionist children's good school behaviour, and expressed deep regret for their own inability to help them effectively. However, they saw the mobile life of attractionist families as something that had always been distant from theirs, separated by a symbolic border that the teachers portrayed as hardly crossable (Gobbo, 2007a, 2007b).

Theoretical Background

Literature on occupational migrants shows that there are many subgroups (for example, Travellers, Roma and circus and show people [ECOTEC Research and Consulting Limited (ECOTEC), 2008]), and there is growing research attention to them and to the cultural and educational differences among the groups. Researchers repeatedly express concern for the learning problems and social barriers that Traveller children face in school (for example, Danaher, 1999, 2000; Danaher, Hallinan & Moriarty, 1999; Danaher, Moriarty & Hallinan, 2000; European Commission, 1994; Jordan, 1997, 2000, 2001a, 2001b; Kiddle, 1999; Liégeois, 1992). The most recent, ECOTEC's *The School Education of Children of Occupational Travellers in the European Union* (2008), also stresses the great diversity among these groups. With regard to schooling, "they all share problems related to access, support and continuity" (ECOTEC, 2008). ECOTEC's findings confirm that the lives of mobile workers and their children's educational experiences warrant educators' and researchers' consideration.

Early studies were sensitive to Travellers' and Gypsies' difficulties with formal education, and were deeply aware that cultural discontinuity, not simple economic disadvantage, explained exclusion. The sedentary majority was seen as 'entrenched' in its educational beliefs, unable or unwilling to question its own attitudes, expectations and actions towards pupils perceived as different from the others (see Liégeois, 1992). The 1994 European Commission Report recognised that school success and the equality of educational opportunities had so far been negatively related to diversity. Both these studies acknowledged the different reasons that attractionists have for choosing a mobile lifestyle, and how much more positive their approach to schooling[7] is than that of the Roma or the bargees. Travellers were seen not only as "part of the European heritage" but also as representing "an important element in the socio-cultural fabric of Europe, as it is demonstrated by their contribution to the functioning of the economies and the cultural role they play

during the festive days of the people of Europe" (European Comission, 1994, p. 16). Yet, as other research documented, sharing the European heritage has not always guaranteed Traveller families and their children an effective education. Teachers, frustrated by the irregular, though predictably cyclical, school attendance of attractionists' children, have not succeeded:

- in finding ways to evaluate the children's learning;
- in communicating to the next teacher what the children have been taught;
- in giving the families accurate accounts of their children's educational progress;
- or in making useful suggestions about how to help the children.

The ECOTEC (2008) study confirms the families' positive attitude towards schooling, and the efforts that they make to provide their children with a good education. It also details the persistent prejudices of the sedentary populations and schools, stemming from a total lack of recognition of the Travellers' distinct culture. A number of possible reasons for this situation are proffered—the small number of occupational travellers; their rather fleeting presence in national and regional territories; and their accommodation to sedentary ways—which makes them less 'visible' than other minority groups. At school, this cultural 'invisibility' allows teachers to ignore or devalue the children's strong work ethic and the "high degree of decision-making, independence and responsibility from an early age" that are assigned to children who are fully "integrated into the family business and upkeep of the family home" (ECOTEC, 2008, p. 36). The need to overcome the teachers' and policy-makers' poor understandings of the Travellers' cultural background is reiterated by ECOTEC (2008): it urges teachers to seek out information on these minorities' specific needs, recommends that the "one-size-fits-all approach to their education" (p. 60) be avoided, suggests that the curriculum make room for cultural diversity and encourages teachers to coordinate efforts across schools serving these children. Ultimately, ECOTEC recognises that, although "there are no simple solutions", efforts should be directed towards

> . . . customisation and experimentation, as well as flexibility in provision. A move towards individual, tailored learning pathways, with a focus on 'learning outcomes' rather than attendance at school, seems to present the most suitable approach towards developing provision for occupational traveller children. (p. vii)

In sum, ECOTEC favours a shift "from the idea of equality of *opportunities* to equality of *outcomes*" (emphasis in original).

Past research about occupational travellers aimed to identify "good [educational] practices"[8], as they are called today, which can effectively answer

the needs of this internally varied group's children. With specific regard to initiatives implemented in Italy to meet the educational problems of attractionist children, their inclusion in school and the reduction of unsatisfactory results were promoted by the 2004 project (Fondazione Migrantes, MIUR, Regione Toscana, 2004) launched by the Tuscany Region, the Ministry of Education and University, and the Catholic Foundation "Migrantes". Following European Union recommendations, the Tuscany agreement established a network of 35 schools, provided families with a more detailed enrolment form and encouraged teachers to keep precise notes in the newly prepared "*foglio notizie*". The overall good results of the initiative have been attributed to its bottom up approach to the educational goals, and a "follow-up of show children's schooling and progress, as well as their educational competencies and skills" (ECOTEC, 2008, p. 63) has been planned to strengthen what has been achieved so far[9], while the original project has been extended to schools and families in other Italian regions[10].

THREE GENERATIONS OF A TRAVELLING ATTRACTIONIST FAMILY

In this section, I offer a narrative of three generations of an attractionist family which gives invaluable insight into the cultural complexity of the lives of attractionists. This ethnographic account is a substantial contribution to the European and international research outlined above, and to efforts to handle the difficulties of the children of Italian attractionists. To this purpose, "narrative language"—which Scheffler (1991) identifies as one of the "four languages of education"[11]—has been particularly relevant as it allows us to gain access to how people understand themselves, to listen to them "when they speak in their own voice" (p. 121) and to disclose "how a problem looks to the person whose problem it is" (p. 122). In this sense, I present the narratives of the attractionist family members whom I interviewed as a way of developing the educator's and reader's 'multilingualism'.

Towards the end of fieldwork that I undertook between fall 1999 and the summer of 2001, Mr Pulliero, then secretary of a travelling attractionists' association[12], introduced me to Mr Gappi[13], who, because of his failing health, asked me to come to his house, a modest, countryside building on the road from Padua to the nearby Hills[14]. His manner was stately, and he arranged that I meet his daughter and granddaughters, and his younger son. Mr Gappi was then in his early 70s; during the 50 years that he'd spent as an attractionist, he'd been a keen observer of the Travellers living in the province of Padua. Now, living a comfortable, settled life, economically well-supported by the income of a toy train attraction parked all year round in a nearby town's public gardens, Mr Gappi recalled how he came to choose a travelling life for himself and his family. Born in the village where he later built his home, he would probably have followed in

his parents' steps, growing fruits and vegetables and selling them at the local market, had it not been for a travelling attractionist family that spent its winter stop near his home. The two families became friendly, and Mr Gappi reported that as a child he "was almost always around the [attractions]; I was almost a son for that family"[15].

After his father's death during World War II, the relationship between the Gappi boy and the attractionist family grew closer; as soon as he could, the young man decided join the attractionists or, as he put it, "*to move* his life". He travelled with that family for about five years as an *operaio* (worker), doing a labourer's chores and tending the *mestiere*[16], though he was always on the lookout for new models of attractions that he would then promote among other attractionists. To further his mobility project, he decided to move to Bergantino[17], where an *operaio* not only was better paid than in Padua but also had a place at the master's table. In Bergantino, Mr Gappi worked as a truck driver for a local attractionist family until his employer died in a road accident. Shortly afterwards, the widow sold her *mestiere* to a Southern Italian man who bought it on condition that young Mr Gappi would work for him and manage it.

At about that time, Mr Gappi married a "still" (that is, settled) woman from his home area, and his personal dream of success was reinforced by the determination to show his wife's family that he was a trustworthy, reliable person. The young couple moved to Caserta, near Naples, and travelled around that area for two years. Now an experienced *operaio,* Mr Gappi passed on his knowledge to other local attractionists. He taught them to take good care of "the craft", to tackle problems quickly and to restore and repaint the attractions every year during the winter stop. He evoked fragments of the informal education that he had received when working as an *operaio:* in the evenings, for instance, his employer would sternly advise the young men against going out to enjoy themselves after a day's work. Instead, they should save money for the winter, when the craft could not provide any income. Thrift, hard work and self-control were Bergantino's values, Mr Gappi claimed, and he always valued and practised them.

Throughout his narrative, Mr Gappi constructed a positive image of himself and testified to his inner drive. Eventually his family and he returned home to the Hills, and Mr Gappi was finally able to realise his own *mobility* project. He drove a truck and tended the roller coaster of his new employer, who persuaded him to invest not in the ferris wheel of his dreams but instead in a smaller attraction, and who even loaned young Mr Gappi the money to buy it. In recollecting his first steps as the owner of an attraction, Mr Gappi proudly stated:

> I still keep the first coins I gained. My craft was popular with the customers, and both my wife and I worked as much as we could. The couch? I did not have much use for it! I worked very hard; I pushed myself to the limits.

Mr Gappi's narrative illustrates how his dream of success and a comfortable life were supported by his ability to learn from others, as well as to safeguard his work and personal identity. He expressed his sincere admiration for the Bergantino attractionists because they "brought the winds of novelty, and we followed them". After remarking that "they have a different attitude towards the world", he added that he believed that he was "a bit like them"[18].

Like other attractionists, Mr Gappi was upset by the fact that education is still a problem for travelling families. He himself had to make a decision that families do not usually make easily[19]: because he could not chauffeur his older son to school, he placed him in a boarding school to complete his compulsory schooling. Regular school attendance still represents a challenge to many travelling families[20], who become somewhat resigned to their children's patchy learning or to teachers' inability to help. Mrs Capari, Mr Gappi's daughter, said that she had become aware that children's intermittent school attendance seemed to justify what she called the "I don't give a damn" attitude that many teachers show—an attitude that seemingly allows educators to 'unload' on the family or the next school the task of presenting missed lessons to Traveller children. Mrs Capari hastened to add, however, that there *are* teachers who really care (see also Gobbo, 2007a, 2007b) and give of their own time to tutor children.

Mr Gappi deplored the indifference of some attractionists towards their children's education. Still, he sounded gratified by the fact that his older son chose to skip secondary school when he learned that there were plans to have him join the family enterprise. Mr Gappi then began to be his teacher, taking him along whenever he went to discuss his present or future entitlement to a *piazza*. Mr Gappi knew that practical training would teach his son how to handle negotiations to secure a *piazza* for his own attraction (see Gobbo, 2003a, for additional examples of this kind of practical and communicative knowledge). Following his father into various town administrators' offices represented a new kind of curriculum for the boy. Mr Gappi taught him that "an amusement park is a type of cultural work" and that attractionists are "cultured people" in that they have to know their work rights and make the local administrators respect them.

Interestingly, the issue of the relevance of schooling to the work sector was brought up twice by Mr Gappi's daughter, but her target was the self-centred attitude of many of her colleagues. Mrs Capari is an articulate and intelligent woman who stood up for the attractionists' right to be respected and valued at the 2000 Catholic Jubilee, but she is not blind to the prejudices existing within her own community towards the rest of society. However, she attributed these prejudices to "ignorance", specifying that this kind of ignorance did not result from a lack of schooling but rather from the difficulty that attractionists have with establishing social relations outside a close circle of relatives, friends and work colleagues. In a tone that reminded me of one of her father's bursts of impatience, she stated that those complaining about limited contacts with outsiders should blame themselves for

their own shyness and ineptitude! Later in our conversation, she diagnosed "ignorance" as the primary cause of an unpleasant squabble that she had had with another attractionist who had lost out to her in a bid for a new *piazza:* this colleague who had heatedly opposed her was an "ignorant" person driven by bad judgment rooted in envy and jealousy. Thus, in contrast with her much more positive attitude earlier in our conversation, Mrs Capari had to admit that, much as she loved her work, trust and friendship among attractionists had deteriorated of late. She associated the changes with shifts in wider society today, recognising that she idealised the past:

> Some years ago I really loved this work and the human contact it provided. Once there was sincerity, human contact; now one sees more competition and less solidarity. We no longer feel we are all on par, regardless of the income each makes. Now if one makes 100 and another 10, they can seldom be friends.

For Mr Gappi, being an attractionist is a free choice; if work prospects look bad, another job should be found. Families have a great educational responsibility. As he said, "When one is correct, and has been taught to behave correctly by the family, then—. . . . But correctness should be learned at home, otherwise— . . .". Mr Gappi's belief that education in the family is crucial for future attractionists also acknowledges that a youth's apprenticeship must be supported by deep respect for the rights of attractionists and of the society at large. Later in our conversation, his daughter endorsed this perspective: her family had taught her to make herself always available to others, even at the risk of being metaphorically "beaten up" by unkind and selfish people. Deeply believing in family and friendship, she confessed: "I cannot live thinking only about myself. I might say so, but when it is necessary, then I am ready to help", because she "had been taught to act that way".

Mr Gappi's narrative clearly presents the family enterprise as a true learning environment where parents are living examples of hard-working, law-abiding citizen entrepreneurs (see Gobbo, 2007b). His daughter deeply shared this ethic: she stressed that taking good care of her attraction was important to her, and claimed proudly that she had never missed a day's work since she started helping her father in her teenage years. The goal of solving problems without calling for a mechanic or electrician made her willingly learn the lessons taught by her husband and parents-in-law[21]. "Do it yourself" saves money; it is also an opportunity to reaffirm independence (see Gobbo, 2003a).

Mrs Capari stressed that she had been happy to leave school on the completion of compulsory education and become an active partner in the family enterprise. She remembered how she eagerly started to work at her father's side as soon as she was allowed:

> [This] is a job I love, I always loved it, because one is in touch with different people, one *moves*. As a child, I would always be around my father,

> helping him as much as I could, and I made up my mind that I would work in this sector. We learned to work outside and inside the home.

At 9 or 10 years of age she was already assigned some simple tasks:

> As a young child you cannot do more than collecting tickets, but when you grow up you can stay at the cashier desk. It is always a school for life. My [younger] daughter sits there with me and learns to talk with other people, to have a dialogue with them, and some customers marvel that persons so young can deal with money and tickets in a professional way.

She could have chosen differently (see Gobbo, 2003a): her school grades were good and she had a warm and gratifying relationship with her teachers. Furthermore, having been born after her father had bought the toy train attraction (mentioned above), she had been able to attend school regularly. Once the first five years in a state school had been successfully completed, she was enrolled in a parochial school for the last three years. She said that she'd been "lucky" because her school attendance was not interrupted by the scheduled moves of the fair. She also guessed that her sedentary status, and the fact that she was a familiar figure to the other town residents, had effectively protected her from prejudice. She also emphasised the importance of the "wonderful" teachers whom she had had, particularly one in primary school:

> I still have her in my heart; she was able to understand the problems of every one of us pupils. A wonderful experience. And the same was true in junior high [school]; the relationship with my classmates was very, very good and the same was true with the teachers and the nuns who ran the school.

Her positive school experience convinced her that her two daughters should have the same opportunity, even though this has required that they live with her husband's parents in Bergantino[22], and join her and their father only for weekends and summer vacations.

For all her social and educational optimism, Mrs Capari continues to be aware of the pervasive prejudice towards attractionists, and she has developed relational strategies to prevent unpleasant situations. She informally taught her daughters about the negative reactions that Travellers can evoke in settled people and about ways to counteract these. When it was time to enrol her children in primary school, she did not overlook the fact that school personnel often do not distinguish between travelling attractionists and Gypsies[23]. One of her strategies to prevent teachers' "confusion" about her family was to invite them to visit her home "so they could see the reality of our world, learn about our work, our life, to learn, for instance, that we *do* have a bathroom . . .".

Her daughters, like their mother, love school, although they complained that regular attendance requires that they see their parents less often, and spend only weekends with them gathering the tickets for the ferris wheel or sitting with their mother at the cashier desk. Neither girl intends to work in the family enterprise. At the time of the interview, the older daughter planned to work in the arts, and the younger said that her love for animals will make the Faculty of Veterinary Science a perfect future choice for her[24]. Notwithstanding their career goals, the two daughters have learned a lot about attractionists' work and skills: "You learn how to speak [kindly] to people [since] you cannot be arrogant; you must instead be nice to customers who complain about the price of tickets. You learn to give them a reasonable explanation". The parents have been their teachers, instilling good manners, pride in belonging to a family of attractionists and the communication skills that are important for maintaining good relations with those around them. Both daughters said that they appreciated the fact that their father knows how to relate to all who come by the family attraction and that he usually persuades them to board the *mestiere*. Having been keen observers of their father's manners, they claim to be capable of using the appropriate communication skills:

> For instance, if the child passing by has pigtails, you call her with a diminutive, like 'little, cute pigtails'. Your goal is to engage [young] people passing by. [After they have boarded the "wheel"], when their seat comes in front of you, you might hold the microphone in front of them or of their parents, and invite them to speak.

They emphasised how having a microphone to engage customers is something special: not every attractionist has one, and the two daughters were proud to point out the bonus that it represents for the family enterprise.

The girls respected their parents for their "passion" for work; the older daughter emphasised, for instance, how her father "likes what he does", pointing out that he is "proud of it and makes us understand [the reasons for his pride]". She acknowledged how the travelling life was valuable to her and her sister, and how she had learned the importance of a way of doing things that is based on the belief that "united we win". Their mother's language skills are a good example of the attention that attractionists pay to details when interacting with customers. Mrs Capari always starts an interaction by speaking Italian; if it becomes clear that the other person is more comfortable with the local dialect, she switches to it, so as to avoid making the other feel awkward. "I am the one who adapts to [the customers]. . . . These are little things, details, but— . . .". While "making the other feel comfortable" undoubtedly contributes to the success of the family enterprise, it also indicates that the family's behaviour is finely nuanced and culturally complex. Acknowledging such cultural and entrepreneurial sophistication might change the simplistic and negative attitudes of sedentary teachers and administrators with whom attractionists must deal.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, in addition to reviewing the available research on this topic, I presented a narrative account of a three generation attractionist family, an account that I collected during my ethnographic fieldwork. My aim has been to underline the dynamic nature of minority cultures and the different learning processes that they use—provided that symbolic and material barriers do not undermine them. Awareness of this can positively influence teachers' understandings of diversity.

The Gappi family narratives recount how identification with the travelling lifestyle is progressively achieved, how it is maintained thanks to the values and education within the family and how it might not be chosen by the younger generation, whose cultural framework can accommodate both cultural orientations. Schooling remains a complicated matter even for a successful family such as the Gappis, either because it brings the experience of sedentary people's prejudices or because it requires that children and parents be separated during the school year. In spite of all the national efforts to implement customised programs to ease the structural conditions in which attractionists live, the schools' inability to accommodate the cultural richness of their lives within their sedentary cultural perspective is inevitably a source of discrimination (see ECOTEC, 2008, p. 112).

Most importantly, the Gappis' account of themselves does not support an image of cultural diversity as a self-sufficient, neatly bounded reality. An abstract understanding of cultural diversity can contribute to the misperception of seeing attractionists as (reassuringly) 'the other', an error which has been rightly identified by researchers who work with stigmatised ethnic groups such as Roma and Sinti (Piasere, 2007; Saletti Salza, 2007, 2008). With immigrant and minority groups, there is always the risk of effacing the singularity of persons, and turning them into one-dimensional figures (Galloni, 2007a, 2007b; Troman, 2003) or of muffling the voices that in their vivid accounts reveal the complexity of life (Gobbo, 2003b). Culture, after all, is a concept "*constructed* out of people's actions, and . . . the ethnographer's close attention to what people do . . . will make the non-linear and creative dimension of . . . teaching and learning . . . come into appropriate relief" (Gobbo, 2008a; emphasis in original).

One reformulation of this concept (Goodenough, 1976) stresses:

> . . . the unique *version* that each person develops . . . of the various cultures he or she experiences or recognizes as distinct. 'Cultures' of this order are not the neat ones revealed in anthropological writing; they are implicit, personally defined, and experience based. (Wolcott, 1994, p. 1726; emphasis in original)

In the end, personal accounts like those of the Gappi family invite teachers to *see* a way of life distinct from school cultures in its tradition of specific behaviours, values, procedural knowledge and communication styles, and

in its complex appraisal of economic and professional prospects. Presenting lives 'different' from the prevailing standard, lives that are sometimes the result of individual decisions to cross over to an alternative culture, invites teachers to take into consideration the role of imagination, self-reliance and self-efficacy in promoting social affiliation outside an individual's 'scripted' membership (see Appiah, 1996; Gobbo, 2003b). It also invites teachers to look for cultural and structural reasons for direct and indirect discrimination. Getting teachers to learn about different minority populations is certainly necessary, but it is insufficient unless accompanied by the disposition to learn that their own beliefs and values are also culturally situated. From this perspective, teachers would benefit from looking at ethnographies as effective educational resources that can help educate them to avoid "cultural blindness, especially when research is carried out within the researcher's own social environment" (Gobbo, 2008b).

NOTES

1. Since the possible translations for *attrazionisti*—fairground people or showmen—are less than precise, I coined the English word attractionist to capture some of the complexity of the meaning.
2. Roma and Sinti children are categorised as nomadic pupils although most live in settled encampments.
3. Mine, the first ethnographic research conducted in Italy among attractionists, remains the only study, except for a *tesi di laurea* on the families and children travelling in an area of the Emilia Romagna region written by a student of mine (Canesi, 2001).
4. Taking Ogbu's comparative perspective (Ogbu & Simons, 1998), Veneto attractionists could be said to have developed a cultural framework able *to accommodate* many cultural features shared by sedentary families and children together with those of their nomadic lifestyle.
5. A number of attractionist families are now entitled to places in so called "entertainment parks", located on popular beach resorts, where they stay throughout the summer.
6. Children stay in each school only as long as each fair lasts, unless the parents are willing to drive to the same school from the next fair.
7. cf. Gobbo (2003a).
8. The Annex to the ECOTEC (2008) study collected a series of projects implemented in the Member States.
9. S. Natteroni and I. Tabarella (2008). *Progetto "Lo spettacolo viaggiante": Regione toscana, anno 2008–2009*. Personal written communication, 29 October 2008.
10. Personal communication by Mrs Capari.
11. The four languages of education are the technical, the narrative, the evaluative and the pedagogical (Scheffler, 1988).
12. *Sindacato Nazionale Attrazionisti Viaggianti,* the National Trade Union of Travelling Attractionists, was part of the much larger leftist *Confederazione Generale Italiana Lavoratori* (Italian General Federation of Workers).
13. All names, with the exception of Mr Pulliero's, are fictional to preserve the persons' privacy.
14. The *Colli Euganei* (Euganean Hills), locally known as "the Hills".

15. Early in my fieldwork, I had heard poignant stories from other attractionists about poor local children joining attractionist families through a sort of informal inclusion. Probably after World War I, a number of children were 'adopted' by attractionist families who could at least offer them food and some future prospects. The celebrated movie *La Strada* can be seen as illustrating how young people could be a resource for poor families that Federico Fellini elaborated in a poetic, but not unrealistic, way.
16. In Veneto attractionists' jargon, an attraction is called *mestiere* (literally "craft" or "job") or *giostra,* from which the everyday word for attractionists (*giostrai*) stems.
17. For a valuable account of Bergantino and its connection to attractionists, see Silvestrini (2000).
18. It must be acknowledged that he also remarked how "a fixed residence is useful, because the *carabinieri* may come around [it] once, but seldom any more. Instead, if one lives in a mobile home, they come more often".
19. For examples, see Gobbo (2003a).
20. This seemed especially true for the Veneto families (as I learned during fieldwork) since the boarding school where many of the children had been enrolled closed down (see Gobbo, 2003a).
21. Because of the characteristics of her father's attraction, the toy train, she never had to face the difficulties that a "ferris wheel" can provoke.
22. The grandparents are a good example of those Bergantino attractionists admired by Mr Gappi. They let their son manage the family craft with his wife when they stepped down from the fair circuit to take care of the granddaughters' education; and they continued to help the younger couple during weekends.
23. For more on the distinction between attractionists and Gypsies, see Vita and Rossati (1997) and Zaghini (2001).
24. The older daughter did not pass the university entrance test. The younger one is now attending the second year of technical high school. The option of veterinary science is still open to her.

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2 Inclusive Education for Children and Young People with Interrupted Learning in Scotland

Pauline Padfield and Gillian Cameron

INTRODUCTION

In mid December 2007, *The Scotsman* published figures from a government poll indicating that 48% of Scottish people believed that a Gypsy/Traveller would be unsuitable as a primary school teacher (see also Lloyd & Stead, 2001; Lloyd, Stead, Jordan & Norris, 1999). Patrick Delaney's response to the tragic racist murder of his 15-year-old son by two non-Traveller boys in the South of England—"It is by working together that future generations can learn to live alongside each other" (Coxhead, 2007)—reflects Travellers' increasing willingness to work with government agencies (Kiddle, 2007). Despite high levels of anti-Traveller views and a lack of Travellers' views (Morris, 2006), Holyrood and Westminster parliaments are making serious attempts to ameliorate racism in everyday life.

In 2000, Scotland's new parliament placed education at the centre of its close working with an increasingly diverse, and arguably egalitarian, society.[1] It aimed to deliver a social justice agenda through improved public services. The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act (2000), which aimed to raise educational standards for all pupils, established all children's right to receive a school education, and education authorities' duty to provide "education . . . directed to the development of the personality, talents and mental and physical abilities of the child or young person to their fullest potential". The Additional Support for Learning Act (ASfL Act) and its Code of Practice (Scottish Executive, 2005a)[2] also signal Scotland's desire for significant educational change, not least for Travellers. This chapter, written in the context of a Scottish National Party government's redefinition of policy approaches to inclusion[3], questions the extent to which changing Scottish educational legislation has helped education authorities and schools deliver the flexible pedagogies necessary to meet mobile pupils' interrupted learning and additional support needs.

SCOTTISH TRAVELLING COMMUNITIES

Despite the serious efforts of government[4] and voluntary organisations[5] to raise awareness about Scotland's Gypsy and Traveller communities and their

changing and contemporary lifestyles, research shows that official understandings of cultural and social distinctions among Scotland's travelling communities remains muddled; school staff generally refer to these distinctive populations as "mostly just Travellers" (Padfield, 2006a). However, the diverse historical, cultural, legal and linguistic elements that constitute Scotland's travelling identities (O'Hanlon & Holmes, 2004) give rise to complex and interrelating factors that may negatively shape the way in which well-intentioned policies are articulated. Unlike English Gypsies, Irish Travellers and Romani Gypsies[6], who have ethnic minority status across the United Kingdom, Scottish Gypsies/Travellers[7] are not *legally* recognised as an ethnic minority in Scotland.

Scotland's travelling communities are broadly comprised of three social groups with distinctive histories, cultures and diverse lifestyles (Danaher, Coombes & Kiddle, 2007):

- As Scotland's oldest indigenous minority ethnic population, **Gypsies/Travellers** comprise communities of families who variously self-define as Scottish Traveller or as Gypsy Traveller.
- Officially called **occupational travellers**, a second Traveller grouping is comprised of **travelling showpeople**[8], who bring shows and fun fairs to Scotland's towns and cities[9]. Travelling showpeople define themselves as business communities, *not as an ethnic minority*. Along with circus folk, travelling showpeople have long been part of Scotland's diverse cultural life. These families are largely Glasgow-based, and their children attend Glasgow schools. Families travel across Scotland, the rest of the United Kingdom, Europe and beyond.
- A third grouping, **New Travellers**, is comprised of families who borrow from traditional Traveller ways of living to organise distinctive communities. Emerging from the 20th-century civil rights movement, New Traveller communities are frequently bound by a common philosophy or approach to life, and tend to live on the margins of society. Little is known of the size and make-up of these communities in Scotland, but New Traveller families are more likely than Gypsy/Traveller or travelling showpeople families to choose 'home education' for their children (Scottish Government, 2008).

"It is important . . . to acknowledge the cultural distinctiveness and coherence of [these] communities without assuming a false . . . homogeneity" (Lloyd & McCluskey, 2008; see also Abajo & Carrasco, 2005; Derrington & Kendall, 2004; Padfield & Jordan, 2004). In this chapter, unless we indicate otherwise, the term "Traveller" includes all three groups.

SCOTTISH POLICY CONTEXT/BACKGROUND

Scotland's National Guidance document[10] aims to change attitudinal and organisational barriers to education encountered by Traveller children in

Scotland's state schools. While it directly addresses improving school performance, the document encourages a multi-agency approach to working with Traveller families. A number of policy developments have set the conditions for delivering effective educational opportunities for Travellers[11]. The requirements of the 2000 Race Relations (Amendment) Act and advice given by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (2005) on meeting the needs of Gypsies and Travellers also put issues of inclusion and equality for Travellers firmly onto schools' policy and strategic agenda. We are interested in how effectively these policy changes have been implemented[12]. We argue that Travellers' interrupted learning experience, which results from a cocktail of factors—mobile lifestyles, racism, institutional inflexibility and sometimes poverty—produces a profoundly negative effect on many Traveller families' educational and social inclusion. We describe some evidence of *good practice* in Scotland, while noting the generally *ad hoc* choices and patchy delivery of educational services for Scotland's travelling communities. The educational inequality of mobile Traveller children, and of others being 'educated outwith[13] school', requires that local authorities and schools deliver more effective learning and teaching (Padfield, 2006b).

PUBLIC SERVICES FOR *WHICH* TRAVELLERS?

Since 2000, governmental concerns for Travellers have focused on Gypsy/Traveller communities. Carried out in 2001, the Scottish Parliament's Equal Opportunities Committee of Inquiry into the delivery of public services for Gypsy/Travellers made 37 recommendations to improve families' access to public services.[14] Families were found to experience difficulties in accessing educational services, accommodation, health, welfare and police services. A further review by the committee in 2004 found that key stakeholders were concerned that little progress had been achieved and "that there is an urgent need for an improvement in the pace of progress and the sharing of good practice across Scotland"[15]. At the time of writing, with one or two significant exceptions, public services for Gypsy/Traveller families show little improvement. Other Traveller groups' public service needs have received little public attention, with a significant negative effect on equality of opportunity for Traveller communities. Scottish travelling showpeople also face accommodation difficulties because their traditional Glasgow 'yards', where many live and keep their showground equipment outside the travelling season, are currently being reduced as a result of land redevelopment.

IMPACT OF MOBILITY ON PUPILS' LEARNING

Traveller families have a range of experiences with schools. Many teachers think that, when Travellers live a 'settled life', whether in a house or a trailer on a site or a yard, they lose their Traveller identities. Such attitudes

reflect widespread misunderstandings about the cultural role of travelling in Travellers' lives.

In Scotland, Gypsy/Traveller families' patterns of mobility continue to vary according to their reasons for travelling; they might travel for employment opportunities, or to attend family and cultural events, or even to avoid 'trouble' with other families. A key concern for educators is whose responsibility it is to maintain educational records for highly mobile Gypsy/Traveller children.

Commentators have argued that "[t]he essentially excluding school system and the self-excluding Traveller pupil conspire to perpetuate cycles of underachievement and marginalisation, confirming their social exclusion within society" (Jordan, 2001a). Linked to mobility patterns and interrupted learning are families' concerns about "the most overt racism in schools, including from staff" (Jordan, 2001b; see also Lloyd & Stead, 2001; Scottish Executive, 2005b) being directed at Travellers. Gypsy/Traveller families keep their children out of school in part because parents fear racism; they do not want their children to lose the skills of Gypsy/Traveller culture. "With all that education they'll want to find jobs that have nothing to do with the family", said one parent. Many Gypsy/Travellers begin at very young ages to earn money within a family's particular occupational choice while school, which offers no entrepreneurial training and does not recognise the skills that Traveller children learn from their families, seems pointless.

Travelling showpeople's patterns of mobility are more predictable than those of Gypsy/Travellers, and many showground families request educational support during the travelling season by making contact with schools well in advance of their children's arrival (Jordan & Carroll, 1994). Travelling showpeople make good use of schools during the winter months. When travelling, their children are more likely to use paper-based distance learning materials provided either by their base schools or by the schools that they attend along the way. Nevertheless, some families choose to leave their children with grandparents to maintain the continuity of their education, while other showground families send their children to boarding schools. In the last few years, Glasgow City's provision of interactive communication technology learning has enhanced some travelling show children's access to education (Mykytyn, 2005).

Attitudes about school-based learning are shaped by factors such as the mismatch between school calendars and Travellers' calendars and the perceived irrelevance of the curriculum. Gypsy/Travellers fear that schools will alienate their children from their cultures. Despite families' concerns about revealing their Traveller identities, research suggests that family attitudes towards schools are changing. School Census returns[16] suggest a gradual increase in the numbers of Scottish schools used by Travellers. In 1992, for example, 133 schools recorded Gypsy/Traveller pupils on their school rolls (Jordan, 2001a, p. 2), while national statistics for 2006 show that 250 schools recorded Traveller pupils on their school rolls. However, because many Travellers don't

disclose their identities for fear of racist treatment, recording systems fail to give an accurate picture of a school's Traveller pupil profile—an absence that has implications for allocations of support. Traveller parents are increasingly interested in having their children acquire the qualifications needed to demonstrate their reliability and accountability in a chosen trade (Bhopal, 2004; Padfield, 2005; Padfield & Jordan, 2004). As a Showman recently said, "Education is about giving our children a choice" (Mykytyn, 2005).

CHANGING TIMES FOR SCOTTISH TRAVELLER EDUCATION

In 1984, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities recommended that funding be provided to help Scottish local authorities develop Traveller educational support. In the late 1980s, a lecturer's post dealing with Scottish Travellers was set up at Moray House[17]. By 1991, the Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP) had also been set up. Funded by the Scottish Office, these initiatives were to take a national lead in promoting educational equality for Travellers in Scotland. Prior to 2000, national and local government awareness of Traveller children *not* accessing Scottish education was reflected in the appointment of one or two designated teachers of Travellers by four local authorities. *Circa* 1998, teachers designated by the local authority and supported by STEP began to meet informally to reduce their sense of isolation, and to share information and *good practice*. By 1999, a professional support network, known as the Traveller Education Network (TENET), had emerged. Designated staff continue to promote and support Traveller children's access to 'a school education' by meeting quarterly to share *good practice* and to access continuing professional development opportunities[18].

Since 2000, policy initiatives have looked to schools to raise standards for all children. Within the broader context of inclusion, local authorities and schools with an awareness of Travellers' educational needs have largely looked to designated staff to promote and support Gypsy and Traveller families' greater use of schools and to provide some "education outwith school" (Scottish Executive, 2006).

Currently, 75% of Scotland's 32 local authorities have formal links with TENET. Roughly half of TENET's 52 members deliver support for learning and teaching, many of them embedded in teams with multiple support remits for children from other backgrounds. In most authorities, only one or two teachers provide the authority's specialist educational support for Travellers and schools. "A Traveller teacher's role is as much about breaking down barriers of prejudice and racism as about teaching literacy and numeracy". Not all Travellers need or want social or educational support; some achieve in schools. Anecdotal evidence suggests that schools are less than confident in responding to the unexpected arrival of Traveller children and in responding to mobile children's learning needs.

Supported by the National Guidance and a raft of inclusive policy guidance (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education, 2002, 2006b; Scottish Executive, 2005b), the delivery of social and educational support for Travellers continues to be shaped by three main challenges. Designated teachers must:

- make and maintain contact with Traveller families;
- work with schools to support the development of flexible educational approaches to Traveller parents and pupils;
- provide support for learning in a range of settings (for example, community centres, houses and trailers) when families are reluctant to use schools.

Unfortunately, Scotland has few coherently developed Traveller education programs. Still, some local authorities *without* designated staff have appointed development workers to identify and support Gypsy/Traveller families. In local authorities *with* designated staff, *good practice* begins with staff making contact with Gypsy/Traveller and travelling showpeople families. Staff members encourage the development of trusting relationships with families as the basis of effective educational inclusion. In addition, with a remit to support schools' development of inclusive educational practices, they aim to raise standards by improving Travellers' access to education and other public services. Underpinned by inter-agency cooperation within and across local authority boundaries, school staff members are encouraged to work with site managers and colleagues from housing, social services and police departments. Some designated staff members also deliver the authority's continuing professional development in race equality. A few designated teachers also work with the few voluntary agencies that currently provide social and educational support for Gypsy/Traveller young people of secondary school age (Save the Children–Scotland, 2005). Unfortunately, designated staff with multiple remits report that increasing requests for them to support pupils with English as an additional language erode the time that they had been using to support Traveller pupils, with the result that some receive no education.

SUPPORT FOR LEARNING—NEW APPROACHES

A secondary teacher to whom we spoke declared with some frustration: "It's very difficult to get extra resources . . . for *anybody*". Her comment sets the general scene in which provision for Gypsy/Traveller pupils is operating (Padfield, 2006a). Teachers report that the impact of the ASfL Act on associated policies, and the allocation of additional resources, usually based on information gathered through the school census, vary among authorities (Padfield, 2006b). Provision is generally for a group rather than for an individual child. The report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education

(2007) on the implementation of the ASfL Act (2004) in Scottish schools noted that "[m]ost authorities varied in their readiness to implement the key requirements of the Act". Specialist teachers of Traveller children confirm these views, frequently reporting that teachers describe Traveller pupils as "taking up valuable time when they may 'just up and go'", complain that Traveller children skew attendance figures or are reluctant to provide work for travelling show children, citing the non-return of resources.

Some non-Traveller parents perceive Traveller children's enrolment at a school as an unacceptable drain on limited staff, resources and learning support. Despite the government's commitment to supporting the ASfL Act, the embedding of its broader concept of 'additional support needs' has still to transform practice; for many teachers the 'special educational needs' and 'physical disability' attitudes prevail. Consequently, Traveller pupils' additional support needs are frequently denied. Overall, Gypsy/Traveller pupils' access to the curriculum largely depends upon the commitment of individuals. In authorities *without* designated support, many Gypsy/Traveller children, especially those of secondary school age, are unable to find ways of accessing their entitlement to a 'school education'.

PROBLEMS WITH EDUCATIONAL ACCESS

Unequal Treatment

Many Gypsy/Traveller parents remember their own difficult experiences in schools. Despite their schooling (or perhaps because of it), many are non-literate, and they fear that their children will be stigmatised by teachers as a result (Kiddle, 1999). Many Gypsy/Traveller parents, moreover, fear for the security of their children; they think (often correctly) that their children will be socially excluded, bullied and subjected to racist treatment at school. Perhaps most significantly, neither parents nor teachers fully appreciate the cultural differences between families and schools. Gypsy/Traveller families continue to question the relevance of the secondary curriculum and its threat to Gypsy/Traveller culture. Mothers don't want their daughters taught about sexual matters too early or in the way that schools teach these subjects. Designated teachers report insensitivity among some school staff to the range of issues shaping families' experiences of schools. Some consider that offering Travellers flexibility gives them an unfair advantage. Such attitudes help create and maintain the very barriers to learning that inclusive educational approaches seek to remove for pupils not able or willing to attend school.[19]

Limited Contact Between Schools and Traveller Families

Experienced designated support staff advise their colleagues "to establish *direct communications* between Traveller family and school staff" because

educational inclusion is achieved through the involvement of parents. Staff frequently commented upon the importance of developing positive relationships with families: “Learning begins with the relationship . . . then you build on that” (Padfield, 2006b). López’s (2001) qualitative research into the parental involvement of Hispanic migrant families in the United States of America suggests that the schools that achieved success “held themselves accountable to meet the multiple needs of migrant parents on a daily and on-going basis”. In a subsequent study, López (2004) highlighted the positive effect of home visits on students’ learning and schools’ accountability. Here in Scotland the recommendation to work with Traveller families is not honoured in all 32 educational administrations. Some administrations offer outreach and help schools deliver flexible access to the curriculum. Others offer flexibility but no outreach. Travelling families therefore experience wide variations in the quality and form of educational provision across Scotland and many perceive these variations as further examples of inequality.

Inconsistent Record Keeping

The unexpected arrival of a group of Gypsy/Traveller children at a school is a sharp test of the school’s commitment to inclusion, particularly since the children are unlikely to have with them a full record of their educational progress. In these circumstances, staff members experience difficulties in placing children: “Sometimes records come late and sometimes records are not particularly full or don’t quite match the child, so . . . we kind of just get on with it” (Padfield, 2006b). Effective assessment processes require that:

> The pupil learning plan *should not* be merely a detailed record of achievement or forward learning plan, but should be conceived as a record of learning achievement and decisions taken by pupil, parent and teacher with the pupil as custodian of the record. (Simpson, 2006, p. 67; emphasis in original)

A 2007 guidance from the government requires that schools “go beyond the recording of attendance and absence and explores many of the circumstances which may lead young people to be disengaged from learning” (Scottish Government, 2007, p. v). The guidance urges, “Particular sensitivity should be given to Gypsy and Traveller families” (p. 11).

The teachers whom we interviewed say that the school record of a settled pupil transfer can take six weeks to pass from one school to another; it commonly takes longer for a Traveller child’s report. Traveller records, moreover, are unlikely to have been systematically updated; they are frequently set out in a tick box form that is too limited to allow particular achievements to be recorded. Some staff say that they would welcome a more systematic access to *all* mobile pupils’ records through electronic means.[20]

The problem of sketchy records is exacerbated by the incompleteness of the census reports on Traveller children. Official statistics gathered for the 2005–2006 School Census suggest that recorded Traveller pupils make up 0.10% of the total pupil population. To avoid discrimination, many Gypsy/Traveller families prefer to hide their cultural identity at enrolment. Thus, Scottish national statistics about Gypsy and Traveller pupils inevitably present an inaccurate picture of pupils, their attendance and their achievements.

Increasing awareness of the need for effective multi-agency efforts is also constrained by poorly kept and incomplete records. For example, when an educator has concerns about the care and welfare of a particular Traveller child, it can be difficult to keep track of a child who may be receiving support from a range of agencies (Scottish Executive, 2005b). Support staff providing 'education outwith school' may be asked to respect a Gypsy/Traveller family's wish that their child's personal information not be included in an official register. This creates compromising choices for professionals who have a duty to record a young person's social and educational progress. Designated staff encourage flexible attitudes among school staff about registration and enrolment procedures because many Gypsy/Traveller families fear official intrusion into their family.

CHANGES IN SCHOOLS' WELCOME AND PEDAGOGIES FOR MOBILE LEARNERS

Scottish legislative and policy drives towards educational inclusion are partly reflected in the numbers of new advice organisations and associated resources accessible through websites. Staff and pupils can access Learning and Teaching Scotland's (LTS) Inclusive Education website[21] and parents and young people can access Enquire: The Scottish Advice Service for Additional Support for Learning[22]. The Government's continued funding of STEP and Scottish local authorities' support for TENET provide sources of information and assistance for educators. And some progress *is* being made: a recent inspection recognised the excellence of the Larkhall Universal Connection project for Gypsy/Traveller learners[23].

When sharing *good practice,* designated staff encourage teachers to welcome families by visiting children in their homes. Scottish research (Padfield, 2006b) found that families appreciated visits by staff and were more likely to be involved with schools as a result of the home visits. One primary head teacher said, "I now see that . . . me going to them . . . probably did more than anything [else] I could have done—I built up a very good relationship with mum". Some staff recognised that Travellers may not read or understand written communications, and that a child's successful inclusion required staff to 'pick up the phone' and converse respectfully.

REGISTRATION AND WELCOME

Many teachers appeared to be aware of the need to be sensitive in making enquiries about the schools that a child has attended in the past; about arranging transport from a site to the school; about offering help with form-filling for uniforms or school meals; and, most importantly, about explaining the school's strategies to help social inclusion in the playground and dinner hall. However, anecdotal reports of families who say that schools fail to keep places open for their children when they return indicate wide variations on schools' use of 'authorised absence'. Some schools remove a child's name from the school roll after four weeks; others keep places for returning mobile children from travelling show and fairground families. Significantly, this latter decision reflects the local authority's endorsement of government recommendations for the inclusion of mobile families. However, practitioners are concerned about how marked variations on policy affect the transition of Gypsy/Traveller children from primary to secondary school.

FLEXIBLE ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

Curricular flexibility was achieved in some schools by adapting the curriculum and timetables to provide a relevant education for Traveller pupils. However, examples emerge of TENET staff expressing their surprise on finding that schools with a tradition of supporting Traveller children had developed neither their inclusive approaches nor their curriculum resources to meet Gypsy and Traveller pupils' interrupted learning needs. "There are very [few] resources geared towards Travellers' needs. . . . [I]t's very important when children come here that the focus is on access to computers and on life skills that are *useful*" (Padfield, 2006b; emphasis in original). Staff reported that "[t]here is no way we give somebody an individualised education programme just because they were a Traveller . . .". It was suggested that should a Traveller child have additional support needs *then* he or she would have such a program. However, anecdotally this is highly unlikely because by definition mobility leads to additional support needs. Some schools evidently continue to think of Traveller pupils in stereotypical ways as needing 'occupation, not learning' in the classroom.

The move from summative to formative approaches to assessment of children's learning, formally described as Assessment is for Learning, focuses on a child's achievements in learning (Simpson, 2006). Designated staff members encourage school staff to be flexible in their use of formal testing, for example, since standard tests[24] do not include culturally relevant images for Traveller children. Designated staff members also highlight the importance of displaying positive representations of Traveller cultures as a way of tackling racism against Traveller communities—remembering to include trailers in a 'homes project'.

Research has shown examples of *good practice:* by relaxing and providing a "[s]ettling in period . . . you gradually assess the [children] and get to know where they were . . ." in their learning. School staff frequently report that Traveller children don't have "learning difficulties" *per se* but do have "gaps in their learning experiences". Designated teachers urge schools to place by ability rather than by level of attainment. Schools describe their effective inclusion of Travellers by using 'negotiated streaming' of all pupils in small group settings. Some groups include pupils from a range of ages (chosen with sensitivity) but at the same stage of learning need; such approaches specifically take account of a range of pupils whose learning needs cannot be met within the usual age/stage framework.

