Re-imagining Development for Mobile and Marginalised Peoples

Throughout much of history, states and empires have regarded mobile peoples—including nomadic pastoralists, itinerant service-providers, and Traveller and Romani groups—as irrational, anachronistic, or a threat to progress and stability. Attempts to subdue, isolate, and forcibly settle them have pervaded modern state-building. Despite the rise of rights-based and people-oriented approaches to development, mobile peoples are often confronted by interventions that are incompatible with their livelihoods and lifeways. Even where states and development actors are not explicitly committed to forced sedentarisation as an explicit objective, sedentism persists as an epistemic bias in the ways that development is envisioned, defined and measured.

Re-Imagining Development for Mobile and Marginalised Peoples is a collaborative research project based at the Oxford Department for International Development, and which includes colleaugues at University of Verona, University of Iceland, and the European Union Institute. We are developing a cross-regional evidence base about the manifestations of sedentism in development policies in Kenya, Lebanon, Mongolia, Italy, and Mauritania. Through a review of existing academic literature on development interventions in areas inhabited by mobile peoples, our study shows that infrastructure projects, education programmes, and healthcare interventions intending to improve human welfare can inadvertently drive immobilisation, social fission, livelihood disruption, and political marginalisation of mobile peoples. In our case studies, sedentist bias does not always entail an overt or ideological opposition to nomadism, but can rather manifest as a set of assumptions, frameworks, and paradigms through which sedentary lifeways are implicitly associated with development objectives such as progress, growth, and peace. Moreover, regional legacies of sedentarisation associated with colonial and Soviet-era spatial organization and political architecture continue shape contemporary sedentist biases in complex ways. Sedentist bias can be explicit or implicit, a property of individuals or institutions, an epistemological frame as much as a policy programme.

In January 2022, we host a collaborative workshop for researchers whose work addresses the concept of “sedentist bias” as it applies to nomadic peoples and the interventions that affect them. Through this workshop, we seek to bring together social scientists, development practitioners, and policymakers to elucidate how sedentism frames existing development policies, and how those policies might better accommodate populations for whom mobility is a vital cultural and economic practice.

The ReDeMP team:
Cory Rodgers, Dawn Chatty, Ariell Ahearn Ligham, Greta Semplici, Marco Solimene, and Stefania Pontrandolfo, Matthew Porges

https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/research/re-imagining-development-for-mobile-and-marginalised-peoples
WORKSHOP LINKS

10 January 2022

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMode- spzspGNLXTZF3mL37qvZjsxUoNazf

11 January 2022

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZIsfuqhr zkrHtPEm18SmnrfEZZxbD3-iloV
10:00 Welcome

Opening remarks

Sedentist bias
Cory Rodgers and Greta Semplici

10:30 Session 1: Contested Futures

Panel 1a: Constructions and Imaginaries of Mobility
Discussant: Cory Rodgers

Detached Imaginaries of Dwelling: Becoming Official in the Camp
Anthony Howarth

Development and Security: reflecting on the reproduction of ‘sedentist’ narratives by Kel Tamasheq in Bamako
Giulia Gonzales

Re-Imagining the Resilience of Pastoralists against Sedentist Bias: The Case of the 2004-2009 Conflict between Samburu and Pokot in Kenya
Shinya Konaka

Political articulations of state-led developmentalism towards Romanies
Ana Chiritoiu & Martin Fotta

Panel 1b: Education
Discussant: Greta Semplici and Ariell Ahearn

The Birth of the School: Social Services / Infrastructures, the Production of Space and the Government of Nomadic Somali Pastoralists
Getu Demeke Alene, Jessica Duncan and Han van Dijk

The Experience of Formal Education Among Mobile Hunter-Gatherer Children in the Global South
Noa Lavi et al

Schooled Tuaregs’ interventions for Mobile Pastoralists: Ambivalences and cooperations
Sarah Lunaček

11:50 Discussions within panels
12:30  Lunch

14:00  Session 2: Land, Resources, Conservation and Development
      Discussants: Gregory Akall and Jurgen Hoth

Devolution and dynamics of community land law among pastoralists in Kenya
Rahma Hassan

Policy interventions and socio-ecological realities of rangeland conservation in the Indian Himalaya
Rashmi Singh

Rethinking pastoralist regimes of resource acquisition: towards a synthesis
Mark Moritz and Roy Behnke

Silent land grab, forced migration and displacement: A follow-up to the case of Herlen Bayan-Ulaan State Reserve Pasture Area, Mongolia
Undargaa Sandagsuren