SCHOOLS' RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRAVELLER PUPILS

While evidence of *good practice* emerges in some Scottish schools, travelling showpeople report concerns about their children's education when travelling away from their Glasgow 'base schools'. Some Traveller families think that "the children should be in school", but others rely on paper-based support provided by their base school. The National Guidance specifically recommends that local authorities ensure that designated support staff should not be used to fulfil a school's responsibilities towards Traveller pupils (Scottish Executive, 2003, p. 20). Traveller parents spontaneously volunteered the view that designated staff were doing the work of the school, and not just providing extra support. "I phone [the primary school] but it's the Traveller teacher that gives them the work, which I didn't know; I thought it was just a school teacher but it isn't, it's the Traveller teacher that does it."

Distance learning is poorly developed in Scotland; there is little evidence of paper-based distance learning for highly mobile Gypsy/Traveller pupils, while distance learning supported by computers (Department for Education and Skills, 2003; see also Danaher, 1998; Jordan & Padfield, 2004; Marks, 2004) is provided only for some travelling show children by a single local authority. As an issue of equality, the delivery of distance learning is crucial to maintaining contact with families during a period of travel, not least so that children remain visible within the system and not missing from education[25].

Designated staff encourage schools to consider homework policies and practices. Traveller pupils should have the same opportunities as other pupils, but may not have a quiet space or adult support at home to complete tasks. Staff could provide a homework club at the school or even on a site. Fránquiz and Hernández (2004) and Ward and Fránquiz (2004) highlight "Even Start", an after-school club that provides a space for migrant youngsters to complete their homework and that delivers language and literacy skills using a whole family approach to educational activities. Schools

exhibiting *good practice* made sure that Traveller families understood how the school's day is organised. They formalised buddy systems for Travellers and non-Travellers, and provided literacy support—"Just what you would do for [other] pupils".

Some schools are aware of the mismatch between schools' learning priorities and those necessary for Travellers. Many Gypsy/Traveller families express their concern that secondary education deskills their children: "The things they are doing will never [help them] to work in the family business." However, while Traveller families continue to provide their children with important family skills, many also want their children to be taught in settings beyond the home (Kiddle, 2000).

CONCEPTUAL CONFUSIONS: 'HOME EDUCATION' AND 'EDUCATION OUTWITH SCHOOL'

A recently published *Home Education Guidance* distinguishes "home education by parents" from "education being provided outwith school by local authorities" (Scottish Government, 2008). Anecdotal evidence from Travellers and educators suggests that conceptual confusions about the official meanings of these terms have implications for parents who agree to 'home education' as an alternative to school attendance. Gypsy/Traveller families have understood 'home education' to refer to the 'learning for life' skills that Travellers teach their children on a day-to-day basis. They have not understood that their agreement is placing a duty on them to ensure that their child is receiving an 'efficient formal education'. By moving their children from school into home education, some Gypsy/Traveller families are failing to access 'education outwith school' services more suited to the pupils' needs. Such confusions arise when written statements have constituted the main mode of communication and there are few teachers working directly with the pupils to advise on flexible alternatives. As there is no statutory duty placed on an education authority "to monitor" the home education provided (Scottish Government, 2008, p. 13), much learning time can be lost before children's voices are heard about their wishes in relation to their entitlement to a 'school education', one that meets their learning and additional needs as envisaged by the ASfL Act (2004).

CONCLUSION

Generally, the media's negative stereotyping of "gipsies" persists and the latter term is used to refer to all travelling communities. A significant exception in quality reportage is a recent article about the role of local authorities in meeting the needs of Gypsy/Traveller families (Lorimer, 2007).

Significantly, Travellers' voices are now being heard as they engage with the media on their own terms (http://www.travellerstimes.org.uk/).

Schools have also changed; they no longer espouse notions like 'Your Traveller values and needs don't fit into our system and therefore they are wrong'. Ward and Fránquiz's (2004) account focuses on Even Start's integrated educational activities and its whole family approach to delivering language and literacy skills. Scottish colleagues recognise partnership and interagency approaches as the way forward. This is reflected when schools establish *good communications* with Gypsy/Traveller families. Through the demonstration of how new educational developments relate to Traveller cultures, children and young people from all travelling communities are actively using the Internet and its opportunities for communicating with families, friends and teachers as they travel (Marks, 2006).

Schools are beginning to meet the challenges posed by inclusive education for children by recognising the negative effects of 'short term' and 'long term' interruptions to learning; likewise teachers are starting to acknowledge that mobility creates additional support needs (Additional Support for Learning Act, 2004). "Children who succeed do so because they grow in understanding both at school and at home and are able to build a learning bridge between them" (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education, 2006a).

The challenge for Scotland is its development of Curriculum for Excellence. In partnership with Learning and Teaching Scotland:

> An online resource called "The Journey to Excellence" [has been developed]. . . . [I]t aims to demonstrate to staff at all levels in Scottish education, but particularly to practitioners, the key dimensions of an excellent school or early years centre and how they might be achieved. . . . It aims to create a single framework for the curriculum and assessment for children and young people (3–18 years of age) by focusing classroom practice upon the child and by simplifying and prioritising the current curriculum so as to encourage more learning through experience. (http://www.curriculumforexcellencescotland.gov.uk)

Crucially, these approaches are based upon understandings about *how* children learn and upon starting with learners' interests.

In encouraging school staff to be aware of, and to celebrate appropriately, the skills valued by Gypsy and Traveller families, designated teachers strongly identify the resilience of children and young people from Traveller communities. They argue that their achievements already reflect the expected outcomes of Curriculum for Excellence approaches: they are successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors.

Change is evident in Travellers' aspirations for their children's education. Significantly, the attitudes of Scottish Gypsy/Traveller communities towards education signal their recognition of the links among formal

learning, achievements and pupils' access to qualifications—that is, they see that a 'school education' leads to 'the piece of paper' that is increasingly needed for employment purposes. Gyspy/Traveller girls are beginning to look outside traditional family lifestyles; they want to try college taster courses. Families recognise that what their generation learned is inadequate for the 21st century.

The duty of authorities to provide education to Traveller pupils can be enhanced only if supported by information and communication technologies (ICTs) (Department for Education and Skills, 2003; Jordan & Padfield, 2004). However, from hopeful beginnings (Danaher, 1998), drifts in the development and provision of ICT-supported learning and pedagogies for mobile pupils show the changes needed to promote educational equality for many of Scotland's travelling pupils. Changing Scottish educational legislation and policies around learning and achieving for all children have recreated 'a moment' for including Gypsy and Traveller learners in Scottish education. Can professionals and families work together to ensure that young Travellers' educational views and aspirations are heard and acted upon?[26]

NOTES

1. See http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Openscotland/publicsectorictpolicy/OneScotlandPortal.
2. The ASfL Act and its Code of Practice will impact widely in that it has significant implications for professionals working in health, social work and a range of other agencies (http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/inclusiveeducation/additionalsupportforlearning/theact.asp). Its notion of "additional support needs" replaces the more limited scope of "special educational needs" approaches to educational inclusion.
3. See http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/purposestratobjs, which states its aims for "a wealthier, fairer, and more egalitarian society".
4. Set up in April 1991, the Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP) is funded by the Scottish Government to support inclusive educational services for Travellers. Through its working with a range of agencies and individuals, STEP provides information, advice and support about research and educational services for Travellers (see http://www.scottishtravellered.net).
5. STEP and the Gypsy/Traveller Education and Information Programme (G/TEIP) are key organisations that work with Gypsy/Traveller communities.
6. Since 2004, as a result of the expansion of the European Union, Scotland has welcomed migrant workers from Eastern and Central Europe. Among them are European Roma families from a range of countries, all of whom have ethnic minority status and are protected in Scotland under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000).
7. The Scottish Parliament and Government have advised that people from these communities be treated as if they have minority ethnic status under the law.
8. Community members sometimes refer to themselves as "Travellers"; however, the term "travelling showpeople" is the preferred referent to families who make up this community (written communication from the Showmen's Guild of Great Britain—Scottish Section, 18 December 2007).
9. See http://www.nfa.dept.shef.ac.uk/history/showmans_guild/scottish.html.

10. A downloadable copy of "Inclusive Educational Approaches for Gypsies and Travellers within the Context of Interrupted Learning: Guidance for Local Authorities and Schools" is available at http://www.scottishtravellered.net/resources/STEP-NationalGuidance.PDF.
11. See Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education's "How Good is Our School?—The Journey to Excellence" (http://www.hmie.gov.uk/documents/publication/hgiosjte.pdf), Assessment is for Learning (http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/assess/for/index.asp) and Curriculum for Excellence (http://www.curriculumforexcellencescotland.gov.uk).
12. See http://www.scre.ac.uk/pdf/spotlight/spotlight76.pdf; see also Jordan (2001a, 2001b).
13. The term "education outwith school" is an official Scottish policy term referring to a local authority's provision of educational services in places that are not schools—for example, a community education centre, a portacabin on a site, a family trailer or house or a roadside encampment.
14. See http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/research/pdf_res_notes/rn01–114.pdf.
15. See http://www.scottishparliament.uk/business/committees/equal/reports-05/eor05–05.htm.
16. Since publication of the McPherson Report, Scottish education authorities have gathered information about pupils by 'ethnicity'. Information about Traveller pupils is gathered under the categories "Gypsy/Traveller", "Occupational Traveller" and "other Traveller" (http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education).
17. The Moray House Institute of Education has since become part of The University of Edinburgh's College of Humanities and Social Science, and is known as The Moray House School of Education.
18. See http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2000/20000006.htm.
19. Interestingly, travelling showpeople appear to have fewer concerns about these issues and are frequently likely to make arrangements for their children to stay with non-travelling family members in term time.
20. STEP/LTS has recently published a new "initial curricular transfer record". Called "My Learning Record", it was developed and piloted in four Scottish education authorities. An Initial Rapid Assessment Guide to support learning and teaching in schools and in outwith school settings, and a parental leaflet designed to encourage mobile Traveller families to stay in touch with schools and teachers, complete a set of resources available in hard copy and also downloadable from STEP's website (see http://www.scottishtravellered.net).
21. See http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/inclusiveeducation/index.asp.
22. See http://www.enquire.org.uk.
23. See http://www.scottishtravellered.net/resources/casestudies/STEPcasestudy_sl.pdf.
24. The Performance Indicators in Primary School or British Picture Vocabulary Scale test.
25. See http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2005/08/0191408/14115.
26. Since this chapter was written the legal status of Scottish Gypsy/Travellers has changed with the result that it is in line with that of other ethnic minority Traveller groups in the UK. At a recent Scottish employment tribunal Judge Hosie arrived 'at the view that Scottish Gypsy-Travellers have "ethnic origins", with reference in particular, to Section 3(1) of the 1976 Act, and that they therefore enjoy the protection of the Act' (Employment Tribunals (Scotland) Case No: S/132721/07 Held at Aberdeen on 8 & 9 September and 20 October 2008). Of profound importance to the communities involved, this judgment will provide

the legal basis for challenging the discriminatory treatment frequently experienced in Scotland as a result of being a Scottish Gypsy/Traveller.

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3 Itinerant Farm Workers' Children in Australia

Learning from the Experiences of One Family

Robyn Henderson

ABSTRACT

For the children of itinerant farm workers in Australia, changing schools generally involves relocating from one state or territory to another and moving in and out of educational systems which have different school entry ages, transition points, curriculum and even handwriting styles. Although recent discussions about a national curriculum have highlighted some of the educational disruptions experienced by children who change schools across state borders, this area of education traditionally has not been given high priority by education systems. Nevertheless, schools whose enrolments escalate in line with local harvesting seasons are very aware of the impact of a fluctuating student population. To tease out some of the educational issues that relate to itinerant farm workers' children, this chapter focuses on the primary school aged children of one family. By examining the discourses that circulated in a school where the children were enrolled for two winter harvesting seasons, the chapter offers insights into the way that education 'worked' for those particular children. It also considers how schools might think differently about itinerancy, to ensure productive responses to the educational needs of itinerant children.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary Australian society appears to be characterised by high family mobility, with many school-aged children moving across state borders each year (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2003a, 2003b, 2007; Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services, 2004). Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (1999, 2001a, 2001b, 2003a, 2003b) show that over 40% of the population moved residence at least once during the most recent six-year census periods. However, statistical information about population trends homogenises mobility and does not indicate families' diverse circumstances or their different ways of being mobile or itinerant (Henderson, 2005).

In the Australian context, issues relating to the education of mobile students have surfaced in small, localised areas and have been managed mainly through local or context specific measures. The Defence Community Organisation, for example, offers support to the children and families of defence force personnel who relocate. This support includes advice about how to minimise social and educational difficulties associated with moving, the provision of teacher aide time in specific schools near defence force bases and funding for additional tuition in key learning areas (Defence Community Organisation, 1999, n.d.). Another example is the Queensland School for Travelling Show Children, which was the end result of lobbying by parents from the Showmen's Guild of Australasia. This mobile school—with semi-trailer classrooms, teachers and mobile teacher accommodation—travels with show families across four Australian states and two territories (Mitchell, 2004).

However, not all mobile groups in Australian society are readily identifiable: itinerant farm workers, for example. Not only are there few official statistics about this section of the Australian labour force (National Harvest Trail Working Group, 2000) but also the children of itinerant farm workers, particularly those who cross state borders and therefore move from one state education system to another, seem to be 'invisible' to education systems. It has only been in recent years that research has attempted to foreground specific educational issues that apply to these children (for example, Henderson, 2001, 2005, 2006, 2008), although it is widely recognised that moving from one state system to another means negotiating different school entry ages, varied transition points between primary and secondary school, different curricula and even different handwriting styles.

Even though educational considerations are still formative and have not yet been addressed substantially at system or policy levels, the enrolment of itinerant farm workers' children in particular schools—in rural areas that rely on an itinerant workforce for harvesting—does not go unnoticed. At such schools, enrolments that fluctuate in line with annual harvesting seasons can cause considerable angst for teaching staff. For example, the enrolment of itinerant farm workers' children can result in larger classes, an increase in a school's cultural and linguistic diversity, and the feeling among school personnel that their school is understaffed and under-resourced (Henderson 2004, 2005).

Additionally, some schools have reported that the 'rules' used by education systems to calculate staffing levels can disadvantage schools that enrol additional students in the middle of the school year (Henderson, 2004). In Australia, education systems generally rely on an eighth-day-of-the-school-year census (in early February) to finalise staffing for the calendar year. This means that schools which experience increased enrolments during winter harvesting seasons (June–August) are reliant on reactive responses from the education system once class sizes exceed prescribed standards.

The Australian situation regarding the education of farm workers' children stands in contrast to the situation in the United States of America, where migrant education—specific considerations for the children of

itinerant or migratory workers from the agricultural and fishing industries—has had official recognition since the 1960s. The United States Migrant Education Program is part of recognised educational practice and has associated government funding in excess of 386 million dollars annually (National Association of State Directors of Migrant Education, 2007). Whilst it is arguable whether the compensatory nature of the United States program—the development of educational responses that attempt to 'catch up' itinerant students to their mainstream peers—would be the only desirable response in the Australian context, there is no doubt that there is much work to do in providing equitable and appropriate educational opportunities for itinerant farm workers' children (Henderson, 2005).

The remainder of this chapter, then, investigates some of the issues surrounding the education of itinerant farm workers' children in Australia. Drawing from a single family case study, it examines the discourses that framed stories about the children's experiences of schooling and an itinerant lifestyle. Through an understanding of discourses as ways of constituting the social world, the chapter shows how these stories constructed the children and their family in particular ways (Fairclough, 2001; Foucault, 1972). Whilst it is recognised that such a small data set will not provide insights that are generalisable across the whole population of itinerant farm workers' children, the rich data offer opportunities to explore the complexities that are part and parcel of social life (Denscombe, 1998) and to see how education 'works' for the children of one family.

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

The stories presented here are drawn from a two-year research project that investigated the literacy learning of itinerant farm workers' children. The research focused on itinerant families whose children attended one primary school in a farming district in the northeast of the state of Queensland. Each winter, the town's population increased substantially as large numbers of seasonal itinerant farm workers arrived for the vegetable crop harvest on nearby farms. Many children accompanied their parents as they moved from one harvesting location to another. At the school where the research was conducted, up to 60 itinerant farm workers' children enrolled (and departed) annually.

Historical enrolment data for the school indicated that the school's enrolments fluctuated on an annual basis in line with the winter harvesting season. Student numbers were at their lowest—usually around 530 students—at the beginning of the school year (late January), and began to increase around April or May before reaching a maximum of between 570 and 590 students at the peak of the harvesting season (August–September). Approximately 80% of the itinerant farm workers' children identified as Turkish, Tongan, Samoan, Maori or Vietnamese and this added substantially to the number of students within the school who spoke English as

an additional language. Moreover, many itinerant farm workers' children were known at the school as "regulars", as they re-enrolled during the harvesting season each year.

This chapter focuses on the Potai family (a pseudonym), who had come originally from Tonga and had been living in Australia for approximately 10 years. After eight years in Sydney, the family took the advice of other family members to move out of the city and to find what they described as "better living". This move was the beginning of an itinerant lifestyle, with the family spending winter harvesting seasons in the northern state of Queensland and summer harvesting seasons in the southern state of Victoria. The family's relocations followed a recognised 'harvesting trail', whereby farm workers travel the 2,500 kilometres distance between the north and the south at approximately six-month intervals (National Harvest Trail Working Group, 2000).

There were six children in the Potai family: Kalisi and her brother Saia (both pseudonyms), who were aged 10 and 7 respectively at the beginning of the two-year study; two older sisters (Aahlyia and Melé—also pseudonyms) who enrolled at the nearby high school; an older brother who was staying with relatives and attending high school in New Zealand; and a younger sister who was not yet of school age. In the discussions that follow, data are presented in three sections. The first presents teachers' stories about the children's school lives, drawn from field notes, classroom observations and a set of six semi-structured interviews with teachers who taught Kalisi and Saia. The second focuses on a section of one of these interviews and provides a detailed analysis of a story told by one of Kalisi's teachers about the children's home lives, while the third presents the family's version of that story as told in two semi-structured interviews.

The details provided in this chapter have been drawn from a much larger study (see Henderson, 2005) which explored the relationship between the 'narratives' of itinerant farm workers' children, their parents and teachers and the contexts within which those stories were produced. Using a range of ethnographic techniques, data for this research were collected in the school and in the family's home over two harvesting seasons. Although the analytic methods are not foregrounded in this chapter, Critical Discourse Analysis based on Fairclough's (2001) text–interaction–context model was used to analyse the stories.

TEACHERS' STORIES ABOUT THE CHILDREN'S SCHOOL LIVES

Teachers' stories about the Potai children varied considerably. On the one hand, there was teacher talk—in the staffroom before school and during morning tea and lunch breaks, as well as during interviews—that commented positively on the grooming of the Tongan students who had enrolled at the school. The Potai children were included in these discussions, with Kalisi's multiple braids and Saia's spiky gel-styled hair being used as evidence

of parental care and attention to the children's appearances. Yet there was also teacher talk that was less complimentary, some teachers presenting stereotypical stories about their perceptions of a latent aggression in Tongan boys. For example, one teacher commented that Tongan boys were "basically passive until you rile them up enough" and another explained that:

> [They] are very aggressive in the playground. . . . The boys have this aura of rough and tough. They seem to ooze that, whereas the girls don't. . . . I think they're fairly rough and tumbly in the playground. Saia is really over the top.

Contradictions were also evident in teachers' discussions about Kalisi and Saia as literacy learners. Some comments about Saia's efforts praised him—for example, "tries very hard" and "has been appreciative of any extra help given to him"—while others were more critical—for example, "refuses to try when he thinks it's too difficult". Saia's achievement levels in literacy were low and he was identified as an 'at-risk' student. Kalisi, though, was considered to be doing a little better at literacy learning. She was reported as achieving mostly in the middle range of the class and her progress was regarded as satisfactory. Nevertheless, when teachers talked about her achievements, they tended to predicate their statements with reference to her learning of English as an additional language. For example, one teacher explained, "For someone who speaks Tongan first, . . . she could read above her age in the classroom", whilst another said:

> You wouldn't know that she's ESL [English as a second language] at all. She's just so capable. So, as far as Kalisi's concerned, I don't think there's any real problem. Probably get her reading a lot more would be good.

Even though teachers recognised that English was not Kalisi's first language, they did not seem to regard it as a significant factor that was affecting her school capabilities. However, they were quick to note that a number of behavioural issues were interfering with her potential as a student. According to one teacher, "She's not a good listener . . . because she's got . . . other things on her mind, little feuds, little personality things she lets interfere with her work". Another explained:

> Yeah, she's a sporty girl. She's competitive. Just because she's a big girl, she picks on the boys. If someone does something, and she wants to know about it, she'll go and try and do better or something like that. She's competitive.

Saia's school behaviour was also criticised by teachers. Report cards stated that he had "disappointing behaviour" and "disturbs people around him". These attributes prompted requests for him to "apply himself", "complete tasks", show "more independence" and observe "classroom protocol".

A TEACHER'S STORY ABOUT THE CHILDREN'S HOME LIVES

Whilst teachers' stories about the Potai children's school lives included both positives and negatives, this was generally not the case with stories that the teachers told about the children's home lives. In the second year of the study's data collection, for example, one small event involving Kalisi seemed to activate a series of deficit stories. The initial event occurred when Kalisi ran into her classroom one morning yelling, "I've left the stove on!" This led to a series of considerations and actions by school personnel. The full story, as told by Kalisi's teacher during an interview, is presented in Interview Transcript 1.

This fairly lengthy interview excerpt offers evidence of how easy it seemed for teachers to tap into deficit discourses about itinerant farm workers' children. Even though the initial event involved only Kalisi and her teacher, it triggered much broader considerations across the school, at first involving the school principal and a member of the school's ancillary staff, but eventually including Saia's teacher and other school personnel. This resulted in a widespread view within the school that Kalisi and Saia Potai's parents were deficient and negligent and could not be trusted.

In telling the story about Kalisi leaving the stove turned on, the teacher focused on the way that members of the Potai family had returned to North Queensland from the southern harvesting season at different times, rather than returning as a complete family unit. She described particular incidents, including the stove story, that had alerted school personnel to the possibility that the children's parents were not in the north. For the teacher, these events suggested that the Potai children's parents, particularly Mrs Potai, were negligent.

The teacher identified several ways in which Mr and Mrs Potai had been deficient parents, offering evidence of both certainty (for example, the use of *obviously* in lines 19 and 38) and tentativeness (for example, the repetition of "I think" on a dozen occasions) in her assertions. In her opinion, there was evidence of parental neglect and abdication of responsibility: older children had been left in charge of younger ones (lines 4–7), children were expected "to bring themselves up" (lines 34–35) and Mrs Potai had failed to ensure that the children were fed (lines 21–22). Moreover, she regarded Mrs Potai as a repeat offender, as there had been evidence of such practices on more than one occasion (lines 1–2, 6–7 and 19–20).

In her description of deficit behaviours, the teacher suggested that Mr and Mrs Potai not only regarded their work as more important than looking after their children but also were unaware of the unacceptability of their behaviours (lines 30–31). In identifying Mr and Mrs Potai as 'bad' parents, the teacher implied a monolithic view of what constitutes a 'good' parent and expectations that all parents should behave in similar ways, with similar values and beliefs, and treat their children in particular ways.

Towards the end of the interview excerpt (from line 27 onwards), the teacher began to draw on a different discourse to make sense of the actions

Interview Transcript 1 An Excerpt From an Interview with One of Kalisi Potai's Teachers

1 We realised that mum was missing from up here and mum hadn't been
2 here for a few weeks. Mum was down in Victoria finishing off the season
3 and Kalisi had come up here at the beginning of the year to start, I think it
4 was the third week into the year, with her big sister and her other sister. I
5 think they're 16 or 17. They're still not of age. I think they're
6 Year 11 or 12 at high school. And she was actually living with them for
7 three or four weeks before we realised that mum wasn't there. And she ran
8 in one day to our classroom and said, "I've left the stove on!" and she was
9 absolutely hysterical and I looked at her and I thought that she was really
10 sincere. She's in a panic, so the principal got one of the aides to take her
11 home. And, sure enough, the stove was on. And then we got to the bottom
12 of it. The story was that mum was still down south. And we were all set to
13 make a home visit, but they must have told mum that the principal and [the
14 teacher] were coming around and mum must've come back and brought Saia
15 with her as well. And then, I think, then what happened that we didn't know
16 about until something happened with Saia, he forgot lunch money. What
17 mum did was leave Saia with the two big sisters and mum went down south
18 with Kalisi, I think. Either went with Kalisi or Kalisi went by herself. They
19 spent another two weeks down in Victoria. They were obviously finishing
20 off the season. Saia was up here. And we discovered one day, we thought
21 everything was okay and Saia had forgotten his lunch money and hadn't had
22 lunch for two days or something, and was really hungry and was starting to
23 misbehave and was a little bit, just not concentrating in class. And
24 something just didn't add up so the principal brought him into the office and
25 rang the big sister up, I think, and found that mum wasn't there. So promptly
26 mum came back again, and, as far as I know, the principal said to me,
27 "They're all there now". But just the amount of responsibility that is
28 expected of them is very different. I am sure they're still, even in our culture
29 there are families that do that, but I think the families that do that in our
30 culture do it for different reasons. It's more, like I sincerely don't think that
31 they think it's neglectful. I think that for them that responsibility is put on
32 those children at a very young age and high expectations as well. And I think
33 they're more, even in their culture—Samoan, Tongan—I think they're
34 given a lot more free rein. They're a lot more independent. And they tend to bring
35 themselves up as well. That's what I think, because I mean, the thing is that
36 Kalisi used to come to school with her hair beautifully done every morning
37 and I wouldn't have even guessed. And she had lunch and everything. And
38 she never said a word because obviously mum had instructed her to not
39 speak about it.

of the Potai parents. She explored the possibility that their behaviours were evidence of cultural differences (lines 27–28 and 31–34), even though she appeared uncertain about the children's ethnic origins (line 33). In drawing on a binary logic, she juxtaposed "our culture" (line 28) against "their culture" (line 33) and, by implication, contrasted an unnamed 'us' with 'them', and the way that 'we' do things in school against the way that Tongan parents might do things in the home.

Although the teacher identified a range of possible cultural differences in relation to parental expectations of children's responsibilities and independence (lines 31–34), her ideas were accompanied by insinuations that these behaviours were "neglectful" (line 31) and that Mrs Potai had deliberately deceived the school (lines 37–39). At this point, it appeared that the discourses which the teacher used to explain the Potai family's actions—family deficits and cultural differences—had merged. Not only was the Potai family construed as culturally different from mainstream families, but its alleged cultural practices were also identified as deficient and even dishonest.

Explicit links between the perceived parental behaviours and the children's schooling were few, with Saia's misbehaviour and lack of concentration (line 23) being the only ones mentioned. Although the teacher did not talk about the education system's requirements for teachers to exercise a duty of care—that is, to ensure the health and safety of themselves and their students—her comments suggested that such requirements were instrumental in the school's reaction. She certainly alluded to the school's surveillance of parents—indirect surveillance through children being questioned (lines 11–12 and 24–25) and direct surveillance through a planned home visit (lines 12–13)—and the perceived necessity of getting "to the bottom of it" (lines 11–12). The involvement of the principal, the main figure of authority in the school, demonstrated that perceived parental neglect was not only a school matter but also regarded seriously. Indeed, the teacher implied that Mrs Potai's return to the north was evidence that the school's indirect surveillance had been effective (lines 13–14 and 25–27).

What was particularly apparent about this interview was that the competent behaviours of Kalisi and her older sisters—their ability to look after themselves, to be well groomed, to organise school lunches and so on—seemed to be invisible to the teacher, even though she acknowledged Kalisi's grooming and organisational skills (lines 35–37). Indeed, the teacher's attempts to make sense of the incidents involving the Potai children appeared to draw on quite limited discursive resources. Other constructions of the Potai family might have focused on the advantages of the children being so independent at a young age, or on the family's efforts to provide stability and continuity in the children's schooling or to maintain family relationships over a distance. It was as if the teacher's expectations of homogeneity amongst parents had helped to silence, *albeit* unintentionally, constructive talk about difference and about how Kalisi's attributes might be utilised in the school setting.

THE FAMILY'S VERSION OF THE SAME STORY

The Potai family's version of events was different from the story told by Kalisi's teacher. Whilst the family verified that three of the children had returned to the north a few weeks before the parents returned, they explained that Kalisi and her sisters were being looked after by an aunt. The family reported that the girls slept at their aunt's house, returning home after breakfast each morning to change into their school uniforms and to collect their school books, before the aunt arrived to drive Kalisi to school. The Potai family lived close to the high school and the older sisters were able to walk to school.

Kalisi continued the story:

> I turned the stove on so I could cook some noodles. After that I heard my aunty. She came. She started beeping. . . . She picks me up every day and . . . I forgot to turn it off. I just remembered when I came into the class. I was thinking of home and I tell her [the teacher], "I turn on the stove!" and I was running and I went to the office and I told the office. . . . "I want to ring my aunty and tell her to come and pick me up to take me home to turn off the stove."

The family's stories of being itinerant and moving from one state to another suggested that they engaged in quite complex family considerations. It became apparent that educational decisions were made in conjunction with decisions about other family matters, including finances and health. Whilst the necessity to put food on the table sometimes meant that financial matters took priority over education, this was not always the case. The decision to allow the three girls to return to the north without their parents was one of the times when educational decisions were privileged. The girls had argued that changing schools was so difficult that they would prefer to return to the north as early in the school year as possible, so as to maintain some continuity in their educational experiences. Yet this decision was criticised by teachers who were not privy to the full story.

An interview with Kalisi and Saia's mother and their eldest sister, 17-year-old Aahlyia, offered insights into the family's attitudes towards education. They emphasised that the family wanted the children to attend school and to continue with education beyond school. During the interview, Aahlyia translated for her mother as well as including her own perceptions:

> My mum says learning is more important than moving around picking, working and everything. . . . The money that we get is enough for our family, but learning and education and all that is more important for our family, for us kids especially, because my parents—as you can see, they didn't go to school. And the learning they get, they get it from us because when we talk at home we speak in English and, you know,

> we talk with more, honestly we're more educated. . . . My mum says it's better for me to keep learning than travelling around working with fruits and everything.

LEARNING FROM THE STORIES ABOUT THE POTAI FAMILY

This chapter has offered insights into a number of discourses that were used to explain the educational achievements of the children of one family of itinerant farm workers in an Australian school. Whilst stories about the Potai family varied considerably within the school context, it was evident that deficit discourses were prevalent and were easily accessed to frame understandings about an itinerant lifestyle and its supposed effects on children. Deficit discourses appeared to represent commonsense knowledges that regarded children's inappropriate behaviours and underachievements in literacy learning as predictable and 'natural' consequences of their home lives and their parents' lifestyle decisions.

However, the prevalence of such discourses was perhaps not surprising in a school and systemic context where teachers felt constrained by inadequate levels of human and material resources, additional stress, growing workloads, and increased cultural and linguistic diversity amongst the student population. In focusing on the negative effects on the school of the arrival of itinerant farm workers' children, teachers laid blame on circumstances that were outside their control. Such a view of itinerant children frees schools and teachers from responsibility, as it deems the students to be lacking important attributes necessary for school achievement (Gale & Densmore, 2002; Henderson, 2001). Yet, under Australian law, all children are entitled to an education regardless of their lifestyle. Furthermore, in the case of the Potais and many other itinerant children, they were 'regulars' who returned to the same school for the harvesting season each year.

There is evidence, however, that it is not unusual for teachers to draw on a fairly limited pool of explanations about the academic achievements of children who do not experience school in traditional ways. In fact, teachers' constructions of the Potai family as deficient were reminiscent of the negative stories about farm workers that were circulating in the community outside the school. They were also reminiscent of stories about low socioeconomic families that have been reported in other research (for example, Carrington & Luke, 2003; Comber, 1998; Hicks, 2002). Even though the teachers described in this chapter did not talk explicitly about social class or poverty, these factors seemed to be woven into their constructions of the Potai family, along with factors related to the family's occupation, ethnicity and cultural practices. It appeared that teachers were of the opinion that Kalisi and Saia were doing as well as could be expected, given that a range of factors relating to the children's home circumstances were limiting their academic achievements.

What is troubling, though, is that an understanding of 'the problem' as being located in the children and their family does little more than narrow the pedagogical options that are available to teachers (Henderson, 2001, 2005). As Gale and Densmore (2002) point out, "a solution" to perceived family deficits is to "target" the students "to make up for what they lack; to *compensate* them with what they are not likely to get at home" (p. 14; emphasis in original). Such practice, however, often masks strengths that children bring to the school context and helps to render some family practices invisible (Henderson, 2005).

An alternative might be to consider ways of opening up opportunities, space and time for classroom teachers and other school personnel to talk with the families of itinerant children about their experiences. Such an approach should help to avoid some of the misunderstandings that were evident in teachers' stories about the Potai family and to ensure that school personnel can make a difference to students' educational experiences. This would help to move teachers away from an understanding of itinerancy as "an unfortunate 'problem' that must be 'solved' or 'escaped'" (Danaher & Danaher, 2000, p. 28) towards opening up discussions about access, participation and socially just curriculum and pedagogy. Instead of asking how schools can 'fix up' itinerant farm workers' children, school personnel should be able to address the more difficult issue of how taken-for-granted school practices might change in light of the experiences of itinerant families. Teachers need ways of contesting and disrupting deficit thinking as well as opportunities to examine their assumptions about itinerant farm workers' children and their families.

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4 Cultural Difference or Subversion among Gypsy Traveller Youngsters in Schools in England

A Question of Perspective

Martin Levinson

ABSTRACT

This chapter draws on evidence from an ethnographic study (1996–2000) of the interface between Gypsy[1] culture and the educational system in England, as well as on findings from a follow-up study involving original and additional participants (2005–2006). It explores perceptions across age groups, and it investigates alternative interpretations of the behaviour of Gypsy youngsters in school settings—in particular, those concerning uses of time and space. It argues that the expression of a distinct cultural identity is liable to be (mis)interpreted as a challenge to institutional norms.

INTRODUCTION

Field Notes, October 2005, Visit to Primary School E. in Dorset, United Kingdom

The head teacher, John, was particularly keen that neither he, nor his school, should be identifiable in my writing. His reason was that, in the context of my research, his opinions might be seen as "controversial and un-PC".

John was clearly proud of his achievements at the school. He said that he had the reputation in the area for "turning round" schools that are "failing or just not delivering". This was the largest primary school at which he had worked, and in his view constituted his greatest challenge. He described the school as being "inclusive and non-discriminatory".

While John was keen to emphasise that he had "nothing against Traveller children or their families", he acknowledged that their presence did not fit in either with his own personal "vision" for the school or with the preferred model as set out by policy documents. The principle of inclusion, he said, was often at odds with the image of a successful school, and this was particularly evident in the case of Traveller children.

"Ordinary families" in the area, he said, had the right to be concerned about the possibility of falling standards if there were an influx of

Traveller children, as had been the case at times in the past. The Traveller children, according to John, did not integrate easily; there were social issues with other children, "not always their fault", he added, but the "frequent problems", the outbursts of "over-the-top violence in response to minor insults or teasing", created a disruption that schools "were not equipped" to deal with. Apart from that, John suggested that the special demands of children who had often "ducked in and out of the system" were a "drain" on teacher time, and meant that other children received less support than would have been the case otherwise. John said that he could provide statistics showing the negative effects of Traveller participation on overall class progress. In John's view, a disregard of rules and conventions was central to this. No institution, he argued, can function with one set of rules for some members of its population and a different set for others.

John's solution, he admitted, was to do all possible to limit the numbers of Traveller children accepted into the school to the "minimum". He added that he was trying to "dilute their effect on the school" by spreading them round classes.

He invited me to accompany him of a tour round the school, saying that one of his achievements had been recent design alterations allowing for closer monitoring. He could now move around classrooms, observing the interactions within rooms, without being identifiable to members of staff or pupils. "It keeps them on their toes," he observed, with a half-smile. Within classrooms, he said, he had pushed through "very simple" changes that allowed for "structured learning", with students organised in a more fixed manner according to ability, and classroom layout devised in a way that permitted minimal interaction between desks:

"The children can't so easily get distracted by people at different desks, because of the angles at which the desks are set out; one group of children does not know what another is doing; the teacher can monitor each group; I can monitor the teacher."

It struck me that what John was attempting to replicate was the axial visibility and lateral invisibility of the Panopticon, the model prison designed by Jeremy Bentham in the late 18th century, and adapted by Michel Foucault in more recent times, in his analysis of the structures of hierarchical institutions (Foucault, 1977). In Foucault's view, the Panopticon is "a machine for dissociating the see/being seen dyad", and is an apparatus utilised in schools, as well as in other institutions, to control and regiment the production of knowledge. How different, I thought, from the home environment of Gypsy children.

The arrival of Gypsy/Traveller children in schools in the United Kingdom is liable to be treated with some degree of trepidation on both sides. If new to the school, the children are likely to be apprehensive as to the reception that they might encounter. If they are experiencing schooling for

the first time, there are further issues, entering an environment in which the structures and processes are entirely alien, contradicting those encountered in home settings. This leads to awkward dilemmas. Within schools, many Gypsy children make no reference to alternative values and skills, the cultural capital acquired in the home environment; some go further, opting to 'pass' (conceal their Gypsy identity); others choose to resist.

In recent years the demands in England to facilitate the inclusion of Gypsy/Traveller children in schools and to raise their attainment levels (Office for Standards in Education, 1996, 1999, 2003; O'Hanlon & Holmes, 2004) have ignored opposing arguments (Hancock, 2002) regarding the potential repercussions of involvement in mainstream education in relation to cultural identity. Despite increasing awareness of the issues facing Gypsy/Traveller children, along with the dissemination of good practice (Danaher, Coombes & Kiddle, 2007), it remains the case that a well-defined set of values and relationship patterns within the home context is liable to lead to difficulties of adaptation to the school environment (Andereck, 1992; Derrington & Kendall, 2004). These difficulties are exacerbated by suspicions on the part of Gypsy parents that schooling is likely to inculcate youngsters with values and behaviour that are incompatible with traditional Gypsy life (Kiddle, 1999; Liégeois, 1998). Although there is a sense within some Gypsy communities of an increased need for access to formal education, there remains a strong suspicion that engagement beyond a certain stage might also be detrimental.

An important factor in the shift of attitudes over the past couple of decades has been the reduction of opportunities for traditional work based on an itinerant lifestyle. Of equal significance has been the shortage of accommodation, along with increasing restrictions on a nomadic lifestyle. While differences of lifestyle persist among Gypsy groups, the overwhelming trend has been towards sedentarism. Nevertheless, it is necessary to recall the continued significance of nomadism in shaping Gypsy outlook. Nomadism remains central to Roma identity (McVeigh, 1997), even in a context in which many Gypsies alternate between periods of nomadism and sedentarism (Hawes & Perez, 1995), while its ideological framework can persist beyond the practice of the lifestyle (Levinson & Sparkes, 2004).

If a nomadic existence is characterised by underlying currents, associated with such features as closeness to nature, a seasonal rhythm, freedom from regulations, movement for opportunity or even just escape from problems, then site life constitutes a very different locus. The connotations here can be much darker, connecting to tension, conflict, entrapment and poverty. Despite differences among individual sites, certain patterns recur. Often located within highly polluted areas, sites constitute "marginal space" (Sibley, 1995), augmenting perceptions of alienation (Department of Education and Science, 1985). The organisation of sites entails a social as well as a spatial framework (Kenrick & Bakewell, 1990), and this can often result in a tense, factionalised universe (Kendall, 1997).

Such cultural patterning results in distinctive orientations towards space that shape adaptations to schools. If school is viewed as "a structured social space, a field of forces" in which permanent relationships of inequality operate and "various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of the field" (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 40), the spectrum between acceptance and resistance of spatial and/or temporal hierarchies becomes imbued with deeper meanings that have far-reaching implications for the home–school interface. If the spatial orientations of home are associated with tensions and power struggles, the potential is always there for such dynamics to be transferred to other contexts. In effect, schools are liable to become sites for the symbolic reenactment of wider, external conflicts (Levinson & Sparkes, 2004).

To avoid misleading generalisation about spatial and temporal orientations, it is important to recall the heterogeneous, multifaceted nature of Gypsy society. There has been some tendency among observers to overlook this factor, possibly as a consequence of studies that were limited to specific communities. Carter's (1996) contention that Gypsies show an aversion to fixed time schedules might be a matter of interpretation; the lack of *need* for fixed schedules, for instance, does not necessarily demonstrate *aversion*. Nor is the common view that Gypsy use of time connects to the immediate present, rather than being future-oriented (Smith, 1997), necessarily indicative of a lack of aspiration. Reflecting on a rhythm of existence that has allowed for sudden disruptions relating to job opportunities, seasonal work, fairs, weddings and funerals, O'Boyle (1990) has gone further, postulating "a typical personality who requires immediate solutions for difficulties and immediate release of feelings . . . whose life is divided into roles with attendant responsibilities which severely restrict lateral development and curtail aspirations to a materially better way of life" (p. 71). Such a stereotype gives a child-like quality to Traveller culture, and tends to consolidate the dichotomy between oral and literate cultures. Indeed, at an extreme level, it has been argued that among Gypsies there is no concept of time and no language for it, a proposition energetically refuted by Hancock (1997). In understanding the behaviour of Gypsy children in schools, it should be remembered that diverse home contexts are involved. Nevertheless, the tendency remains to view Gypsies as members of a homogeneous group.

SPATIAL ORIENTATIONS

Salient aspects of nomadism, expressed by participants in both phases of this study, were: (a) an association with a healthy outdoor life; (b) a causal role in the underpinning of strong communal relationships; and (c) association with a rhythm, structure and social hierarchy in which family members had clearly defined roles. Amongst many participants, sedentarism was associated with assimilation. This was expressed in numerous ways:

> Take away our rights, stop us from travelling, and what are we? Red Indians on reservations—and look what became of them. (John, age 40s)

> Ivan (age 10): I used to be a Gypsy and I don't mind. I'm proud of it.
> Me: Used to be a Gypsy? What happened?
> Ivan: Caravan burned down and we moved into a house.

While it was more common for adults to reminisce nostalgically about the old travelling life, children also emphasised its resonance in their lives. The impact of a nomadic lifestyle on core values was a salient theme among adults: "Things were better when we used to travel"; "People used to help each other more"; "It was a hard life, but a good life" were typical comments. Children, too, tended to compare their own lives to those of other children, favouring nomadic, Romani patterns: "*They're* stuck in one place; *we* get to see everywhere". The exceptions were children (usually girls), who explained that they had become settled in certain places and/or schools, that they had established friendships there and that they were powerless to influence parental decisions to move on. More commonly, however, children talked about the anticipation that they felt when they knew that they would soon be travelling. Responses varied among children whose families moved regularly: several youngsters said that frequent moves were unsettling, although a few suggested that they enjoyed the changes. Some older children said that, while the effects of intermittent schooling had not caused difficulties during their earlier school days, it became an issue as they grew older:

> I'm a kind of happy, go-lucky, person . . . but to be honest it got embarrassing. You going backwards, same old books, learning the same old stuff, while the other children in the class have all moved on, and they think you're thick or something. . . . And it's not as if it's your fault, being there [at school] for a few weeks, then moving off. (Eve, age 15)

Meanwhile, apprehensions about schooling have also been connected to the fear of assimilation. Some parents expressed concerns that their children would become too settled. Others suggested that the qualities needed to follow a nomadic lifestyle were incompatible with those engendered at school. In particular, several older participants have argued that schools make children "soft", with the consequence that they might never be able to re-adapt to a life of travel.

As for site life, the impression was of transience and instability, particularly on unauthorised sites; the shortage of authorised sites leads to a competition for space, and many families feel unable to move away temporarily for fear of losing their pitch. Naturally, the situation varies from one site to the next, and John (age 40s) emphasised that each site develops a unique

micro-culture, even though some features are likely to be fixed: "The type of friendships you set up are more permanent than on the road. . . . Gang culture tends to set up on sites in a way it wouldn't on the road". The precise positions taken up on sites can denote status and influence, and the formation of hierarchies is liable to result in rivalries that can embrace entire families. A number of children referred to ill feeling between themselves and other children on the same sites, which was quite regularly carried over to the school environment.

Observation of site life revealed the extent of independence among young children, the freedom to move from place to place. Site life is very public; doors seem seldom closed. On the other hand, trailer life itself entails a number of constraints. The tight organisation of space, along with its public nature, creates difficulties for children with homework (as also noted by Kiddle, 1999). Within the home, children behaved in a highly disciplined way, contrasting with the freedom of movement outside. The safe zones are deemed to be around the trailers; the boundaries are beyond the site, where the perception is of a hostile, potentially dangerous, non-Gypsy world:

> You see Gadje [non-Gypsy] children. And they're off around the streets, here, there and everywhere, and their mums and dads neither knows nor cares. And there's all sorts around: rapists—paedophiles. . . . We don't let our kids wander off; they get looked after proper. (Jolene, age 20s)

The restrictions come beyond the perimeter; the boundaries between Gypsy and non-Gypsy worlds are both physical and psychological.

Finally, it should be noted that in recent years, in England, growing numbers of Gypsies have moved into houses. Despite the increase in living space, a number of participants have confessed to feeling claustrophobic in houses. Participants reported feelings of alienation, distress at the breakdown of communal support, entrapment and loss of autonomy. All these differing home-places have implications for schooling.

TEMPORAL ORIENTATIONS

> Time, used as a restraint, is foreign to many Traveller pupils. To them, time is usually much more flexible around a task in hand. (Naylor & Wild-Smith, 1997, p. 21)

A recurrent feature of the research process was for participants to arrive for prearranged meetings either late or not at all. There seemed several reasons, one of which might have been about contested power relations between researcher and researched. On occasions, something else came up; sometimes appointments were forgotten, as participants rarely made a note of the arrangement; once or twice, it was pointed out to me that many

Gypsies did not make use of watches. At times, it seemed possible to infer more than one meaning from a single explanation:

> Well, I am sorry if you have been standing around here for a while, but for us the exact time we meet someone doesn't really matter. We get there when we get there. Now, say I've got a job to do, and I'm working with a friend, it's usually enough just to say after breakfast, or lunch-time, or something. Anyway, it's nice enough here, and I don't suppose you had much else to do. (Jem, age 50s)

Anna (age 50s) had no problem with the concept of time. Indeed, her trailer was filled with numerous clocks, all set at different times. When I enquired about this, she told me that they were attractive as ornaments and, although she could not tell the time, she got up at daybreak and went to bed when it was dark, and managed her day perfectly well in between. During a number of meetings what emerged was not any absence in terms of a concept of time, but sanity in her relaxed approach to it.

"You Gadjes are always planning; never happy", I was told by Daniel (age 50s). "What's the point in carefully planning things, when at any moment the gavvers [police] might turn up to move you on?" asked Adam (age 40s). Perhaps, overall, if attitudes towards the concept of time seemed less fixed, all it reflected was the unpredictability in the existences of those concerned. Such unpredictability seemed negative only when enforced: "We used to spend much more time going places. You're stuck in one place now, and time drags" (Primrose, age 16).

Fonseca (1996, p. 277) has linked "the Gypsy instinct for living so responsively in the present" to a "peculiar lack of interest in the past". Nel (age 70s), the eldest of 10 children, had lost her parents by the time that she was a teenager. Subsequently, three of her own children had died in the first few years of their lives. In her view, life had "flown by", but the days "dragged". In view of the precarious nature of Gypsy existence, it would seem strange if distinctive orientations towards time did not emerge.

While the blanket generalisations referred to above (Carter, 1996; Fonseca, 1996; O'Boyle, 1990) were not confirmed, discontinuities between home and school experiences *were* evident in this study. At home, Gypsy children have a great deal of autonomy in their use of time. They also spend much time learning in informal contexts with older family members (Levinson, 2008), while girls, in particular, face demands to share responsibilities. This can be onerous, and is not always accepted with equanimity:

> Girls do everything . . . housewifing—cooking, cleaning, washing . . . hoovering, wipe around, clean the bath, clean the floor, make the beds, wash the kitchen . . . clean the car, feed the dogs . . . shop. It's a full-time job. And she has to go out hawking. There's no time for nothing.

> And men just sit on their backsides, watching TV . . . while the woman is running up and down. (Val, age 11)

Katie (age 8) was not so negative. She said that she liked to get up as soon as it was light, so as to help with jobs before going to school. Where both Val and Katie were agreed was in their clarity about their contribution to the family. They also agreed that they "did not have time to get bored", and that time was shaped around tasks. You finished when the job was completed. This is in contrast to the situation in schools.

SCHOOL PERSPECTIVES: CULTURAL DIFFERENCES AND CHALLENGES TO INSTITUTIONAL NORMS

In both research phases the overall response among school staff towards a Gypsy presence was equivocal. At one extreme, some schools seemed to do everything possible to avoid accepting Gypsy youngsters; some accepted them, with reluctance, owing to external pressure or some sense of moral obligation; a very few schools welcomed them unreservedly. Amongst head teachers, there was a tendency to speak about the impact on league tables; occasionally fears were expressed that acceptance of a significant intake of Gypsy/Traveller children might push institutions over the brink into "special measures", which would have required intervention by OFSTED. However, there were some head teachers who spoke of their Gypsy/Traveller pupils with genuine enthusiasm, suggesting that the wider school culture was enriched by their presence.

Some head teachers showed a willingness to be flexible in their approaches:

> I've been very aware that they need to be treated in a different way. For instance, they respond badly to any direct confrontation. One problem is that the other children resent the leniency. Some of the staff have had some difficulties in adapting to the strategies I use . . .
>
> You never win by confronting them. Only when you compromise do you make progress. When I first came, they hated school. They really did hate us; it was like a war. Very gradually, I've won the support of the parents. . . . I don't want to integrate them; I just want harmony.
>
> In actual fact, the children are very well liked by staff, who genuinely try to be fair. But what they tend to do is to try to treat them the same as other children, and that doesn't work. On the other hand, positive discrimination causes resentment from other children and parents. You can't win. (Theresa, head teacher, primary school, Cornwall)

Among classroom teachers, while numerous responses concerned the challenging behaviour of Gypsy/Traveller pupils, there was also allusion

to the diversity and colour that they introduced. Such positive statements related to several aspects: increasing other pupils' awareness of cultural diversity; adherence to strong family values; loyalty to friends; uninhibited demonstrations of affection. Referring to the warmth of her Gypsy pupils, one teacher said that their behaviour reminded her of "that unrestrained, un-rule governed, joy of childhood that most of our pupils have forgotten".

However, some teachers complained about such "inappropriate" displays, and numerous comments concerned youngsters perceived as challenging the system and testing boundaries. Occasionally comments were more extreme: Gypsy children were "not to be trusted"; they were "aggressive", "wild", "defiant", "volatile" and "disruptive", and did not know how to relate to or play with other children. Overall, they ignored accepted conventions; failed to concentrate for sustained periods; spoke out of turn; showed little consideration for other students; and were liable to be aggressive towards staff. A recurrent theme amongst teachers concerned interactions with adults: "If they do stand out, it's often the way they talk to you. Could be a caretaker or headmaster; it's all the same" (Joy, primary school teacher, responsible for Traveller liaison, Devon).

Teachers spoke of Gypsy youngsters as being excessively shy or excessively forward, often appearing to overlook potential cultural explanations. In fact, there are strong historical/cultural reasons for avoiding attention, against the background of relations characterised by conflict and hostility; at the same time, there are also historical/cultural reasons for initiating contact, deriving from a reliance on non-Gypsies for economic purposes. Similarly, many teachers did not explore deeper reasons for tensions in school. Central to problems was an apparent disregard for boundaries that were perceived as critical to the efficient functioning of classrooms and institutions. These related to accepted conventions regarding adult–child relationships, as well as to the spatial and temporal frameworks in which schools operate. Yet in many cases behaviour that could be linked to different cultural orientations seemed to be interpreted as deliberate defiance. This was particularly the case in relation to breaches of convention regarding movement, acts that cannot be fully understood without some appreciation of the codes that are prevalent in home settings.

GYPSY PERCEPTIONS OF THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

> The first day at school was a strange experience. There we were walking into this big building—you must remember, we wouldn't enter shops or cafes because of fear of the police and the Gadje world. (Saki, age 30s)

Site life constructs a spatial universe, the primary division of which is between Gypsy and non-Gypsy worlds. School itself represents part of the wider non-Gypsy world, one that is perceived as antagonistic and oppressive.

Daniel (age 40s) recalled arriving at school for the first time to encounter a group of parents at the gates, holding up "No Gypsies" placards. Apprehensions were evident across generations. Ryan (age 8) explained that he stayed with Gypsy children all the time as "the other children don't want to be our friends".

The school environment provides a very different landscape from that with which the Gypsy child is familiar, one with its own rules and codes with which other children are already familiar. Describing their first experiences, many participants have emphasised the alien nature of the school topography. Several have mentioned that in the first few weeks of school, in particular, they were often seeking safe places. Such sanctuaries were, in many cases, outdoors: "I used to wait in the playground for my cousin to take me to lessons. Then I'd wait in the classroom to be collected. I was afraid to go anywhere on my own" (Sophie, age 9).

For many, the playground was their preferred area; some children mentioned that, in the event of trouble, it was easier to escape to home from there. There were complaints that, inside the building, they were often separated from friends. Comments about school buildings suggested that they induced feelings of entrapment, claustrophobia, disorientation and intimidation. Dawn (age 16) recalled closing her eyes and holding onto the rail going up the staircase. Others referred to the trepidation caused by the front door and steps: "Yer won't see me in big school. Have you seen it in there? See them going up all them steps, don't yer, but I think—know what I think? Just how many come out? Ey?" (Albie, age 10).

Others spoke of the "strangeness" of the environment, of regimentation and of the highly structured use of space. Although some staff reported Gypsy youngsters using space in "aggressive", "uncontrolled" ways, others described them as being "invisible", "hiding away" and being "overawed". In many playgrounds, the Gypsy children seemed to be clustered together. Further observation suggested that this choice was often self-regulated, and that space was being utilised in a particularly *social* way, limited to intragroup use.

To an extent, this might be perceived as a coping mechanism, the exercise of some degree of spatial autonomy simulating the home environment in the school. Dorcas (age 30s) recalled playing an imaginary game, pretending that she was at home. She would meet her friend, Pearl, secretly, then "hide" in the field or in a corner of Pearl's classroom.

Gypsy boys, especially, spoke in terms of restriction, restlessness and boredom in classrooms. Commonly, they discovered that releasing pent-up energy at playtime landed them in trouble. Nevertheless, confined and dominated within the school buildings, some continued to use playtimes as an opportunity to dominate space.

Another way in which a challenge to school norms occurred was in the tendency to leave classrooms without permission. I have described elsewhere (Levinson & Sparkes, 2005) the case of Sue-Ellen (age 10), who was

regularly in trouble for leaving her own classroom to visit others without permission. Sue-Ellen justified this on social grounds: her mother had told her to keep an eye on younger family members. She argued further that her friends had certain ownership rights to their own classrooms. Her arguments involved the superimposition of other socialisation patterns over those of the classroom; a rejection of school codes regarding movement; the establishment of territories and envisaged spatial rights; and finally the impression that Sue-Ellen had devised some kind of internal map with certain boundaries which reflected in some ways the home environment. Her behaviour might be interpreted in the context of site life, whereby relatives' trailers were often viewed as an extension of home. Sue-Ellen's behaviour was not simply about resistance: she was re-negotiating spatial rights.

Certain comments of parents are revealing: "They must learn to stick up for themselves: against Gadje children; against teachers" (Dorothy, age 20s). In several schools I was shown "Gypsy" territories in playgrounds—usually in spaces furthest from the classrooms, around the school grounds; some youngsters were proud to add that non-Gypsy children avoided those areas. Some spoke in terms not only of defending their territory but also of infiltrating that of the non-Gypsy children. At times, in an attempt to control the outbreaks of violence, schools appear to have abandoned attempts at integration and effectively colluded in the process of establishing distinct spatial territories: "Until I took over eight years ago, segregation was the norm in the classroom and the playground" (Theresa, head teacher, primary school Cornwall).

Invariably, the expectation within schools was that Gypsy children should accept school conventions regarding spatial behaviour. There was little acknowledgment of alternative spatial environments encountered in home contexts, nor that certain uses of space might not simply be *anti-social* or *disruptive* but could equally be perceived as reflecting behaviour in the home environment and appropriate preparation for future living contexts.

Efforts made by schools to amend spatial behaviour that challenges established norms can be perceived as having a dual motivation: firstly, to protect conventions that are deemed to be significant in the maintenance of order; secondly, to facilitate processes of integration. The promotion of institutional values may assist in the acculturation of Gypsy children within a mainstream environment; however, the boundaries between acculturation and assimilation are blurred and, while the latter may not be intended, it might be facilitated. Moreover, another possible outcome for some Gypsy youngsters as they become versed in the practices of the school environment is that they could actually be left less well-equipped to negotiate the cultural world of the home context. Attempts to amend spatial behaviour contain the potential for both empowerment and disempowerment.

Similarly, regarding temporal behaviour, those teachers who complained that Gypsy pupils found it difficult to settle down, or to sustain concentration during lessons, rarely connected this to any sense of frustration

regarding the organisation of classes or the segmentation of time in schools. Robbie (age 7) complained about “bloody bells”. Ray (age 12) described it as “stupid” to have lessons all of the same length. Faith (age 15) suggested that school should finish “when you’ve had enough”. Many resented the lack of control over activities: “I was just enjoying that, and then we was all told to pack everything away. And then, when I didn’t, I got shouted at again” (Jake, age 9). Leah (age 9) said that her teacher deliberately taught everything “at the speed of the Gadjes”, and there were other suggestions that time was being used in a hostile manner against Gypsy pupils, as part of a wider, oppressive regime:

> There were quite a few of us Travellers there, and we all felt like we weren’t really wanted there. And we got hurried and nagged. And none of us got learned nothing—well, some of the girls, maybe. But me, I never used to finish nothing. I were a bit slow, you see. And I always told myself, one day, one day, I would finish, just like the others. But I never did. (‘Digger’, age 15)

Issues here concern the exercise of control—pacing of work; set times for starting and finishing; interruptions, lack of time to complete tasks, length of the school day. When asked how things were different when working at home, children drew attention to social factors: “I get to work with Dad”; “at home, doing jobs, we all have a bit of a laugh”. Other comments related to time: “I can start and finish when I like”; “no-one nags me if I’m slow”. Schools were seen as inflexible. At home, time flowed, and there was a sense of autonomy/control; at school, where it was turned on and off like a switch, time was rigid, yet fragmented.

CONCLUSION

Far from being neutral, the spatial and temporal organisation of schools constructs boundaries of inclusion/exclusion, while also contributing to the formation of the “technologies of domination” that serve to establish normality (Foucault, 1977). This process can effectively place many Gypsy youngsters in a situation of some disadvantage. The specifications and design of the school environment can be disorienting and representative of a hostile world. Restrictions on the use of space contradict patterning arising from a nomadic tradition. Similarly, the organisation of time into regular units diverges from the relative freedom and fluidity experienced at home.

The options for participants in “fields” or structured social spaces (Bourdieu, 1998) entail various strategies, ranging from complete acceptance to resistance. It would seem that the habitus of Gypsy children is constructed to fit in with a different social space, where they dominate and are

dominated in different ways. In Bourdieu's view, structures of dominance are challenged when agents recognise them for what they are and refuse to cooperate in their reproduction. The evidence presented here suggests that a number of Gypsy children are following such a pattern in schools. At the very least, the capital that they bring to the school environment is not recognised and is of limited use there, making the transition from home to school problematic.

In highlighting the alternative meanings that might be attributed to Gypsy spatial and temporal behaviour in schools, I am not denying that an element in the behaviour of Gypsy youngsters is to challenge authority or subvert codes within the school system. Elsewhere (for example, Levinson, 2005, 2007) I have proposed that defiance of norms is often interwoven with the expression of a distinct cultural identity. At the same time, I am arguing that there is a need to understand the complex (and variable) factors underlying certain acts. There is also the need to recognise that, for most Gypsy families, issues of *actual* mobility remain of greater import than those of *social* mobility, while school is not necessarily associated with future expectations.

However, the issues go beyond understanding specific acts. There is also a need to consider the impact on other members of the school population, both staff and non-Gypsy pupils. Finally, it should be noted that potential effects work in both directions, so it is important to investigate the impact of the spatial and temporal norms of school on the cultural orientations and identity of Gypsy pupils, and eventually on wider Romani practice.

NOTES

1. I have used the term “Gypsy” in this chapter, rather than “Traveller”, which is preferred by many working in the field. Both terms have connotations. Liégeois (1998) rejected “Traveller” and “nomad” on the grounds that, by avoiding any ethnic content, such labels deny the existence of a specifically Gypsy culture. My decision here is determined to a large degree by participants' choices; although these varied, many preferred the term “Gypsy”, often on the grounds that it distinguished them from “New Age” or “New Travellers”. Some participants expressed a preference for the terms “Rom” or “Roma”, though these terms also convey different meanings to different groups.

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5 Promoting Educational Access for the Indigenous Reindeer Herders, Fisherpeople and Hunters in the Nomadic Schools of Yakutia, Russian Federation

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INTRODUCTION

In most countries of the world there are nomadic children who regularly—sometimes every season, month or week–move from school to school. In some countries, these are the children of migrants, travelling circus performers and Gypsy Travellers. In Russia, particularly in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)[1], they are the children whose parents lead a traditional nomadic life as hunters, shepherds, fisherpeople and reindeer herders. Some, like the Evenki[2] and the Evens[3], are nomadic clans of considerable size; others, like the Dolgan[4] and the Chukchi[5], are more fragile populations of fewer than 1,500 members.

The lives of aboriginal reindeer herders, fisherpeople and hunters underwent many changes in the mid 20th century. Unfortunately, reforms implemented in the field of education to address these changes and meet the educational needs of their children didn't initially consider the traditional culture of the indigenous people.

The mobility of the indigenous population of the North made *settlement* schools a serious problem on a number of counts. Separated from their parents, nomadic children were not taught traditional skills essential to the maintenance of traditional ways. Additionally and predictably, the children missed their parents, which negatively influenced their studies. Each spring, most nomadic parents—either by force or by persuasion—took the children out of school and brought them to the reindeer herd till the end of the school year in May. The teachers reluctantly let the children go on the condition that the parents continue the school program with the children. Since the nomad parents had neither the time nor the proper training for teaching academic subjects, indigenous children fell behind in their studies.

In the 1990s, regional authorities, influenced by a growing desire to preserve regional, ethnic, cultural and religious diversity and nomadic

communities, joined efforts to change the structure and the content of the formal education of the children of the indigenous people of the North. The nomadic parents wanted their children to receive a quality education, and they wished to participate in the educational process as much as possible, but they didn't want their children in settlement schools.

As V. Androsov, a reindeer herder, put it:

> When you come back home to a warm *balok*[6] after working in the tundra, the food is ready and, which is the most important, my children meet me with joyful cries. Since their early years our children hunt and fish together with parents, help to graze deer, and process furs and fur products.

The opening of a multi-age nomadic school in 1991 was of great importance in the life of nomadic trading stations: children were not separated from their homes and parents; youngsters remained in their natural, nomadic environment and were taught in their native languages; and the school became a centre not only of academic education but also of cultural communication.

Parents were happy because they didn't need to send their children away to study in settlements but instead could bring them up in their own families and could therefore be involved in crafts and housekeeping. Now the children could join their parents following the reindeer herds and learning the traditional occupations of their culture. Some of them moved with their parents all year long. But *all* had the opportunity to study without gaps. Everybody was at ease here: children, parents and teachers. The opening of the first nomad school allowed the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) to establish a school schedule that took into account climatic conditions, and to develop a curriculum based on the ethos of the people of the North, the carriers of the national culture of indigenous minorities. Unfortunately, although a viable plan for offering effective basic education to the children of the nomads of the tundra had been conceived, the funds for turning the idea into a workable reality were not available. Thus, when an opportunity to partner with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) "Education for All" program presented itself, the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) was eager to participate.

THE UNESCO/SAKHA PARTNERSHIP

Improving educational opportunities for nomadic populations is one of the goals of the UNESCO "Education for All" program. In 2005 a special UNESCO fund[7] was established to support a literacy project for northern nomads that had initially been developed by the staff of the Moscow Office of UNESCO on the initiative of the Ministry of Education of the Republic

of Sakha (Yakutia). The project[8], supported by the Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO, was funded for 2006–2007. What follows is an account of that year-long partnership.

The project aimed at developing students' multicultural competence by: (1) forming their notions about the culture of the nomadic nations of the North as a part of universal human civilisation; and (2) preparing them to live in a multicultural world. Among other goals, the project was to create an educational infrastructure for the children of the small indigenous nations of the North through the introduction of the following interconnected components:

- Strengthening the material base and the staff potential of the nomad schools
- Creating an interactive educational portal for the students and teachers of the nomadic nations of the North
- Establishing an international association of the children and teachers of the schools in the North[9]
- Introducing dual education[10]
- Organising scientific expeditions called the "Nomadic Laboratory"
- Building a database dealing with the northern child's personality development.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CULTURAL INTEGRATION

A chief goal of the project schools was to support the survival of endangered nomadic ethnic groups. The traditions and customs of the family and the clan are the wealth of our nation's pedagogical wisdom. The education of northern indigenous peoples has always been a natural process closely connected with life, nature and the family. Nomadic children acquire labour skills early; they also learn respect for the environment, physical endurance and how to survive in extreme situations. Nomadic parents see each child as a 'prodigy of nature' and as the living promise of the future—each child is a clan member who will help to continue the clan traditions and customs. Parents foster in their offspring such qualities as industry, self-criticism, modesty and respect for other people. Without these virtues, a child would not be a worthy member of the clan.

The curriculum of the nomadic schools tried to complement indigenous pedagogy: the teachers worked to prepare students to make decisions; they included courses that integrated nature studies and life skills. The introduction of lessons about tribal ancestors and about the familiar and comprehensible environment of the North gave the children added preparation for the severe living conditions that they will face all their lives.

The project schools became a joint effort of clan members and school staff to solve the social and economic problems of the community. The clan

members organised field studies in traditional economies for the children, taught them how to survive in the far North and acquainted them with clan skills like processing wood, skin and fur, preparing tendons for sewing clothes and shoes, sewing and ornamenting, and hunting. Both education and training were conducted in natural living conditions. The communities, in conjunction with the project school staff members, secured connections between the nomadic schools and the base schools and regional centres. Parents were involved in the academic education as well as the cultural training of their children.

A major problem of the nomadic schools was finding ways to increase the social interaction between the nomadic children and the children of modernised societies. A student deprived of an opportunity to visit cultural centres has a harder time mastering social and cultural competencies.

In the project schools, children studied the problems of reindeer herding and hunting, considered the prospects of traditional economies and were acquainted with research about the indigenous minorities' spiritual and material culture, including 'foreign' Arctic cultures (American Eskimo and Inuit, Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian Sami) who are similar to Sakha nomads in lifestyle, economy, culture and customs.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum of the UNESCO project schools was based on the ideas of V. Robbek, who believed that 'basic' academic subjects needed to be integrated with nomadic cultural subjects and become an extension of the traditions and culture of the nomads themselves. According to Robbek, the very schedule of the school year should agree with the yearly life cycle of the herd. Thus, although nomadic students would complete the requisite 34 weeks of school per year, their vacations (December and January, most of June and all of July) occurred during the traditional reindeer hunting and calving seasons.

The children received primary instruction both in Russian *and* in their native language; they were taught to draw and to work with paper and clay, and were trained to role play. Starting with first grade, every child has nature studies, traditional studies and handicraft studies, which were guided by parents and other members of communities and production brigades.

The Scientific and Research Institute of National Schools of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) commissioned a series of training kits dealing with indigenous languages, literature and culture:

- All nomadic schools' Grades 1–4 use R. S. Nikitina and A. V. Kryvoshapkin's *Bringing Up Children in the Spirit of the Ancestors*. This study program is expected to provide the groundwork for future curricula.

- A program called *Khopkil Biniten* introduces in the academic setting the traditions of the Even clan and the parents' major activities: reindeer herding, fishing and hunting. R. S. Nikitina has also written *The Taiga*[11] *Alphabet,* a study program about fundamental nomadic life skills for primary students.
- *Niot* by U. P. Tarabukina and A. S. Sakerdonova is actually a treasury of Even literature for first grade students. The masterpieces contained in the textbook are easy to read and make readers think. The book introduces children to the world of research, and shows them the value and importance of their native language.
- *Tulalyyr Eige* by G. M. Fedorov and R. S. Nikitina is a training kit about the environment for first grade students in nomadic schools. Instructions in Yakut, Even, Evenk and Russian are provided.
- Two other books have been prepared for first grade students: *Ayavri Torenget* in Even (translated by Z. A. Stepanova); and *Buga* (translated by A. N. Myreeva) in Evenk.

INFRASTRUCTURE

In recent years, the need for innovative technologies suitable for remote schools has increased sharply. In order to provide a genuinely comprehensive education that also honours the traditional way of life of the indigenous people of the North, it was necessary to expand the physical resources of the nomadic schools. It is impossible to provide high quality education without the necessary equipment. Under the provisions of the UNESCO project:

- Four nomadic schools were connected to the Internet; these schools were linked to distance education programs that make it possible for nomadic children to communicate with the whole world through the Internet.
- In 2007 eight nomadic schools received electric generators. In the past the communities used candles and petrol lamps; now they have electric light.
- There are more schools, but they vary in type. Some are small buildings made of available materials. These constructions serve for the time that the reindeer forage in a particular area. When the reindeer move, the nomads follow. In 2007, four of nine schools were small wooden schools with few rooms. Five schools were tent classrooms.
- Miscellaneous other supplies and equipment suitable to the conditions of life in the North (for example, Buran snowmobiles, ovens, generators, chain saws, six-man tents, and photo and video cameras) were provided to each of the nomad schools.

The difficulty of establishing nomad schools really defies the understanding of an entirely settled population. The nomad schools are located

in remote regions on the coast of the Arctic Ocean and in the mountainous regions of the southwest of the republic. Reindeer pastures are *very* far from the settlements, and there are no regular transportation routes that connect fisherpeople, reindeer herders and hunters. Distance is not counted in kilometres, but in how many hours by helicopter one location is from the next. Children are obviously not able to attend schools on a daily basis. Periodically (especially during traditional clan gatherings in September–November and March–April when the nomads celebrate the ritual of meeting the sun) children stay in the villages and attend common school; this gives them the opportunity to catch up on the general academic curriculum.

Before the UNESCO project, the nomadic schools were without electrical power and had substandard materials, poor transportation and inadequate connection with settled villages. The combination of UNESCO funding and state efforts corrected some of these problems. Perhaps inevitably, the efforts to provide technical assistance led to some unexpected difficulties. Nomads are accustomed to working with old and familiar equipment, and know little about new technical models; therefore the equipment grant applications that the clans prepared requested obsolete models that are no longer produced. Some of the substitute equipment was unusable for a variety of reasons. In the future, it is imperative that clan members receive published catalogues describing new equipment models. All technologies need to be approved for the conditions of the far North (for example, they must be frost resistant, easy to handle and equipped with staying power during repeated encampment changes). Service support for new machinery must be available, and any proposed acquisition must be vetted for the far North (for example, some new generators are economical and easy to use but they require high octane fuel that is unavailable in Arctic regions). At the very least, transport systems to the North must be improved and all equipment contracts should include training, service and spare parts provisions.

PARTNERS

Predictably, the UNESCO/Republic of Sakha partnership spawned a considerable amount of bureaucracy. First, on 1 April 2006, the Centre for the Development of Nomadic Educational Institutions of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) was established as a structural division of the Scientific and Research Institute of National Schools of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia). This Resource Centre was charged with the implementation of the UNESCO effort. The basic activities of the Centre were to introduce models of nomadic education and to coordinate the activities of nomadic schools with municipal education authorities and with subordinate agencies of the Ministry of Education.

Various groups became project partners: UNESCO experts, the Ministry of Education, the Department of Peoples' Affairs and Federal

Relations, the Scientific and Research Institute of National Schools, the Institute for Professional Training, the Institute of the Indigenous Peoples of the North (Siberian Division, Russian Academy of Sciences), the Arctic State Institute of Culture and Arts, the Sakha Pedagogic Academy and the Pedagogical Institute of the Yakutsk State University were involved. The work of the Centre for the Development of Nomadic Educational Institutions resulted in new joint projects with the Ministry of External Relations of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), ALROSA JSC, the Museum of Open Education, the Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, and the Institute of National Schools of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).

SEMINARS

A raft of training sessions became possible as a result of the UNESCO/Sakha partnership. Seminars were conducted about the curriculum of the nomadic schools; innovative techniques; multi-age/level classrooms; individualised instruction; basic curriculum; teaching indigenous languages; literature and culture; lesson analysis; and teacher competence. Since the basic curriculum of the nomadic schools was changed, the staff members were given training supply kits.

The seminars proved to be worthwhile and resulted in recommendations for further work. The most valuable suggestion has already been implemented: designing a professional course on integrating natural science and mathematics subjects. Teachers complained that their efforts tended to be somewhat fragmented; they wanted solid blocks of time during the teaching day that would allow long projects. The integration of mathematics and science frees academic hours in five major subjects. A teacher who is trained in the integrated approach can use classroom time very creatively. In the nomadic schools, all five subjects in science and mathematics can be taught by one teacher, and substitution of staff members becomes practical. A training course about the integration of natural science and mathematics, a two-year sequence, was designed as one of the first distance training classes. Distance classes suppose not only direct contact with a teacher but also independent activity with video materials, textbooks, teleconferences and Internet research. In accordance with curricular requirements, the total academic period for the mathematics/science integration module is 1,000 hours, including 454 hours of direct classes and 546 hours of distance training. Teachers who have completed the training sequence report that they are better able to help students develop systemic theoretical thinking skills, make use of creative imagination, employ analysis and synthesis effectively, shift skills from one subject area into another and develop applied skills more rapidly.

REPRESENTATIVE ACHIEVEMENT: THE NUTENDLI SCHOOL

The results at the project schools varied considerably; however, the achievements of the kindergarten and primary school at the Chuckchi Nutendli Nomadic Clan Community are representative:

- Through active cooperation between the Nutendli Nomadic Community and the Regional Administration, the curriculum at the kindergarten and primary school became a natural complement of the life of the Nutendli clan community. The children's psychological and physical development was thus fostered.
- The course of study came to include not only basic educational subjects but also culturally specific disciplines such as "Ancestors' Lessons", "The Culture of the Northern Nations" and the Chuckchi language.
- The value and importance of native culture, customs and traditions were reinforced by having the school develop extra-curricular programs devoted to family celebrations and the reindeer herding cycle.
- Much attention was paid to bolstering students' clan skills. Young men went to the clan's spring site where they not only presented their cultural program but also helped the adults count and grade deer. Older girls learned to process pelts, to sew traditional clothes and to prepare national cuisine. Older boys, skilled in fishing, deer riding and snowmobile driving, were able to take an active part in provisioning the school.
- As is appropriate in Nutendli culture, the children in the kindergarten group were given much direction by the older students in the primary school. This technique reinforced the efforts of indigenous parents to instil responsibility in the older children and obedience in the younger ones.
- A newly established school folklore band became an important component of the project. Indigenous ceremonies and rituals were collected by the students and included in the band's repertoire. Students presented these cultural treasures in programs for community members and guests, and in Chersky, the closest settled community.
- Opportunities for cooperation with the Russian Federation and with international groups presented themselves. Membership of these cooperative ventures may well become factors in the future development of the school.
- Cooperation with the Institute of Problems of the Northern Small-in-Number-Nations under the Siberian department of the Russian Academy of Science began. V. Shadrin, researcher in history, archaeology and ethnography, was selected to be the project scientific consultant. Textbooks and multimedia supplies in Chukchi were prepared and purchased.

- Cooperation with the *SnowChange Project*[12], headed by Tero Mustonen of Finland, was initiated. This pairing resulted in financial assistance being provided in 2007 by Iceland's Save the Children Foundation.
- Cooperation with the Inari[13] school of Lapland, headed by Finland's Yrjo Musta, made possible an exchange of information about environmental changes in the far North.[14]
- A final performance review of students was made, and most Nutendli students met the Ministry requirements.

In short, most of the major goals of the UNESCO/Sakha project were realised in the primary school of the Nutendli Nomadic Clan Community. The staff are confident that remaining problems will be handled during the next stage of the project.

GENERAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Through the efforts of dedicated staff members, a great deal of work on the implementation of the UNESCO/Sakha project was completed in a very short time:

- Equipment to improve the material conditions of the nomadic schools was purchased with UNESCO funding.
- An orientation training workshop about the project was held in April 2006.
- Training workshops about drafting the nomadic schools' models in relation to the reindeer herders' sites were held between October 2006 and February 2008.
- A program for teachers and pupils was developed that integrates academic knowledge and the traditional indigenous knowledge of the North.
- All schools in the North were evaluated: community schools, stationary schools with a nomadic branch, nomadic schools with a kindergarten, summer nomadic schools, *taiga* schools and nomadic schools with remote access to educational resources.
- Nomadic school children were given an opportunity to visit Russian children's centres between July 2006 and August 2007.
- A database dealing with the nomadic schools of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) was created.
- Projects of an interdisciplinary nature were established with the international partnership program "Schools of the North"[15].
- Materials about the development of nomadic schools were prepared and published in the mass media, including on the UNESCO website.

- Analytical materials about the activities of the UNESCO pilot schools were prepared.
- Manuals in four northern indigenous languages were developed.
- "The Northern Lights Program", which acquaints children with a variety of northern nomadic cultures, was implemented.[16]
- The following research papers were commissioned to assist the development of the UNESCO/Sakha project:
  - N. Bugayev studied the pedagogical system of nomadic peoples.
  - R. Nikitina prepared a history of the establishment of nomadic schools in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).
  - R. Nikulin prepared a report about the difficulties of organising general education in the conditions of nomadic life.
  - S. Zhirkova compared the educational system of the indigenous nomadic peoples of the Russian Federation with similar schools in the Scandinavian countries.
  - A. Lebedeva investigated approaches to familiarising children with the traditional ways of many other northern peoples.

In the final analysis, the implementation of the joint project gave us an opportunity to serve more children and to support the preservation of the cultures, languages and traditions of the indigenous peoples of the North. UNESCO support, the exchange of information with foreign colleagues and the efforts of Yakutian scientists and teachers flowered into an opportunity to develop a rich educational system for nomadic peoples. We believe that our experience has applications for nomadic populations worldwide.

CHALLENGES

Not all aspects of the project were successful. We encountered a number of serious difficulties:

- The nomadic schools continue to be understaffed, and current teachers and staff members need more and broader knowledge and experience.
- There are too few refresher courses. It is best when a member of the tribe or clan goes to school and becomes a teacher. Teachers who are 'strangers' may have the pedagogical background needed for the classroom, but they generally lack the necessary life skills to live in the far North.
- School construction is behind target dates; there are not enough rooms. Since there are no modern portable classrooms available, nomads must construct schools out of limited available materials every time that they come to a new location.

- Since the construction of the second block for the primary schools is unfinished, classes must be held in two shifts, and there is no classroom for home assignments and extra-curricular classes.
- Educational supplies and materials (for example, textbooks in indigenous languages, especially Chukchi) are insufficient.
- There is much to be done to improve the physical character of the nomadic schools:
    - There is still a limited amount of electricity, even in winter. Portable electricity engines are available but nomads have limited fuel to run the machines.
    - Communication lines with regional centres are weak.
    - Transportation lines with regional centres are not stable.
    - The food allowance must be increased.
- The project schools clearly add force to the preparation that the children receive from their parents for their traditional life and for their traditional work; however, teachers are not certain how best to prepare students who prefer to be involved in non-traditional choices.

CONCLUSION: AFTER THE UNESCO/SAKHA PROJECT

We are certain that the UNESCO/Sakha project will result in further cooperation by the authorities with non-governmental organisations in the Russian Federation and beyond, as well as with business structures and the public. This will consolidate the efforts of all those interested in the creation of a permanent, high quality nomadic education system. The challenges facing countries with nomadic populations have been widely discussed. Thus, people throughout the world have learned about the successes and challenges of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) nomadic schools. Thanks to project activities, delegations from Norway, Finland, Mongolia and the northern territories of the Russian Federation have expressed interest in joint projects.

The implementation of the joint project of the UNESCO Moscow Office and the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) strengthened both internal and international interactions. Today, unfortunately, the chances of attracting new primary resources are severely limited. We need high quality resources and we need to use them efficiently. To solve this problem, we need a network of educational institutions organising and coordinating the use of intensive educational resources.

Our present joint task is to prepare a new generation capable of adaptation and development in a diverse and dynamic world. Our schools will need not only to honour nomadic cultural components but also to present different ways of looking at the world and ways of entering the world culture through one's own creative acts. This education for the contemporary world will certainly be a determining principle in selecting educational content.

If we are to provide high quality education for every population, we must have a clear understanding of up-to-date educational research, the relationship between what can be changed and what can't be changed, and the optimal connection among federal, regional and local schools. Supported by state and local authorities, we will have to establish programs for all children living with their parents in remote areas. Nomadic schools will have to implement educational programs that have been developed on the basis of parents' expectations and their demands.

The experience of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) in providing high quality education to nomadic communities, in fostering in children vital social and working skills and in helping them to develop respectful attitudes towards other traditions should certainly be useful to all those interested in providing equal access to education to all children and in establishing balanced intercultural communication among all populations. In our opinion, these aims *can* be reached, provided that interested agencies, public organisations, business partners and communities support a second stage nomadic schools project under the aegis of UNESCO.

NOTES

1. The Federal Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), population approximately 1 million, is the largest region of the Russian Federation (area 3.1 million square kilometres or roughly 10 times the size of Italy). About half of the republic is in the Arctic. The Republic of Sakha bears no connection to the Russian island Sakhalin, which is located in the Pacific Ocean north of Hokaido, Japan.
2. According to the most recent Russian census (2002), there were 18,232 Evenki in the Republic of Sakha.
3. There were 11,657 Evens in Sakha in 2002. The Even language is endangered, having only 7,168 speakers.
4. There were 1,272 Dolgans in Sakha in 2002; Dolgan is a potentially endangered language.
5. There were 602 Chuckchi in Sakha in 2002; Chukchi is one of the world's endangered languages.
6. A sledge-tent commonly used by nomads.
7. "Capacity-building for Education for All".
8. The project's name was "Promoting the Literacy of Indigenous Pupils through Capacity Building among Nomadic Peoples of the North of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia)".
9. This is a companion to the polycultural education program "Arctic Light" for children of non-nomadic cultures. The essential components of the program are the promotion of respect for the peoples who inhabit the Arctic regions in extreme climatic conditions and amid a unique circumpolar culture, and motivation for understanding the nomadic culture. See http://www.unesco.ru/eng/articles/2004/polina24082007114648.php.
10. A dual education system is practised in several countries, notably Germany, Austria and Switzerland, but also Denmark, the Netherlands and France, and for some years now in China and other countries in Asia. It combines in a single course apprenticeships in a company and vocational education at a vocational school.

11. A moist subarctic forest that begins where the tundra ends.
12. The *SnowChange Project* is a multi-year, education-oriented initiative to document indigenous observations of climate change in northern regions.
13. Inari Saami is a Finno-Ugric language spoken in Finland by some 300 to 400 people. The language is classified as seriously endangered.
14. See http://www.snowchange.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=20&Itemid=2.
15. The Institute of National Schools of the North (a Russian research institute).
16. The "Indigenous People's International Polar Year" of 2007 marked the beginning of indigenous people's involvement in the International Polar Year, which this year will include a human dimension focusing on changes in the indigenous people's society in the Arctic. Projects based at scientific institutions will attempt to broaden cooperation on issues related to indigenous societies in the North, and simultaneously to involve indigenous youth in the process.

6 Australian Romani

Wendy Morrow

ABSTRACT

The traditional attitude of Roma (Gypsy People) towards mainstream education, their suspicion of intentions and the anticipated consequences of assimilation/integration with mainstream cultural values have frustrated efforts to rectify the disadvantaged position that Roma occupy in every mainstream (*Gajé*) society in the world. Internationally, education has been offered, encouraged and in many cases forced onto Roma with only limited success (European Roma Rights Centre, 2007).

Roma are, however, acutely aware of the pressures, both political and social, being brought to bear on them to send their children to school. Although they are often not willing to send their children to mainstream schools, some are becoming increasingly aware of the shortcomings of their own illiteracy and its disadvantages. School provision has undergone extensive scrutiny and has been the focus of many proposals and projects, at least in Europe, since the early 1980s (at the initiative of the Council of Europe and the European Community). Although there has been little substantive change since then and that school provision for Romani children has been seen as a universal failure, there are many new initiatives being trialled and progressed, particularly in Europe, and the many small successes can be built upon and expanded:

> The "Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015" is an unprecedented international effort to combat discrimination and to close the gap in welfare and living conditions between Roma and the non-Roma, in order to break the cycle of poverty and exclusion. The initiative is supported by the OSI [Open Society Institute] and the World Bank, and endorsed by nine Central and Eastern European countries. (Education Support Program, 2007, p. 7)

The Romani *Sikavni* in Adelaide, South Australia, and the research that preceded and followed its establishment are the first attempt in Australia to address this issue.[1]

INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers an insight into the attitudes and experiences of two groups of Australian Roma with regard to mainstream education. The case study data on which this chapter is based emerged from original Australian research conducted mainly during the period 1995 to 2004 (Morrow, 1998, 2005).[2] This research by no means represents a complete or exhaustive investigation of the Romani People in Australia as it is based on primary information provided by only two *vitsi,* although much of the additional data was provided by willing informants from many other *vitsi*. The educational/schooling experiences relied upon here are those of four *familia* of Roma living in Australia from what are arguably two of the most represented *natsia* in Australia: the Lovara and the Ganešti.[3, 4]

The research approach was framed by the following challenges: the lack of research on Roma in Australia, particularly that written by Roma; stereotypical images of 'Gypsies' in the media, both positive and negative, that colour the attitudes of mainstream society; Roma understanding of the significance of literacy and the relevance of education; the invisibility of Roma in Australia; the impact of mainstream culture on traditional attitudes (particularly with respect to education and schooling); and the traditional characteristics of a 'folk society's' attitudes and behaviours (Redfield, 2001, p. 57).

These challenges are not new and are faced by researchers all over the world. Reagan (2000, p. 163) sums up the difficulties of 'Westerners' (*Gajé*[5]) studying Roma owing to the Roma's 'non-Western' approach to both life and education. He describes the challenges of studying the Roma: "If the origins and early history of Roma are difficult to identify and understand, the same can be said, perhaps paradoxically, to be even more true of any effort to understand contemporary Rom life, values, behaviors, and so on" (p. 163).

The question often asked is why education is an issue and the simple answer is that Romani people not only travel but also have a heritage that owes nothing to education or literacy. All children have a characteristic set of needs according to the society in which they live. For Romani children those needs often make mainstream education, as a part of the dominant culture, irrelevant, but in many cases it has also had a destructive effect on their lives. History has shown that the education of only some of these children has made them outsiders in their own cultural group, different from their peers and incapable of contributing to their own communities (Reiss, 1975, p. 24). This is a world-wide phenomenon. The feature that makes the Romani situation unique in Australia is that it is both unrecognised and unacknowledged. Although there is a curiosity about the 'Gypsies', there is no understanding of the culture and/or lifestyle of the Romani people and therefore no understanding of the difficulties that they face.

Even though Roma have never been officially declared an ethnic minority in Australia, this discussion is based on the reality that the Romani

people do constitute an ethnic minority by virtue of the definition of the term. They have a common ancestry and “share a common heritage defined in terms of language, culture and social attitudes, values and practices”. Roma can be distinguished easily by their cultural boundaries, which are “maintained by social interaction, consciousness and group identification” (National Advisory and Coordinating Committee on Multicultural Education, 1987, p. 18f.).

The Romani population in Australia is neither large nor politically cohesive enough to be able to achieve a community presence sufficient to provide the safeguards of political power. For this reason, the community does not believe that introducing Romani culture into mainstream schools is a reasonable or viable option. Those parents whose Romani heritage has been revealed at mainstream schools in South Australia and Victoria believe that this has been the reason for their children’s misfortunes in those schools, leading in at least three instances to the children being removed from the schools by the parents (Morrow, 1998, 2005). Additionally, Romani families generally do not travel together in large groups as they do in Australian circus families and in Europe, because this tends to bring unwelcome scrutiny.

CONSTRUCTS OF ROMANI IDENTITY AFFECTING EDUCATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Although the Romani people may be culturally unique, the hardships that they face in the mainstream Australian education system are not necessarily unique; in fact they may be comparable, in many respects, to those of migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds and low socioeconomic environments (Foster & Hawthorne, 1998, p. 204).

Many minority communities want recognition of their cultures and desire assimilation into mainstream society without discrimination. Romani people often fear this integration and its effect on their people, and as a result public admission of Romani ethnicity is not often encouraged (Courbet, 2000, para. 1–4). In keeping with this, Romani people in Australia, more so perhaps than in most other countries, are a largely ‘invisible’ community. The desire for invisibility arises from a perceived need to avoid racism and prejudice and a belief that even unconscious prejudice causes damage to the way in which their community is perceived by others. Invisibility in Australia has served its intended purpose well, for with a few notable exceptions there are relatively infrequent media reports and rarely overt displays of racism. Whilst invisibility may reduce the chance of individuals experiencing open racial discrimination, it also means that indirect discrimination can unknowingly be perpetuated. This is especially so whenever government policies and legislation are being reviewed. There can be no consideration taken for the needs of a group of people if members of that group are unwilling (or unable) to stand up and declare themselves or their needs.

Roma are among the many minorities who express fear of the loss of their ethnic identity (Kaltenbach, 1998, p. 59f). They believe that acceptance of the cultural package that goes with entering the mainstream environment requires that cultural individuality be compromised, with possibly devastating results for their culture. Elders believe that their cultural identity is becoming warped by 'Hollywood' interpretations and fear that it is being irreversibly changed by borrowing from mainstream culture:

> Most 'Ethnic' Australians show varying degrees of biculturalism [which means that they] have generally kept aspects of their native cultures while acquiring many of the ways of the majority culture. The nature of multiculturalism among ethnic Australians, however, varies according to generation. . . . Ethnic cultures are not being transmitted to the next generation in their 'authentic' and integral form, but only in their folkloric versions. (Morrow, 1997, p. 37)

There is, then, the question of the socialising of Romani children—although there is much social interaction with children and adults of other Romani *familiyi,* there is rarely this same level of mixing with *Gajé* children.[6] If there were an increase in socialisation between Romani and *Gajé* children, there is the fear that there would be a much higher degree of intercultural 'borrowing' and hence adaptation would occur at a faster rate than currently, which is already too fast for some. For example, for many Romani *familiyi* in Australia, accommodation may alternate quite often between a rented house and a caravan, which means that personal belongings are severely limited. This may also affect a child's ability to recognise and manipulate toys and gadgets that are a common feature of mainstream society (Partington & McCudden, 1992, p. 259; Sibley, 1981, p. 70).