15:20  Discussions within panels

16:00  Reflections on day 1

16:10  Conclude
11 JANUARY 2022

10:00 Welcome

10:20 Session 3: Governance

Panel 3a: Citizenship and Exclusion
Discussant: Saverio Krätli

The bureaucratic trap: registered residence and sedentist bias in Italian policies of social cohesion from Roma and Sinti
Marco Solimene and Stefania Pontrandolfo

Statelessness and service provision implications for communities of nomadic origin: the Bedouin and Nawar of Lebanon
Thomas McGee and Walaa Kayyal

Seeing Cattle Like a State: The Impact of Livestock Traceability Systems on Pastoralist Communities in Namibia
Veno Tjiseau and Dylan Groves

After ethnopolitics: New travellers, new rights?
Freya Hope

Panel 3b: Governing Mobility
Discussant: Getu Demeke Alene

'Sedentary bias' in migration programming in the Sahel: 'Fixing people' through voluntary returns
Ekaterina Golovko

Countermapping Ethiopia
Jed Stevenson

The Hidden Costs of Externalising European Borders into Northern Niger
Hannah Rae Armstrong

Time to move: challenging sedentist biases through a temporal analysis of pastoral mobility
Natasha Maru

11:40 Discussions within panels

12:20 Lunch
13:30  Looking Ahead to Dana+20  
Dawn Chatty

13:50  Panel Summaries and Discussion of "Sedentist" Concept  
Chaired by ReDeMP team members  
Reflections on day 2 and workshop wrap-up

15:10  Conclude
Camel Caravan, Jidda, 1981. Captured by Dawn Chatty

Household mobile storage, Mukhaizana, 1981. Captured by Dawn Chatty
Introducing Dana+20
Reviewing Mobile Indigenous Rights 20 Years after the Dana Declaration

September 2022, Wadi Dana, Jordan

The 2002 Dana Declaration on Mobile Peoples and Conservation was the first major effort by scholars and policymakers to outline a framework for incorporating mobile peoples into sustainable development and conservation policies. In 2012 a Dana +10 workshop was held to remind the world that 100s of millions of mobile people face dispossession, eviction and restrictions to their lifestyles and livelihoods and that without concerted global action, they would be rendered destitute, disempowered and economically burdensome to the states they inhabit. The workshop prepared a statement for the Rio+20 Summit, which recommended a handful of critical interventions by state and international actors that would allow mobile peoples not only to thrive, but to contribute to global transitions toward a more sustainable future. The Dana Declaration was incorporated into 'soft' international law first at the WCPA Durban Accords in 2003 and then into the IUCN guidelines in Barcelona in 2008. Since then, the Declaration continues to be a crucial advocacy tool, used by representatives of mobile peoples, scholars and practitioners, to advance the rights of Mobile Indigenous Peoples internationally.

However, the continued restrictions on mobile peoples’ cross-border movement, the denial of customary land rights, and the ongoing dispossession of communal resources through land-grabbing by extractive industries undermines mobile peoples’ access to food, to natural resources, and to service industry promotion. In many areas, states do not recognize mobile peoples as Indigenous, and they remain unable to leverage international human rights mechanisms afforded to Indigenous peoples.

As we approach the 20-year anniversary of the Dana Declaration, there is need to take stock of ecological, technical, legal, and political developments over the past two decades and to bring the implications for mobile peoples to the attention of global forums. Furthermore, it is critical that a younger generation of indigenous peoples advocates become informed about the crucial issues which continue to plague mobile peoples. In particular, the Dana +20 workshop will examine some of the stubborn “sedentist biases” that continue to influence mainstream sustainability, climate change, and development paradigms, even among those who recognise and aim to uphold indigenous rights. The Dana +20 workshop aspires to outline ways forward to improve government and inter-agency engagement with mobile populations on the interrelated priorities of conservation, climate adaptation/resilience, land tenure rights, and sustainable development. The outputs from these deliberations will be delivered to major international fora, with a focus such as the UNPFII, COP28 (November 2022), and the Congress for the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP) in Mongolia in 2025.