The links among mainstream education, mainstream society and the promotion of the dominant culture are made clear in the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986, Schedule Three, Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which states (in somewhat sexist or exclusionary terms) that:

> . . . He shall be given an education which will promote his general culture and enable him, on a basis of equal opportunity, to develop his abilities, his individual judgement, and his sense of moral and social responsibility, and to become a useful member of society. (Commonwealth of Australia Parliament, 1986, Schedule 3)

Roma often feel that they have no part to play in mainstream communities and, because they face so many challenges in *Gajé* society, retaining their sense of self-worth and identity is dependent on maintaining the differences between Romani and *Gajé* (ní Shuinéar, 1999, p. 212). Acceptance of the cultural package that goes with entering the school

environment requires that cultural individuality be compromised. Mainstream education is seen as the major block to retaining identity because school is seen by Roma in Australia as an institution which is exclusively and totally part of an environment dominated by 'Others'. In this environment, their children are taught vocational skills which will not help them find 'appropriate' work.[7] They learn literacy skills that make them different and they are given attitudes that make them seem foreign to the rest of their *familia*. Education and the school environment are seen to be used as a means for implementing forced assimilation into the dominant society. From this perspective, mainstream education in Australia appears even today to Roma as a hostile institution, and one which wants to take their children from them.

If one of the unashamed, implicit uses of school is as a means of social instruction, the question remains—as it will probably always do so—how much induction into the *Gajé* social system do these children need? Is it likely that they will want or be forced to assimilate or integrate into mainstream society? Reiss (1975) described the situation accurately when he said:

> If literacy were all, then our problems would be relatively straightforward—providing that literacy training is delayed until the stage of reading readiness. But what else do we teach besides literacy? What of our middle class curriculum is relevant? There is also the whole question of occupational training so necessary as the [Romani] community passes through such momentous change. Even if we wanted to, and if it was even desirable, how could you change 600 years of fact and resistance to change and the total failure of *Gajé* attempts to force conformity[?] [Romani] children take their roots not from the geographical pinpoint on the globe but from the family and the travelling family takes its own decisions and has a fundamental and unassailable right, not always protected by the present laws, to do so. And the family takes its roots from the [Romani] tradition that has endured through every external blow we have thrown at it in the past. (p. 24)

Because Roma are generally aware that they live in a society that despises them, they have erected their own immovable boundaries around themselves. It has been suggested that this may form a part of the strategy of accommodation, widely used by Roma in which they adopt those behaviours which enable them to coexist with the dominant group but at the same time retain those social norms and cultural values which permit the group to preserve its own distinctive identity (Andereck, 1992). In a society built on education, lack of formal mainstream education makes assimilation much more difficult.

Another often-mentioned concern is that Roma feel that the *Gajé* education system does not uphold any of the traditional Romani values. Often

unverbalised, but ever present, the rules of *marimé* particularly hinder full Rom participation in *Gajé* society.[8] These deeply held beliefs are practised by every Romani community (although to differing degrees), forming an integral part of life. The *Gajé,* being ignorant of the rules of *marimé* and therefore lacking the proper sense of shame, can be considered to be *marimé,* from head to toe; this characterises all contacts with the *Gajé,* whether they are for economic or (rarely) social reasons. There is an unwillingness to allow children to be exposed to influence from a people considered *marimé* and at the same time an unwillingness to provide their own version of 'mainstream education', believing strongly in the power of the family and its traditional structure of training. So many times, to those in a position of authority, Romani families simply represent individuals who are breaking the law and must therefore be cautioned and threatened with fines and imprisonment. They are not seen as an ethnic minority with a common set of problems based on a long history of difficulties in this area who are in need of assistance.

Given these types of issues, how can the educational needs of Romani people best be addressed? There is no one answer to this question.

STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

Three main areas for potential change were considered in the research—systems, policies and administrative procedures—and the most popular/commonly suggested strategies are presented here (Morrow, 1998, p. 219f). These suggestions were put forward during the course of the research by Romani elders and other informants.

Strategies in Systems of Schooling

- Segregated schooling in special Romani schools with Romani teachers/teacher assistants;
- Setting up a Romani ethnic school to teach the culture and language to Romani children in a less formalised setting with children attending mainstream classes;
- The use of information technology to enable the expansion of a distance education system which allows for students to progress at a rate commensurate with their abilities;[9]
- The use of mobile schools setting up in various caravan parks, which are capable of moving all over Australia;
- Initially segregated schooling in special Romani schools, with a long-term view to integration;
- Home schooling with the parents participating with their own children, with the permission of the education authorities;[10]

- Integrated schooling with support for Romani children in the schools and assistance to succeed; and
- The expansion of vocational education and training in school programs to cater for areas of vocational interest to Roma.

Strategies for Policy-makers

- Mainstream educational institutions to recognise and acknowledge that students who already speak a second language at home, regardless of attendance at other cultural or language programs as may be provided by ethnic schools, do not need to learn another language at school;
- Ensuring awareness by teachers and school staff of the implications and methods of implementation of the multicultural policies currently in place;
- Providing training courses so that literate Roma could work in their own community under the supervision of a trained teacher, whilst attending intensive training courses;
- State education authorities to make available to schools a list of Romani volunteers available to schools who can assist with following up early school leavers, assessing their problems and providing support and counselling where required;
- Training for teachers on dealing with students of different literacy levels in one class; and
- The production and distribution of cultural information literature or packages for children to take to school.

Administrative Measures

- The introduction of flexible times for school attendance;
- A minimum number of days (or weeks) per year that must be attended; and
- Work set on a regular basis to be completed within a set, negotiated time irrespective of term/holiday times.

Whilst some of these strategies appear to be feasible in theory, they would possibly find little practical success in an Australian context as the (administrative) implications of some are too far-reaching. Many would require investigation into teacher education and training and restructuring of the mainstream education system. Others may be more realistically achievable, such as making wider use of information technology and the advancement of distance education.

For example, mobile schools in caravan parks would be difficult to implement because of the wide dispersal of Romani populations and the

large distances between towns and cities in Australia. There is also no set pattern of migration and *familiyi* may leave a caravan park or house to go their separate ways depending on *familia* needs.

When issues of multiculturalism and ethnic groups are considered, identification involving skin colour, accent or some other easily distinguishable feature facilitates the assumption that difficulties may exist. Subsequently, appropriate solutions can be identified and implemented. This is a significant issue for Roma owing to their diversity of appearance. Difficulties arise when faced with a child who looks like any other white Anglo-Celtic child and who appears to be orally literate in English, but is from a different cultural background:

> . . . among Romani children . . . in one family, there may be children of quite dark skin colour and those of very pale skin colour. Although it is quite obvious from their appearance that some of these children belong to an ethnic minority, others appear quite Anglo-Celtic. . . . It is not possible to identify a Rom on the basis of the country of residence as being Rom is determined not merely by race, but also by a complex combination of values. (Liégeois, 1994, p. 38)

Consequently, if a child has an Anglo-Celtic appearance, it is possible that, owing to a lack of "understanding of the students' cultural background and the influence of this culture on their response to the school environment" (Partington & McCudden, 1992, p. 11), the individual needs of many children will go unfulfilled.

The gradual loss of Romanes, the Gypsy language, by the younger generation has resulted in the loss of a possible pigeon hole in which the children could be placed within the school environment. Romanes is understood by the younger generation, but rarely spoken by people under the age of 30. It is becoming mixed to a large degree with words brought across from the language of the last host country of residence. This means that new immigrants are bringing with them a Romanes mixed with Serbian, Czech or German. The old language is dying slowly. Romani children born in Australia may communicate in two or sometimes three languages with no firm foundation in any one of them on which to base their learning experiences.

This is an issue because the application of the definition of multicultural education in Australia through its policies appears to relate mainly to people of non-English speaking backgrounds. Despite claims that multiculturalism is not confined to immigrants in Australia (National Advisory and Coordinating Committee on Multicultural Education, 1987, p. 18), there is no acknowledgment by this society that people who *appear* to have an English speaking background may also have a culture of their own. Therefore, although these policies appear to have worthy aims, their implementation at the school level causes difficulties. Interpretation of some of the statements made in these policies has resulted in further educational difficulties

for Romani children in school. For example: "Maximal potential: the right of all children and students to quality education and care that provides knowledge, skills and understanding that will enable them to participate effectively in culturally and linguistically diverse societies on a national and international level" (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 1989, p. vii).

In South Australia, this statement means that every child must learn a second language. In state schools, there is no choice of which language—each school has one second language which it teaches. One of the key informants in the research was enrolled in a school where the language taught was Spanish. When the family was required to transfer to a local school, the language taught in this new school was German. That meant that the child coming from a home environment where Romanes and English were spoken interchangeably had to learn the concepts of a third and then a fourth language. This child, already having difficulty with expression in English, was then doubly penalised. But this was not the concern of the local school. Their policies and curriculum stated that every child had to learn a second language and that it was to be German. The principal of the school suggested that the parents take up their concerns with "the Education Department".

There is still much to be learned about multiculturalism and the implications of its policies. Unfortunately, the sometimes narrow views of those with the power to make a difference cloud the real issues, including the reasons for non-compliance with the law. Whilst there may be no excuse for this non-compliance, there is a substantial need for concrete assistance.

In discussions with elders in the Romani community, it emerged that they felt that education needed be offered in less limited ways and under conditions likely to make learning a worthwhile and fulfilling experience. The answer could lie in the fact that there is no correct way. The ideal therefore, from a pluralistic society perspective, is that at the truly multicultural school all types of children mix and learn recognition of one another's worth as they discover their differences. Whilst this may seem an idealistic vision, it is one that we should not put aside. It is obvious that continued separation of Romani children from *Gajé* children will perpetuate the age-old line of division between Roma and the *Gajé*. However, Roma do not want to assimilate into the dominant culture that exists and, until a system of education can be devised in which ethnic minorities do not feel the pressure being placed on them to assimilate, this ideal situation cannot be reached and the line of division will remain.

Another point around which there was much discussion was the amount of time wasted at school, even in the open access system. Most of the adults felt that painting, craft and sport were activities that should be conducted out of school. These were considered to be fun for the children, but not useful skills for finding work. The main reason for agreeing that education had a role in the first place was for acquiring vocational skills, of which 'reading, writing and arithmetic' were considered to be vital components.

There was really only one recommendation that found universal favour with Roma in the underpinning research and that was setting up an arrangement parallel to the open access system which allows progression at a rate commensurate with the children's abilities. The fact that we found even one solution was encouraging because it suggested that the issue was not so much one of a lack of literacy skills but rather the inflexibility of the school system as it currently stands. The strategies listed as addressing their educational needs were put forward to and discussed by Romani informants in the study, but it was widely felt that most of them were a waste of time because they would never happen. There was also a defeatist attitude prevalent among Roma to whom I spoke; they could foresee no changes in the near future. We spent many hours discussing all the options. A few would become quite excited about them, but towards the end someone would invariably say, "Well, yes, but this is all a waste of time anyway; you are just dreaming".

Some Focused Strategies Put Forward by Roma to Help Themselves

Changing the system can 'fix' half the problem, but even with extensive systematic change Roma would need to change as well. Strategies suggested during the research included:

- Building a Romani support network, to ensure a loud enough voice for action;
- Asking for assistance for those Romani people who complete school so that they can gain higher qualifications and help others within their community;
- Using Romani associations to liaise formally between education departments and officials and Roma in each state or on a national level;
- Special efforts by those Roma in contact with children who leave school early, or who have never attended school, to ensure awareness of the need for their children to be educated and to assist wherever possible with finding the most appropriate form of schooling for their needs; and
- Roma making a commitment to their children's mainstream education, cooperating with schools and other government agencies at all possible times, facilitated by:
    - Romani Associations informing federal and state education authorities about Romani culture and the difficulties faced by Romani people;
    - programs to inform Roma about schooling and the Australian education system[11];
    - programs to inform adult Roma, where appropriate, about the availability of community literacy programs; and
    - involving parents/guardians in their children's education, possibly in a home-based learning environment, such that they could also gain literacy skills.

In many families, the mother goes out to work each day and supervision of the younger children is delegated to the oldest girl. Therefore the older girls (most of whom have limited literacy themselves) could assist with the direction and control of the younger children. It was felt that the girls were fully capable of acting as guides for the younger children, and assisting with the location of reading materials. Within the normal pattern of their lives, this would give them something constructive to do whilst encouraging some informal learning to take place. This would be especially good for the open access system, where the illiteracy of the parents is given as a major reason why Romani people are not being encouraged to participate.

As an extension of this, mothers could be educated at the same time as the children. With mothers and children learning together, the strength of the *familia* would be increased and at the same time ease concerns about the morality of the classroom. This suggestion was widely welcomed, but it was acknowledged that, unless this education was through the open access system, or in a segregated classroom, the solution was impractical. It was also accepted that the loss of earning power from the women would severely reduce incoming money, and that this would result in more families needing to survive on social security payments.

Almost every person consulted during the research had comments to make about the open access system and it was widely believed that this system was by far the best option offered in Australia. At the same time, nearly every *familia* had an account of the treatment that they had received by this system. Some stories were quite encouraging, with others not so complimentary (ranging from simple rudeness over the telephone in response to enquiries to being told that the school did not care whether the children remained illiterate but they were not going to be enrolled in open access). It was strongly felt that expansion of the existing distance education system would possibly result in the enrolment of more children in this system. The other alternative considered was to set up another system beside the current one and have it administered by Roma or other willing participants.

CONCLUSION: WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Not all people within a culture will want to be segregated into isolated communities and 'special' schools; there will be those who wish to assimilate or integrate into mainstream society; those who wish to live side by side; and those who wish to have no part in it at all. This is true for all societies where freedom of speech and freedom of expression are the basic tenets.

Simply put, lack of literacy skills is a major problem amongst Romani children but total immersion in mainstream culture (for example, through a school environment) in order to address this problem is seen by many Roma to threaten the (present and) future of Romani culture. Whilst there is much documented evidence of this, small pockets of Roma are not

worried about this loss of their heritage. In 1998, a Rom from Macedonia living in Australia declared that it was a good thing that Romani people were losing their sense of self-identity and that it was time to assimilate with the dominant culture: "You must trust in the country you are living. . . . If you are good, you will have a good life" (Abduramanoski, as cited in O'Brien, 1998, p. 5). It may be that this is the result of seeing the extent of discrimination against Roma in Europe and not wanting to see a similar scenario here. This fear may be substantiated by the fact that segregated schools in Europe are designed for academically challenged students. Once in these schools, the children seldom progress.

In Australia, those who need an alternative to the mainstream education system must have sufficient material assets to be able to send their children to one of the alternative curriculum schools such as Montessori. These schools are usually out of reach of the average Romani *familia*.

Those children and adults who appear to have had the most success with education, measurable by the years of schooling received and the degree of literacy achieved, are those who have had the chance to receive schooling outside the mainstream system. Of those children included in this research who have had no choice but to attempt to progress through the state system either by contact or through open access, few have completed secondary school and most are still only semi-literate. Irregularity of attendance is the easy answer to the question why, and this would account for many of the difficulties encountered. But then the reasons given for this non-attendance need to be addressed. It should be pointed out here that those parents who have really wanted their children to receive an education have certainly achieved their goal, using different means, and usually under conditions of adversity, but they have done it nonetheless. There are also an increasing number of parents who want their children to be educated but who do not manage it using the avenues currently available to them. However, there are still a number of Roma in Australia who want no part of the existing educative process for their children.

Success in education can be achieved not only by examining the way that schools are administered but also by taking into consideration the nature of the relationships within the school and its relationships with the wider community. The development of educational systems to meet all children's needs must include the views of those standing outside mainstream cultural society, if truly equitable outcomes are to be achieved. The implications of change in the area of educational administration lend credence to the ideas of Edgar (1999), who believes that the changing nature of society warrants fundamental changes to the ways in which education is provided. He presents concepts of centralised administration and decentralised learning assisted by educational networks and learning webs powered by the technology now available (p. 5).

This chapter has put forward that effective changes in education and schooling for Romani children must begin with understanding their needs

and cultural norms. There are fears that there is a failure of the current education system to meet the educational needs of Romani children. Mainstream educational institutions could be effectively utilised to provide alternative, community-based education. Consideration could also be given to the argument that education and schooling are not synonymous. Even though alternative education for ethnic minority children is traditionally provided in non-government schools, for some minority groups, such as Roma, mainstream and alternative education could be effectively integrated:

> . . . for [a] child to succeed in a society where the dominant culture is not their own, the school needs to be one that also reflects the culture of this dominant society. A policy of separatism may therefore not greatly benefit the adult that the child will ultimately become, an adult who must be able to move in the dominant society with relative ease in order to survive and succeed. (Morrow, 1998, p. 78)

How such integration is managed to meet different cultural needs has implications for educational systems, schools, managers, teachers and Romani people themselves.

NOTES

1. *Sikavni* is the Romani word for “school”.
2. This chapter contains content derived from Morrow (1998, Chapter 8).
3. The *familia* is the extended ‘family group’ rather than the one generation family generally referred to in Western culture. A *familia* may include two, three or even four generations.
4. The *natsia* is the largest grouping with which a Rom would identify and is a primary unit of identification. The closest English equivalent would be tribes within a nation or race.
5. *Gajé* is the term used by Roma to describe all people who are not Rom.
6. *Familiyi* is the plural of *familia*.
7. Appropriate work is seen as not being employed or in a job but being able to be self-sufficient and provide for the *familia* through self-employment.
8. *Marimé* is a concept of cleanliness and purity observed by all Rom. Breaking the rules of *marimé* may result in being declared *marimé,* a kind of social death. The definition of *marimé* can be found in Liégeois (1994, p. 73).
9. Currently the open access system permits entry mainly to those students disadvantaged by distance and those whose behaviour is such that it precludes attendance at school. The Open Access School has its own teachers who liaise with the students; the role of the parents is usually to assist with the distribution of materials and direct the proceedings. Illiteracy has been the main reason that Romani parents are unable to enrol their children.
10. Currently home schooling requires the parent/teacher to be literate. Illiteracy has been the main reason given to Romani parents for their ineligibility for home schooling registration.
11. This could possibly be achieved by utilising international strategies already on offer (Education Support Program, 2007).

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7 The Telesis of Nigerian Nomadic Education

Abdurrahman Umar and Gidado Tahir

ABSTRACT

The nomadic education program in Nigeria is 20 years old and its central concern has been the promotion of access to education for nomads in the country. This chapter critically examines the implementation of nomadic education in the context of its avowed goal of promoting equality of educational opportunity. It contends that the delivery systems of the nomadic education program need to be reconceptualised and the potentials of cost effective systems such as open schooling need to be harnessed and implemented if the goals of Education for All as articulated in the Dakar Framework in 2000 are to be actualised.

INTRODUCTION

One of the key concerns of successive governments in Nigeria in the past four decades has been how to provide equal educational opportunities and access to basic education to all children irrespective of gender, social class, occupation or geographical location. This informed the launching of the Universal Primary Education program (UPE) in 1976 and the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program in September 1999. These two initiatives have led to the unprecedented expansion of primary education in the country. Enrolment in primary schools rose from 2.9 million in 1960 to 8.2 million in 1976, when UPE was introduced, and to 19.2 million in 2000, a year after the introduction of UBE (Federal Ministry of Education, 2003a). Unfortunately, this phenomenal expansion of primary education has failed to address the educational needs of some disadvantaged groups, particularly those of the nomads.

There are two major nomadic groups in Nigeria. These are the nomadic pastoralists, with a population of 6.5 million, and the migrant fishermen, with a population of 2.8 million. Of the 9.3 million nomads in Nigeria, 3.1 million are children of school age. The level of literacy for these nomadic groups ranges from 0.2% for the nomadic pastoralists to about

2% for the migrant fishing communities (Federal Ministry of Education, 2003a). Their level of participation in basic education is abysmally low; the major constraints on their participation in existing educational provision include:

1. Their constant movement in search of water and pasture in the case of the pastoralists, and fish in the case of the migrant fishermen;
2. The importance of child labour in their production systems, thus making it difficult for them to allow their children to enrol at school and to attend regularly;
3. The failure of the curriculum to address their specific needs—for example, their need for skills that can strengthen their production systems and uphold their culture;
4. The fact that they live in physically remote and often inaccessible areas;
5. The failure of government to provide the requisite policy framework that will enable them to acquire land and settle (if that is what they wish); and
6. The inflexibility of the school system with regard to timetabling and school terms and holidays. These do not take into account the nomads' production cycles and schedules, particularly in terms of the time when children will be most needed by the nomads' production systems (Junaid, 1987; Umar, 1988; Umar & Tahir, 2000).

It was in the context of the failure of formal conventional schooling to address the educational needs of the nomads that the federal government established the National Commission for Nomadic Education (NCNE) in 1989. The objectives of the NCNE are to:

- formulate policy and issue guidelines on all matters relating to nomadic education in Nigeria;
- provide funds for the design, development, implementation and monitoring of nomadic education; and
- establish, manage and maintain primary schools for nomadic children.

However, it should be noted that the formulation of policy on the education of nomads which led to the establishment of the NCNE was not simply an act of benevolence on the part of government, but also the outcome of a long period of struggle in the 1970s and 1980s by the nomadic communities themselves, pressure groups such as the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association, a group of scholars in the universities of Sokoto, Maiduguri and Jos, some state governments, particularly in Bauchi, Plateau, Kano, Niger, Borno and the defunct Gongola state, and also international agencies such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (Umar & Tahir, 2000). The activities of these various groups led

the government to consider the need for a separate educational provision for the country's nomadic populations and the promulgation of Decree 41 of 1989, which established the NCNE.

The NCNE is 20 years old and it is perhaps an appropriate time to ask if the nomadic education program has achieved telesis, which, according to Hawkridge (1981), denotes "the attainment of desired ends by the application of intelligent human effort to the means". Have the desired ends been achieved over these past 20 years?

To answer this question it would be necessary to carry out a comprehensive evaluation of nomadic education, the evolution of its theoretical foundations and implementation strategies, and the extent to which it has achieved its goals. However, this chapter focuses on only one dimension of telesis in nomadic education—namely, its achievement of its avowed goal of providing equality of educational opportunity to nomads in Nigeria.

THE OPERATIONAL MODALITIES OF NOMADIC EDUCATION

The implementation of nomadic education is a collaborative enterprise between the NCNE on the one hand and the states and communities on the other. In general, states and communities establish and manage schools while the NCNE provides support in the form of funds, curriculum design and development, the provision of teaching and learning equipment and facilities, instructional materials, and the training and retraining of education personnel. The NCNE ensures that uniform standards are maintained in all the schools. In addition, in order to generate and sustain support for the program among leaders and members of the nomadic communities, the NCNE funds and implements extension services aimed at enhancing the health, welfare and productivity of the nomads. It also organises training on income generating activities, particularly for nomadic women, so as to enable them to raise their productivity and incomes. The NCNE also provides financial support to local communities for building classrooms or procuring instructional materials.

In order to ensure the effective coordination of the nomadic education program, the NCNE has established zonal offices in all the six geopolitical zones, and Nomadic Education Units in all the 36 state ministries of education and in the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja and the State Universal Basic Education Boards.

The curriculum of nomadic schools is an adaptation of the national curriculum. Concepts and principles in the national curriculum are taught using the nomads' lived experiences and examples drawn from their culture and environment. The adaptation of the curriculum to fit the values, beliefs and lifestyles of the nomads is aimed at engendering program acceptability among the nomads.

There are three types of nomadic schools:

1. Schools with fixed/permanent structures which are located in places where the semi-sedentary nomads spend a considerable period of time during the year (for example, four to seven months);
2. Schools with temporary structures which are located in places where the nomads stay for about two to three months before moving to another location; and
3. Schools with mobile, collapsible structures that are moved along with the nomads during their seasonal migrations. These structures are mainly used for the highly mobile nomadic groups.

In addition to these schools, the program delivery system includes the use of interactive radio and the establishment of literacy classes for adults.

NOMADIC EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF EFA

Two clear stages are discernible in the evolution of nomadic education in Nigeria: *viz* the pre-1990 era when small-scale initiatives by some state governments (for example, Plateau, Bauchi, Kano, Borno and Niger states) tended to predominate; and the post-1990 era which witnessed large-scale, nation-wide intervention by the federal government that led to the promulgation of Decree 41 of 1989 and the establishment of the NCNE (Umar & Tahir, 2000). Although the two stages shared the desire to enhance the nomads' participation in education, there were major differences in approach.

Before 1990, the nomadic education program being implemented by the states mentioned above was more or less the same as the existing formal schools and adult education programs meant for sedentary people. There was no attempt to adapt the curricula or delivery methods to suit the needs and realities of the nomads nor were the nomads consulted in the design and implementation of the nomadic education program.

The post-1990 era witnessed a complete departure from the approach used in the pre-1990 era. Major developments included:

- The adaptation of the national primary education curriculum to suit the culture and existential realities of the nomads;
- The development, production and distribution of textbooks and other instructional materials based on the adapted curriculum. The culture and lived experiences of the nomads were used as filters for teaching the ideas, concepts and principles contained in the adapted curriculum;
- The design and implementation of special teacher training programs that are aimed at acquainting teachers with the culture, needs and expectations of the nomads and the pedagogical methods and techniques that can engender the attainment of the goals of nomadic education;

- The provision of support (in the form of funds, instructional materials, etc.) to nomadic communities to establish and maintain their own schools;
- The design and implementation of adult and extension education programs that are aimed at raising the productivity and incomes of the nomads, improving their living conditions, empowering women and reducing maternal and infant mortality;
- The establishment of a forum (in the form of biannual meetings) for the exchange of ideas and experiences among officials of the NCNE, federal and state ministries of education, NGOs and representatives of nomadic communities;
- The use of radio for community development and educational delivery;
- The effort to address the problem of poor teacher supply and retention through community education programs in selected states which train teachers who are from the nomadic communities and willing to move with them during their seasonal migrations; and
- The expansion of the scope of the nomadic education program to include migrant fishing communities (Carr-Hill & Peart, 2005; Ezeomah, 1997; National Commission for Nomadic Education, 2001, 2003; Umar & Tahir, 2000).

Clearly there has been a paradigm shift in the post-1990 era from a mere concern with making formal education accessible to the nomads, to a concern not only with promoting access to education but also and more importantly with improving the living conditions of the nomads and enhancing their productivity and incomes. The aim of the paradigm shift is to boost enrolment, to engender program acceptability and ownership and to actualise the goals of Education for All (EFA), by establishing an organic link between nomadic education and the daily concerns and living conditions of the nomads.

The changes characterising the paradigm shift in nomadic education in the post-1990 era can be grouped into three categories: issues relating to broadening access and the quality of nomadic education (that is, the curriculum, textbooks, teacher supply and retention, and teacher training); issues relating to adult education and community development (that is, using nomadic education to enhance the nomads' productivity and income, improve their living conditions, reduce maternal and infant mortality and harness the potential of radio for community development); and issues relating to funding and providing support for instructional materials, building more classrooms, etc.

Although there has not been any systematic evaluation of the impact of these changes, there are indications that some of them have had a modest degree of success. For example, the nomadic education program has expanded its coverage and includes not just pastoralists but also migrant fishermen. As Table 7.1 below indicates, the enrolment of children of nomadic pastoralists

and migrant fishermen has increased steadily since 1990, rising from 92,570 in 1995 to 375,550 in 2005. Female enrolment also increased significantly from 35,751 in 1995 to 153,489 in 2005. Similarly there has been a strong partnership with development agencies such as UNICEF and UNESCO to combat maternal and infant mortality in nomadic communities through the vaccination of children and capacity building workshops that disseminate income generating skills. These have now been mainstreamed into the nomadic education program. The institutional capacity of the NCNE for harnessing the potential of radio for community development and teacher training has also been enhanced through the specialised training of its staff on the use of interactive radio and the provision of digital production studios by the Commonwealth of Learning, Vancouver, Canada.

However, many of the post-1990 initiatives have not been successful, mainly because the funding of the NCNE (like other federal government agencies) has deteriorated (owing to IMF-imposed reforms), and worse still the state governments have in general failed to demonstrate sufficient political will and commitment to the attainment of the goals of nomadic education. For example, budgetary provisions for nomadic education are often not made and even when they are made the funds appropriated are rarely released by most state governments. Similarly, despite the 2000 directive of the National Council on Education that states should stop posting teachers trained for nomadic schools to conventional schools, the practice persists. This is partly responsible for the dearth of qualified teachers in nomadic schools.

The goals of EFA as articulated in the Dakar Framework for Action (2000) are:

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children;
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality;
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs;
4. Achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults;
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality; and
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

Our particular interest in this chapter is Goals 2 and 5, which deal with access to education.

ACCESS

The main goal of nomadic education is the promotion of access to primary education of good quality which is comparable to what is provided to sedentary children in formal, conventional schools. To what extent has this goal been attained? In order to answer this question, pupil enrolment in nomadic schools is presented and discussed, followed by a brief discussion of teacher quality in nomadic education.

Table 7.1 below shows the annual total enrolment in nomadic schools for the period 1990–2006.

Table 7.1 Nomadic Education in Nigeria: Pupil Enrolment 1990–2006 (National Commission for Nomadic Education, 2007)

Year	*No. of Schools*	*No. of Teachers*	*Pupils' Enrolment*			*Teacher–Pupil Ratio*
			Male	*Female*	***Total***	
1990	329	879	13,763	5,068	18,831	1:21
1991	473	1489	25,942	10,559	36,501	1:24
1992	629	2491	33,463	16,689	50,152	1:20
1993	656	2365	38,335	15,253	53,588	1:23
1994	754	2822	42,738	19,094	61,832	1:22
1995	860	2788	56,759	35,751	92,510	1:33
1996	940	2915	63,638	40,938	104,576	1:36
1997	1103	3265	71,695	47,081	118,776	1:36
1998	1366	4328	74,956	47,418	122,374	1:28
1999	1363	4323	97,524	65,837	163,361	1:38
2000	1494	4748	112,745	80,504	193,249	1:41
2001	1574	4907	118,905	84,939	203,844	1:41
2002	1680	5290	134,930	92,014	226,944	1:43
2003	1820	6375	175,962	127,556	303,518	1:47
2004	1981	6861	211,931	151,622	363,553	1:52
2005	2034	6916	222,061	153,489	375,550	1:54
2006	2094	7196	206,225	149,684	355,909	1:49
					2,698,068	

The table shows that:

1. There has been a massive expansion of the nomadic school system in a 16-year period. The number of schools rose from 329 in 1990 to 2,094 in 2006.
2. Pupil enrolment increased steadily—from 18,831 in 1990, to 193,249 10 years later in 2000, to 355,909 pupils in 2006.
3. There continue to be gender disparities in nomadic education. Although there was an increase in enrolment for both boys and girls each year, the system tended consistently to enrol more male pupils each year. In 2006, the total enrolment for boys was 206,225 (58%) compared with 149,684 (42%) for girls.
4. The number of teachers increased from 879 in 1990 to 7,196 in 2006, but the teacher–pupil ratio has continued to worsen. It deteriorated from 1:21 in 1990 to 1:49 in 2006. Since 2000 it has remained above the prescribed ratio of 1:40.

The table shows that some modest achievements have been recorded in making primary education accessible to the children of the nomads. However, given the fact that there are 3.1 million school-aged children (that is, 6- to 11-year-old children), the 2006 enrolment figure of 355,909 is unsatisfactory and suggests that only 11.48% of school-aged children are enrolled in primary education. A lot more needs to be done if the EFA goals are to be attained by 2015.

Out of the thousands of children enrolled in nomadic schools, how many of them do complete primary education and transition to junior secondary schools? Table 7.2 below seeks to answer this question by providing data on the number of pupils who graduated from nomadic primary schools and who transitioned to junior secondary schools in the period 1997–2005.

The table shows that 83,739 pupils completed primary school in the period, out of whom 44,208 transitioned to junior secondary schools. The transition rate into junior secondary schools was 59% of all those who completed primary education as at 2005, which is far above the national average of 47% (Federal Ministry of Education, 2006). There was gender disparity: more boys than girls completed primary school and transitioned into junior secondary schools each year during the period 1997–2005.

Why is the enrolment in primary education so low? What can be done to boost enrolments and thus facilitate the attainment of the EFA goals? There are many reasons for the low enrolment levels in the nomadic schools. Some of them include:

1. The inflexibility of the nomadic education delivery system and the contradiction between the demands of schooling and the nomads' production systems (Junaid, 1987; Umar, 1988).

Table 7.2 Nomadic Education in Nigeria: Primary School Completion Rates and Transitions into Junior Secondary Schools 1997–2005 (National Commission for Nomadic Education, 2007)

Year	*No. of schools that graduated pupils*	*Graduands*			*No. transitioned to junior secondary schools*			*Transition rate into junior secondary schools*		
		M	*F*	*Total*	*M*	*F*	*Total*	*M*	*F*	*T*
1997	113	940	522	1462	423	157	580	45	30	40
1998	138	1628	752	2380	749	188	937	46	25	39
1999	169	2482	1308	3790	1042	301	1343	42	23	35
2000	163	2005	1130	3135	1082	396	1478	54	47	38
2001	304	2084	1114	3198	1084	368	1452	52	33	45
2002	425	3354	2322	5676	2235	1519	3754	67	65	66
2003	914	11250	7015	18265	6074	3172	9246	54	45	51
2004	1018	12234	9162	21396	6851	4215	11066	56	46	52
2005	1243	14453	9984	24437	8643	5719	14362	60	57	59

M = Male, F=Female

The nomadic schools are modelled on formal, conventional schools attended by the children of sedentary people. There is a fixed (inflexible), *albeit* culturally adapted, curriculum, and a fixed timetable and terms and holidays, which are as rigid as in the formal, conventional schools. Classes begin and end at a particular time of the day and the school terms and holidays are the same as those of the conventional schools. This hardly takes into account the needs of the nomadic production system for child labour at particular times of the day during specific seasons of the year and thus makes it difficult for children to become enrolled and regularly attend school. From the point of view of many parents, the opportunity cost of enrolling all children in schools may be too high, given the relatively low private returns, and may undermine the production systems of the nomads. Although the Local Government Education Authorities and the state ministries of education do recognise the importance of flexible timing in the delivery of nomadic education, they have (with few exceptions) in practice continued to operate nomadic schools in a very rigid manner, similar to what obtains in formal, conventional schools for sedentary groups.

2. Poor teacher attendance.

   As part of a study by Umar (2007), aimed at determining the extent to which primary school teachers in some states regularly attend classes and how well they perform in the classroom, conventional

primary schools and nomadic schools in selected local governments of the states were visited and observed. The study indicates that teacher absenteeism in nearly all the 250 schools covered by the study was very high (up to 20% in many nomadic schools and as high as 40% in a few schools). In one of the nomadic schools visited, the teachers did not turn up for more than two weeks, even though pupils did turn up every day. Discussions with parents indicate that teacher attendance is a serious problem in nearly all schools. This is not unique to nomadic schools and is also manifested in formal, conventional schools, *albeit* on a lesser scale.

Although no one has conducted a systematic study of the impact of teacher absenteeism on the willingness of parents to send their children to school, focus group discussions with parents and community leaders indicate that it has had a negative impact on the attitudes of parents towards the nomadic education program, and has made them less likely to enrol more children into the program.

3. Lack of teaching materials.

A related problem is the dearth of basic teaching and learning materials such as textbooks and other instructional materials which has had a negative effect on the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Although the NCNE has developed and distributed textbooks specially designed for the program, it has not been able to make these textbooks available to all pupils owing to inadequate funding. This is also true of formal, conventional schools nationwide and the textbook–pupil ratio is about 1:5 for all schools (Federal Ministry of Education, 2006) and estimated to be 1:9 for nomadic schools. The net effect of this and other related issues such as poor teacher quality and teacher attendance is the poor pupils' learning outcomes. The national report on the assessment of learning achievement by Primary Four and Primary Six pupils conducted by the Federal Ministry of Education (2003b) indicates that the national mean scores in literacy and numeracy for Primary Four pupils were 35.0% and 33.7% respectively. The mean scores for rural schools, including nomadic schools, were 34.7% and 32.5% respectively. These lower learning outcomes could discourage parents in nomadic communities from enrolling their children in schools.

QUALITY ISSUES IN NOMADIC EDUCATION

As was pointed out above, the quality of nomadic education has not received any attention from researchers. There has not been any regular evaluation of the quality and impact of nomadic education for and on the pupils or the local communities. This may be partly explained by

the fact that most scholars are more concerned with the provision of access in quantitative terms and justifying the need for a special education program for nomads in the face of constant threats of closure or discontinuation of the program. As recently as February 2007, the outgoing Obasanjo administration submitted draft legislation on the reform of the education sector to the Nigerian National Assembly, which among other things sought to scrap the NCNE and transform it into a unit of another parastatal. Prior to that, at least three unsuccessful attempts were made by the Federal Ministry of Education to close down the program in 1996, 1998 and 2001. Public outcry against such a decision forced the ministry to abandon its plans. The impact of these incessant threats of closure or discontinuation of the program meant that the attention of scholars and practitioners remained disproportionately focused more on advocacy for the program and exploring alternative delivery systems so as to raise enrolments than on systematic studies of the quality of the tuition being provided.

However, there are data on educational inputs such as teachers from which one can make inferences about the quality of teaching in nomadic schools, as reflected in Table 7.3 below.

Out of the 5,446 teachers in nomadic schools, only 1,818 (33.4%) possess the prescribed minimum teaching qualification—that is, the Nigeria Certificate in Education and above (National Commission for Nomadic Education, 2007). This is far lower than the national figure of 56% for formal, conventional schools and can be explained by the relatively higher levels of teacher attrition in nomadic schools. Although there has not been any systematic study of teacher attrition in nomadic education, the problem was serious enough to prompt the National Council on Education, the highest education policy-making organ in the country, to issue a directive in 2000 prohibiting the transfer of teachers specially trained for nomadic schools to formal, conventional schools and directing states to address the problem of teacher attrition in nomadic schools.

Some of the causes of teacher attrition in nomadic education include: the remote, harsh and inhospitable environment in which nomadic schools are located; the lack of special incentives for teachers serving in nomadic schools; unattractive conditions of service, etc.

Apart from the problem of teacher quality, there is the dearth of instructional materials (as noted above, the textbook–pupil ratio is 1:9) and of teaching and learning facilities referred to earlier in the chapter, brought about by consistent under funding of the program by the state and local governments. Not only is this funding inadequate but even the UBE federal intervention funds released to the states to improve the quality of schools, including nomadic schools, are mismanaged by many state governments. Given these constraints and the necessity to actualise the EFA goals as articulated in the Dakar Framework for Action in 2000, there is the need to explore the possibility of harnessing the potential of

Table 7.3 Distribution of Teachers by Qualification in Nomadic Schools in Nigeria 1990–2005 (National Commission for Nomadic Education, 2007)

	TEACHERS			*QUALIFICATION*						
YEAR	*M*	*F*	*TOTAL*	*BA/BSc (Ed)*	*Nigeria Certificate in Education*	*Diploma*	*Grade II Pass*	*Grade II Referred*	*Higher Islamic Studies*	*Others*
1990	791	88	879	0	106	21	252	176	120	204
1991	1266	223	1489	10	210	148	424	211	184	302
1992	2117	374	2491	18	418	201	714	316	255	569
1993	1994	371	2365	22	431	194	756	289	248	425
1994	2424	398	2822	25	513	192	873	281	248	690
1995	2349	439	2788	31	538	197	851	264	252	655
1996	2401	514	2915	37	587	186	893	258	270	684
1997	2285	980	3265	58	875	204	960	362	311	495
1998	2519	839	3358	33	892	211	968	371	309	574
1999	2499	972	3471	39	908	211	984	368	314	647
2000	2796	1023	3819	45	1147	198	1341	359	334	395
2001	2964	1025	3990	57	1247	198	1426	342	352	368
2002	3005	1145	4150	63	1491	185	1382	331	384	314
2003	3242	1746	4988	63	1396	321	1496	274	516	922
2004	3258	2077	5335	115	1611	320	1545	273	534	937
2005	3259	2187	5446	164	1654	330	1566	251	546	935

M = Male, F- Fmale, BA/BSc (Ed) = Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science (Education)

cost effective delivery systems, particularly open schooling, which, as the experiences of many countries have shown, can be used to universalise access to basic education.

CONCLUSION

As was mentioned earlier, nomadic schools have been modelled on formal, conventional schools, with the main delivery method being face-to-face, classroom-based instruction requiring substantial investment in facilities such as buildings, furniture, teachers, etc. In the context of nomadic education, the provision of such facilities is the responsibility of states and Local Government Education Authorities, which over the years have failed to invest adequately in these facilities. A survey of all schools by the Federal Ministry of Education in 2006 indicated that more than two thirds of all schools require renovation and the shortfall in classrooms for all primary schools, including nomadic education, was so high that it could consume the entire annual budgetary allocation to education (Federal Ministry of Education, 2006). Since it is unlikely that funds will be made available to address these problems and to create the requisite number of classrooms and provide more teachers so as to raise enrolments and attain the goal of providing access to primary education to all school-aged children by 2015, alternative delivery methods such as open schooling need to be explored and implemented.

Open schooling refers to the systematic use of distance education strategies to provide basic education to children and adults, thereby extending educational opportunities to marginalised groups who for various socioeconomic reasons are unable to enrol in existing formal, conventional schools. This is done through institutions called open schools. Open schools are:

> . . . institutions which use the methods of distance education to provide schooling to out of school learners. They are usually established in order to increase access to schooling and are generally designed to accommodate tens of thousands of pupils in one school. (Jenkins & Sadiman, 2000, p. 205)

As argued by Tahir et al. (2005), open schooling strategies need to be utilised if Nigeria is to actualise the EFA goals. In our view, the NCNE should work closely with states and Local Government Education Authorities to reconceptualise its delivery methods and adopt the open school strategy if it is to provide access to all school-aged nomadic children by 2015 (EFA Goal 2). The specific objectives of open schooling for nomads should be to: enhance access to education of good quality for the nomads; facilitate the attainment of the goals of EFA; complement the efforts of formal schools in the attainment of a 100% transition rate from primary to junior

secondary levels; eradicate gender and regional inequalities in education; meet adequately the changing learning needs of nomadic children, youths and adults; and also provide functional vocational education including income generating skills that can engender self-employment and thereby raise their incomes and standards of living.

Although the open schooling strategy has never been used in Nigeria, the experiences of other countries indicate that it is an excellent means of making basic education accessible to disadvantaged groups. An example is the Indian National Open School, whose remit is to extend basic education to out-of-school children and adults and enrols no fewer than 100,000 learners each year (Jenkins & Sadiman, 2000, p. 214). Any attempt to use open schooling to attain the goals of nomadic education in Nigeria requires drastic changes in the management and implementation of the nomadic education program. Some of these changes include: the development of learning materials of good quality; a well-structured organisation of the teaching–learning process; a highly effective learner support system; decentralised and efficient program management and delivery systems; the strengthening of the existing partnerships with local nomadic communities; and a high degree of flexibility in responding to the diverse educational needs of nomadic children and adults.

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8 Irish Travellers, Identity and the Education System

Máirín Kenny and Alice Binchy

ABSTRACT

In literature on school provision for Roma and Traveller children in Ireland, as across Europe, a frequent theme is the need to ensure their inclusion in school ethos and curricula. Roma and Travellers are seen as at particular risk of intentional and unintentional exclusion, and of inclusion policies and practices that promote their cultural absorption. In this chapter we briefly outline the population profile of Travellers in Irish society and in education; our main focus is the interrelation between constructions of Traveller identities, by the dominant society and by themselves, and the implications for policy and professional development in formal education. "Changing schools" requires transformation of the perceptual and policy framework within which they operate. We argue that lacunae in the system are at fundamental conceptual levels, and need to be addressed if intercultural initiatives are to be effective in practice.

Historically, Travellers were the only group in the Roma/Traveller ethnic cluster in Ireland. The past decade has seen significant Roma immigration; analysis of their experience in Ireland is beginning (Lesovitch, 2005; National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism, 2004), but available data are insufficient for comparative analysis, so this chapter focuses on Travellers.

INTRODUCTION: TRAVELLERS IN IRISH SOCIETY

Scholars generally concur that Irish Travellers are an indigenous ethnic group whose presence was first officially recorded in the 12th century. They traditionally provided goods, services and entertainment to local rural communities, among whom they camped in extended family clusters on the roadsides and on land not in obvious use. Twentieth century modernisation eroded Travellers' traditional economic niches; they increasingly moved towards urban centres, and found entrepreneurial opportunities (for example, scrap collecting, landscaping) in the dominant population's changing

needs. Increasingly, Travellers are entering waged/salaried employment also. The practice of nomadism has been constrained, and Travellers have come within the ambit of publicly provided accommodation, whether it be standard housing, Traveller-specific housing or serviced caravan sites. Their preferred practice remains to live in extended family groups; this is not possible in standard housing. This cultural shift towards settled-type economic activities and accommodation is not necessarily freely chosen; it is powerfully driven by official policy, and by the hardship of nomadic life in the conditions permitted by the dominant society.

Traveller organisations concur that official census data on Travellers are unreliable. There are between 24,000 (Central Statistics Office, 2008) and 34,000 (Traveller organisations' estimates) Travellers in Ireland; they comprise less than 1% of the national population. Their marginal position is reflected in life statistics: infant mortality three times the national average; life expectancy 10 to 12 years below the national average; and unemployment at 70% (Department of Health and Children [DOH], 2002). Over 50% of Travellers are under 15 years of age.

Official provision for Traveller education began in the 1960s, when very few of them attended school. Now all Traveller children of primary school age are enrolled in state schools (where preschool provision is available, they start there). Almost all now transfer to secondary level but attendance and completion patterns, though improving, remain problematic at that level. A small percentage complete the post-compulsory senior cycle and a handful go on to third (tertiary) level. A thorough assessment is difficult in the absence of disaggregated data on student performance, but areas of poor take-up are being targeted. Details of the current situation are available in the report of the Department of Education and Science Inspectorate (2005). The focus of this chapter is on conceptual and cultural issues relating to Travellers and their full inclusion in the school system.

SETTLED SOCIETY'S PERCEPTIONS OF AND RELATIONS WITH TRAVELLERS

Perceptions of Travellers are well illustrated by the shifts in understandings informing the reports of three successive government committees established to address Traveller issues. The 1963 Commission Report presents Travellers as deviant, destitute drop-outs from a homogeneous settled Irish population (Commission on Itinerancy, Department of Social Welfare, 1963); the 1983 Review Body Report recognises their distinct social status and nomadic tradition, but primarily as elements of a subculture of poverty; the 1995 Task Force Report discusses their culture as a group process rather than a fixed body of content (Task Force on the Travelling Community, Department of the Environment, 1995).

Powerfully exemplifying the historic silencing and denigration of Travellers in Ireland, these government bodies renamed them. Traditionally, Travellers were called "tinkers" though they preferred to call themselves "Travellers" (Mac Gréine, 1932). In the dictionary sense "tinker" means "tinsmith" but the word acquired pejorative overtones, reflected in terms such as "dirty tinker" or "tinkering" denoting botched work. The Commission on Itinerancy, Department of Social Welfare (1963) introduced the substitute term "itinerant". However, historically itinerancy was criminalised, a legal position endorsed by "folk myth and long-standing domestic prejudice directed at gypsies, Jews, and especially in England, Celtic vagabonds" (Malchow, 1996, p. 70), and by 19th century theories of class, criminality, race and morality (Hansen, 2004; Mac Laughlin, 1995): "the civilised man lives not in wheeled houses" (Carlyle, 1843/1965). In 1983 the Review Body adopted the term "Travelling People", which the Task Force on the Travelling Community, Department of the Environment (1995) replaced with "Travellers/Traveller community"—Travellers' known preference was at last registered.

Since 1995, ethnicity and anti-racism terminology is widely used in official policy texts regarding Travellers, but their ethnic status remains insecure in the absence of legal endorsement (Equality Authority, 2007). The Equal Status Act (Government of Ireland, 2000) prohibits discrimination by public services on nine grounds, including the "race ground" (race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin); there is a separate "Traveller ground". Travellers are: "The community of people who are commonly called Travellers and who are identified (both by themselves and others) as people with a shared history, culture and traditions, including, historically, a nomadic way of life on the island of Ireland" (Government of Ireland, 2000, 2[1]).

The significance of these impositions, and the value of interpretative frameworks for one's experience, are highlighted in Collins's (1994) comments:

> For too long Travellers have been unaware of the theories that have been constructed about them. . . . More Travellers are rejecting the subculture of poverty theory . . .
>
> . . . we see ourselves as an ethnic group. This enables us to put into words and to have concepts which explain our experiences and what has been happening to us. (pp. 130–132)

Anti-nomadic racism is perhaps the most ancient form of racism, identifiable even in the Book of Genesis (Clébert, 1963). Across Europe, anti-Roma/Traveller racism goes unchallenged to an extent that is not true of other groups (Save the Children, 2001, p. 21). The European Parliament Committee of Enquiry on Racism and Xenophobia (1991) found that "the single most discriminated against ethnic group [in Ireland] is the 'Travelling People'".

Scholars endorse this judgment (for example, Donahue, McVeigh & Ward, 2005; Farrell & Watt, 2001; McVeigh, 1997; McVeigh & Binchy, 1998). Mac Gréil (1977, 1996) found that, between his first and second studies of prejudice and tolerance in Ireland, hostility to Travellers had hardened. Even where a family unit or group of Travellers has lived for generations in a neighbourhood, the 'local community' is prone to treat them as outsiders who cannot be trusted to contribute to the local social context. Travellers' ethnic identity is also contested, partly because their cultural practices seem so familiar to the majority. Liégeois (2008) argues that Travellers' practices are distinctive by virtue of their "nomadic mindset": "Nomadism, though neither entirely the product of Roma/Gypsy culture nor its source, is nonetheless a fundamental part of that culture, colouring the whole" (p. 66).

TRAVELLERS' IDENTITY CONSTRUCTIONS

In this section we discuss the significance of interconnected core cultural practices maintained by Travellers: their nomadic tradition, language, construction of their cultural identity and community, and management of childhood. This cluster of practices has key implications for formal education.

Discussion of identity theory is limited to a few immediately relevant texts, because the authors have found that in literature the main focus is on the development and maintenance of individual identities, and the assumption seems to prevail that the individualism characterising industrialised societies is the norm in 'modern' cultures. In literature on ethnic identity, the focus is on boundary (us/them) issues; there is little discussion of the primacy of collective over individual identity in cultural groups such as Travellers; Liégeois's study (2008) is a key text.

Bernstein's (1965) theory of codes has relevance. The restricted code develops within social groups, such as Travellers, where there is a high level of shared experience and meanings. Little need be said where so much is understood; laconic statements can have multiple and layered meanings, and can be rich in imagery. But schooling is about opening up a wider world in which individuals can take divergent paths. In the process, the elaborated code becomes privileged. This cultural issue requires consideration in formal education.

As noted above, the status of Traveller culture is often questioned, on the basis of the level of shared practices linking Traveller and settled Irish. For instance, there are substantial overlaps between their music traditions: Travellers "were one of the principal agents through which the [Irish folk music] tradition developed to its present state" (Ní Laodhóg & Collins, 1995, p. 110). A wealth of resonance links Travellers' language with Irish and Hiberno-English. Finally, extended family networks are an important component of many traditional societies, including Irish rural society. However, Travellers' economic activities both enabled and required a nomadic

lifestyle, which generates a distinctiveness based on *how* they do things rather than *what* they do (Liégeois, 2008). There are attendant differences in understandings of community, and in the nexus of members' sense of self as cultural beings.

For settled people the local geographical community usually includes numerous sets of people related by family ties. Travellers have traditionally moved in extended family clusters: these are in effect their members' local community. This is a very intense form of community structure.

In definitions of community, "place" is usually mentioned: people are linked by virtue of geographical location. However, for Travellers the community location is the family network, not place. Traveller-settled relations in any location are guarded, owing to settled people's hostility, and to Travellers' strong attachment to their own social networks and boundaries. Nomadism and family networking are mutually reinforcing:

> Country [=settled] people organise every aspect of their lives . . . on the fact of sedentarism, the fact that they live permanently side by side with a fixed group of people. Travellers. . .organise every aspect of their lives around family ties; how far away other family members may be is of no importance, any more than how physically close non-family may be. The Traveller's very identity requires "keeping in touch" and this in turn requires travel . . . (M. McDonagh, 1994, p. 98)

> I don't suppose a Traveller would ever forget the road. People would say to you, "Why don't you settle down?" You'd try to settle down, but when you're there where I live, you're there on wheels, you always know the Navan road, or the Mullingar road, or the Galway road, or the Cork road is out there. And I would go, and probably I will go this year, or probably go next year. Living in a house, well, it's gaol, now, isn't it, you're in prison. . . . Me, I travelled in old wagons; if I see an old wagon and horse going along the road, it might look hateful in other people's eyes but it'd look to me as scenery. (Davy) (Binchy, 1994)

Rich (2004, p. 1180) notes that group-associated practices allow individuals to affirm connection to their group's cultural past and historic struggles, build feelings of solidarity that help them to understand their "place in the world" and view themselves as performing distinct social roles. Benson (2003) distinguishes between the ethics of community (focusing on "duty, respect for authority, loyalty, the honor of the group") and the ethics of autonomy (focusing on rights, justice and "individual freedom and choice") as the axis of members' cultural identity. These comments highlight the strengths accessible to group members where confidence in identity is rooted in belonging rather than in being or becoming a unique person. Liégeois (2008) firmly places Roma and Traveller identity construction within the ethic of community framework:

> . . . the family group [is] the basis of social and economic organisation and . . . a network with flexible resilient links. . . . The individual, firmly situated within the network, finds in it, through a strong sense of belonging, both the elements of his or her own identity, and a solidarity. . . . Group interests take priority over individual ones. . . . (pp. 95–96)

A facet of the importance of belonging relates to the management of childhood. Many Traveller children have real and necessary roles in the economic and nurturance activities of their group—for example, boys go trading, girls help with child minding. Contemporary understandings of childhood tend to see children who have to work as exploited. This is not necessarily so. These children's skills are often well beyond the dominant society's norms; they have the security of being needed as well as wanted in the family unit (Kenny, 1997). Mitterauer (1992) argues that in traditional societies the defined period of "youth" was shorter, and the generation gap narrower, than in contemporary societies. He highlights how formal education has contributed to this, narrowing young people's peer group banding and delaying their entry into adult work and family roles. This has given young people longer to explore and diversify their expressions of identity. Harris (1995) cites Erikson's (judgmental) term "foreclosed identities" for identities formed within shorter time frames. However, early access to a valued community role may well offer opportunities for personal growth as great as the long individual journey of the (post)modern youth.

Travellers are modifying their cultural practices to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Many of them are allowing/encouraging their children to participate in formal education. Children who spend more time in school will naturally spend more time exploring their personal possibilities. And, as Benson (2003) notes:

> "Self" is shorthand for extremely complex, multi-layered processes that are capable of being stabilized as continuities while remaining open to great variation. . . . [W]ho you are is a function of where you are, of where you have been, and of where you want to be. (p. 61)

Harris (1995) highlights the tensions in this process for members of marginal communities:

> As we become adults in a society that devalues our minority status, we continue to experience forces which tend to make us question who we are. . . . [T]hese forces are compounded by rapidly changing demographics that separate us from our roots and take away those certitudes of identity that once were passed from generation to generation. (p. 1)

Travellers' language is embedded in this complex of cultural elements, which need to be valued *in toto* if any one element is to be valued properly.

As discussed above, names for Travellers as a group have passed through stages reflecting successive generations of prejudice; it is interesting to note that the same process has obtained with regard to their language. Early scholars of Travellers' language (Harper, 1969; Macalister, 1937; Sampson, 1891) generally regarded it as slang, jargon and argot, with all the connotations of criminality and anti-social behaviour that attend these terms. Academics adopted Shelta as the title for this language; Travellers call it Gammon or Cant (Travellers quoted below called the language Cant, so this name is adopted in this analysis). We believe that on sociolinguistic grounds Cant is a language.

Travellers inhabit two worlds: the hostile settled world; and their own Traveller world. Their bilingual language use reflects this. They speak Hiberno-English when dealing with settled people in the settled world, while their conversations with other Travellers in that context tend to be in Cant. Within the Traveller world also, most everyday conversation is in Hiberno-English; Cant is spoken in specific circumstances. Cant speaking is common to some degree to all Travellers who wish to identify with the community: using the language is a speech act through which their cultural identity is affirmed (cf. Rich, 2004, p. 1178). The two names (Cant and Gammon) appear to denote differences at the level of lexical variants known to all Travellers: "It's all the one language, but there's two different ways of using it". The language functions as a social yardstick to locate Travellers not personally known:

> *Sally:* If I was downtown now and I had my back turned and someone said '"*Oh, gami feen anawsha*" [there's a bad man here] I'd look, 'cause I'd know it was one of mine. But if they were saying "*Deish the glohk*" [look at the man], I'd say, Right, I'd know what clan they're from, I'd identify straight away, I'd identify the different clans. (Binchy, 1994)

A young Traveller man expressed the following view of the importance of the language as part of the definition of a Traveller:

> *John:* It's like they say, it's your custom, something you grow up with, something you expect to carry on. There's lots of cases where years ago people were housed and [Traveller] children grew up with settled children, and even talked like settled children, sounded like them, but still they'd know Cant as well; the parents would make sure they learned the Cant. There'd be occasions when they'd meet relations that still travelled, and they'd be able to make themselves understood in the Cant. That's one thing that's different between Travellers and settled people, Travellers always know Cant. If they didn't, you'd regard them as settled. No matter how long they're in a house, they still use it. Travellers learn it from the time they're a child and teach it to their own children. (Binchy, 1994)

Travellers learn Cant as a joint first language along with Hiberno-English, but it is not consciously taught: "*Biddy:* Nobody ever sat down and talked about it; you picked it up for yourself. Picked it up when we were very, very young; when we were very young we knew it, so we did" (Binchy, 1994).

This comment highlights another cultural factor distancing Travellers from formal education. Travellers conduct teaching and learning by apprenticeship as the need arises, and the process is embedded in everyday, communal life; teaching and learning in school, however experientially embodied, are future oriented, individualised, at a remove from work and family contexts (Kenny, 1997; Mac Aongusa, 1992).

As noted above, Bernstein's (1965) theory of codes offers a useful perspective on Travellers' language use. "Codes" denote regulative principles that are realised through different possibilities of selection and combination. Bernstein's focus is not on language in the sense of dialects, but as a means of understanding social relationships, structures and processes: "Language and language use are always understood in the context of a moral order: social roles and values; modes of social control and the exercise of power; the order of meaning and expression" (Atkinson, 1985, p. 68).

Bernstein (1965) argues that speakers use the restricted code in social contexts where there is a high level of shared meaning and predictability; they use the elaborated code when these are reduced. Travellers' traditional social context is the family—a perfect context for restricted code use:

> The speech in these social relations is likely to be fast and fluent[;] articulatory codes are reduced; some meanings are likely to be dislocated, condensed and local; there will be a low level of vocabulary and syntactic selection; the unique meaning of the individual is likely to be implicit. (Bernstein, 1965, p. 128)

However, there is no conflict between the regulatory function of the restricted code and the embedding of it in highly ornate language styles, such as are suggested in the speech of Travellers quoted above. Tradition is a key element: ". . . the social conventions which regulate such activity serve to copy and transmit existing forms with utmost fidelity" (Atkinson, 1985, p. 62). Traveller children in school are in a social context that both requires and privileges the elaborated code; the cultural and educational implications are highlighted later this chapter.

CONCEPTUALISATION OF TRAVELLERS IN CURRENT EDUCATION POLICY

In the 1960s and 1970s, deficit theories and absorptionist aims informed national education provision for Travellers. The 1998 Education Act

(Government of Ireland, 1998) guarantees that all children regardless of background are entitled to enrolment and integrated placement in local state funded schools; their learning needs must be addressed and diversity of traditions must be respected. In its *Report and Recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy,* the Department of Education and Science (DES, 2006) commits to full integration of Traveller learners. In contemporary Irish society, racism is increasingly visible; inclusion is a locus of strain, from state policy to school-gate and classroom. The number of Travellers who still travel is currently dropping ("Travelling is dying as a way of living" [Patrick, as cited in Kenny & Mc Neela, 2005, p. 42]), and the impact of their mobility on schools' demographics is correspondingly lessening; however, culturally based opposition to Travellers' inclusion remains as strong as ever in school communities. Racism is a majority practice which cannot be addressed by focusing on the minority.

Well-articulated and located concepts are essential to good policy. The White Paper on Education (Department of Education, 1995) recognises the need to educate all children for a global society, but its treatment of cultural diversity in schools is nominal. The White Paper on Early Childhood Education (DES, 1999) does not register the concept at all. The National Children's Strategy (DOH, 2000) includes an excellent discussion of children's diverse social identities, but it is located in a section with the title "Some children have special needs". The DES (2002a) report on teacher education contains one passing reference to Travellers and one to interculturalism, again located under the heading of special needs. The situation has improved in the domain of intercultural education policy (see below).

Reflecting these conceptual misplacements, the administrative location of Traveller-targeted initiatives remains problematic. The DES targets specific needs (supports for special needs and social inclusion for disadvantaged students) where possible within mainstream provision. Traveller education issues have been moved from the Special Needs Unit to mainstream; within that their needs arising from marginalisation would fall to the remit of the Social Inclusion Unit. There are conceptual and administrative weaknesses here. A Unit is required to oversee interculturalism issues across the complex of DES structures and services. Traveller-targeted initiatives should be included within that diversity framework. Strategies are required also to recognise the intersection of issues of special educational needs, disadvantage and ethnicity. A rich understanding of Travellers' cultural identity would strengthen policy under all three headings. Currently, in terms of its location in policy and administration, "Traveller culture" could still be a euphemism for either special needs or disadvantage (R. McDonagh, 2002). Given the conceptual and structural weaknesses identified here, the Travellers' campaign for mainstreaming can paradoxically help such slippage.

INTERCULTURALISM AND THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

The DES notes in its Guidelines on Traveller Education in Second-Level Schools (2002b) that interculturalism is not an add-on or another subject, but a commitment to teaching all subjects informed by knowledge of diversity. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2005, 2006) includes issues regarding Travellers throughout its interculturalism guidelines; however, though these provide a lot of material on discrimination, there is not substantive content to enable rich exploration of Traveller culture.

Travellers' cultural practices are subtle and silenced—subtle in their distinctiveness from and intertwinement with the practices of the dominant society, and silenced as regards levels of recognition and status accorded to them by that society. Their culture does not lend itself easily to inclusion in essentialist understandings of teaching about cultural diversity. The DES (2002b) notes that little is known about Traveller history and that while the curriculum offers "many opportunities to include and validate Traveller culture . . . more needs to be done to identify and promote these opportunities" (p. 40). The DES Guidelines for Primary Schools (2002c) include an extensive list of resource materials but few items specifically reference Travellers. There have been significant initiatives in the voluntary sector to address this gap—for example, the Éist project preschool materials (Murray & O'Doherty, 2001) and a Cant wordbook (Navan Travellers Workshop, 2008). Much remains to be done.

Travellers' cultural practices are distinctive because they are shaped by the "nomadic mindset" (Liégeois, 2008); this idea offers little in terms of tangible elements that can be incorporated into curricula. It requires something more profound—a rethinking of intercultural education so that it honours subtle as well as substantial evidences of diversity. Whether nomadism is a current practice or part of their heritage, Traveller children need the affirmation of seeing schools treat it with respect. It is at least unconsciously racist simply to romanticise the nomadic lifestyle; always and only to link its mention to critiques of injustice is equally so. Education personnel (not alone teachers but also policy-makers, schools inspectors, curriculum experts and all 'rock face' staff from preschool through to third level) must be made aware that in human societies normality is diverse and diversity is normal, and that normality includes mobile and nomadic lifestyles.

Prevailing value judgments regarding individualism and the 'culture of childhood' pose difficulties. From the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of the Child, through the range of child education policies, primacy is given to individual development; becoming a productive community member comes second. This is in contrast to the traditional immersion of the individual in the community project in Traveller philosophy. Yet Traveller young people are increasingly staying on in school—entering the long journey of individual growth embodied in formal education. Henderson's (2005) observation about migrant worker children in Australia applies also

to Travellers: they display many competencies that are problematised, if noticed at all, in formal education settings. The tendency to see children from marginal groups through the lens of the deficit model persists (reflecting the location of marginality in system structure and policy identified above). Henderson points out that this results in children or their parents being blamed for individual learning problems, knowledge gaps or impoverished home or social backgrounds.

The Travellers' use of their language, Cant, is a rich example of restricted code, owing to its centuries-long maintenance within family clusters. Cant must receive honourable mention and esteem in schools. This requires a delicate touch, but it is an important one in terms of valuing Traveller children's cultural identity. Hancock's (1989) remark applies to Traveller children: "Teaching Gypsy children to function as Gypsies within Gypsy society is taken care of quite adequately at home. Teaching Gypsies to function as Gypsies in non-Gypsy society, on the other hand, has not been seriously addressed" (p. 17). Travellers themselves will ensure that their children learn Cant, and Traveller parents locally will advise on the use of materials featuring it with mainstream pupils.

Research suggests that "supporting the continuity of their identities, cultures and lifestyles" informs the interest of many Scottish Travellers in formal education for their children (Lloyd & McCluskey, 2008, p. 336). However, the broadening of horizons that schooling should promote, and that is also part of what Travellers send their children to school for, is counter to the mindset of communities whose closely knit social and linguistic practices fit so well with the concept of the restricted code. How many teachers, in their professional training, have had the opportunity to enjoy this style of language use in all its richness?

It warrants mention that educators also use a restricted code, whose meanings are well understood to insiders—middle class teachers and parents. The gap between the languages of school and Travellers is wide. Travellers have gone a long way in crossing that gap, sending their children increasingly to school. How far has the education system moved in terms of raising awareness of the cultural terrain of these children and families?

All this points to the need for a deep and widely ranging anti-racist intercultural awareness training as part of initial and ongoing professional development. This is foundational to the intercultural project.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE

Deep understanding of interculturalism should inform all levels from central policy development to curriculum delivery. The urgent need for intercultural training to meet the growing diversity in Irish schools has been registered by Traveller organisations (Irish Traveller Movement, 2004; Pavee Point,

n.d.), by teacher unions (Irish National Teachers Organisation, 2002) and in research (for example, Deegan, Devine & Lodge, 2004; Devine & Kenny with Mc Neela, 2002; Murray & O'Doherty, 2001). Third level institutions have a key role in promoting research, curriculum development and professional education, and Travellers' involvement in professional roles. Preservice and ongoing professional development for educators is essential to promote understandings of culture as process, as well as knowledge of Travellers' traditions. Travellers must be involved in shaping and delivering education for their children at all levels, from national to local policy, from professional development to the classroom floor. Nothing less can ensure that understandings and knowledge are not reinterpreted to fit old moulds in educational policies and programs.

CONCLUSION

Travellers are intensely marginalised in Irish society. For all students, education should challenge majority prejudice and promote knowledgeable respect for diversity. For Travellers it should enable them to achieve their human right to a full, equal working and personal life, as citizens and proud members of their ethnic community.

The United Nations (1989) defines education for diversity as: "The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country . . . and for civilizations different from his or her own" (Article 29[1]). Furthermore, "Approaches that do no more than seek to superimpose the aims and values of the article on the existing system without encouraging any deeper changes are clearly inadequate" (United Nations, 1998). In addition, "Pre-service and in-service training schemes which promote the principle reflected in article 29(1) are . . . essential for teachers, educational administrators and others involved in child education" (United Nations, 2001).

Travellers' ethnic identity is profoundly shaped by a "nomadic mindset", whether travel is still a current reality for any group or individual or whether it has become a deferred dream (Liégeois, 2008). "Changing schools" to ensure respect for this culture requires Travellers' involvement in rethinking conceptual frameworks and transforming professional development at all levels in the education system.

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9 The Revitalisation of a Threatened Indigenous Language

The Case of the Sami People in Norway

Kamil Özerk

INTRODUCTION

> All nature seems to be in deep repose; the turbulent streams are frozen; the waves of the lakes strike no more on the pebbled shores; the rocks upon which the water dripped in summer appear like sheets of glass. Day after day the atmosphere is so still that not a breath of wind seems to pass over the hills; but suddenly these periods of repose are succeeded by violent tempests. On the Norwegian coast, terrific storms lash the sea with fury, breaking the waves into a thousand fragments on the ragged and rocky shores. Under the fierce winds the pines bend their heads, and the mountain snow is swept away, hiding everything from sight. (du Chaillu, 1882)

du Chaillu's (1882) ghostly picture describes the "Land of the Midnight Sun", the land in which the Sami people, once known as *Lapps,* have lived for at least 8,000 years. Although the land of the midnight sun includes Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia, this chapter focuses on the situation of the Sami who live in Norway, and highlights the transformations that the Sami population have undergone in the last 50 years. I deal specifically with the changes in Norwegian policy that have most directly affected the Sami and the preservation of their Finno-Ugrian language (Greller, 1996).

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first possibly plausible historical reference to the Sami is in Tacitus's *Germania* (1999), which describes the "Fenni", a tribe of the far north, as a population that opted for the nomadic life over the "painful occupation of cultivating the ground". Whoever the Fenni were, there still lives in the far north a nomadic population. The total Sami population is fewer than 80,000, living in a 150,000 square mile region called "Sápmi"[1], which extends from Norway to the Kola Peninsula in Russia (see Figure 9.1 below). The Sami compose a very small percentage of the Norwegian population of

4.7 million. How small a percentage is difficult to ascertain, since the available estimates are based on differing ways of counting 'real' Sami. Some figures are based on subjective estimations, and some on unclear collection rubrics. The data in Table 9.1 below suggest, however, that the number of those Norwegians who call themselves Sami has remained rather stable for the last 60 years at about 20,000; the number of those with Sami background has increased somewhat; and the number of those who speak Sami as a first language has declined.

This still small indigenous population has been under assault for centuries. Starting in the 16th century, Christian missionaries started to work among the Sami people. Missionary activities made a huge impact on the shamanist beliefs and the traditional way of life in Sápmi. At the same time, Norway started to establish itself as a nation. The long nation-building process put the Sami people under severe pressure. They had to accept laws and rules made by the central government. Gradually Sápmi came to be populated by more and more Norwegians. With the Norwegians came industrialisation and formal schooling, which soon had a significant effect on Sami life. Industry began to take an interest in the water, ore and fishing resources of Sápmi.

In 1902, the Norwegian Law of Land Ownership was passed; it decreed that, in order to be eligible to own land, the prospective owner had to speak Norwegian. Needless to say, this blatantly racist law accelerated the assimilation processes among the Sami (Özerk, 1993). Two decades later,

Table 9.1 Sami Population Data

Date	*Author*	*Number of Sami recorded*	*Comment*
1930	Norwegian census	20,704	The census did not cover the entire country. The Sami data were based on a language-related question.
1970	Norwegian census	10,535	The data reflect those with Sami as a first and primary language.
1978	V. Auberg's analysis of 1970 census	27,646	The number of those with some Sami language 'connection'.
		40,000	The number of those with a Sami 'background'.
1980	Hajdu and Domokos	18,500	
1988	Korhonen	20,000	
		10,000	Those who speak the Sami language.
1992	Helander	42,000	
1996	Darnell and Hoëm	21,000	

Figure 9.1 Map of Sápmi. © KlikkART/I. P. Reklame/2008.

the Norwegian government's introduction of seven years of compulsory schooling and the establishment of boarding houses for Sami speaking children had a disastrous effect on the education and socialisation of Sami youngsters, whose traditional education was informal and an outgrowth of nomadic life.

Until the 19th century, the majority of Sami people were nomadic. They lived in small groups (called *seidas* or *siidas*) and depended on what natural resources their area could provide. The Sami proverb, "It's better to be on the move than be settled" (Juuso & Eira Bjørn, 2006), gives a clear indication of Samis' view of mobility even today. Researchers (Bjørklund, 1990; Karlstad, 1997; Magga, 1992; Paine, 1994; Roberts, 1995) categorise today's Norwegian Sami based on the way that they make their living. The first group is the *Sea Sami,* who live in the coastal regions of Northern

Norway. They combine fjord fishing with other livelihoods such as cattle raising and berry picking. The second is the *Sami landholders,* who are engaged mostly in subsistence agriculture, freshwater fishing, berry picking, hunting and tourism. The third group is the p*astoralist Sami,* who herd semi-domesticated reindeer from one grazing area to the next according to the season. These pastoralists, unusually sensitive to atmospheric changes, have a year of eight rather than four seasons[2]—each of the seasons is keyed to the life cycle of the reindeer they herd. Sami 'late winter' lasts from March to the end of April. In this season, the reindeer move from the winter grazing ground in the lowlands to either the coastal areas or the mountain areas where calving takes place (Mullins, 2000).

During Sápmi's hard winter, with temperatures between 10 and 40 degrees Celsius below zero (between 14 and –40 degrees Fahrenheit), the herders divide the reindeer herds into small groups and move them to winter grazing areas in the inner part of the country. Modern technology, pressure from market forces and concerns about environmental and ecological issues have made it necessary for reindeer herding Sami families to find new ways of dealing with their herds. Today most aspects of reindeer herding are performed using modern equipment like snowmobiles, helicopters, tractors, four wheel motorcycles and terrain-adjusted lorries.

During the 1990s Sami herding underwent substantial structural changes; the herders' efforts were aimed at sustainable development that would preserve the ecological balance of Sápmi. The changes gave some control of reindeer herding to official government agencies, but they ensured the Sami people of state support in case of bad seasons. A consequence of the changes was a sharp reduction in the number of the Sami employed in reindeer herding. Today there are only about 560 Sami families, known as *reindeer holder "units",* who have organised themselves into the required "enterprises", with formal charter books and accountants. In 2007 the *total* number of persons who were employed in reindeer herding was 2,815. The total number of reindeer is about 240,000 (SSB, 2008). Sami reindeer herding uses about 324,000 square kilometres or 40% of Norway. Such vast spaces are necessary because reindeer must move to different grazing areas in winter and summer. Depending on the traditions of the reindeer holder *"units",* the grazing lands can be as much as 500 kilometres apart.

MOBILITY IN THE CONTEMPORARY SAMI POPULATION

The mobility of the Sami today stems less from their nomadic pastoralism than it does from external requirements set by the Norwegian government. Sami children and teenagers are required to move from their families and attend public school. Some of the state-educated children must move out of Sápmi to secure jobs in other parts of Norway. And finally there is a

certain social 'mobility' which pulls young Sami away from the traditions and lands of their fathers.

Educational Mobility

Since the 1920s, Norway has required seven years of compulsory basic education, starting when a child reaches seven years of age. In the 1960s, the country added another two years, and in 1997 the requirement was increased to 10 years. Thus, for the last 90 years, Sami children have been required to spend several months of each year in public schools, often away from their parents. Early in the last century Sami families started to establish semi-permanent homes close to the public schools so that their children would not have to be separated from them. The Norwegian state was happy to support their settlements with funds. However, settled though they might be for part of the year, the Sami pastoralists *had* to move with the reindeer herds. This created a need to make some provision for the children of these nomadic families. The official solution was to establish public boarding schools in Sami-populated areas. For the last eight decades, children from reindeer holder families have stayed at state-owned boarding houses located in several school areas[3]. Whenever possible, the children rejoin their families on weekends and holidays. The schools are public, but the main language of instruction is Sami; Norwegian, the official state language, is also taught.

Secondary schooling for those between 16 and 21 years of age is a right but not compulsory in Norway. About 96% of this age group are enrolled in secondary education (SSB, 2008). Most Sami teenagers go to Sami secondary high schools, in which they can get their education in bilingual programs. There are two such secondary high schools located in the core area of Sápmi. Many Sami teenagers live in state-owned dormitories or private dormitories partially subsidised by the government. In these secondary high schools, they have the opportunity to study traditional subjects like *reindeer husbandry* and traditional Sami art and handicrafts known as *duodj*. Students who receive their education in traditional subject areas can get certification and move back to their homes and start work as reindeer holders and traditional artists. However, students who have studied academic subjects in high school and want to go to college must move once again. The Sami University College, the one university in which the language of instruction is Sami, was established in Sápmi in 1989. It is the only indigenous university college in Europe. It offers teacher education, Sami language education and bachelor degrees in journalism and the management of natural resources. Like other schools for the Sami, the Sami University College offers subsidised boarding opportunities for students. Students who wish to study subjects other than those offered at the Sami University College have to move out of Sápmi and receive their higher education in Norwegian.

Employment and Social Mobility

During the last two decades, job opportunities have been quite good in Sápmi. Most Sami children have come back to their communities and have taken jobs in Sápmi public or private sectors. However, many state-educated Sami obtain jobs outside Sápmi. This means that they have to move to other areas of the country. Today there are Sami people in all the 19 counties in Norway.

We do not have reliable statistics about the social mobility among the Sami. Still, recently collected statistics have much to tell us about the Sami. Table 9.2 below, which summarises some of the results reported by the Norwegian Statistisk Sentralbyrå—Samisk statistikk for 2008, indicates that the Sami are older and poorer and have less academic education than the total Norwegian population.

NORWAY'S ASSIMILATIONIST POLICY AND ITS CONSEQUENCES FOR THE SAMI LANGUAGE

Since the early 19th century, Norwegian authorities have followed an assimilationist policy towards the Sami people and have actively restricted the use of the Sami language. The restrictive policies persisted at least until 1969, when a new "Law of Basic Education" was passed that allowed parents who used the Sami language in their daily lives to demand that their children be taught in the Sami language (Dahl, 1957; Jensen, 1991; Stordahl, 1997).

In 1973 the Nordic Sami Institute (NSI) was established in Guovdegeaidnu, the largest municipality in the core area of Sápmi. The NSI, which is financed by the Nordic Council and by the governments of Norway, Sweden and Finland, is a research institute that focuses on the Sami language and on the social, economic and cultural aspects of Sami indigenous life.

In 1975 some amendments to the school legislation were made and Sami parents, regardless of whether they used Sami in their daily life, were given the right to demand language teaching in the Sami language for their children. This policy was later changed to a better one as a result of some serious political movements in the country.

Table 9.2 2008 Statistical Report on Norway (SSB, 2008)

	All Norway[4]	*Sami*
Percent of population with a bachelor degree or higher	25.4	18.3[5]
Percent age of 15- to 74-year-olds employed	71.7	67.1
Earnings in Norwegian Kroner (Euros) per year	306,700 (38,237)	227,100 (28,311)
Percent of population older than 60	20	25

THE SAMI MOVEMENT AND A NEW POLICY TOWARDS THE INDIGENOUS SAMI PEOPLE

In the last quarter of the 20th century, although the Norwegian government was making necessary and constructive changes in education policy, it remained insensitive to the environmental issues affecting Sápmi. In 1980 the government, which has its seat in Oslo—1,000 kilometres from Sápmi—decided, without consultation with the Sami, to construct a hydroelectric power station on the Sampi Alta-Kautokeino Watercourse. The construction of the power station was certain not only to damage a beautiful natural setting but also to present problems to many reindeer holders. Appalled, the Sami people organised a huge anti-construction action. The bitterness of the Sami is expressed vividly in Sami poet Marry Ailonieida Somby's (2005) chilling poem "Warrior". Somby writes compellingly of the dreadful destruction perpetuated on the Sami by the "powers" who "broke reindeer hooves and sucked out the marrowbones" of the rivers.

Physical attempts to stop the commencement of the construction works were supported by many Sami activists. Several groups organised hunger strikes and mass demonstrations. According to Eidheim (1997), one can see this organised action as a resistance movement and as a product of the "Sami self-organising initiatives" led by a small elite that emerged during the 1950s. Since the 1960s this group has been called the "Sami Movement". In the 1970s the "Sami Movement" became stronger as a result of what Sibiri (1997) calls the "ethnic renaissance" era in the world. The "Sami Movement" lost the fight to stop the Alta-Kautokeino power station but they won the war of public opinion and succeeded in making themselves heard. Their action generated wide attention from the mass media (Solbakk, 1997).

Following the "Alta affair" in 1980, the Norwegian state authorities started to cooperate with the representatives of the Sami people. They initiated some serious committee work with the aim of defining the legal status and rights of the Sami people. At the same time, the Norwegian officials began to replace the assimilationist policy with better and more democratic policies. One of the first steps towards justice was Law 56, called the Sami Law, which was passed by the Norwegian Parliament in 1987. The law ensured the establishment of a Sami parliament (*Samediggi*) with 39 seats elected by all Sami people in the entire country. A year later, in 1988, the Norwegian Parliament made an important amendment to the Norwegian Constitution. Paragraph §110A, known as "The Sami paragraph", states: "It is the State's responsibility to provide the conditions necessary for the Sami people to be able to safeguard and develop their language, culture and livelihood" (author's translation).

In 1989, the first Sami Parliament was elected as a consultative parliament for Sami related issues. In 1990, the Norwegian Parliament amended the "Sami Law" and made Sami the second official language of Norway.

After the constitutional amendments, a Sami Language Council was established as an advisory body for the Sami Parliament and other public institutions on questions concerning the Sami language in Norway. This new orientation of the Norwegian authorities in the 1980s culminated in 1989, when Norway ratified the United Nations' *General Conference of the International Labour Organisation* Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (the convention was enacted formally in 1991). As a signatory, Norway accepted responsibility for "developing, with the participation of the [Sami], coordinated and systematic action to protect the rights of [the Sami] and to guarantee respect for their integrity" (Article 2, sec. 1). In 1992 the Sami Parliament, with the Sami Language Council as its subsidiary, began to concentrate on safeguarding, revitalising and developing the Sami language and the Sami way of life.

The decades-long influx of monolingual Norwegians into Sápmi, coupled with the longstanding state policy of Norwegianisation, caused subtractive bilingualism at the individual level, and language decay at the group level, among the Sami population. These historical processes resulted inevitably in a weakening of the Sami language. Like the languages of the indigenous minorities in the United States (McCarthy, 1997; Valdés, Fishman, Chavez & Perez, 2006) and in other parts of the world (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000), the Sami language is defined as a "threatened language", a "language at risk" or a "lesser-used language" (Fishman, 1991; Garcia & Baker, 1995; Hyltenstam & Stroud, 1991).

The main challenge facing Norway has been replacing assimilationist Norwegianisation policies (Niemi, 1997; Stordahl, 1997) with policies of equality, social justice and language revitalisation. According to some researchers (Phillipson, 1988; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000), the practice of discriminating against minorities on the basis of their language is *linguicism*.

THE SAMI LANGUAGE ACT AND LANGUAGE PLANNING

Establishing linguistic diversity in a limited geographical area is a difficult challenge. Garcia (1992) portrays language planning using a "language garden" analogy that presents the coexistence of different languages as a backyard gardener might consider his or her own varied flower plot: coexisting languages, like flower varieties, need different types of care and protection in order to survive. Using Garcia's analogy, we can think of the Sami language as a rare flower that is under threat from the quick expansion of the majority language. The attempts by the Sami Language Council to strengthen the position of the Sami language at public institutions can, therefore, be seen as an effort to "tend" a language at risk (Özerk & Eira, 1996). Since such measures aim to increase the number of Sami speaking employees, they must be considered as a part of language revitalisation policy.

The aim of the revitalisation policy is to increase the number of Sami speaking people (Huss, 1999). The measures that must be taken necessitate what Garcia (1992) calls “landscape engineering”. A major purpose of this engineering is to plan, control and create the conditions needed for the learning and use of the Sami language by more people in as many domains in the society as possible. The 1987 Sami Language Act (§3.6 of the Norwegian Constitution, 1987) signalled Norway’s recognition of Sami as a threatened language surrounded by Norwegian. According to Williams (1991), a policy like the Sami Language Act is preservationist and conservationist. From the perspectives presented by Edwards (1985) and Baker (1993), we can say that such a policy can be considered as an attempt by the Norwegian state to avoid engaging in *‘language murder’*.

EDUCATION AND LANGUAGE REVITALISATION PROVISIONS IN THE SAMI PEOPLE’S TERMS

In 1985, on the way to constitutional amendments, the Norwegian Parliament made an important change in the Basic School Law §40, No. 7. This paragraph gave Sami children the right to be taught in Sami; schools were obliged to use Sami as the medium of instruction for all pupils who spoke Sami at home. In 1987 Norway introduced a new National Basic School Curriculum document for all schools in the country. For the first time in the country’s history, this curriculum document was translated into Sami. In the 1990s Norway initiated several reforms in the educational sector. These reforms resulted in two additional changes: a new Curriculum Document for the Education of the Sami Children (1997) and a new Law of Education (1998). By this new law, all Sami speaking children were given the right to be taught in Sami; additionally, children who live in the eight municipalities of the Sami Administration Area for Language (SAAL) were given the right to use Sami as the medium of instruction in all the school subjects in compulsory primary and elementary education. Using the Sami language as the medium of instruction for Sami children became an accepted practice in the educational system. Distance education has also become a widespread practice because of the mobility among Sami families and the changing consciousness of younger families. According to law, if, in a school outside Sápmi, there are 10 or more students whose parents are interested in having them taught in Sami, the educational system has an obligation to offer that education. Whenever the schools cannot find a Sami speaking teacher, the children receive television-based distance education in the Sami language two to three hours a week free of charge. These positive developments improved conditions at the two Sami secondary schools. Officials also increased their support of the Sami University College (Keskitalo, 1997). In 2006 the country passed a law that gave the Sami people economic support to reform the Sami Curriculum of 1997.

The changes in policy made by the Norwegian government in the last 30 years have been complemented by changes in Sami attitudes towards their own language and culture. The Sami language is undergoing a genuine revitalisation. Several studies (Todal, 2002, 2007) show that the number of children who are learning in the Sami language is increasing both in and outside Sápmi. A study conducted by the Sami Research Institute (Pettersen & Gaup, 2001) revealed that in 1999 there were only 516 children enrolled in SAAL kindergartens for Sami speakers. The latest statistics show that that number has more than doubled. There are now 46 kindergartens for Sami speakers serving 1,145 preschool Sami children. Eight hundred and eighty-three (77%) of the children live in families in which Sami is the home language. One hundred and sixty-two (18%) live in municipalities that are located *outside* SAAL. Almost 23% of the 1,145 children who are enrolled in Sami speaking kindergartens are from homes where at least one of the parents has a Sami background but in which Norwegian is the primary language. Some of this change may be the result of a slow and inevitable shift in Sami culture: more and more Sami parents are employed in health and service jobs, so traditional family-based child care, informal socialisation and the familial transmission of language and culture have begun to be more and more institutionalised. But we can hope that part of the reason for the increase in Sami language kindergartens is that pride in the Sami language is on the upswing.

In addition to intensified efforts in relation to education and research, the Sami people have begun to develop mass media institutions. Two weekly Sami newspapers have merged and hope to become daily newspapers in the coming year. Today there are daily television and radio programs in three varieties of the Sami language. Sami University College is no longer the only university that teaches in Sami. Three colleges outside SAAL (the University of Tromsø, Bodø University College and Nord-Trøndelag University College) now offer a credentialled Sami language course (SEG, 2000). More and more students choose to move outside Sápmi and to take Sami language courses as a part of their degrees (Eira, 2001).

CONCLUSION

Education, language and cultural issues are of utmost importance to the Sami people. Whenever new policies that affect them are being developed and implemented, at least two factors must be taken into consideration: their historically nomadic life; and the oppressive policies that they have experienced for centuries (Özerk, 2007). Today the Sami people must find ways that will allow their culture and language to flourish. In "Trekways of the Wind" (1994), Sami poet Nils-Aslak Valkeapää writes plaintively of those who came to Sápmi and tried to take everything from the Sami. They wanted everything "according to their will. . . . Everything. Ourselves also".

The Norwegian government is making a serious effort to support the efforts of the Sami people to regain what has been taken from them. Together the Sami of Norway and their Norwegian countrymen are making important attempts to reverse the language shift, to stop the language decay and to revitalise the Sami language.

NOTES

1. The word “Sámi” is the genitive form of the noun “Sápmi”; it means “person of Sápmi”. It is thought that the word is related to the Baltic word **Ẑeme* or “land”.
2. Spring (*giđđa*), early summer or spring-summer (*álgogeassi* or *giđđageassi*), summer (*geassi*), early fall (*álgočakča*), fall (*čakča*), the dark season (*skábma*), *dálvi* (winter) and *giđđadálv* (late winter or spring-winter).
3. When their families settled only 50–60 kilometres away from the schools, the children lived with their families and were transported to school every day—until the parents moved with the herds. This transport is funded by the government.
4. Since the all-Norway data include Sami data, non-Sami Norwegian numbers are probably somewhat higher.
5. There are eight administrative areas in Sápmi. One of these areas is very close to the Norwegian national average (25.1).
6. Since the all-Norway data include Sami data, non-Sami Norwegian numbers are probably somewhat higher.

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10 Paradoxes in Policy

Mixed Messages for Fairground and Gypsy Traveller Families in England

Cathy Kiddle

INTRODUCTION

It is now more than 40 years since the Plowden Report (Department of Education and Science [DES], 1967) drew attention to the chronic lack of access to mainstream education for Gypsy Traveller children in England. The intervening years have seen the production of several other reports (DES, 1983, 1985, 1990; Office for Standards in Education [OFSTED], 1996, 1999, 2003; Reiss, 1975), which all voiced the same concerns. Over the period there have also been many changes in the educational landscape, in education policy and priorities, in funding mechanisms and in systems of accountability. There have been developments in practice to promote an understanding of diversity and equality of opportunity for all. Courses in citizenship have been added to the National Curriculum. Policies of inclusion have sought to bring most students into the mainstream of education.

And still Gypsy Traveller children are the group with the lowest achievement levels. They are still the group "at greatest risk" (OFSTED, 1999) within the education system. There are an estimated 10,000 children not even registered in secondary education (OFSTED, 1996) and many of those who do enter secondary schools fail to complete their studies (Derrington & Kendall, 2004).

In this chapter I seek to do several things. First I look at the roots of the current educational situation for Traveller children in England, identifying the distinct Traveller groups and tracing the development of Traveller Education Support Services (TESSs). I put this into the frame of national and local government policies in order to provide a context for those readers who are not familiar with the English environment. This leads to my consideration of the concept of 'Traveller education' together with recognition of the initiatives taken and the development of good practice over the years.

The present situation is exemplified through two case studies, one from the Gypsy Traveller and one from the Fairground Traveller community. Through the case studies I offer sociological detail as background. The chapter moves on to discuss possible educational developments, seeking a new approach to some of the issues that have been raised, pointing out the need to consider the different circumstances of individual Traveller groups. The conclusion looks

to the future; in it I urge government to make coherent and strategic use of TESSs, unscrambling the mixed messages that current policies provide.

So the chapter moves from past, to present, to future. The first section is reflective, based on my 30 years of practice and research in this field of education. The case studies are selected from my many years of experience as head of Devon Consortium Traveller Education Service, and reflect aspects of the present situation. The final section calls for serious debate about the best way forward.

TRAVELLER GROUPS

Gypsy, Roma, Irish and Scottish Travellers

So far I have mentioned only Gypsy Travellers, but there are a number of nomadic or semi-nomadic groups in England whose mobility makes educational provision problematic. Gypsy Traveller families themselves have a range of travelling patterns. Some travel for work away from a home base only seasonally and may stay within a limited geographical area. Others move widely across the country in their trailer caravans. Others again have no home base and travel the year round. Much of the travelling is for work purposes, but many Gypsy Travellers also attend traditional fairs to maintain their social networks. At other times extended families come together to celebrate marriages or to support one another at times of sickness or death. Irish and Scottish Travellers similarly move around the country following work opportunities and attending cultural gatherings. In recent years, Roma, Gypsies from Eastern Europe, have travelled to England seeking better work and living conditions.

Circus Travellers

Beyond these families, there are the circus Travellers, who tour with their shows seasonally or for the whole year, sometimes stopping for as few as three days in one location. Some circuses have their own winter bases where they will rest for a few weeks, but others are constantly on the move. Circus locations do not follow a regular pattern. It is likely that the routes followed will be different from year to year.

Fairground Travellers/Showmen

Another distinct group are the Showmen, travelling with their fairground businesses from town to town for many months of the year, bringing entertainments to diverse community events, festivals, markets and regattas. Most Showmen have their own winter yards where they can stop for a while and repair their equipment and prepare for the next travelling season. Their routes are much more regular than those of the circuses.

The same families often attend the same fairs at the same time of year from one generation to the next.

New Travellers

For the past 20 years new groups of Travellers, raised within the settled society, have adopted nomadic lifestyles, either through choice or by being forced by economic or social circumstances. These individuals or family groups rarely have legal places to stop and so a round of evictions largely enforces their mobility.

Traveller Education Support Services

The sundry reports mentioned in the introduction made it clear that mobility, together with several other barriers, prevented travelling children from all these groups from attending school regularly. So government began to provide central funding to Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to enable them to support access to education for Traveller children (Kiddle, 1999, p. 53). From the late 1970s, gradually, over the next decade or so, LEAs individually set up TESSs. They were guided by their local contexts and budgets in promoting this work and each developed in its own way. There was no national coherence or strategy.

The work of the TESSs was multifaceted. They offered teaching support to children and gave advice and training to class teachers. They developed educational resources and helped with assessments. They worked to change intolerant and hostile attitudes and to ease anxieties within communities, local authorities and schools and among the families themselves. Their work, conducted on many levels, took them from Traveller sites to classrooms, to professional development centres, to governors' meeting rooms, to community centres and LEA officers' boardrooms.

Sometimes local residents objected to their work. Because prejudice against Traveller groups was (and remains) extremely high, what some settled people regarded as extra provision for Traveller children became a sensitive issue within the allocation of local education budgets. Residents in an area often resented what they saw as special treatment given to Traveller children. TESS staff had to make it clear that any support given to Traveller children was to help them to approach equal opportunities within the education system. The support aimed to break down some of the many obstacles hindering basic access to education. In no sense were Traveller children benefiting from 'better' opportunities than other children.

The Concept of 'Traveller Education'

Those working with Traveller groups in the field of education have always had to come to terms with the fact that the lack of sufficient legal sites for

Gypsies would hinder their work. Over the years there has been semantic and legal debate around the issue of defining a Gypsy (Department of the Environment [DoE], 1984), as if somehow a 'real' Gypsy could be clearly identified who would be deserving of support. In a government attempt to solve the accommodation problems of Gypsy Travellers, the Caravan Sites Act (Ministry of Housing and Local Government, 1968) made it the duty of local authorities to provide sites in their areas. This Act stated that site provision was to be made for "persons of nomadic habit of life, whatever their race or origin"—an inclusive phrase designed to prevent authorities from evading their responsibilities by adopting a narrower definition. However, Showmen were exempt from this Act, keeping themselves separate from Gypsy groups, and a later case (*South Hams v Gibb*) ruled that New Travellers did not qualify for site provision.

The whole debate, seeming to create a hierarchy of need, was unhelpful to the TESSs. Education is for all and no Traveller group could be considered more or less deserving than another. Social justice demands that there should be equal educational opportunities for all, and that belief underpinned the work of the TESSs. In order not to discriminate among Travellers and to bring the needs of these marginalised groups to public attention, the concept of 'Traveller education' was developed. It happened in the following way.

Most TESS staff started their work with Gypsy Travellers, whose needs had been so clearly identified. But as they became more experienced they became aware of the needs of other mobile groups. These others also faced barriers to school access and educational continuity. The TESSs did not want to make value judgments about which groups were more deserving of support. So, in lobbying for adequate resources, they tended to speak of all the groups together under the collective, non-pejorative name of "Travellers". 'Traveller education' became the default expression for this field of work.

Several other factors contributed to the continuing use of this rather vague collective naming. First, as already mentioned, specific government funding was available for "Traveller Education projects" as a unified idea. Second, the settled population displays great hostility towards all Traveller groups. There is a deeply rooted suspicion of the outsider, and there is generally a lack of accurate information about the circumstances that determine the movements of Traveller families.

A third factor in the development of the notion of 'Traveller education' is that the complicated logistics of mobility are common to all nomadic groups. Whatever the reasons for mobility, it will necessitate a change of school and cause interruptions in education. A high degree of mobility presents even greater challenges for parents, children and schools. All these factors—of funding, of prejudice, of mobility—led to the consideration of the diverse groups together and to the concept of 'Traveller education' as a means to address the issues.

Good Practice in Traveller Education

Though there were no national guidelines for Traveller education projects, notions of best practice emerged gradually. In order to counter prejudice, TESSs have spent considerable time on anti-discrimination work in schools and do much work on the importance of appreciating cultural diversity. TESS teams have also provided support in various ways to schools, students and families to help them engage with mobility. Record transfer schemes and student held record books have been introduced to reduce the need for continual re-assessment. Distance learning schemes have been developed to aid continuity of learning.

A strong network of TESS teachers has shared experience and ideas through local teams, regional groupings, and national meetings and conferences. Further dissemination came through OFSTED reports (OFSTED, 1996, 1999, 2003), Department for Education and Skills (DfES) research (Bhopal, with Gundara, Jones & Owen, 2000) and other publications (DfES, 2006; Hawes & Perez, 1995; Kiddle, 1999; Naylor & Wildsmith, 1997; O'Hanlon & Holmes, 2004; Tyler, 2005). By 2006 there had been over 30 years of—at times—pioneering work by TESS heads of service and teachers (Danaher, Coombes & Kiddle, 2007), promoting access to school and achievement within school. There has undoubtedly been improvement in terms of the numbers of children attending and staying in school. But progress is slow and much more still needs to be done.

It is time to consider seriously the particular needs of families within the generalised groupings of "Travellers". It is time to go beyond the vagueness of the term "Traveller education".

Time for a New Approach

The umbrella term "Traveller education" has been a useful one for raising awareness of the needs of Traveller groups and for generating funding. But in reality the various groups of Travellers are very different from one another with respect to ethnicity and background. Among and even within the groups there are not only very different travelling patterns but also very different economic circumstances and different attitudes towards education. There are families with secure base sites, or housing, and regular working routes, and there are those who are continually on the move with no legal place to stop. While some problems can be addressed by intensive work in the short term, there are other circumstances that demand long-term, sustained developmental work.

This all makes for an extremely complex area of work. However, 30 years of work on the ground and strong relationships with extended Traveller families have given TESS staff a substantial body of knowledge of the range of different situations and needs. Now there are deep foundations of understanding on which the present TESS teams can build. It is time to look further than the generalisation of 'Traveller education', in itself a

marginalising title, and examine the range of particular circumstances of individual families and groups. It is now time to explore how all the disparate needs can best be met by making the mainstream education system more responsive and accountable.

CASE STUDIES

In order to be more specific about possible ways forward, this section of the chapter presents two case studies demonstrating widely differing circumstances.

Case Study 1: A Highly Mobile Gypsy Traveller Family

Let us first take the case of a Gypsy Traveller family with three primary school aged children and a three-year-old toddler. Most of their extended family lives in the west of England and they spend their time travelling for work around the counties of Somerset, Dorset, Devon and Wiltshire. The father does roofing jobs and other building repairs. They have no legal site place. So, although they can sometimes stay temporarily on a bit of land owned by a relative, most of the time they are camped illegally by the roadside. They are one of the estimated one third of Gypsy Traveller families still without an official site place, as the 1968 Caravan Sites Act was never fully implemented and was then repealed by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act in 1994. Depending on the policy relating to unauthorised camping in the county where they are at any time, and the attitude of the owner of the land on which they are stopping, they will be evicted sooner or later and have to move on.

Neither of the parents spent much time in school as they had followed similar travelling patterns in their own childhoods. They would like better educational opportunities for their own children—at least the chance for them to read and write—but will put them into schools only where they believe that they will not be bullied or called names. Sometimes they take the children to local schools, but are refused admission because the schools are full or have vacancies for only one or two of the children. The younger children refuse to go to school without their siblings for protection. Sometimes an outreach worker from the local TESS arrives at their campsite, helps to get school places for the children and gives some support.

Experiences in school are mixed. Some head teachers make Travellers feel welcome and see to it that in class the children get extra help to catch up. Other schools insist on exact school uniform, don't offer help with filling in the admission forms and generally make the parents feel that the children are just a burden on the school. One school experience is layered upon another. Sometimes the children can stay for only two or three days; sometimes they get the chance to stay for three or four weeks. After a series

of short stays owing to evictions, unsettled by frequent changes of rules and routines and some unpleasant playground experiences, the oldest boy says that he doesn't want to go to school any more.

The mother wants education for her children. She tries to have a range of differently coloured sweatshirts available to fit in with different school uniforms. Most of the time she gets the children to school clean and on time, although she is often short of water and doesn't know if they will have to move on again at the end of the day. But if the children are unhappy she will not force them into school. She remembers times when she was bullied in school. She has already given up trying to book the toddler into playgroups as she travels, because she is constantly told that there are no spare places in the middle of the term.

In most of the schools that the children attend, the teachers do their best for them. But they have no records detailing what work the children have already completed and the teachers have little time for thorough assessments. It is rare that Gypsy Travellers come into their school, so there are no books relating to the Traveller children's culture in the library. The teachers would like professional development opportunities to learn more about the best ways to support the Gypsy Traveller children, but training time is completely taken up with new curriculum initiatives for the foreseeable future. Anyway the children will move on soon.

Case Study 2: Fairground Travellers and Distance Learning

For the second case study I want to present the situation of some of the Showmen's children, who travel with their families on the fairground for many months of the year. Since the 1980s (Kiddle, 1999; Pullin, 1985), research has demonstrated the difficulties that these children have in maintaining educational continuity. A combination of a long travelling season and relatively short stays at each fairground location means constantly interrupted education. The time that the children attend their local schools in their winter bases provides the most significant educational experience for them, even though this is limited. For some of the children this is their only time in school in the whole year.

TESSs have for several years focused on the central importance of these winter base schools in trying to work out the best way of providing educational continuity to this group of children. Since the mid 1980s, they have developed school-based distance learning schemes for Fairground Traveller children. These schemes started as largely paper-based packs of work, which were prepared by TESS teachers and winter base schoolteachers. They aimed to cover the essential elements of the schoolwork that the rest of the class would be completing while the children from the fairground were away travelling. In partnership, the TESSs and schoolteachers (Kiddle, 2000) organised the logistics of the exchange of the distance learning packs and systems of marking and feedback. TESSs provided training for

parents on the best ways to support their children's independent learning while away from school. The distance learning schemes aimed to provide a year-round continuity of education for the Showmen's children.

Inevitably there have been many difficulties to overcome. It is hard to maintain a standard of high quality materials when TESS and class teachers have so many other commitments. Each pack has to be customised to suit the level of the individual child if she or he is to be expected to complete it independently. The materials have to be relevant and engaging if they are to motivate the children. The logistical details of exchanging the packs, keeping in contact with parents and providing feedback within a reasonable time create further challenges, even when there is commitment and cooperation on all sides.

But the advantages of the distance learning schemes have become clear over time and the systems have become increasingly sophisticated as the technologies have developed. European funding enabled many of the developments, through a series of projects in the 1990s coordinated by the European Federation for the Education of the Children of Occupational Travellers (EFECOT). The projects involved CDI players, then satellite transmission systems and virtual classrooms (TOPILOT, FLEX and TRAPEZE). In recent years the DfES in England has provided financial backing for a number of projects (the e-LAMP projects) piloting the use of laptops with General Packet Radio Service data cards to enable Internet access (Marks, 2004, 2005).

Currently about 12 TESSs are participating in the e-LAMP projects, but they are only pilots with no guarantee of continuation in the long term. Many more TESSs would like to bring their distance learning provision to a similar stage of development, but lack the financial, time and human resources needed to make this possible.

DISCUSSION

These two case studies show the circumstances and needs of Traveller children at two ends of a spectrum. In the first case, TESSs are struggling to enable even the most basic access to school for the Gypsy Traveller children. In the second case, they are pioneering highly technical systems for distance learning for Fairground Traveller children. There are many other situations in which Traveller children find themselves which could have provided further case studies, demonstrating different needs. For instance, TESS teams are increasingly encountering Roma children, arriving in England from Eastern Europe, who have no knowledge of English. For these children language acquisition is of paramount importance.

But to return to the two case studies that I have chosen to explore here. In the first case study, these Gypsy Traveller children are the ones most likely to underachieve in the present system. From the description of their circumstances, it is easy to see that they have little opportunity

for success, let alone an equal opportunity with other children. The issue of legal accommodation is, and has always been, the crucial one for this group. Unless families can rely on secure, legal places to stay, the children will never attain regular school attendance. Separate government departments formulating uncoordinated policies for nomadic groups have for decades ignored the connection between lack of site provision and underachievement in school, despite constant lobbying by TESSs and groups such as the Advisory Council for the Education of Romanies and other Travellers (ACERT), the Gypsy Council and the Traveller Law Reform movement. In school Traveller children may participate in citizenship lessons, hearing about the need for all cultures to be treated with respect. They receive a totally different message when they return home to find that another eviction notice has been served and their presence will no longer be tolerated in that area. Until this nettle is grasped, the children forced into unauthorised camping will always be disadvantaged in terms of school education.

The intractability of the accommodation issue does not, however, stop educationalists from seeking continuing improvement. Much more could be done in the initial training of teachers and in their professional development opportunities. Within the time devoted to diversity, inclusion and anti-racist issues in initial teacher training courses, consideration of the needs of Traveller groups could be made obligatory. Even though Gypsies and Irish Travellers are covered by the Race Relations Acts (1976 and 2000), these groups still suffer from more prejudice and racist abuse than any other (Clark & Greenfields, 2006) and this should be confronted. Similarly, within each school specific consideration could be paid to Traveller groups when writing the school's equal opportunities and anti-bullying policies. A member of staff could be given a named responsibility for being aware of the various needs of Traveller children, even when there are none in the school, and the task of organising appropriate support if and when Traveller children come to the school. This named teacher could make sure that the school library includes books and other resources, which reflect the several Traveller cultures, so that the children will always find themselves included when they enrol in a new school. Also other children would be familiar with Traveller cultures and not regard Traveller children as anything out of the ordinary when they do come into school.

TESS teams have a great store of knowledge of suitable books and materials that they can recommend to schools. Also they have the expertise to provide relevant in-service training to school staff. All school staff, including non-teaching staff, should expect to participate in this training as a matter of course.

It is important that TESS staff maintain their longstanding relationships with parents, which do so much to ease the worries that families have about schools, but it is equally important that schools assume the full responsibility for Traveller children in school, as they do for every other child.

To a certain degree TESS teams are doing this work already, but they are constrained by limited budgets. They need the financial support and the political will of government to keep the extreme needs of this group of Traveller children visible. There is a danger that the relatively small number of Gypsy Traveller children will be lost in the large pool of 'vulnerable children', with whom they share funding sources currently, and that they will continue to underachieve.

When we turn to case study two, there are completely different issues to consider. The demonstrated commitment of Showmen's families to distance learning, the technology available and the fairly regular travelling patterns of this group mean that educational solutions to this kind of mobility are possible. Countries such as Australia have offered distance learning opportunities to school-aged students for many years and have demonstrated its practicality (Danaher, 1998). Although in some situations distance learning can be socially isolating for the student, the fairground provides its own travelling community within which the learners can give one another mutual support during the periods when they are away from their base schools.

But really successful distance learning for Showmen's children will not be achieved without considerable investment. There are training needs for TESS staff, schoolteachers and parents. There is the need for substantial investment in materials development. Computer hardware and software must be provided and the ongoing costs of online communication have to be met. TESSs alone with their meagre budgets, limited staff numbers and so many other areas of responsibility cannot possibly do all this adequately. It is too much to expect the TESS teams, multiskilled as they are, to develop the distance learning schemes in a sustainable way with their current level of resources.

In this case I believe that government departments should look beyond the box of 'Traveller education' and consider the whole range of situations in which children find themselves out of school for a while. There are those who are unable to attend school because of accidents or other ill health; there are those who have been excluded; there are school-phobics; there are pregnant schoolgirls. Other children, whose parents work abroad in a variety of postings, have to change schools frequently or attend boarding schools. At present local authorities cater for such children in an *ad hoc* way, with home tuition schemes, some provision of hospital schools and the use of private, online, distance education providers.

The establishment of a National College for Distance Education, on the lines of the Open University in the United Kingdom, but providing for school-aged children could offer an exciting extension of mainstream state education. Those, such as the fairground children and those from the circus, whose mobility makes it difficult for them to attend school regularly could register with such a College. As indicated above, it could also be appropriate provision for many other students. A nationally established institution, existing as part of state education, would be properly

resourced and equipped to offer combinations of online and paper-based courses with periodic face-to-face support. It could utilise the new technologies to provide virtual classrooms and discussion groups for isolated learners. It could supply high quality materials and establish systems for feedback and student support to a standard that is unachievable by TESSs working alone. It would offer continuity to those whose education is often interrupted. It could be an innovative and effective extension to the state education system.

CONCLUSION

This chapter began by making the point that, more than 40 years after the identification of the educational needs of Traveller children, they are still the groups at greatest risk of being failed by our current system. Over the intervening years TESS staff have worked with remarkable professionalism and commitment to social justice to remove some of the educational barriers confronting Traveller children. Even though the TESSs have never had funding guaranteed for more than a year at a time, they have succeeded in raising enrolment and attendance levels. There have been excellent achievements by some Traveller students. But it is not enough.

TESS teams work at different levels endeavouring to meet the whole range of needs in partnership with parents, schools, education officers and other agencies. They have in-depth knowledge of the circumstances of the various distinct Traveller groups. It is time that the newly created Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) fully recognises the wealth of expertise that it has in the TESS teams and uses it in a strategic way to full advantage. They should not expect the teams to continue to spread themselves more and more thinly, working on every front with no funding guarantees and no coherent national strategy. The recent government changes to local authority structures, creating coordinated children's services departments, should enable a greater degree of lateral thinking.

TESSs are well placed to support schools, enabling teachers to take on full responsibility for Traveller children in school as they do for all other children. Recent government plans for personalised learning tailored to each child's needs, outlined in the government paper "Every Child Matters", must include every Traveller child. TESS teams should have a properly funded advisory and training role in order to do this. They should also continue to have an outreach role to promote school attendance, through fieldworker and education welfare staff, building on the strength of relationships with families nurtured over many years. However, they cannot be expected to deliver fully structured distance learning schemes in isolation. Nor is it appropriate for them to address the language needs of Roma children separately from other children also requiring additional language support.

My contention is that it is the right moment for TESS teams to use their coordinated strength and extensive knowledge to argue for government to look clearly at the particular needs of each and every Traveller child in her or his distinct circumstances and move beyond the marginalising concept of 'Traveller education'. If the government is serious about its ideas for personalised learning, then it must use the TESSs in a strategic way to give schools and Traveller children the kinds of support that the TESSs can give. Then it must extend the mainstream to provide relevant opportunities for others that are beyond the scope of TESSs. This is the way to raise the achievement of Traveller children and to enable each one to reach his or her full potential. 40 years is long enough to wait.

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11 Australian Circus People

Beverley Moriarty

ABSTRACT

Throughout history, humans have often wanted to find out about one other. Explorers, anthropologists, historians, educators and others have been inspired by this curiosity. Some groups are interesting because they have made conscious decisions to resist change and have become enclosed communities, disconnected from the outside world. Other groups have made conscious decisions to maintain their distinctive ways of life while needing to interact successfully with, and respond to changes to, the outside world in order to preserve their distinctive lifestyles. Either way, this juxtaposition between two worlds is a fascinating point at which to examine how change in one world may effect change in the other.

The focus of this chapter is on Australian circuses. I argue that Australian circus communities have long traditions of survival as travelling entertainment troupes because they have perfected the art and science of living cooperatively and because they have made a conscious decision to respond to changes that have occurred in the outside world. An enduring problem for Australian circus people, however, is the challenge that their particular type of mobility presents in their gaining access to formal education for their children and for adult members of their community.

INTRODUCTION

Like their counterparts described by Francesca Gobbo in her chapter on Italian attractionist families in this volume, Australian circus personnel have a distinctive way of life that differentiates them from people of fixed residence whose towns they visit on their circuits. Whatever perceptions people in the towns along the way have of circus troupes and their way of life, the reality is that, by virtue of their mobility, regular attendance at school for children of circus families in Australia, as elsewhere, is problematic. Adult circus members experience the same difficulties accessing higher education, other educational opportunities that also depend on

regular attendance or attendance on particular dates or distance education that requires regular access to the Internet. In order to attempt to solve the problem of educational access for Australian circus people, it is first necessary to understand what makes the lives of families and individuals in the circus distinctive and the nature of their mobility.

There are many groups of Travellers in Australia. Some, like circus and fairground people, take their homes (or their caravans) with them when they travel but, even amongst these two groups that seem to have so many similarities, there are also differences. It is important to understand these differences and not to extrapolate from one Traveller group to the other because what might appear superficially to be fairly subtle differences may present major problems if the same solution regarding access to education is applied across Traveller groups.

The research reported and drawn upon in this chapter takes this first step by providing a glimpse of Australian circus community life. Johnson and Johnson's (1998) principles of cooperative community are applied as an overarching framework to examine the circus performance through the eyes of the ringmaster. This illumination of life in the circus ring demonstrates how community life for Australian circus people provides an environment for learning skills associated with performing in and operating a circus as well as the issues that affect the ability of circus personnel and their children to take advantage of regular and uninterrupted access to education. I argue, therefore, that both the particular strengths of community life and the challenges of mobility experienced by Australian circus people need to be understood in order to plan appropriate educational access for circus communities.

Johnson and Johnson's (1998) five principles of cooperative community are both individual and interrelated, as is shown by the overview of the theoretical framework. In the section of the chapter on research methods, it is acknowledged how these same principles have been applied by the Australian Traveller Education Research Team to examine how the community environment and patterns of mobility of Australian circuses impact positively on informal learning but provide challenges when accessing formal education.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATIVE COMMUNITY

Circus families have an identity that is readily recognised in the broader Australian community, from young children who have had their first experience of watching a live circus performance to elderly people who can remember circuses coming to town since they were young. The identity shared by circus people forms part of the first of Johnson and Johnson's (1998) principles of cooperative community, that of positive interdependence. Indeed,

because circus troupes are so readily and widely recognised, they are perhaps one of the ideal illustrations of the first principle.

Communities characterised by positive interdependence have members whose individual successes are dependent upon the success of fellow members. The corollary of this is that an individual who experiences success as a result of others being successful also shares the responsibility for ensuring the success of others. It is important, however, that members recognise this interdependence, understanding that success for an individual does not occur in isolation. One member cannot succeed unless the others also succeed.

Other elements of positive interdependence may include having mutual goals that are supported by members performing complementary roles, sharing their resources and the rewards of their efforts. As with the other four principles of cooperative community, the ways in which the elements of the first principle of positive interdependence are enacted in circus performances and circus operations more generally are readily determined.

The second principle of cooperative community, individual accountability, is closely related to the first principle of positive interdependence. A frequently asked question about implementing cooperative community principles relates to how to make individuals accountable for their work. This concern is expressed in relation to the work that individuals do or are expected to do in the group as well as to the sharing of rewards. It is not seen as fair when individuals who contribute little or nothing to the process share the rewards. When members perform different but complementary roles, it is more difficult for an individual to hide behind the efforts of the group.

Individual accountability, therefore, is linked to the structuring of the roles to be performed. Goals are broken down into their parts and these parts adopted by individuals in full and open recognition that, unless all players do their different but complementary parts, the group will not succeed. A crucial factor here is the number of people in the group. If too many people are involved then the work of some members may be too inconsequential or may even duplicate the work of others. Roles are more likely to be complementary and individual accountability highest when the number of people in the group is manipulated so that each person has an essential part to play.

The third principle of cooperative community relates to the promotion of one another's success within the group. Imagine a group in which each person is accountable for completing a particular task that complements the tasks that the other group members undertake; all tasks are essential for the achievement of the group goal but the members act entirely in isolation. While the goal may be achieved, it would be difficult to imagine how individuals could continue to experience success without the support and encouragement of other group members. This type of assistance and encouragement as well as praise for one another's efforts not only helps to sustain effort through difficult times but also makes this possible because of the goodwill and confidence that have been established during the not so difficult times.

It can also be appreciated that promoting mutual success is likely to contribute to a sense of identity among group members that may even be visible to outsiders. It cannot be assumed, however, that members of communities will automatically be readily supportive of one another. In classrooms, for example, the skills associated with the promotion of one another's success need to be taught and monitored just like the skills associated with the other four elements of cooperative community.

Where members of groups provide genuine support and encouragement for their peers, it is more likely that trust will be built among the members. Trust building is part of the fourth element of cooperative community, that of interpersonal and small group skills. Other parts of this element include leadership and decision-making, communication and conflict management.

Interpersonal and small group skills are arguably the most challenging part of developing and sustaining a cooperative community. Difficult questions arise, for example, around the form that leadership will take and how different styles of leadership interact with personality. It is also possible that improvements can be made even when interpersonal and small group skills appear not to be concerns.

The fifth principle of cooperative community, group processing, is often referred to as reflection. Group processing is a two-step process that requires members to examine how well they are achieving their group goals and how well the members are working together.

With so much effort being put into the other principles, which may involve identifying and agreeing upon group goals, deciding who will do what, taking time to encourage one another and dealing with issues around leadership and decision-making, it is not surprising that little time may be left for reflection. This is why it is important to set aside time for reflection. Planning ahead for reflection can help ensure that successes are celebrated and many potential problems are avoided.

Several questions now arise in relation to researching the operations of circus troupes. What methods can be used to investigate research questions around how circuses or other Traveller groups operate? How was the research reported in this chapter conducted?

RESEARCH METHODS

The case that is the subject of this chapter, together with the one reported by Danaher and Danaher (see Chapter 14), is part of an ongoing research project examining the education of the children of Australian circus and fairground personnel. The project began in 1992 out of curiosity about how the children of travelling fairground people on the eastern seaboard of Australia received their education. In 1998 interest expanded to include the education of circus people. It was also in that year that the Australian Traveller Education Research Team became inquisitive about how circus

communities managed to survive for so long, especially given the challenges that they faced from outside their communities.

In-depth interviews were conducted with members of circus communities at sites on the eastern Australian seaboard where circus troupes were stationed for up to one week at a time. Opportunities to observe interactions among circus personnel behind the scenes as well as during performances were plentiful. Thirty adults and children, who occupied a range of positions within circus communities, participated. It was possible, therefore, through the cross-sectional nature of the study, to build a picture of how children were educated over time from the current experiences as reported by children and the insights of their parents, to the accounts of prior and current educational experiences of older members of the communities. The ongoing educational needs of members as they grew older thus also emerged.

Johnson and Johnson's (1998) principles of cooperative community were also standard practice among the six research team members who visited sites and conducted interviews on their own or in groups. Regular meetings of the research team ensured that the five principles were embedded throughout all stages of the research, from proposal planning through to writing. A detailed account of the application of the principles of cooperative community to these operations is provided elsewhere (see Moriarty, 2007). Data collection involved individual and small group interviews conducted by individual interviewers or several interviewers together, depending on circumstances and the preferences of the interviewees, and one focus group interview conducted by a pair of interviewers and numerous observations of performances and life behind the scenes.

The following application of Johnson and Johnson's (1998) principles of cooperative community is presented through the eyes of the ringmaster as he orchestrates a performance. It provides the opportunity to draw on the words of circus performers and other circus personnel to illustrate the types of informal learning available to circus people and the challenges presented in accessing formal education by virtue of their community life.

AUSTRALIAN CIRCUSES AS COOPERATIVE COMMUNITIES

The ringmaster is responsible for coordinating and presenting publicly the efforts of a range of personnel and animals. The particular acts vary from one circus troupe to another but may include animal trainers and handlers, such as the lion tamer and the people who work with monkeys, dogs and elephants. Three generations of circus personnel are often involved in a single performance, which may include young children performing very simple acts for the first time under the guidance of their parents, who themselves perform death-defying acts on the tight rope, people of a range of ages presenting acts with animals, men working with fire and groups of

aerialists. Performances also involve a range of support personnel, such as those controlling the lighting and sound. This analysis through the eyes of a ringmaster is supplemented by background information relating to other areas of circus life where such information provides a deeper understanding of how circus performances encapsulate Johnson and Johnson's (1998) principles of cooperative community.

Positive Interdependence

Despite the hard work that has gone on behind the scenes to ensure polished circus performances, it is the ringmaster who has the responsibility for coordinating the on-stage efforts of the performers. The total image that is presented to the public is possibly the most important and explicit encapsulation of circus identity that people outside the circus see. Polished performances, well-treated animals that act on cue, in fact, the entire package of light, sound, costumes, show bags, sawdust, big top tents and intrigue become the public image of the circus and the identity that members of the circus share among themselves and with the public. As a ringmaster whom we interviewed in 2000 said:

> In something like the circus that relies so heavily on tradition, you have still got to present an image that you are with the times but not let them [the audience] leave thinking, "It wasn't the circus that I used to know". . . . To me, this is circus. With animals and what have you. I mean I stand on the door of a show in the night and I hear so many people commenting, "It's so nice to see a circus with animals, the ringmaster with the top hat" and all that sort of stuff. That's what people remember from years ago when they were little.

This ringmaster was comparing the traditional circus with some of the more contemporary circuses that do not have animals and often perform in entertainment centres rather than under the big top.

As the performance proceeds and the ringmaster introduces one act after the other, it is not difficult to appreciate the extent of interdependence among performers who take part in quite different acts. Regardless of how well an individual may perform, a successful performance overall is dependent upon the success of the individual acts and how well they are coordinated with the lighting and sound. This dependence relates to the animal acts as well as those that rely on human skill only. As a program and musical director of one of the Australian circuses observed:

> Everyone loves the elephants and they are a great act but without [their trainer] they wouldn't get out there on their own and do it or they could and it would be an absolute shemozzle. In a lot of ways, without him [the trainer] they are nothing.

Similarly, one of the aerialists noted, “It’s like me. I can do a good act up there but if the guy under me is not there then I am just a girl on a rope.”

The ringmaster is also aware that his expertise in introducing acts and encouraging the audience to show appreciation and involvement is just as crucial as his ability to compensate for any unexpected occurrences throughout the show. Everyone, including the ringmaster, has a vested interest in ensuring that all acts are supported and are successful because mutual goals involve a positive, shared identity and the continuity of a distinctive way of life, both of which can be possible only as long as members of the public are prepared to devote time and money to attend performances. Even so, one ringmaster agreed that audiences do not always appreciate the degree of skill that they see at the circus: “They just sit there, a lot in awe, and go, ‘Oh, my god’, but I really don’t think they appreciated the 20 or so years of practice that have gone into it beforehand.”

Individual Accountability

Perhaps one of the most likely reasons why circuses often have a wide appeal is that performances typically involve a number and variety of acts that encapsulate tension between individual accountability and mutual dependence. Each performer is responsible for his or her act or part of an act and together they are responsible for presenting a series of varied acts. It is important for the compilation of acts to appeal to a wide audience so that, for example, parents who bring their young children to the circus want to see their children entertained as well as enjoy the performance themselves. The position of ringmaster is ideal for observing how different groups within the audience react to the performances. What the ringmaster hopes and expects to see are faces that change expression constantly, showing awe, disbelief, relief and amazement that depict a high level of audience engagement.

One question that comes to mind, however, relates to how the performers and support personnel, whose efforts the ringmaster orchestrates during a show, learn their roles to the degree that they are able to be individually accountable. During a focus group interview in 2000, which included a ringmaster and other performers and personnel, there were many references to learning from one another, learning continuously and the multiple roles that people adopted.

The role of ringmaster may appear routine from one performance to the next but this predictability is necessary so that moments when actions do not go according to plan are infrequent and can thus be given the concentration and attention that they need. For example, the ringmaster, knowing from memory the order of acts and the lights, sounds and props associated with each, will be quick to recognise that a decision has been made behind the scenes to present an act in a different order. If a performer becomes ill suddenly or a piece of equipment fails then subtle signals need to be recognised by the ringmaster and adjustments made without the audience being aware.

The ringmaster, as with the other performers and personnel in support roles, needs to be individually accountable for producing a consistent performance from one show to the next. As one ringmaster said:

> I think from the performing side, I think consistency is a very important thing. I mean you can have a bad day but you have to present the show the same you do every night because people are paying to come in and see it and they don't want you to come across that you have had a bad day. It has to be the same all the time.

One of the managers of a circus agreed: "It doesn't matter if you have had a blazing row with your husband or whatever; you walk in that ring and you have a smile. You are getting paid to do it; you have to do your job."

The tension between individual accountability at all levels, therefore, and mutual dependence in situations such as these sharpens considerably in order that the performance is successful and everyone shares in the associated rewards.

Promoting One Another's Success

The preceding discussion around individual accountability issues related to unanticipated changes to the order of presentation of acts at a circus performance also highlights how individual acts of the ringmaster and others are connected to the promotion of the success of other community members. A ringmaster commented to us on this point and the role that he plays:

> It all happens so quick [*sic*]. I'm ready to announce one act and it can't go on, so what's going on, we don't know. I tend to just fill in and say whatever. Normally I will tell them [the audience] when we are showing the next place or when our show times here are. There is always something to say.

Even when acts are proceeding smoothly, there needs to be an atmosphere of encouragement and appreciation of one another's efforts. During the show the ringmaster can be seen promoting the skills of the performers to the audience and building an expectation and recognition of excellence. The ringmaster engineers the applause from the audience and also witnesses the confidence and reaction of the performers to these accolades. He also witnesses the open encouragement and appreciation of the actors towards one another before, during and after acts. These might include, for example, hand gestures and smiles from supporting acrobats towards a fellow acrobat whose talents are displayed in a particularly difficult or spectacular act. These signs of encouragement affect the performers not only directly but also indirectly through the public display of commitment to one another and to the circus community. Such positive identity is not only

promoted at performances but is also explicitly taught to child performers who are tutored by parents and others. Developing a stage presence is just as important as learning to perform their feats.

Interpersonal and Small Group Skills

In his very distinctive and individual role on stage, the ringmaster coordinates the efforts of support shown by performers to one another and the involvement of the audience in supporting the performers. The ringmaster also helps to support the building of trust among the different parties. Trust is built between the audience and the ringmaster and between the audience and the performers when the performers deliver the spectacular acts promised by the ringmaster. The audience would possibly be unaware, however, of the extent to which the efforts of the lighting and sound technicians affect the success of the performance unless the ringmaster paces and varies his delivery to coincide with moments of anticipation, nervousness or intrigue, demonstrating the importance of performers and technicians trusting one another. At a practical level, therefore, the communication skills of the ringmaster can make the same performance accepted in quite different ways by the audience depending on his expertise in delivery.

In a closely knit community such as a circus, the ringmaster is aware of relationships among members. Performers themselves have acknowledged the importance of disregarding on stage any disagreements that may have occurred among them prior to the performance. One of the aerialists gave an example of how disagreements before a show often dissipate while in the ring: “You could go in there feeling like ‘Ooh, I’m going to kill them’ and you get up there and do your act, come down and you have forgotten all about it.”

While these situations were rare in our experience of interviewing and observing circus personnel, they do occur. Similarly, the ringmaster and performers recalled occasions when performers continued with their acts even while they were injured. It appears that the depth of commitment to the community established over a period of time enables performers to meet their responsibilities when that commitment is tested. When individual members of the community, therefore, make the decision to act responsibly in adverse situations, they build positively on the trust already established with other community members.

Group Processing

Reflection, or group processing, at the circus occurs during performances as indicated by the preceding discussion and at other times. It may be a planned exercise or it may occur spontaneously. The ringmaster observes and participates in all types of reflection and is in an ideal position to comment.

Reflections that occur during performances have underpinned some of the previous reports, particularly in relation to non-verbal communications

and observations. Ringmasters witness very difficult acts that are made to appear deceptively simple but with their insider's knowledge realise that every performance act needs to be a conscious one, with performers continuously reflecting. An example that is clearly visible to the ringmaster and others is when animals may act unpredictably or out of character. The audience may not be aware of the extent to which their safety is monitored when lions are performing but the ringmaster knows that there are men hardly visible to the audience who are in a position to take immediate and pre-planned action if a lion should attempt to escape. The pre-planned nature of the response is an indication of the type of reflection that occurs outside the performance and the constant monitoring and surveillance during the performance are an indication of reflections that occur regarding processes and outcomes at the show.

A ringmaster and two of the researchers witnessed reflections of a more spontaneous nature on one occasion after a performance during a focus group interview. Several aerialists were working in the background to go over the acts that had just been performed. A more senior aerialist was observed reflecting with a more junior performer, giving advice and guidance. This reflection occurred when it was most needed and when it would have the most impact—that is, straight after the performance in which the act did not proceed as well as it could have done and while the tightropes were still in place.

INTERACTIONS WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD AND THE IMPACT OF CIRCUS LIFE ON INFORMAL LEARNING AND EDUCATION

Examining performances in the ring gives some insight into the cooperative nature of circus operations at an intersection where the circus community meets the outside world. If circus communities are to be sustained and members maintain their distinctive way of life then their performances need to attract the interest and involvement of the broader community. Being able to work cooperatively within their community is essential but more realistic when circus personnel depend on and support one another, adopt individual accountabilities, encourage and support one another, use effective interpersonal skills and reflect on their work.

This cooperation extends to informal learning among circus personnel, which relates not only to the teaching of performance skills and other skills associated with the performance but also to other informal learning that helps to sustain the community and keep it mobile. Between them, members of a circus need to be able to perform a number of duties that are not obvious to audience members. For example, they need to be able to maintain their vehicles and undertake ongoing maintenance and repairs to equipment, care for their animals, sew costumes and balance books. Many of these skills are learned informally from one another and without the recognition of formal qualifications.

During individual and group interviews with Australian circus personnel, there has been much reference to informal and formal learning and education. Among the numerous references to informal learning include comments such as:

> There is always someone else that is next to you that knows something you don't. You are constantly learning in a job like this. As a ringmaster I'm still learning every day. (Ringmaster)

> Like if . . . you don't know how to weld well. If you say, "Can you show me?", he is going to teach you. It makes it easier for the person. It only takes five minutes. (Tent boss)

> You never stop learning; you never stop asking. (Program and musical director)

We now need to place these discussions into the broader context of circus life in order to identify those operations of circus communities that differentiate their members from other mobile groups and render even more problematic their access to regular education.

Early in this chapter it was mentioned that circus communities in Australia take their homes with them when they travel. Australian fairground people also travel in their caravans but there is one major difference in the way that these groups travel that impacts on access to educational services. Fairground people have set routes that they follow each year. Being in the same place at the same time each year and knowing ahead of time where the show will be and how long they will stay in each town provide predictability not available to circus communities, whose routes and schedules are quite *ad hoc*.

Circus communities in Australia, as with Gypsy Traveller families in England (see Martin Levinson's and Cathy Kiddle's chapters in this volume), have difficulty knowing where they will be able to park their caravans as they move around the countryside. In Australia, it is quite common for circus communities to send one member ahead to talk with local councils and, in many cases, attempt to convince them that circuses should not be denied access to towns and facilities to perform. This is because there is frequently a misplaced perception that the animals in circuses are exploited and not well treated and it often falls on a member of the circus community to convince local councils that their concerns are unfounded. This leads to a level of unpredictability about schedules and routes to be travelled, thus making it more difficult for the children of circus families to access school facilities or for adult members to access further or higher education along the way.

Some adults in the circus reflected on their access to education. For example, correspondence lessons were recalled by one adult female as "on and off" as a child: "We never had a proper teacher. We had whoever was at the show. We just picked somebody that had a bit of an education themselves. It never worked out really well. You really need a full-time teacher,

I reckon." Like some other personnel, she spoke about having stayed with relatives for two years in the city to attend school while the immediate family travelled. "But then I missed the circus too much and just wanted to come back", illustrating the impact that circus life had on education, even when access to education, theoretically, was available.

In talking about their education, some circus personnel also defended their situation:

> You also learn a lot in the circus compared to someone that has gone all through school. We also do a lot more than they do.
>
> In different ways, I think that in a way it [the circus] is a really good learning place.
>
> You do history at school and you learn about your country but we actually get to see it and really do it and learn about it.
>
> You learn the basic things in life, I suppose. You learn how to work. A lot of people can't even change a tyre or drive a truck and know how to pull loaders out and stuff. We learn all that stuff. We learned the basics in school, which is our maths and spelling and reading. A lot of it we also learned here in the circus by learning off other people.
>
> Yes, all that hospitality stuff. Some people pay money to go to do courses; we just learn it.

At the other end of the spectrum, some of the males in the circus gained qualifications from Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges. In other interviews, however, it was noted how difficult it was to gain qualifications such as welding at TAFE, when the circus moved on and classes had to be missed.

There was also evidence that circus people in Australia would like to have more opportunities for formal education and that they would like to have opportunities that have been afforded to the children of fairground people:

> All I can say is that I hope [that] they [our children] can eventually get a full-time teacher here for the children to be the same. . . . It would be good for us to have that. . . . We still travel the same.

CONCLUSION

Communication with the world outside the circus has become more multifaceted in recent years. It can be seen how circus communities have responded to changing interests and perceptions in the broader community and we can even learn from the ways that circus communities interact

among themselves and with the outside world. While we can appreciate that being able to live and work harmoniously and cooperatively in a circus community may be one of the main reasons why circuses have survived for so long, changes in perceptions in the outside world also affect the ability of circus communities to maintain their livelihoods.

It is difficult to anticipate whether changed perceptions will present the most difficult challenges to Australian circus communities in the future or whether a more serious consideration will be the ongoing problem of access to schooling for circus children. Problems for mobile groups such as circuses and fairground people in accessing education have existed over a long period largely because of the mismatch between mobility and traditional schooling, the latter being based on assumptions of fixed residence. I maintain, however, that the particular nature of their mobility predisposes circus families to more difficulties in accessing formal education than many other groups whose patterns of mobility are more stable and predictable.

While fairground people in Queensland, Australia, have been successful in obtaining primary education for their children that is suited to their lifestyle, as will be seen in Chapter 14, we are yet to discover how educational provision can be best tailored to suit the particular requirements of mobile circus communities in Australia.

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12 Against the Odds
Roma Population Schooling in Spain

Manuel Souto-Otero

ABSTRACT

Retention and achievement rates in the primary and secondary education of the Roma population in Spain have been historically much lower than the rates found in the general population. This continues to be the case, although some progress has been made in recent times. The situation is particularly difficult for Roma females, who face strong social, family and educational barriers in their studies. Yet they progress in the educational system at a higher level than Roma males. In this chapter I explore some of the reasons behind this paradox and extract a number of policy recommendations from this discussion.

INTRODUCTION

The education of the Roma population in Spain (whose population centres are depicted in Figure 12.1 below) has received increasing attention in the last decade, owing not only to the growing numbers of Roma in the country but also to the well-documented inequalities in access and achievement in the education system, which clearly limit the life chances of the Roma in adulthood. The mobility of the Spanish Roma and the associated need to have their children 'change schools' regularly work to the disadvantage of Roma children. In Europe, many Roma now live sedentary lifestyles (sometimes as a result of forced settlement); Gypsy/Roma who continue to travel for work are most often found in southern European countries (ECOTEC, 2008), in part because casual agricultural labour is a predominant source of employment in certain regions of these countries.

Today, Roma are the largest single minority in the European Union (EU) (European Commission, 2008b) and Spain is one of the EU countries with the largest numbers of Roma (Gamella, 1996). It is estimated that around 700,000 documented Roma live in Spain (1.5% of the population). Additionally, an unknown number of illegal and frequently undocumented Romani immigrants and asylum seekers from Central Eastern Europe and the Balkan

countries (FCNM [Framework Convention for National Minorities], 2006) have flooded across the Spanish border. This is a huge increase since the mid 1990s, when approximately 400,000 Roma lived in Spain, and a more than a threefold increase from the estimated 200,000 Roma thought to have lived in Spain in the late 1970s (Grañeras Pastrana, Gordo López, Lamelas Frías, Villa Fernández, & De Regil Amorena, 1999). Around 70% of the contemporary Roma population is under the age of 25, much of it below 16 (Grañeras Pastrana et al., 1999), and therefore of school age.

Roma have lived in Spain for over 600 years, yet it was not until 1978 that the Romani were acknowledged as fully fledged members of the Spanish community, by decree of the Spanish Constitution, which recognised them as citizens and guaranteed their fundamental rights and freedoms (FCNM, 2000). The Spanish Constitution proclaims equal rights to education (Fernández Soria, 2002) and, in principle at least, allows children who

Figure 12.1 Map of Spain. From the website of University of Texas at Austin, Perry-Castañeda Library, Map Collection, Spain Maps. Courtesy of the University of Texas Libraries, The University of Texas at Austin. Map produced by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/cia08/spain_sm_2008.gif

do not have legal residence status in the country to enrol in school without impediment (Eurydice, 2004). Public authorities have a legal obligation to ensure the enrolment and attendance of all children. Legislation passed in the mid 1990s, moreover, attempted to ensure equality and to prevent discrimination on the grounds of birth, race, sex, economic capacity, disability or any other personal or social condition (Boletín Oficial del Estado [BOE], 1995). Inevitably, perhaps, the situation in specific Spanish regions varied because some adopted the national framework legislation while others adopted regionally binding legislation in line with but not identical to the national legislation (Gairin, 2005).

Despite these laws, however, the Roma population is still disadvantaged, in society and education, to a larger extent than other disadvantaged groups (Open Society Institute, 2002). Roma are the group most consistently rejected by teachers and pupils in schools (Calvo Buezas, 2000), which see the 'different' profile of the Roma as a problematic deviation from the norm. Until recently, this perception has justified school segregation in the so-called "bridge schools" and contributed to the fact that 70% of the Roma in Spain are functionally illiterate (Grañados Romero, 2008). Roma children *still* have difficulties gaining equal access to education and, when they go to school, they don't have the 'success' that the school establishment expects.

The reminder of this chapter is structured as follows: in the next section I look at sociological explanations for the 'failure' of Roma children; in section three, I review the educational situation of Roma children in Spain, with particular attention to gender differences; and in the final section of the chapter I offer conclusions and recommendations.

EXPLAINING DIFFERENCES IN ACHIEVEMENT

In the last 50 years, many sociological explanations have been proposed to account for differences in educational achievement among minority groups. Of particular interest have been class, gender and ethnicity studies. Early sociological explanations tended to focus on the *home background* of the working class—their attitudes and values—to explain underachievement. 'Material' and 'cultural' deprivation arguments held that the conditions under which working class children are raised heavily influenced their schooling outcomes. Material deprivation arguments concluded that poor conditions—extreme poverty, poor health and substandard housing—created disadvantaged students (Department of Education and Science, 1967; Floyd, Halsey, & Martin, 1956). Because an important part of learning happens at home (OECD [Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development], 2006), the argument goes, whenever the "conditions for learning" (for example, electricity, water, space, books) cannot be provided, it is more difficult for children to learn (Marc, 2000). Cultural deprivation arguments

identify several factors operating against the educational success of working class children: the lack of parental involvement in school issues (Douglas, 1964; Feinstein, 2003); the expectation that even young children will make economic contributions to the family (Sugarman, 1967); and the lack of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984), including the ways of expression that make it possible for students to succeed at school (Bernstein, 1961; Labov, 1969).

These theories, which looked at the household as the origin of educational underachievement, were contrasted in the 1970s by theories that looked at what happened in the *school* as the explanation of differences in performance. The new theories pointed out that the formal and the informal curricula involved values derived from middle class experiences and concerns (Fernández Enguita, 1999). Children from disadvantaged backgrounds found themselves learning things that did not build on what they knew, and which they mostly did not consider relevant. Interactionist theories also looked at what happened in the classroom, and discovered that teachers frequently labelled students by placing children from disadvantaged backgrounds in low performance groups. Children in the low performance groups met the low expectations of their teachers. Thus, the researchers concluded, teacher *expectations* about student performance became self-fulfilling prophecies (Farley, 2005).

Economic (incentive-based) explanations have complemented these sociological explanations by looking at how expected educational costs and returns affect educational investment decisions (Boudon, 1974; Morgan, 2005).

Whereas most of these factors have influenced the performance of Roma children in education, there are also specific factors affecting this group:

- the educational system is designed to serve sedentary populations, not those, like the Roma, who travel;
- there is no provision in the schools for those who undergo frequent periods of interrupted learning (European Commission, 2008c);
- policy-makers, teachers and middle class classmates are often prejudiced against Roma (Jordan, 2001);
- Roma parents sometimes do not have the specific documents required for school enrolment (EUMC [European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia], 2006);
- school expenses are beyond the means of the Roma (ECOTEC, 2008).

Even when Roma children have entered schools, segregation has historically hindered their learning. Although the most conspicuous forms of systematic segregation no longer exist, formal and informal practices of separating Roma populations from other children persist in several European countries. Roma are sometimes seated in separate parts of the classroom or in separate classrooms in which they follow the same curriculum as middle class students (or a 'simpler' version); sometimes (for example, in Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic) they are placed in 'special schools'

for children with intellectual impairments (EUMC, 2006). While opinion polls show that Spaniards are more tolerant of differences in nationality, race or religion (SORA Institute for Social Research and Analysis, 2001) than are residents of many other European countries, the common Spanish perception of Roma—although also better than that held by majority populations in neighbouring countries (European Commission, 2008b)—is negative and widely shared (Gamella, 1996). It is clear that, when an education system separates 'disadvantaged' children from 'advantaged' children, socioeconomic differences are reinforced, and the legal guarantee of quality education for all is not honoured in practice.

The body of research presented above makes clear that underachievement in school is linked to more than one factor. The relative importance of the different sociological factors identified as relevant, however, is still a subject of much discussion. In particular, the link between aspirations and beliefs about the benefits of education in different disadvantaged groups and educational achievement has been under-researched (Morgan, 2005). The remainder of this chapter addresses this issue by looking at the education of the Roma population in Spain, paying particular attention to gender differences.

ROMA BOYS AND GIRLS: AGAINST THE ODDS?

In this section I review prevalent aspirations and beliefs about education in the Spanish Roma population, and how these have evolved over time. Through the inclusion of gender differences in the examination of educational attainment, the importance of expectations is highlighted. Moreover, the success of Roma girls in school is not only important in its own right but also vital to the educational achievement of future generations, because it has been shown that mothers have great influence on the school performance of their children (Carneiro, Meghir, & Parey, 2007).

As outlined in the previous section, material and cultural conditions have a direct effect on educational results. The Roma population often works in low status and poorly paid jobs[1], and their cultural background is different from that of the mainstream middle class. Gypsy children often help their parents in their work, and they generally see the lessons offered at school as irrelevant. Additionally, the irregular employment patterns of the Roma population (that is, seasonal work that involves travelling) render the standard educational provisions for Roma deficient. Segregation and the failure to incorporate in the curriculum anything familiar to the Roma have a detrimental effect on the performance of the Roma population in Spain, as well as in other EU countries (EUMC, 2006).

These material and cultural factors work against male and female children equally. However, the patterns of enrolment and achievement between boys and girls have been shown to differ significantly (Payá Sánchez et al.,

2003). Disparities in performance might be partly due to differing personal and family expectations. If this is the case, more action is needed in working with teachers and families to activate cultural change.

In the following subsections I first review enrolment and attendance and then the achievement of Roma boys and girls in compulsory education in Spain.

Enrolment and Attendance

Roma show low levels of enrolment and attendance in primary education, and the transition to secondary education is also low, as a result either of early gainful employment to help their families (Smith, 1997) or of "low" performance (Heckmann, 2008). Levels of enrolment among the Roma population have, however, improved significantly in Spain during recent times. This followed the recognition of the rights of the Roma population by the Spanish Constitution and resultant changes in educational provision.

In the 1970s almost half of the Romani children between 4 and 14 did not attend schools at all (FSGG [Fundación Secretariado Gitano], 2002). Then, in 1978 special "bridge schools" for Romani children were set up; they increased the enrolment levels of Romani children, and brought schools closer to the Romani community. However, they did so at the cost of segregating Romani children from the rest of the school population, employing poor or outdated equipment and fostering rather than preventing "low" achievement (Fresno, Andrés, Rincón, & Chamorro González, 2000; Muñoz Sedano, 1993). Within a decade, it became evident that the bridge schools did not provide any sort of 'bridge' into 'regular' schools. By 1986 Roma children began to be mainstreamed in regular schools; unfortunately, the mainstreaming was based on residence and Roma children were inevitably concentrated in specific low performing schools. Thus 'mainstreaming' produced a new kind of segregation in Spain, as it did in other European countries (see European Commission, 2008c).

According to a 2001 survey, 91% of Romani children began school at the normal school age in Spain (FSGG, 2002)—short of the 100% rate for non-Romani children. Behind this increase, there have been important positive developments in the provision of education, which has been reshaped to facilitate access by the Roma. Compensatory education programs, in which some educational centres receive additional funding and specialised staff to work with disadvantaged children, were set up to increase performance by different minorities, including Roma. These are seen as constructive improvements, although there are concerns that they might reinforce segregation. Also in 2001, a complementary set of measures established an intercultural education program in Spain, in which educational activities would be based on respect for cultural diversity. Today curricula still reflect the majority population almost exclusively. The "Gitano Development Programme" of the Ministry of Education and Culture recommended

that elements of Gitano culture be included in the primary education curricula, and that intercultural mediator training programs be initiated. The Departments of Education in the respective Autonomous Communities also funded training programs and programs of employment promotion to support students older than 16 who did not achieve the main objectives of compulsory secondary education (EUMC, 2006).

Spanish Roma, like other Travellers, were also given the opportunity to keep their children with them, and to make use of schools "as appropriate". To participate in this program, they must register with the Centre for Innovation and Development in Distance Learning (CIDEAD), which is responsible for recording and coordinating teacher assessments, the award of assessments and related matters (ECOTEC, 2008). One problem with this strategy, however, is the low educational level of parents in the Roma community, which makes them unable to help their children with standard school assignments. Itinerant Support Units are available for pupils who, owing to the working situation of their parents, cannot attend school on a regular basis (for example, Roma, fruit harvesters, etc.). Interactive groups are yet another way to organise activities in the classroom to stimulate learning by all children through dialogue (Payá Sánchez et al., 2003). These groups are normally heterogeneous and place students of differing backgrounds (for example, Roma and non-Roma) under the tutoring of an adult (Roma or non-Roma) under the management of a teacher.

These measures have helped to increase Roma enrolment levels. However, Romani children continue to be over-represented in public (state) schools and under-represented in private ("colegios privados" and "colegios concertados") schools (Open Society Institute, 2002). Within public schools there is a process of 'ghettoisation' in certain schools, resulting in *de facto* educational segregation. Selection criteria for "colegios privados" and "colegios concertados" tend to exclude Romani children because, for instance, family location is considered and schools can give priority to children who have close family members who have studied at that school, and because of tuition costs, which tend to perpetuate existing inequalities.

Having presented this overall framework of special provision, I now review the differences between the educational success rate of Roma boys and girls in more detail. In most industrialised countries girls perform better than boys in primary and secondary education (European Commission, 2008a). However, Roma communities are reputed to be 'closed social groups', anchored in cultural traditions that are difficult to change. Aguado Odina, Gil Pascual, Jiménez Mas and Sacristán Lucas (1998) report that there is marked opposition to females' independence in Roma communities. There are strong expectations that they will stay at home to take care of husband and family.

This suggests that Roma girls in particular are likely to receive little encouragement to go to school, let alone to do well in their studies. Research undertaken in Spain in the 1990s confirmed that teachers often report that

Roma parents do not have positive expectations about their children's education, beyond the hope that they will acquire basic literacy[2]. The Roma see the school as a tool for cultural assimilation into non-Roma values. As reported to Abajo and Carrasco (2004) by a Roma 18-year-old boy[3]:

> Many of my cousins, family and other people I know have not studied. They come and say: "Why do you keep on studying?" I reply: "Because I like it". And they treat you as a non-Roma person. That is hard too. . . . [They tell you] you should quit, you are becoming similar to a non-Roma. (p. 119)

As mentioned, a European Commission report (2008a) concluded that in most industrialised countries females perform better than males do in primary and secondary education. However, the report shows that young Roma girls do less well in primary school than Roma boys. Romani girls, the Commission reports, tend to have a high rate of early school-leaving and of irregular participation in education. This, it is argued, is due to the emphasis on women's domestic roles in Roma culture, accompanied by the widely held view that education is not important for young girls (European Commission, 2006). As it will be seen, the situation is not so clear-cut in the case of Spain.

FSGG (2006) shows that enrolment rates in primary education for Spanish Roma are initially rather high (see above), and relatively gender equal. However, in line with the roles traditionally assigned to girls in Roma communities, there are three Roma boys for every two Roma girls by the time that the children are ready to move from primary to secondary school (FSGG, 2006). Contrary to expectations, this situation is reversed by the fourth year of secondary school, when there are three girls for every two boys.

While progress has been achieved in enrolment levels, attendance continues to be a thorny issue. Absenteeism is high and has remained relatively stable, with around 30% of Romani children missing classes for periods of three months or longer per year (FSGG, 2002). Some of this is to do, as outlined above, with the domestic roles of Roma girls. As FSGG (2006) reported in the testimony of Carmen, a 13-year-old Roma girl: "I often miss school. I have a boyfriend and I need to go to another city four days a week to be with my future mother-in-law" (p. 32).

Yet only one third of the Romani children who missed classes, FSGG (2006) found, did so for unjustified reasons (their parents simply not wanting the child to attend school). Most children missed classes because their parents were engaged in seasonal work that required travelling. This highlights the fact that the implemented changes in educational provision are still not sufficient to accommodate the situation of Travellers fully. Attendance at secondary school is also complicated by the distance of secondary schools from Roma settlements and by the loneliness of Roma students, who have few peers in the secondary schools (Payá Sánchez et al., 2003). As reported by Amparo, a 14-year-old Roma girl (FSGG, 2006):

> I did not have any girlfriends there, and I felt very lonely. I went there with much hope, but then I started the activities and I felt down. . . . If I did not understand something, I did not say it, because of shame. (p. 33)

In the next subsection I look at the academic performance of those Roma girls and boys who manage—*against the odds*—to stay in school.

Achievement

The road to educational success is a hard one for Roma boys and girls alike. Having to re-take a course is one of the clearest evidences of academic difficulty. A recent study (Andrés et al., 2006) surveyed 800 Roma and non-Roma students between 12 and 16 years of age in Spain, and reported that 65% of Roma students had to re-take courses, while only 30% of the non-Roma students had to do so. The FSGG (2002, 2006) offers data on failure in individual subjects. These studies provide a similar picture. Interestingly, they report that non-Roma girls were 7% more "successful" than the boys in their classes; Roma girls were 2% more successful. In the next paragraphs I analyse some possible reasons for these figures.

As was mentioned above, curriculum biases would seem to work against the 'success' of Roma children in school. Fresno Garcia (1994) points out that fewer than 10% of the school centres he reviewed took Roma traditions into account in their teaching, and that well over half of the teachers were not often in contact with the Roma community; some teachers had not even read about the Romani population. As has been seen above, Roma are often rejected by teachers and peers at school. However, the degree of rejection is much higher for boys than for girls since girls often accommodate better to the "good student" role (Grañeras Pastrana, Lamelas Frías, Segalerva Cazorla, Vázquez Aguilar, Gordo López, & Molinuevo Santos, 1997). Fresno García (1994) shows that Roma girls are more likely than boys to adopt school norms, bring study materials to the classroom and complete their homework more frequently. Perhaps because the girls are so much more compliant, they are also more accepted by their classmates, and offered opportunities to participate in games and class activities: compliance brings them integration.

The FSGG (2002) also offers revealing data about why Roma children think that they fail in school: 54% of Roma boys reported having failed owing to lack of effort while only 47% of Roma girls reported this as the reason for failure. The girls identified "not understanding the subject" as a reason for failure more than the boys did (21% to 18%); girls blamed teachers 8% of the time, boys 7%. Girls thought that their difficulties stemmed from absenteeism more than the boys (12% to 9%). Results were similar in relation to the reported reasons for not doing their homework. Non-Roma girls, by contrast, reported having failed owing to lack of effort much more

often than non-Roma boys (55% versus 45%). Absenteeism almost did not feature as a reason for the academic failure of non-Roma students.

This greater will of females to study can be related to their future professional expectations. Roma children in general had lower expectations of working in graduate positions than the non-Roma population (13% versus 31%). Girls showed substantially greater ambitions in this respect than boys (18% versus 10%) (FSGG, 2002). As Carmen (a 15-year-old Roma) said to FSGG (2006), one needed to study: "To be someone in life. Even if you are Roma and you get married, you have your own things, your job; you don't need to sell stuff. That is no longer on; it is better to have a job" (p. 40). Boys were more likely to expect to be working in lower tier occupations.

Another significant difference is that 17% of Roma girls expected to be married and at home when they grew up, as against 9% of Roma boys and 7% of the non-Roma population (FSGG, 2002). Nevertheless, girls showed much higher ambitions on average in terms of educational achievement (FSGG, 2002), which reinforced their commitment. As Sheila, a 16-year-old, reported to FSGG (2006): "I do like studying. I like learning to be able to teach, so that I [can] study for a degree, to have an academic title. This is why I do not miss school, unless there is a good reason" (p. 37).

Individual expectations are mediated, as argued above in this chapter, through family decisions. In relation to the important issue of parental involvement, Fresno García (1994) shows that parents respond more often to calls from teachers regarding their girls than their boys. Such contact enables a more fluid relationship between these important stakeholders for the academic development of the child. As suggested by Payá Sánchez et al. (2003), the transformation of education centres to give a greater role to Roma families to make their culture and needs known can be a crucial factor in ensuring the educational success of their offspring. As I have mentioned above, progress in relation to parental involvement has been made in recent times (FSGG, 2001).

In an interesting ethnographic study, Bereményi (2007) found that, contrary to the conventional wisdom, Roma parents often have positive expectations about the educational achievement of their children. Parents highlighted that, without education, there would be no future for their children, as employment in their current low skill occupations are not sustainable—see also above. As a Roma grandparent reported to Bereményi:

> If I were born again, I would not like to be what I am. I want to know, be able to speak other languages, have a degree, be a solicitor, be someone in life, so that I could defend myself and defend my rights and, wherever I am, be able to give my children a similar background to that. (p. 6)

Roma parents, however, expressed reluctance towards putting pressure on their children to continue education. As reported to Bereményi (2007) by

a Roma parent: "We don't really talk much about schooling at home. . . . I haven't thought about my daughter making efforts to study later on" (p. 6).

A reflection of the increasing importance of education for Roma parents is that there is growing participation in school matters by a small core of families in recent times: around a third of Roma families now actively seek feedback on their children's performance at school and take part in school meetings (FSGG, 2001).

The bargaining power of girls over their schooling depends on their capacity to contribute to domestic chores and family finances and whether or not they are receiving good grades. Additionally, girls need to show that they can behave in secondary schools in an 'appropriate' way from the parental point of view (for example, within the Roma codes of conduct). Roma parents, especially those who have little direct knowledge of the education centres, often look at secondary schools with distrust, as places that foster non-appropriate behaviour (Payá Sánchez et al., 2003). Thus, in order to be able to continue, girls must show to their families that their educational success at the next level is likely (see also Abajo & Carrasco, 2004): to continue their studies, females are required to obtain better results than males. As more females achieve good results at school and continue their education, it is likely that more Roma adults will come to believe that girls and boys have equal rights to study and to advance to secondary school (Instituto de la Mujer y Fundación Secretariado Gitano, 2002).

CONCLUSION

This chapter has offered a brief history of the school enrolment and achievement of school-aged Romani in Spain. Given the demographic profile of the Roma population and their increasing numbers, their school success or failure is of crucial importance not only to them but also to the majority population. The chapter also reviewed alternative explanations of differences in educational achievement by minority groups, making special reference to the situation and special characteristics of the Roma population.

The chapter reviewed a series of initiatives taken in Spain to enable educational provision for Traveller groups, and in particular for the Roma population. While legal initiatives have guaranteed formal equality between the Roma and the non-Roma populations, the implementation of the law has often failed to materialise equality in real life. Throughout the years, however, changes in the law (through the abolition of segregation in the poor performing Spanish "bridge schools" for Roma, to name one example), and in the expectations of the Roma community itself, have increased the levels of schooling of the Roma community as a whole. Unfortunately, Roma school enrolment and achievement still lag behind the levels of the non-Roma population.

Looking in particular at the gender perspective and cumulative disadvantage, I revisited the educational performance of Roma girls and

boys. This strategy enabled me to keep material deprivation and some cultural variables relatively constant, and to focus on the particular role of expectations in educational achievement. Given the background of the Roma population and the internal organisation and division of roles within Roma communities, it was expected that, as is indeed the case in many other EU countries, Roma girls in Spain would be less successful in school than their brothers or male cousins. The data suggest that reality is quite different from expectation: while slightly more Roma boys than girls begin primary school, the number of girls outstrips the number of boys by the end of secondary education. This is due to the commitment of Roma girls to do well in school, to prepare themselves for better jobs, to succeed in intra-family bargaining and to be allowed to continue in their studies.

The discussion presented highlighted the importance of raising expectations—together with enabling flexible provision for travelling groups and improving the material conditions of the Roma families—to improve educational achievement by the Roma population. This would suggest that greater work with Roma families and schoolteachers is needed to raise Roma awareness of the benefits of education and to inform them of the available flexible provision and economic support that can aid in making educational progress viable for them. Greater efforts should also be put in place to enable Roma parents to participate in school life—as also happens with other minority groups. More contact between school staff and Roma parents will not only raise expectations but also serve as a mechanism for improving mutual understanding.

The problems of educating the children of any mobile population are formidable. In Spain, many recommendations to address the problems have been proffered. As I have demonstrated, the traditional approach of the Spanish administration tries to address the "economic deprivation" of the Roma students (see Rodríguez Galán, 1995). More recently, the European Commission has called for additional support for schools, quality standards, language instruction, preschool education and integrated/intercultural education (see European Commission, 2008c).

These are important issues, but other aspects related to provision are in urgent need of solution too, such as the tension between the integration of Roma children in mainstream schools and the provision of customised education, and the lack of clarity regarding choice between mobile learning and distance learning. This is a formidable challenge. Cultural and aspirational aspects, moreover, are more difficult to change than the provision of infrastructure, as they require not only a budgetary allocation from the appropriate authority but also a genuine will by stakeholders to change their thinking and to question their prejudices. While progress has been achieved over the last 30 years in Spain in terms of the education of the Roma population, these issues should be addressed promptly, to take advantage of the momentum gained during the last decade.

NOTES

1. Grañeras Pastrana et al. (1999) reported that the employment rate of the Roma population in Spain was around 25%, overwhelmingly concentrated in manual jobs in industry and agriculture.
2. Non-Roma parents, by contrast, are reported to value education in itself and as a tool for personal development.
3. All translations of quotations and titles are the author's.

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13 Schooling and the Rabaris of Kachchh in India

The Need for Change

Caroline Dyer

> INVISIBILITY, one might say, lies in the eye of the beholder. Farmers' suicides, starvation deaths, malnourished children, some of the world's most anaemic women—400 million people, all inhabiting the drylands. If they still manage to remain invisible to most of the country's politicians, scientists, intellectuals and decision-makers, six decades after independence, clearly there is some explaining to be done. (Shah, 2006, n.p.)

INTRODUCTION

Unlike the policy–practice examples discussed in other chapters in this volume, India has been slow to develop appropriate educational provision for its many migrant populations, and particularly those inhabiting its drylands. This chapter focuses on schooling for one group in the northwestern State of Gujarat, the transhumant pastoralist Rabaris of Kachchh (see Figure 13.1). Rabaris' responses to questions of schooling are reflections of their marginalisation, their resistance to it and their attempts to use schooling as a means of transformation. Faced by shrinking pastures and ever dwindling natural resources as a result of state-driven development policies, Rabaris have become increasingly interested in schooling, primarily as a key to gaining access to employment in the non-pastoral sector.

The nature of schooling provision means, however, that formal education and transhumant pastoralism are pitted as mutually incompatible, for the former demands sedentarisation, but the latter demands movement. Despite an increasing demand for formal schooling among Rabaris themselves, the narrowness of the government's development policies in relation to transhumant pastoralists is a salutary reminder that schools are embedded in a particular hegemony of development that is highly resistant to change. The state's model of progress is predicated on agricultural and industrial expansion—a model that fails to recognise pastoralists' unrivalled ability to exploit the potential of arid, marginal lands and to husband animal breeds that are perfectly adapted to them. The dominant hegemony of progress does not admit of this possibility, and continues to marginalise pastoralist knowledge and a life characterised by movement,

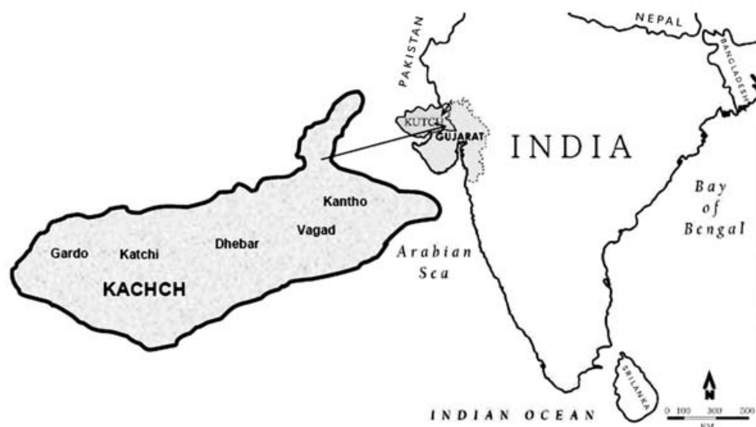

Figure 13.1 Map showing the location of Kachchh in Western India, and distribution of Rabari sub-groups.

apparently assuming them to have neither a place in contemporary society nor a contribution to make to the development of the nation state (see also accounts of this issue in other international contexts in Dyer, 2006).

This chapter draws on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in the mid 1990s with the Rabaris of Kutch, both in villages in Kachchh and on migration with Rabari groups in the State of Gujarat, investigating literacy acquisition (see Figure 13.2; see also Dyer, 2000a). Since that time, there has been not only a major earthquake (January 2001) and subsequent vigorous industrialisation of Kachchh but also an intensifying critique of the inappropriateness of the Gujarat government's development policies in relation to ecological sustainability, which has particular importance for transhumant pastoralists. It is with this critique, which sets the context for the discussion of Rabari demand for education that follows, that this chapter begins.

PASTORALISM AND DEVELOPMENT

Development in Gujarat: Industrial Peaks and Ecological Troughs

In 1960, the former Bombay State was bifurcated into the States of Gujarat and Maharashtra. Gujarat comprises three main geographical zones: the mainland, with its verdant South and dryer North; the peninsula of Saurashtra; and Kachchh (named for its shape, *kaachbo,* or tortoise). Kachchh is a drought-prone, arid area: it has a narrow fertile strip running along the southern coast; a region of formerly lush grasslands in the central Banni area; and salt pans around the borders with Pakistan and 'mainland' Gujarat.

Figure 13.2 Peripatetic literacy education helps an adult Rabari learn to read while on migration (photo credit: Caroline Dyer).

Since its establishment, Gujarat's development plans have aggressively promoted modernisation through industrialisation (for example, Government of Gujarat, 1978, 1985). While the state is at the forefront of India's industrial progress, Kachchh has been poorly integrated into this process and was long seen as a punishment posting for failing civil servants. Mehta (2001) argues that planners failed to understand its agro-pastoral economy and instead encouraged a "relief and scarcity industry" from which powerful villagers, leaders and politicians benefited "at the cost of long-term drought proofing of the region and any long-term benefits going to the rural poor". In 2001, Kachchh found itself at the epicentre of an earthquake measuring about 7.8 on the Richter scale; thousands of lives were lost. Rehabilitation of the region has seen a push towards establishing chemicals, pharmaceuticals, steel, electronics and edible-oil industries in the region—encouraging an influx of migrant labour to the region, and "reckless" use of very limited ground water supplies (Bhatt, 2006; Thacker, 2006).

Success in modernising the state via industrialisation extorts a heavy price. Gujarat State's first Human Development Report (GSHDR, 2004) identifies a "lagging agricultural sector", "depletion and degradation of environmental resources on which a significant proportion of the population depends" and "market distortions" (GSHDR, 2004, p. 58). Traditional land users exploiting marginal resources in ecologically fragile zones are particularly disadvantaged by ecological degradation. They face a shrinking of pastures resulting from curtailed access to Forestry Department land as the state attempts to recharge those resources, and competition with other users as resources for all dwindle or are degraded (see also Agrawal & Saberwal, 2006; Köller-Rollefson, 2007; Shah, 2006). For transhumant pastoralists this is exacerbated by the removal of fodder resources formerly available on state-owned wasteland where this has been sold off for industrial development.

Agricultural policy has been designed to benefit sedentary farmers—for example, by providing subsidised electricity to power irrigation that can sustain all year round crops. This has also contributed to the alarming ingress of salinity and the degradation and depletion of ground water (GSHDR, 2004), which are clear indications that this model of development is not sustainable (Shah, 2006). In the animal husbandry sector, the state under Operation Flood has promoted a 'white revolution' model of dairy development that depends on the husbandry of large animals (cows and buffaloes). Far less policy attention has been paid to the economic potential of small ruminants such as sheep and goats, which are well suited to exploiting marginal dryland resources.

Policy and Pastoralism: A Loud Silence

Despite the presence of many different pastoralist groups all over India—from the Gujjars, Bhotiya and Bakkarwal of the Himalayas (for example, Hoon, 1996; Rao, 2006) through to the Raikas, Rabaris, Ahirs and Bharwads of Western India (for example, Agrawal & Saberwal, 2006; Köller-Rollefson, 2007)—Sharma, Köller-Rollefson and Morton (2003) point out:

> There are no official pastoral development policies: in fact, both the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment and Forest are remarkable for their stance against pastoralists. . . . [T]he considerable indigenous knowledge of pastoralists has not received any recognition and they are perceived as backward. (p. iii)

Instead of nomadic pastoralism being recognised as an honourable field of specialisation, it is widely seen as an "evolutionary cul-de-sac" (Krätli, 2001, p. 15)—a poor relation of agriculture that is in need of modernisation. The quest for pasture and water is seen as wilful, rather than a necessity—a view that, as Klute (1996) reminds us, is held among officials practically everywhere in the world that pastoralists are found. Krätli argues that the

idea of sedentary = development is the paradigm within which development is conceived. His view is upheld by Bharwada and Mahajan (2006), who point out that Indian planners' "inherently negative bias towards mobility" suggests sedentarisation as a prerequisite for any development. They summarise the Gujarat situation as follows:

> All those aspects that characterise most semi-arid regions like low human density, mobile livestock keeping, open grazing over a large area and seasonal adaptability, continue to be seen as signs of 'backwardness' of people and their regions. Models of development for such regions invariably aim to turn them into water-intensive industrial or agricultural zones, even if it means severe damage to the ecosystems and traditional livelihoods of the local people.

THE RABARIS OF KUTCH

The Rabaris of Kachchh were traditionally camel breeders and claim a high Hindu caste status, deriving according to community myth from their direct descent from Sambad, the first Rabari, who was put on earth by Lord Shiva to tend Parvati's camels. A handful of families still keep camels, but most others now keep sheep and goats. The dietary requirements of these animals precipitate the seasonal cycle of migration out of Kachchh in search of suitable fresh animal fodder and water. Gujarati-speaking, the Rabaris are spread in five endogenous sub-groups across Kachchh. Each group wears slightly different jewellery, clothing and tattoos; they have broadly similar social conventions around engagement, marriage, death rites and so on. Social customs are regulated by internal councils of elders, and transgression can lead to the ultimate sanction of outcasting (Dyer, 2005).

The Gardo and Katchi Rabaris to the west of Kachchh are now largely sedentary, or keep very small flocks of animals which can be sustained locally. Among Vagad, Kantho and Dhebar Rabaris, the proportion of sedentary families is growing but the majority still migrate. Many Dhebar families have migrated outside the State of Gujarat altogether, to pastures in other states to the south. Vagad and Kantho Rabaris, and some Dhebars, are transhumant, migrating in extended family groups known as *dhangs* from Kachchh into Gujarat once monsoon-fed supplies of fodder and water in Kachchh are exhausted; and returning once the monsoon comes. Formal education is spreading among the Rabaris of Kachchh, although among transhumant groups, and older Rabaris, adult literacy is rare. For sedentary families it is becoming a social norm to send children to primary school at least; but for the working children of transhumant pastoralist families, formal education is generally out of reach.

Pastoralism as practised by Rabaris is based on a moral economy (Thompson, 1993); Rabaris see themselves as caretakers of animals whose lives are

commended to the mother goddess. However, the religious foundation of their occupation and way of life has become so marginal to the development trajectory of the modern State of Gujarat that its very existence is threatened. Their "situated learning" (Lave & Wenger, 1991) equips children with knowledge integral to successful pastoralism (see Figure 13.3), but cannot provide a sufficiently wide range of life skills to cope well with the contemporary world. Key among those are not only reading and writing but also the ability to 'speak the language of power' required to negotiate successfully the sometimes hostile institutions of present-day society, such as hospitals and police stations.

A Growing Demand for Education

Pastoralists have always survived because they are flexible and adaptive (Agrawal & Saberwal, 2006). In the contemporary development context outlined above, which is exerting multiple pressures on pastoralism, Rabaris' interest in formal education can be seen as continuing a long tradition of finding successful adaptation strategies. At another level, however, it is a profound rupture, for the child who opts into mainstream schooling cannot later opt back into pastoralism. Rabaris' growing demand for education directly correlates with the negative impact on them of development policies and the resultant shrinking pastures.

The closure of forest lands, the industrial development of wastelands, the construction of roads on traditional migratory routes and the almost constant presence of standing crops in areas under irrigation mean that

Figure 13.3 Children's situated learning: Two Rabari boys practise herding techniques, using locally available materials (photo credit: Caroline Dyer).

the passage of migrating animals is now very constrained. This has had two particularly damaging effects on Rabaris: not only is migration now physically very difficult, but it also requires substantial amounts of ready cash. Gone are the days of cash-free exchange, when Rabaris received payment for animal dung and urine in the form of consumables such as grains. Now hard cash is needed—for example, to rent fields from farmers so that animals can browse crop residues or to pay for a forestry licence (or 'come to an agreement' with an officer). Initially, sales of clarified butter were sufficient to meet cash requirements; gradually wool was added; and now Rabaris sell animals for the meat market. Although this final step is carried out via middle men, it is for Rabaris tantamount to selling the blood of their sons. A version of pastoralism that can be sustained only by 'blood money' may be profitable, but it conflicts with Rabaris' view of it as a religious enterprise; and has thus precipitated for Rabaris a moral crisis in respect of their own—and pastoralism's—future.

Here supportive state policy could be helpful, but it unwittingly compounds the moral dilemma. Although outreach services for small-animal breeders are minimal, those which do exist are geared towards commercial profitability. Rabaris are encouraged to sell wool by the kilo (as the market will buy it) rather than by the fleece (the holistic Rabari approach), or to invest in breeds with more marketable wool quality (but with unproven ability to withstand the rigours of transhumance; see also Köller-Rollefson, 2007; Sharma et al., 2003). Thus, the state's focus on drawing Rabaris into the contemporary marketplace contradicts the moral orientation of Rabari pastoralism.

Along with multiple pressures on transhumant pastoralism in the current context come frequent suggestions by farmers, from whom Rabaris rent grazing rights, that they should settle down so that their children can receive an education. Schooling is inextricably linked with the onward march of 'progress'; and Rabaris see their own lack of education as part of their condition of being backward, having 'remained behind': "we have eyes but still we cannot see". They describe themselves, in the terms that others use of them, as "*jungli*" in the pejorative sense of 'backward and uncivilised' rather than merely 'of the jungle'.

Evidence of the links between social status and formal schooling is plentiful. Inevitably, pressures on limited land resources are resulting in more physical disputes, some of which become police cases, where Rabaris are immediately disadvantaged by their inability to read any official documents, probably compounded by official adherence to the view that 'wandering' is a problematic way of life. Furthermore, forestry or police officials at these lower levels are often persons who have lower caste status than Rabaris. Their formal education has helped them overcome the non-privilege of low ascribed status and to reach positions of (relative) power in the service of the contemporary nation state—and over higher caste Rabaris.

The notion of schooling as a force for community development is also strongly advocated by community leaders (Dyer, 2005). In the past, although leadership was hereditary, leaders were expected to demonstrate expertise in matters of animal husbandry. More recently, leadership has been seen to require understanding of the ways of the present-day world—not only reading and writing but also an education, via formal schooling, in the ways of others. A new generation of educated, sedentary leaders now advocates formal education as a tool for change, to curb what they see as wasteful and extravagant community traditions in relation to jewellery, weddings and so on, and to enable Rabaris to know about, and be part of, contemporary life. They view their transhumant peers in colourful metaphors that reflect the centrality of both movement and animals in their lives: like "a horse stuck in mud"; and "others have gone ahead, and we have got left behind". Moreover, they believe that "education is like glasses"—it enables one both to "see the way forward" and to "speak the voice of power" (Dyer & Choksi, 1998).

A demand for education emerges strongly from both transhumant Rabari families and community leaders, all of whom associate schooling with change and with inclusion as citizens of the current nation state. Education (in the form of formal schooling) is primarily seen by transhumant Rabaris as an adaptation strategy within pastoralism. They seek to develop multi-resource households (Chatty, 2006) in which most children are reared to be pastoralists, learning their traditional occupation through practice but in which an investment is also made in the schooling of one child (usually a boy). His schooling should support the family's economic diversification, equipping him with both the skills and the social capital that will facilitate employment in the formal sector; in effect, this strategy provides an insurance policy against the failure of pastoralism. Leaders, in turn, see education's modernising potential as critical to future community development. How, then, does the state engage with Rabaris' growing demand for educational inclusion?

TOWARDS UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION: POLICY, PRACTICES AND INCLUSION

Universal Element Education: Access and Planning Norms

The policy expectation (for example, NPE [National Policy on Education], 1986/1992) that formal schooling can have a positive effect on profound social inequalities—a discourse that Rabaris have in some ways appropriated—is contentious in both theory (for example, Apple & Aasen, 2003) and practice. Since the 1950s, India has articulated a policy commitment to the idea of Universal Elementary Education and now has a national Universalising Education Programme (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan) that aims to

achieve this goal by 2010, five years before the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goal deadline of 2015. How migrant groups will be accommodated remains unclear, however, since national-level policy remains silent on their educational inclusion. The low policy visibility of such groups (Shah, 2006) is an important factor in ensuring that mobility as a dimension of access remains inadequately addressed, despite many years of policy focus on improving access to schooling.

Improving access has predominantly taken the form of the massive expansion of the network of formal schooling facilities. Expansion has been orientated to the policy norm of the "Provision of primary schools in all habitations having a population of 300 persons within a walking distance of 1 km. for children of 6–11 years age group" (Education for All [EFA] India, 2000)—a measure linked to an assumption of only sedentary populations. In addition to this unremarked silence on those who are not sedentary, the quantitative expansion of the formal system has also neglected qualitative aspects, for "The government did open new primary schools at a rapid pace, but failed to care for the material and pedagogical conditions prevailing in them" (Kumar, 1991, p. 185).

Gujarat has made relatively rapid progress in establishing a primary school network, reaching 97% coverage of the policy norm by 1986 (5AIESGuj, 1988; Dyer, 2000b). Net school enrolment of children aged 6–14 reached 72.66% in 1999–2000 (National Sample Surveys, as cited in GSHDR, 2004). Thus, despite the expansion of facilities, almost 30% of the known eligible population is out of school. Statistics such as these can be treated as little more than trend indicators, since the surveys on which they are based are unlikely to capture reliable information about migrating households. They suggest, however, that the state's struggle to retain children in school is acute: nearly half (47.25%) of the number of children enrolled in Year One do not continue after Year Five (GSHDR, 2004).

In 1994 a vast reform program in the shape of the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) was launched, as a joint venture between the Government of India and international agencies. DPEP articulated an integrated set of intentions aiming towards "holistic pedagogical renewal" and achieving the universalisation of primary education through the "increasing access, retention and quality of learning" (NCERT [National Council of Educational Research and Training], n.d., p. 15). However, existing spatial norms still governed the provision of schooling facilities in DPEP's aim "To provide, *according to national norms*, access for all children to primary education classes (I–V), i.e. primary schooling wherever possible, or its equivalent non-formal education" (Government of India/DPEP, 2000; emphasis added). These norms were subsequently challenged by the State of Madhya Pradesh, which launched its internationally lauded Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) as a response to the still too great distance between planning norms and geospatial realities for very small children[1]. The EGS pioneered improved school access in the most hostile of terrains, but the assumption of a *sedentary* learner group remained unchallenged

even from this radical quarter. DPEP itself has been subsumed along with other initiatives under the overarching Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan umbrella, but the national Abhiyan has yet to focus on educational inclusion from the perspective of those who migrate, such as pastoralists. Any policy initiatives focusing on reconciling movement and education therefore arise from individual state governments (for example, ToI, 2003); and, if at all they do, they are sporadic and rarely sustained (Rao, 2006).

Social Justice and the Problems of Labelling Education

The often poor quality of the public schooling system—its inability to retain those children who do enrol, let alone assure their learning achievements, and its resistance to reform—tends to be captured in commentaries by emotive adjectives such as "dismal" or "bleak", for reasons that are discussed in various publications (see for example, Chopra & Jeffery, 2005; Govinda, 2002; The PROBE Team, 1999). While the analysis of how public schools serve to sustain social disadvantage, rather than support social transformation, is growing increasingly detailed, migrant groups such as Rabaris still remain outside the purview of even these critical accounts of educational exclusion.

In 1950, the Constitution of India recognised under specific constitutional Schedules the need for designated underprivileged groups, now known as Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs), to receive the specific support of the nation state. A further category of Other Backward Castes (OBCs) was added following the Mandal Commission report of 1980. Taking the view that education is instrumental in social transformation, the nation state entitles members of these recognised ST, SC or OBC groups to free formal education and access to a reserved quota of jobs in the government service. A mounting body of evidence (for example, Jha & Jhingran, 2002); Ramachandran, 2003; Sinha, 1997; Subrahmanian, 2003; Vasavi, 2003) demonstrates the subtle, and persistent, ways in which schools discriminate against children of such backgrounds. In keeping with long-entrenched traditions of social discrimination along caste and gender lines, this critique probes educational discrimination in relation to stigmatised caste or ethnic identities (that is, SCs, STs and OBCs). A major challenge to the project of social transformation through education is that those who are prejudiced "do not see themselves as such, but view their negative beliefs and behaviour . . . as rational responses to a group which is seen to violate the professed ideals of their society" (Velaskar, 1998, p. 227).

Being higher caste Hindus (and therefore not SCs or OBCs) and not 'indigenous', since they trace their origins to Afghanistan (and therefore not STs), the Rabaris of Kachchh are officially invisible to the need for state protection. Despite the fact that they are clearly educationally excluded, Rabaris' lack of an official label of non-privilege excludes them from the kind of state support to which members of labelled groups are entitled—policy commitment to the notion of *universal* primary education notwithstanding. But if Rabaris do

not have one of the kinds of stigmatised caste identity that comprise state-recognised categories of disadvantage, they nevertheless suffer from a different but unarticulated stigmatisation. For, as we have seen above, mobility is seen by policy and village communities alike as a transgression of an unarticulated ideal that being sedentary is a prerequisite for human development (see also Klute, 1996; Krätli, 2001; Rao, 2006).

Accessing Schooling: Rabari Responses and Demand for Education

The expansion of public schooling facilities outlined above means that both in Kachchh and throughout the areas through which Rabaris migrate there are primary schools. But village schools have often demonstrated precarious quality. Many operate as multi-grade schools by default, owing to room and staffing constraints; teacher absenteeism is high; and children's attendance is often also erratic. This, coupled with the highly structured and sequenced 'lock step' learning embodied in the textbook, does not lend schools any of the flexibility that is a prerequisite to considering how migrating learners might be drawn into the system.

In relation to where they are from day to day, transhumant pastoralists also have very little flexibility, but Rabaris can organise children's working days to include time for formal learning (see Dyer, 2000a, for an account of education during migration). Learners like Rabaris challenge the underlying organisational assumptions of general public provision of this nature; the imperative of movement to sustain the animals on which Rabaris depend is diametrically opposed to the imperative imposed by the current model of schooling provision. While educational services for transhumant children need to be able to accommodate both mobility and interruptions in order to include them, current provision places schooling out of their reach by demanding their presence in the same place, every day. Rabaris' engagement with such schools is thus limited to looking through their windows to see what is going on inside as they pass by.

The non-availability of networks of schools in villages along migratory routes leaves Rabaris with three schooling options: (1) the whole family sedentarises so that children can go to school; (2) parents migrate with their animals and some of the children while the child to be schooled is left in the village in Kachchh with older family members; or (3) for a very few, children use the Rabari boarding school while the family migrates.

In the past, parents choosing the first two options have often been disappointed by the quality of village schools. As a migrating mother put it in the mid 1990s, "Five years will go and we will feel my son is studying, but he won't learn a word. Women are teaching them and we can't say anything, like 'Sister, it has been five years; why can't my son write a word still?'". The DPEP, however, included Kachchh in its third phase of quality improvements, an impetus that received a further boost from infrastructural reconstruction following the earthquake. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this is strengthening the trend evident in the 1990s of splitting the family unit to

accommodate both transhumant animal husbandry and sedentary schooling; sometimes whole families sedentarise, perhaps precipitated by animal loss, but also deliberately to facilitate school attendance.

The third of the schooling options does not enforce the sedentarisation of the family, and allows children to access the mainstream curriculum while learning in a Rabari cultural environment. This is made possible by a boarding elementary school set up by Rabari leaders but, with about 200 private (that is, for fee) places, this option, while favoured by the Rabaris, is available only to a few. This school gains state recognition by using the state curriculum and books and by employing state-trained teachers—the Rabari managers of the schools have appointed Rabaris from sedentarised families living in northern Gujarat to these posts. Parents are welcome to come and go as they please. The state also stipulated that a certain number of places had to be reserved for girls; they remained unfilled at first, but there is now some demand for girls' schooling, which leaders actively advocate as crucial to community development (see Dyer, 2005). This boarding school meets Rabari expectations very well: it equips children with the mainstream knowledge that families seek to facilitate diversification, but schooling is mediated with respect for Rabari sociocultural values. However, despite its social embeddedness, this school does not challenge the hegemonic construction of a complete separation between the knowledges of schooling and pastoralism. Because Rabaris do not bear a label that would entitle them to official support, there is no reason why Gujarat State should offer any financial assistance to assist in building more schools that suit this group's educational demand so well; and Rabari philanthropy and resources have so far not been able to stretch to the establishment of other such boarding schools.

WHERE NOW?

All three schooling options currently available thus serve Rabaris in their aims of accumulating the 'mainstream' knowledge that is needed to diversify away from pastoralism. The forms and processes of formal education that have never in the past created a link between schooling and pastoralism continue to deny any possible instrumental role for education in adapting pastoralism to an industrialised present-day context. Transhumant pastoralism in current Gujarat is at best obsolescent: in the worldviews of both planners and increasing numbers of pastoralists—particularly their leaders—pastoralist knowledge is relegated to the past. Its relevance to an ecologically sustainable future is visible neither to the expert Rabaris themselves nor to the planners pursuing their vision of contemporary Gujarat.

State support for all out-of-school children is implicit in its policy pledges of universalisation yet, in relation to the promises of Universal Elementary Education and Education for All, policy initiatives at both federal and nation state levels consistently neglect migrant groups. Policy conceptualisations

of access to schooling do not cater to spatial mobility; rather, the insufficiently changing nature of norms governing the provision of physical facilities puts the onus on the mobile would-be user of the system to find a way to access those facilities. For any Rabari family who wishes to educate a child, decision-making about education entails considering some level of sedentarisation. Thus, the development hegemony of sedentarisation as a precondition for progress is upheld both by the education system and by potential school users.

The inaccessibility of schools by which transhumant Rabaris are surrounded as they migrate is, in their case, exacerbated by their invisibility to educational policy initiatives specifically targeting the disadvantaged. State support is guided by its labelling of the groups who are entitled to its focused assistance, but Rabaris do not fit existing policy parameters of disadvantage because of their relatively high caste status, and so the labels do not apply to them. As an officially unidentified group, despite their evident educational deprivation and disadvantage, Rabaris' needs and interest in being part of the 'universal' primary education pledge pass unnoticed. In this way also, existing policy parameters serve to perpetuate their educational exclusion.

Meanwhile, the environmental cost of the rapid 'development' of Kachchh is rising and current patterns of growth are emerging ever more strongly as unsustainable (for example, Bharwada & Mahajan, 2006; GSHDR, 2004). The assimilation of Rabaris into the socioeconomic mainstream via a process of sedentarisation is an accelerating trend. The immediate future may be characterised by optimism; recent changes to the local economy of Kachchh offer Rabaris more hope than before of employment in the non-pastoral sector, although competition for jobs is sharpened by the influx of migrant labour (GSHDR, 2004). There is currently considerable activity by pastoralist non-government organisations and pastoralist representatives who seek to bring about a major and much needed policy shift in the nation state's stance towards transhumant pastoralism (Köller-Rollefson, 2007). If the pastoralists of Gujarat are not to be "lost and forgotten" (Bharwada & Mahajan, 2006; Sharma et al., 2003), this activity must attempt to tackle the inertia of the education system in relation to those who migrate to earn their livelihoods. The focus of such dialogue needs to challenge the legitimacy of a public education system that upholds through its inactions and omissions the assumptions that formal schooling: (1) can be provided only in a sedentary format; and (2) does not have to be relevant to pastoralists' knowledge and ways of life. Such dialogue needs also to question whether that public education system is making any real contribution to human development.

NOTES

1. Under the EGS, the State Government guaranteed to provide a primary schooling facility within 90 days of receiving a community demand for it,

providing that the community could demonstrate 25 learners in a tribal area (40 in a non-tribal area) in a habitation with no schooling facility within a kilometre (UNDP [United Nations Development Program], 2001, p. 264).

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14 Inclusion Versus Specialisation
Issues in Transforming the Education of Australian Show Children

Geoff Danaher and Patrick Alan Danaher

ABSTRACT

Despite social justice rhetoric, it is more difficult and expensive for schools to cater for those who deviate from accepted social norms. At the same time, minorities often find efforts to include them in mainstream schooling uncomfortable and even frightening. Yet specialised schooling seems even more expensive, and does nothing to challenge existing marginalising stereotypes.

This dilemma about the appropriate 'mix' between inclusion and specialisation has been played out in the recent educational experiences of Australian show children. Having suffered from educational neglect for generations, parents lobbied for a specialist program that still entailed interactions with local children and the dominant schooling bureaucracy. More recently, however, their efforts have seen the establishment of a separate school operating exclusively to the rhythms of their mobile lifestyle.

This chapter presents these eddies and flows in the education of Australian show children as the encapsulation of broader debates about the purposes and effects of educational provision in the early 21st century. The issue of inclusion versus specialisation is linked with a discursive struggle involving material realities and ideological assumptions about schooling. In the context of that struggle, the show people have found a temporary settlement rather than a permanent resolution in their search for changing schools and educational transformation.

INTRODUCTION

A crucial continuing debate in relation to appropriate forms of educational provision and hence a key element of discourses about changing schools is focused on the appropriate mix between inclusion and specialisation. This debate has assumed multiple manifestations as broader ideas about particular types of learners have developed and changed and as questions about the education of what might be termed "minority" or "marginalised" groups (see also Anteliz, Coombes & Danaher, 2006) have evolved.

As is developed below, the terms framing the debate have likewise changed in response to the prevailing assumptions about and nomenclature for describing such groups. For example, "inclusion" has also been called "integration" and "mainstreaming" with reference to students identified as having special educational needs (Farrell & Ainscow, 2002; Stainback, Stainback & Jackson, 1992). At the same time, "specialisation" has been named "segregation" in relation to different kinds of disabilities (Cooney, Jahoda, Gumley & Knott, 2006), ethnic (Massey, 2006) and religious (Leonard, 2006) minorities, socioeconomic background (Oakes, 2005) and residential location (Brunello & Checchi, 2007). "Specialisation" has also been termed "separatism" in particular contexts (see for example Doerr, 2004; Zine, 2007). These names often have positive or negative valences according to the positions on the inclusion–specialisation spectrum occupied by the educators and researchers who use them.

From this perspective, it follows that the debate about inclusion versus specialisation within Traveller, nomadic and migrant education must be seen against the backdrop of this broader ambivalence about the pros and cons of integrated or segregated educational provision for minority or marginalised groups (Currie, 2006). Similarly, that debate goes to the heart of contemporary discussions about the purposes and outcomes of education. It also links with concerns about changing schools in ways that maximise opportunities and fulfil aspirations for citizens and that celebrate the diversity of those citizens' location and ethnicity.

This chapter engages with, and hopefully contributes to, that debate and its wider ramifications by focusing on the educational experiences of Australian show people. Those experiences have changed from decades of neglect and marginalisation to having a specialised program within a larger institution (G. R. Danaher & Danaher, 2000; P. A. Danaher, 1998, 2001) to having their own dedicated school (G. R. Danaher, Moriarty & Danaher, 2006). Yet this change is far from being understood as permanent or progressivist (Foucault, 1991) in the sense of being a guaranteed improvement in schooling for show children. Instead these developments can be seen as temporary settlements and uneasy truces in the ongoing struggle for meaning and understanding by mobile communities and their supporters and in the associated discourses about changing schools by, for and with such communities.

The chapter is divided into four sections:

- A conceptual framework posited on the interplay between inclusion and specialisation;
- Selected manifestations of that interplay in Traveller, nomadic and migrant educational provision;
- Selected data analysis about the Australian show people's attitudes to that interplay and their aspirations for changing schools;
- Concluding implications of those attitudes and aspirations for changing schools and transforming education for Australian show children.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: INCLUSION VERSUS SPECIALISATION

The discussion of the comparative advantages of inclusion and specialisation has been canvassed in the literature on educational provision. On the one hand, inclusion is preferred in principle and currently constitutes "the dominant . . . agenda" (Macleod, 2006, p. 125). On the other hand, there are significant hindrances in place in schools, hindrances that have impeded its practice (see for example Kenny, Mc Neela, Shevlin & Daly, 2000; Kenny, Shevlin, Noonan Walsh & Mc Neela, 2005).

Farrell and Ainscow (2002, p. 1) point to a great deal of uncertainty about the definition of inclusion. They note also a shift from the terms "integration" and "mainstreaming", which were employed in the 1980s to refer to the placement of students designated as having "special educational needs" in mainstream schools (p. 3). This shift is identified by Stainback, Stainback and Jackson (1992, p. 3) as emphasising the need for all children to be included in the social and educational life of their schools and classrooms, not merely placed in those classrooms. By contrast, integration implied that the focus was on integrating an individual or group who had been excluded back into the mainstream of school and community life. The emphasis on inclusion suggests that such exclusion should not occur in the first place. Slee (1993, p. 3) cites an address to educators in Melbourne in 1989 considering whether integration is understood as an outsider coming in or alternatively as the creation of a school culture that accepts all comers. Yet Booth and Ainscow (1998) contend that it is impossible to consider inclusion without also taking into account those barriers that have led to the exclusion of some students. They also challenge the focus on special educational needs, calling for an approach that is responsive to the diversity of all learners rather than concentrating on a group of students categorised as having special needs or disabilities (p. 2).

The focus on special educational needs in relation to inclusion is also problematic. Historically the term seems to be linked to students with mental or physical disabilities (Booth & Ainscow, 1998). Yet this raises issues to do with the inclusion of other students, such as those designated as "gifted and talented", some of whom can exhibit the same behavioural difficulties as students with disabilities, and who can experience learning problems of their own (Smith, 2006). There are also those whose exclusion is based on cultural rather than individual factors, such as Travellers, nomads and migrant workers. It is on this basis that Winstanley (2006, p. 24) concludes: "The able population must be inclusive. Children with learning problems must be allowed the opportunity to benefit from provision, as must children from disadvantaged backgrounds."

Some of the impetus for inclusion emerges from educational bureaucracies. In 2000 OFSTED (then the Office for Standards in Education and subsequently the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills), responsible for overseeing education in England, stated:

> An educationally inclusive school is one in which the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every young person matters. Effective schools are educationally inclusive schools. This shows, not only in their performance, but also in their ethos and their willingness to offer new opportunities to pupils who may have experienced previous difficulties. . . . The most effective schools do not take educational inclusion for granted. They identify any pupils who may be missing out, difficult to engage, or feeling in some way apart from what the school seeks to provide. (as cited in Farrell & Ainscow, 2002, pp. 3–4)

Historically, special education provision in many Western countries initially took the form of separate special schools set up by religious or philanthropic organisations, which were eventually adopted and extended as part of national educational arrangements. This was the situation until the early 1990s, when the appropriateness of such a separate system was challenged on the grounds of both human rights and effectiveness (Farrell & Ainscow, 2002, p. 5). In terms of the human rights perspective, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child endorsed the move towards inclusion. This inclusive orientation was also agreed to by 92 governments and 25 international organisations in the Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education in June 1994 (p. 6). In terms of effectiveness, Booth and Ainscow (1998, p. 4) link the move towards inclusiveness with the provision of appropriate and sufficient resources needed for learning.

It is striking that, even within the context of moves towards inclusive education, the issue of whether mainstreaming or special provision is the preferred option remains open. For example, the Tomlinson committee in its national enquiry into further education provision for students with disabilities and/or difficulties in learning in England in 1996 defined inclusion in terms of obtaining the greatest degree of match or fit between individual learning requirements and provision. It left decisions about whether such match or fit is obtained in mainstream or segregated settings to education and training professionals (Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education, n.d.). This suggests that it is possible to complement a commitment to inclusive education with a somewhat segregated environment.

Thus the conceptual and practical relationship between inclusion and specialisation in educational provision varies from mutually opposed to complementary. Similarly, preferred views about the most appropriate form of that relationship also vary across place and time, with the pendulum in favour of either end of the spectrum swinging in response to broader debates about educational funding and organisation. It is against this backdrop that approaches to inclusion and specialisation in relation to Traveller, nomadic and migrant education and the contribution of those approaches to changing schools and potentially to transforming education must be understood.

INCLUSION VERSUS SPECIALISATION IN TRAVELLER, NOMADIC AND MIGRANT EDUCATION

Despite the necessary selectivity of this section of the chapter, it is clear that there is considerable diversity in previous and current enactments of inclusion and/or specialisation in Traveller, nomadic and migrant education. This is the case both in different countries and with regard to different mobile communities. Perhaps because they are more visible, the examples of specialisation are in some ways easier to identify and are canvassed first.

Specialised provision for mobile communities has assumed a variety of forms. One manifestation is a mobile school that travels along the same circuits and at the same time as the community. Some of these are relatively recent (the Queensland School for Travelling Show Children having opened in 2000 [G. R. Danaher et al., 2006]). Others like the mobile classrooms for fairground and circus children in the Netherlands have been in operation for generations. Still others have returned to previously enacted and subsequently abandoned types of provision, such as the nomadic schools for children of reindeer herders in Siberia that began under the Soviet authorities in the 1930s and that re-emerged in the 1990s as part of the Russian Federation (Zhirkova, 2006).

By contrast, the mobile schools that functioned in different areas in northern Nigeria to accompany the nomadic pastoralists there were deemed failures. This was largely because they imposed centrally designed curricula and did not engage with the pastoralists' distinctive culture and educational needs (Umar & Tahir, 2000, pp. 232–233; see also Krätli with Dyer, 2006, p. 17). Yet another version of mobile schooling was the non-formal peripatetic literacy program developed by two educational researchers for adult women among the Rabari nomadic pastoralists in Kachchh in western India (Dyer, 2000, pp. 245–247). Other examples of mobile schools, each manifestation with its distinctive contexts and features, include "Tent-schools, schools-on-wheels and various kinds of collapsible schools" in countries as varied as Algeria, Iran and Mauritania (Krätli with Dyer, 2006, p. 17). There are also mobile schools and special hostels among the nomadic pastoralist Bakkarwal in the western Himalayas (Rao, 2006, pp. 64–69).

A variation on the use of mobile schools that suits the particular demographic and geographical circumstances of the target community is the educational provision for children living on Dutch barges that regularly move around the Netherlands and neighbouring European countries. That provision combines six berth schools (the first having opened in 1967) that unlike the families' barges are fixed in place in different Dutch ports, three mobile teachers who visit the children on board their barges and a set of distance education learning materials (Scholten, 2000). Another version of the visiting mobile teachers was the *accompanatrices* employed by a local authority in Brittany, France, to visit the homes of Gypsy Travellers, to provide support such as transport to and from school and to give classroom assistance as required. The difference from the Dutch teachers visiting barge families

is that the Dutch berth schools are specialised for bargees (barge residents) whereas the Breton schools are designed for all children of relevant age in the area (Moriarty, Danaher, Kenny & Danaher, 2004, p. 19).

A similar approach to the Dutch berth schools, of having a specialised but non-mobile institution serving a largely mobile school population, is represented by St. Kieran's National School for Travellers (Kenny, 1997; see also Moriarty et al., 2004, pp. 14, 19). Combining preschool and primary school provision and located south of Dublin, the school is located in a permanent building in an area where Irish Travellers are often mobile but remain largely within the school radius.

A very different approach from the use of separate mobile or permanent schools has been pursued in England, with Traveller Education Support Services providing specialised support for 'regular' schools to teach mobile students when they attend those schools during the winter months. They also provide distance education learning materials when those students travel with their families during the summer months (P. A. Danaher, Coombes & Kiddle, 2007; Kiddle, 1999). One example of the potential success of this approach has been the provision of school-based distance learning and the development of close partnerships with fairground parents by the Devon Consortium Traveller Education Service (Kiddle, 2000, pp. 269–272). A broadly similar approach operates in Scotland, where some schools have developed enduringly warm relations with the Gypsy Travellers who attend year after year in the long winter season. By contrast, the Scottish comprehensive schooling system has often been inflexible and unhelpful for interrupted learners such as the Travellers (Jordan, 2000, pp. 255–259).

Some mobile communities are too small and/or organisationally dispersed to have sufficient cultural and financial capital to lobby successfully for either separate schooling or specialised provision within a broader educational system. In such situations their options are generally limited to attending the local schools along the circuits that they travel or alternatively to employing tutors to support their children in completing distance education programs. For example, the seasonal workers who pick fruit and vegetables in several locations throughout Australia have reported varied levels of understanding of and engagement with their situation by teachers in local schools (Henderson, 2001, 2004, 2005a, 2005b, 2008). Australian circus families have experienced similar educational options (Moriarty, 2000), including attending local schools for one or two days in smaller towns and a few weeks or months during the circus winter camps (St Leon, 2000, pp. 290–291). Early in the 20th century they had a dedicated schoolroom on a special circus train operated by Wirth Brothers Circus (St Leon, 2000, p. 292).

As noted above, distance education and its more recent incarnation of online education have also been explored as options for particular mobile communities. One example was the provision by the Brisbane School of Distance Education in Queensland, Australia, for show and circus children

between 1989 and 1999 (P. A. Danaher, 1998, 2001). Another example was a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation adult education project directed at Mongolian nomadic women in the Gobi desert (Krätli with Dyer, 2006, p. 18). In the United States, Project SMART is a national distance education program for children of migrant farm workers when they move to other states in the summer months. It is an integrated package of educational technologies, including live interactive satellite televised instruction, live non-interactive televised instruction, delayed televised instruction and videotaped lessons, as well as streaming audio and video, reception via computer stations and Internet tutoring options (Meyertholen, Castro & Salinas, 2004).

Yet another option has been for children attending local schools while their families continue along their mobile circuits to live in boarding schools. Such schools sometimes serve several different types of students apart from those who are mobile and at other times are established specially for students from mobile families. Examples have been evident in Algeria, Ethiopia, Kenya, Qinghai Province in central China, Siberia and Tibet (Krätli with Dyer, 2006, p. 18) and also for the Harasiis pastoral nomads of Oman (Chatty, 2006).

Thus there have been, and continue to be, experiments with specific combinations of elements along the inclusion–specialisation spectrum for different groups of mobile learners. Each of these enactments of schooling options is seen by its developers as having particular benefits and drawbacks. This demonstrates that decisions about Traveller, nomadic and migrant educational provision reflect the complex intersection between material resources and ideological assumptions about such provision. It is against the background of that intersection that the Australian show people's attitudes to inclusion versus specialisation for their children's education must be seen.

AUSTRALIAN SHOW PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES TO INCLUSION VERSUS SPECIALISATION

This section of the chapter presents an equally selective account of the Australian show people's attitudes to the interplay between inclusion and specialisation in educating their children and their aspirations for changing schools. This account draws on a wider corpus of qualitative semi-structured interview data gleaned from show children, their parents, their teachers and educational officials between 1992 and 1996 inclusive (P. A. Danaher, 1998, 2001) and in 2003 (G. R. Danaher et al., 2006; Moriarty et al., 2004). The research was located in the interpretivist and post-structuralist paradigms, with a focus on understanding the participants' worldviews analysed through various conceptual frameworks directed at addressing research questions about the show people's experiences of and perceptions of education.

The specialised program for show and circus children provided by the Brisbane School for Travelling Show Children was established in 1989. Prior to this, the Australian show community had a limited range of educational options for their children, centred on attending local schools along the circuits or attending boarding schools (P. A. Danaher, 2001, p. 255). In many cases these were not really options at all. This was so because, according to one show parent: "There was a time when a lot of showmen I don't think had any means of teaching their children, and if they couldn't afford to send them to school, they didn't get the schooling at all" (as cited in P. A. Danaher, p. 256). Or as another parent summarised the situation: ". . . the kids just went to boarding school. They just went to school from town to town until they were about ten and then they went to boarding school" (as cited in P. A. Danaher, p. 258). A variation on that theme highlighted the same enduring absence of opportunities for sustained formal learning:

> None of us could afford boarding school. We couldn't afford it, and again when we came to town you'd take your children to a school and nine times out of ten they were put down the back of the class. And they were given a little project to do while they were there for two or three days. They learn very little this way. (as cited in P. A. Danaher, p. 259)

The few options available to the show community constituted neither inclusion nor specialisation but instead neglect and marginalisation.

The establishment of the specialised program within the Brisbane School of Distance Education, largely in response to effective lobbying by show parents, was felt by parents to represent a welcome shift in their community's location on the inclusion–specialisation spectrum. It was directed at preschool and primary school children and combined face-to-face and distance education. Teachers worked with the children in a spare classroom in a local school or in a church hall at selected points along the circuits. At other times the teachers communicated with the children via telephone and facsimile machine when the teachers returned to Brisbane (such as when the children moved interstate) (P. A. Danaher, 1998, 2001).

The show community expressed considerable pride in the program's establishment and the improvement that it represented in their children's educational prospects and outcomes. One parent stated that ". . . here you've got the best of both worlds. You can still work [and] you're not leaving your children. Your kids are still there all the time and that, so it's good" (as cited in P. A. Danaher, 2001, p. 328). Another parent evoked a communal sense of ownership and agency in relation to the show children's education: "Now with the program they're not only a part of something that belongs to them, that they feel a part of, we have a gauge, a learning system that we can control" (as cited in P. A. Danaher, p. 329).

There was a generally favourable view of the program at the time of the first phase of data gathering in the early and mid 1990s. Despite this, the show parents lobbied successfully for the establishment of a separate

institution, the Queensland School for Travelling Show Children, which opened in 2000. The school functions under the auspices of Education Queensland, the state government department overseeing government schools. It operates two mobile classrooms that follow the children along two predetermined itineraries throughout eastern Australia with state of the art technology and has such appurtenances of 'mainstream' schools as a school uniform (G. R. Danaher et al., 2006; Moriarty et al., 2004).

The show parents' articulation of the reasons for their lobbying for the creation of their own school varied, partly according to the level of their respective involvement in that lobbying. One parent conveyed a fairly generalised aspiration for changing schools that linked with an empathy with the children working with a new set of local teachers in each new town along the circuits:

> When I think this program would go in leaps and bounds, what would help it, is to have a teacher who could travel with us. . . . Because what we found the problem is, every time the children go into the next classroom, that whole first day is taken up just finding out for that new teacher where the kids are at. But if there was a teacher that could keep them in line and organised and know each town where they were at, it would be so [good], and they could work one on one every day with a different child. It would be such a bonus to the program; it would be excellent. (as cited in P. A. Danaher, 2001, p. 366)

A different parent expressed a more strategic aspiration based on a self-assessment of how show children differ from the kinds of learners for whom the Brisbane School of Distance Education had catered primarily. In the process this parent sounded a clarion call in favour of changing schools focused on specialisation:

> We tried to do it where they were integrated, but we're a different system altogether. The distance . . . education . . . kids are there. . . . They're out a hundred k[ilometre]s on a property, and they come to town every so often, and they're contactable, and they're there. Our kids are completely a different system. So we can't take their rules and make them work for us. And we've done it for a few years, and we've found it's just inhibiting us too much on what we can strive for and do. . . . And we are specialised, so therefore we should specialise on us. (as cited in P. A. Danaher, 2001, pp. 367–368)

CONCLUSION: INCLUSION VERSUS SPECIALISATION, CHANGING SCHOOLS AND TRANSFORMING EDUCATION FOR AUSTRALIAN SHOW CHILDREN

Changing schools and potentially transforming education in relation to mobile communities are challenging and complex propositions. A key

element of that challenge and complexity derives from positioning inclusion and specialisation in educational provision as mutually exclusive options. Doing so means that there is inevitably loss and risk associated with selecting one rather than the other option, as when Levinson (2007) contended that segregated provision for Gypsy Travellers "would constitute a lost opportunity for communities struggling to understand one another" (p. 33). Indeed, engaging in such positioning reflects the ongoing otherness of mobility and is potentially complicit with perpetuating that otherness.

This chapter has charted the move from the targeted program within the Brisbane School of Distance Education to the separate institution of the Queensland School for Travelling Show Children. In some ways this move can be interpreted as a shift from inclusion and integration to specialisation and segregation in schooling provision for the Australian show children. From a different perspective, the Brisbane School of Distance Education program was itself specialised and was unable to contribute much to enhancing communication and understanding between the show community and other groups of students associated with the school.

Certainly most show parents see the establishment of their own school as a significant move forward in redressing generations of formal educational neglect and marginalisation. Some parents conceded the potential risk of segregation attendant on that establishment, not least in restricting opportunities for cooperative and collaborative learning between show children and other learners. Nevertheless the strongly held consensus is that that risk is outweighed significantly by the benefits of having much greater control over the operations of the school and how their children are educated (at least at preschool and primary levels).

A major theme of this chapter has been the close link between the show community's attitudes towards formal and informal learning on the one hand and their aspirations for changing schools and potentially transforming education on the other. The separate school emerged as a direct consequence of their lobbying educational officials and political figures, as the specialised distance education program had emerged previously. This point does not diminish counter arguments about the value/s of inclusion and the risks of specialisation (which at least some show parents acknowledge in any case). On the other hand, it does resonate with contemporary discourses that emphasise the importance of learner, parental and community involvement and agency in decision-making about educational provision.

More broadly, the specialist program and now the separate school for the Australian show children can be seen as temporary settlements rather than permanent resolutions in this particular mobile community's ongoing encounters with educational authorities and systems. Like the notions of inclusion and specialisation, changing schools and educational transformation in the context of Traveller, nomadic and migrant education are located in shifting sands and on moving foundations. These sands and foundations are in turn shaped alike by current material possibilities and ideological assumptions about and aspirations for education.

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Conclusion
Whither Changing Schools?

Judith Remy Leder

Like the tornados of the Gulf of Mexico and the melting ice caps, these 14 chapters serve as a warning to us all. They present a grim picture of what happens when generous theory and heroic effort collide with the walls of ignorance, resistance and prejudice. The authors of these essays show with clarity how nomad families from Australia, England, Ireland, Italy, India, Nigeria, Norway, Scotland, Siberia and Spain—and, by extrapolation, Travellers in every corner of the world—are marginalised, ignored and disrespected. These accounts are practical exemplifications of why there are so many "mute inglorious Miltons" not only in Gray's churchyard but also in the contemporary world.

Still, amid these profoundly depressing reports, there *are* some things to celebrate. Each of the authors records some success in dealing with the education of nomads: the Gitano Development Programme (Souto-Otero), Even Start (Padfield and Cameron), St. Kieran's (Kenny and Binchy), distance education (Danaher and Danaher), Sami University College (Özerk) and the Rabari boarding school (Dyer) all hold out real promise for the children of migrant families. Unfortunately, however, what these chapters most accurately reflect is the disastrous failure of formal school systems across the globe. Despite years of effort, things have not improved (Padfield and Cameron). Nomad children are still coming in 'last' in standardised tests and are being blamed for their position in the academic competition.

The presenting aspect of this broad disaster is teachers, who are described as unaware of their prejudices (Dyer), possessed of limited discursive resources (Henderson) and having only an abstract understanding of cultural diversity (Gobbo). They think in stereotypes (Padfield and Cameron) and have negative expectations of their students (Souto-Otero). Even more damningly, teachers are said to *foster* the barriers between the children of nomads and the settled community by "protect[ing] conventions that are deemed to be significant in the maintenance of order" (Levinson); to mistrust any "deviation from the norm" (Souto-Otero); to be blind to the notion that resistance is often an index of cultural alienation; and to interpret unfamiliar behaviour as deliberate defiance (Levinson). Ultimately, cultural difference is read by teachers as deprivation. Most teachers are

reported to accept unquestioningly the dominant hegemony which assumes that migrant workers have neither a place in contemporary society nor a contribution to make (Dyer). They regard differences among students as deficits that need to be corrected. A more thorough condemnation of teachers could hardly be found—the fact that the negative comments are made in passing, and without the edge of passion, suggests the intractableness of the problem. Although the writers in this volume do not reflect on the lot of non-migrant children, the way in which they depict teachers indicates that the lot of non-migrant children is likely to be almost as dreadful as that of migrant children.

When the essayists turn to governmental directives, the mood lifts briefly, because official documents are articulate and movingly sympathetic to the nomad populations.

> [The government supports] . . . the right of all children and students to quality education and care that provides knowledge, skills and understanding that will enable them to participate effectively in culturally and linguistically diverse societies on a national and international level. (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 1989, p. vii, as cited in Morrow, this volume)

> It is the State's responsibility to provide the conditions necessary for the Sami people to be able to safeguard and develop their language, culture and livelihood. (Amendment to the Norwegian Constitution, as translated by and cited in Özerk, this volume)

Unfortunately, in a classic version of bait and switch, the suggestions of governmental agencies are promulgated without the moral or financial support that would turn them into reality. Governments, moreover, ". . . [uphold] through . . . inactions and omissions the assumptions that formal schooling . . . can be provided only in a sedentary format . . ." (Dyer). Deficit theories and absorptionist aims have informed national education provision (Kenny and Binchy) in almost all the countries discussed, and ". . . policy-makers [rarely consider the issues] from a sociopolitical perspective" (Gobbo).

The sharp disconnect between school and nomad life is exemplified exceptionally well by Kiddle:

> In school Traveller children . . . participate in citizenship lessons, hearing about the need for all cultures to be treated with respect. They receive a totally different message when they return home to find that another eviction notice has been served and their presence [in the community] will no longer be tolerated . . .

Only those like the authors here, who are directly committed to Traveller education, are framing the issues clearly:

Why are the multicultural policies currently in place not being implemented? (Morrow)

What are the differences among various mobile groups? (Moriarty)

Why have the efforts to educate Traveller, nomad and migrant children been a nearly universal failure? (almost everyone)

Can states provide the conditions necessary for marginal peoples to safeguard their cultures? (Özerk)

Two underlying psychological problems exacerbate these troubling issues: prejudice and its handmaiden, ignorance. Most members of settled societies see the beliefs and behaviours of nomads as violating the ideals of the sedentary folk. The 'problem' is with the nomads. Sometimes even young nomads, who have been educated and are settled, advocate formal education as a tool for turning Travellers into settled folk. Cowed by centuries of bad press, some nomads have introjected the opinions of the settled communities with whom they interact; the Rabaris of India, for example, have come to see their lack of education and their way of life as part of their condition of being backward—"We have eyes but still we cannot see"; others have gone ahead, and we have "remained behind" (Dyer).

The world's ignorance of the travelling life leads to a pervasive and debilitating xenophobia that defines as deficiencies all the ways in which nomads differ from the settled population.

- The settled population has an ethic of *community* which focuses on "duty, respect for authority, loyalty, the honour of the group"; it rejects the nomads' cultural identity which focuses on *autonomy* and "individual freedom and choice" (Kenny and Binchy).
- The settled community sees being sedentary as a prerequisite for human development. Mobility is seen as a transgression (Dyer).
- The settled community celebrates formal teaching in established schools which are future-oriented, individualised and at a remove from work and family contexts (Kenny and Binchy); the settled groups ignore or opprobriate the way that travelling populations teach—in family settings for moral instruction, and by apprenticeship as the need arises.
- The settled community has laws against child labour. Among nomads, children become an integral part of familial production systems (Umar and Tahir; Kenny and Binchy; Dyer; Henderson).
- Literacy and the literate culture are celebrated by the settled population; the nomads' oral tradition, with its subtle restricted linguistic codes, is defined as ignorant.
- The settled population sees being settled as a value; the reasonable fears of the nomads—fear of assimilation (Levinson), fear of sedentarism,

> fear of the destruction of all that is good in the traditional life—are dismissed and ignored by policy-makers. As a result, the great contribution to the world that Travellers, nomads and migrant workers *might* make—a heritage that owes nothing to education or literacy (Morrow)—is being lost forever.

In the early 1960s, the anthropologist Gregory Bateson was asked to work on dolphins with a researcher in the Virgin Islands. In an initial conversation, Bateson asked, "What is it that you have done so far?" The researcher replied, "We've been trying—without success—to teach the dolphins English." Bateson's immediate (and, for those who knew him, completely predictable) response was, "Ah, we must try a different approach; we must learn Dolphin." The authors of the 14 chapters in this volume all suggest that one way of addressing the failure of the formal education that has been offered to the children of mobile communities must be to find out what the Travellers want for their children—we, the settled, must learn Traveller.

The Travellers, nomads and migrant workers who have actually been *asked* about the education of their children, however, are both astute and clear about their hopes and expectations. The nomadic parents want their children to receive a quality education, and they (the parents) wish to participate in the educational process as much as possible (Robbek et al.). They see the establishment of their own schools as "redressing generations of formal educational neglect and marginalisation" (Danaher and Danaher). Although they want formal education, migrant populations see current mainstream education as irrelevant and destructive (Morrow). They believe that accepting the cultural package of the school environment means that the cultural individuality of their children will be compromised (Morrow), for schools are "'cultural environments' . . . characterised by majority norms, rules and expectations which may well conflict with the cultural standards that minority children have learned within their own families" (Gobbo). The nomads' assessment of formal education is eerily similar to the devastating definition of education attributed to Franz Kafka: "Education is but two things: First the parrying of the innocent child's impetuous assault on the Truth and second the step by step imperceptible initiation of the humiliated child into the Lie."

To prevent forced cultural assimilation, migrant parents suggest segregated schools (the risks of segregation are "outweighed significantly by the benefits of having much greater control over . . . how their children are educated . . ." [Danaher and Danaher]). They think that schools should be more flexible (Levinson; Morrow), and should make learning a worthwhile, practical and fulfilling experience. Nomadic parents see each of their children as a living promise of the future—each child is a clan member who will help to continue clan traditions and customs (Robbek et al.), and so the parents want more emphasis on and respect for their traditional style of education.

If the wishes of the migrant parents are to be honoured, professional educators need to make mainstream education more responsive (Kiddle); they need to rethink intercultural education so that it honours subtle as well as substantial evidences of diversity (Kenny and Binchy); they need to open up discussions about access, participation and socially just pedagogy (Henderson); they need to address the underlying challenges of the nomad community (for example, the need for legal accommodation [Kiddle]). Educators need to learn to avoid "cultural blindness" (Gobbo), and to understand that diversity is normal (Kenny and Binchy). They must have the will to question their own prejudices (Souto-Otero). All this points to the need for deep and widely ranging anti-racist and intercultural awareness training as part of teacher education (Kenny and Binchy). Schools will need to honour nomadic cultural components and to present different ways of looking at the world and ways of entering the world culture through one's own creative acts (Robbek et al.).

The writers of these chapters demonstrate clearly that there are no simple solutions (Umar and Tahir). We need a network of educational institutions organising and coordinating the use of intensive educational resources (Robbek et al.). If we are to provide high quality education for every migrant population, it will be necessary to have a clear understanding of up-to-date educational research, of the relationship between what can be changed and what can't be changed, and of the optimal connection among federal, regional and local schools (Robbek et al.). Kiddle suggests that "[t]he establishment of a National College for Distance Education, on the lines of the Open University, . . . could offer an exciting extension of mainstream state education". This is one of the best suggestions in this volume, but Kiddle's idea needs a broader stage. A world research group with transnational interests could investigate all aspects of the 'problem' (for example, dealing with governments, distance learning, teacher education, best practices, prejudice, educational funding and organisation). It would be able to establish a set of definitions (for example, what is the practical difference between pastoralists and migrant farm workers; what is 'quality education'?). Lack of precise and shared definitions was one area in which the essays sometimes clashed with one another. The "Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015" is an unprecedented international effort to combat discrimination and to close the gap in welfare and living conditions between Roma and non-Roma, in order to break the cycle of poverty and exclusion. The initiative is supported by the Open Society Institute (OSI) and the World Bank, and endorsed by nine Central and Eastern European countries (Morrow). Perhaps a core group of researchers might initiate a Decade of Traveller, Nomadic and Migrant Inclusion?

In a spirit of collegiality and dialogue, and in keeping with the aspiration to contribute to the third dimension of changing schools enunciated in the editorial introduction, the following propositions are suggested as possible strategies for moving forwards. They are intended for consideration alike by members of mobile communities, those who provide them with formal education and those who conduct research with them.

Don't demonise classroom teachers: In the interest of fair disclosure, I should say that I am a retired teacher who has taught every grade from kindergarten through graduate school. I have known good teachers and bad, but I have never been at a school at which *all* the teachers were incompetent and full of prejudice. My experience echoes Kiddle's: "In most of the schools that the [Traveller] children attend, the teachers do their best for them." It would be valuable to see fewer anti-teacher fulminations and a more substantive critique of the *faux*-progressivism of government bureaucrats.

Discuss the ways in which a particular mobile population resembles other migrant groups: It would be useful to step back and dedicate a paragraph or two to cross-cultural contextualisation. To which other groups is the target group similar? As readers, we need to know where each population 'fits' in the world picture. It's valuable to see the tree before we investigate the leaves. For example, it is important to understand that the situations confronting the Sami, the Rabaris or the Australian show people are part of a broader mosaic of nomadic education for 30 to 40 million people world-wide.

Do not romanticise the population under analysis: Anthony Quinton (1996) has this to say about romanticism:

> The 'Romantic' . . . prefers the unique individual to the average person, the free creative genius to the prudent person of good sense, the particular community or nation to humanity at large. . . . Romantics prefer feeling to thought, emotion to calculation, imagination to literal common sense, intuition to intellect.

I sense that many of the writers in this volume have been seduced by the groups about whom they are writing. Just because a population has been the object of derision and prejudice does not mean that *everything* about its culture is great. Travellers are neither more nor less good, just or true than any other population. Philosophical rigour is always required.

Let the Travellers, nomads and migrant workers have a voice: There is perhaps nothing more lethal to 'informants' than making them disappear into a text. Members of mobile communities should be quoted as frequently as members of the scholarly community. The tremendous difference between moderating information (telling the reader what an informant has said or has meant) and allowing a member of the population speak in his or her own voice is well illustrated by a memorable passage in the chapter about the Russian Federation: "When you come back home to a warm *balok* [a nomad dwelling] after working in the tundra, the food is ready and, which is the most important, my children meet me with joyful cries" (V. Androsov, reindeer herder, as cited in Robbek et al.). Similarly Gobbo shares with us the words of three generations of the Gappi family, while Levinson, and Kenny and Binchy, quote *and name* (*albeit* with pseudonyms) their informants frequently and to good effect.

Finally, be rigorous with respect to world context and definition: What we scholars and activists need is a careful analysis of one group *from which*

we can extrapolate an understanding of contemporary migrant workers. Part of the value of largely nationally based studies such as those in this book lies in the foundation that they can provide for subsequent extrapolation and analysis. The theme of the book is posed in question form by Danaher and Danaher: "[What are] the purposes and outcomes of education . . . [and how do we change] schools in ways that maximise opportunities . . . for . . . and . . . celebrate the diversity of . . . citizens . . ."? Moriarty wisely suggests that we must be wary of positing a single answer to the problem: there are many differences among mobile groups and "what might appear superficially to be fairly subtle differences may present major problems when the same solution regarding access to education is applied across Traveller groups". Because we as readers don't know initially who the migrant groups are, we expect the authors to explain not only whom they are writing about but also what that population shares with others. By illustrating the intense community structure of their group and the linguistic codes that inevitably develop in the community, Kenny and Binchy offer a clear psychological portrait of a group of Travellers. These authors give us a valuable understanding of what the Irish population thinks about Irish Travellers, and what the Travellers think about themselves. Extrapolation to other nomadic groups is not difficult. Levinson's essay, with its intriguing analysis of the temporal and spatial orientations of English Travellers, serves as a complement to the Kenny and Binchy chapter. Morrow adds a valuable and compelling note when she explains how a cultural conviction like the Roma's *marimé* might make any population unwilling to attend mainstream schools. In each case, our understanding of why one group of migrant workers act as they do helps us to understand how other groups might respond to educational proposals.

All the chapters in this volume are interesting and thought provoking. Imperfect as they inevitably are, these 14 essays are like the facets of a diamond: each offers us a look into one aspect of an exceedingly complex phenomenon.

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Respondent's Text

Judith A. Gouwens

With only a few exceptions, the plight of Traveller, nomadic and migrant children around the world with regard to education is strikingly similar, even as concerned educators and policy-makers work to change it. Similarities include political, social and economic climates that exclude and marginalise them as 'other'; a pervasive, stereotypical view of Traveller, nomadic and migrant people; governmental agencies' paternalistic view of education for Traveller, nomadic and migrant children when policies and programs for their education are developed; few real opportunities for Traveller, nomadic and migrant people to be active agents on behalf of their children or their children's education at either the policy level or the school level; and educational systems and programs for Traveller, nomadic and migrant children that are culturally irrelevant and aimed at assimilation into the mainstream.

The political, social and economic climates that Travellers, nomads and migrant workers and their children throughout the world live and work in render them virtually invisible to the mainstream populations. In nearly every country where there are Travellers, nomads and migrant workers, their numbers are estimated because even the census does not represent them or their presence in the country. In the United States, for example, statistics about the population of migrant workers and their families vary widely, depending on the reporting agency, and there are purportedly large numbers of undocumented migrant workers who are not included in any census. That they contribute to the economies of their countries is ignored, and even when Travellers interact with the mainstream population, as Henderson documents, they make *themselves* invisible. Henderson's interviewee described how she has learned to adapt her interactions to match those of the people with whom she comes in contact; she is even teaching her daughter to do so, as well.

Only a few Traveller, nomadic or migrant populations have the political power to influence the education provided for their children. The case studies presented in this book show that Travellers, nomads and migrant workers rarely act as agents on their own behalf or on behalf of their children's education; when they do attempt to do so, it is often with limited success.

Instead, when education programs are designed for Traveller, nomadic or migrant children, the programs have most often been designed without the involvement or input of the parents or the children themselves. However well-meaning the designers might be, the exclusion of the Traveller, nomadic or migrant families from the design process devalues them and their cultural perspectives and underscores how little those perspectives are valued in the larger society.

Interestingly, the education programs that seem to be most effective in addressing the special needs of Traveller children have classrooms and teachers who travel with the children. At the same time that the programs provide education to Traveller children that is continuous rather than requiring children to move from school to school, the programs serve to exclude Traveller children further from schools that serve the majority populations and from the mainstream of society.

While many of the programs described in the case studies in this book aim at increasing access to and inclusion in education, Traveller, nomadic and migrant children throughout the world continue to have lower enrolment rates in schools than majority children and, even when they are enrolled, their achievement does not match that of majority children. Glasser (1986) and other psychologists have written extensively about the relationship between the basic human need to belong and school success, and there is an increasing body of research that connects children's sense of 'belonging' to their academic motivation and, ultimately, their academic achievement; children who do not feel respected and included in school do not do as well academically or stay in school as long as those children who do feel that they belong. Several of the case studies in this book document how teachers and school administrators often reflect societal perspectives that discriminate against Traveller children, even as they argue that they care about the children and their learning. The teachers' and administrators' language signals their view of these children as 'other'. According to Beck and Malley (1998), "A pedagogy of belonging emphasizes the importance of the teacher–student relationship and actively involves all students in the life of the classroom and school community" (p. 3). For children to feel as if they belong in a classroom and school community, teachers must play the critical role of communicating that the children and their cultural capital are valued in the school community.

In all of the countries represented by the chapters in this book, there is rhetoric about education preparing students for participating in a diverse, global society. The education of most Traveller, nomadic and migrant children, however, is rarely aimed at the need to function in their own societies with their unique cultures and languages, nor is it aimed at teaching other children about Travellers' culture or to value the diversity that Traveller, nomadic or migrant children bring to their classrooms. According to Howard (2003), who connects culturally relevant pedagogy to student academic achievement:

> Teacher practice and thought must be reconceptualized in a manner that recognizes and respects the intricacies of cultural and racial difference. Teachers must construct pedagogical practices in ways that are culturally relevant, racially affirming, and socially meaningful for their students. (p. 197)

In Howard's (2003) view, culturally relevant pedagogy also has the potential to help children feel as if they belong and as if their cultural capital is valued. To that end, he calls for training teachers to develop and implement culturally relevant pedagogy, echoing Giroux's (1992) call for teachers to become cultural workers who cross the "borders" between and among cultures to create classrooms that truly invite and include *all* children to engage in curriculum that reflects the diversity of the children in those classrooms.

Education programs for Traveller, nomadic and migrant children are often the victims of fluctuating political views and economics, an example of which is the migrant education program in Nigeria described in this book. In the United States, although there has officially been a federal migrant education program since 1966, it has never been fully funded, and some migrant children have never had access to education programs and services that would help to close the gaps in education that they experience because of moving from school to school. Because of the political climate of distrust of migrant workers and their families and the assumption that they are undocumented, there is little popularly supported call for increasing the funding or program services.

There often seems to be little real political will to address the special needs of Travellers', nomads' and migrant workers' education, even when educational strategies demonstrate high levels of success in doing so. Estrella, a pilot project in the United States, is one example of a strategy that proved unusually successful in helping middle and high school aged migrant children complete high school and go on to post-secondary education. Children in the Estrella project were provided with laptop computers with Internet access that could be used to complete their coursework as their families travelled for work. The Estrella project allowed the children to work in the fields during the day, a family expectation that often keeps children from attending school, and to stay connected with their teachers at their home schools from wherever their families were working (Gouwens, 2001). Although Estrella participants graduated from high school and went on to post-secondary education at rates that were significantly higher than is typical for migrant children, no funding was provided to continue the project after its pilot.

So what will it take for Traveller, nomadic and migrant children to have school experiences that help them to learn well? The children must feel that they belong in schools and classrooms, and they need to experience pedagogy that is relevant to them personally and culturally to be successful

in school. They need teachers who are prepared to help them value their own cultural capital as well as to learn about, and come to value, the cultural capital of all of the children in the school. They need schools that are structured in ways that acknowledge and account for their travel and programs that help to prevent the gaps or to fill the gaps that occur while they are travelling. Their parents' voices must be welcomed and included in designing educational programs that can begin to break down the societal barriers that impede their education.

Some of the case studies in this book show that progress is being made towards meeting these very important needs. Whether they are just a few 'points of light' or whether they become models for the development of other programs will depend to a large extent on the political will of the people.

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