The Dana+20 standing committee
Dawn Chatty and Ariell Ahearn
Detached Imaginaries of Dwelling: Becoming Official in the Camp

Anthony Howarth
University of Oxford

It is widely assumed that Travellers do not have a sense of place. This paper challenges this assumption through examining the place-making activities of a family of Irish Travellers living in an extra-legal camp in South East London. Although the Travellers constructed their own sense of place, this was also shaped and fractured by the threat and implementation of eviction by a local state administration. This way the state defined and shaped the spatial parameters of place for the Travellers, will be conceptualised as ‘the classificatory force of the law’. However, while the family were acutely affected by this, they had a contrasting conception of using, governing, and inhabiting the camp’s land. The analysis moves beyond any neat bifurcation where Travellers are situated on one side of a legal divide and the state on the other, by providing an account of the former’s attempts at ‘becoming official’. I begin by exploring the family’s efforts to prevent the eviction through mobilising a legal defence. Then, I describe how the family’s application for adverse possession of the camp’s land resulted in the High Court ruling in their favour, pending the claim’s outcome. After this, I demonstrate how these incommensurate ways of conceiving and using land, or what I term ‘detached imaginaries of dwelling’, interact and, in doing so, are involved in shaping the place where the Travellers live. The paper concludes by considering how sedentist and sedentarising biases are mobilised, reproduced, and negotiated by both Travellers and the state.
Development and Security: reflecting on the reproduction of 'sedentist' narratives by Kel Tamasheq in Bamako

Giulia Gonzales
European University Institute

This paper analyses the narratives linked to development and developmental projects in Bamako produced by Kel Tamasheq, a traditionally nomadic pastoralist population. The paper reflects on how sedentist biased narrations are enclosed and reproduced in the capital Bamako by Kel Tamasheq youth and educated people. In such narratives, development is understood as access to state resources (education and health facilities as well as infrastructural layouts) and upward social mobility linked to access to globalised market (e.g. tourism). Lack of development was also one of the main claims that led to the 2012 rebellion in Northern Mali. Similarly, the Peace Accords of 2015 have a developmental focus and they are built on the security-development nexus to deal with insecurity and governance in the region. Development is further and crucially linked to identitarian representations (broussarde equated to backwardness, and more lately equated to terrorism), which are also reproduced in Bamako by Kel Tamasheq. This paper then looks at the way Kel Tamasheq in Bamako talks about development, which processes they envision to development (drilling wells in the North, planting trees, reduction of mobility in order to access services), and how they sit with the current insecurity and governance apparatus which has been put into place since the 2012 rebellion.

Re-Imagining the Resilience of Pastoralists against Sedentist Bias: The Case of the 2004-2009 Conflict between Samburu and Pokot in Kenya

Shinya Konaka
University of Shizuoka

This paper is an attempt to re-imagine the resilience of pastoralists in East Africa against ‘sedentist bias’ through a case study of a series of conflicts between the Samburu and Pokot peoples in Kenya. The conflict erupted in 2004 and ended in 2009. The author’s research revealed identity politics and incitement by a politician to gain votes as the main causes of the conflict; however, most Kenyans, including the media and humanitarian/development agencies, attribute it to two types of narratives—‘traditional livestock rustling narrative’ and ‘resource conflict narrative’—both of which are seemingly associated with ‘sedentist bias’.

The conflict displaced 25,000 Samburu peoples. This paper analyses how the displaced pastoralists survived an extinction crisis without depending on the nation-state and humanitarian/development agencies. It presents examples of self-help efforts of the displaced pastoralists under two topics: the case of formation of clustered settlements and an inter-ethnic mobile phone network. Mainstream narratives presuppose that pastoralists’ resilience is weak and hence must be strengthened or enhanced. However, the fact that they sustained themselves through pastoralism by forming clustered settlements and an inter-ethnic mobile phone network illustrates a different picture of ‘the resilience of the pastoralist’, far removed from the stereotypical image of traditional pastoralists. Finally, the author theoretically questions ‘sedentist bias’ as part of a ‘risk aversion strategy’, contrasting it with the ‘risk acceptance strategy’ of pastoralists, by employing the theoretical frameworks developed by Emery Roe. The paper suggests that consideration of unpredictability and uncertainty must be prioritised to re-imagine the development of pastoralists, who live in marginalised areas where unavoidable and uncontrollable risk is not an exceptional case, but a day-to-day reality.
Political articulations of state-led developmentalism towards Romanies

Ana Chiritoiu
Central European University, Vienna

Martin Fotta
Czech Academy of Sciences

Whether ‘nomadism’ several decades ago, or migration in more recent times, the essence of the ‘Gypsy problem’ in Eastern Europe seems to be that Roma populations won’t stay put. Conversely, in Brazil today, Ciganos are being recognised as a traditional people, with nomadism – past or present – serving as a cornerstone of a ‘differentiated’ Ciganos culture. In our paper, we compare these two seemingly different state approaches to Romani mobilities. We show that, regardless of whether these approaches are punitive or benevolent, both ‘nomadism’ and ‘traditionalism’ as deployed by states function as ideological labels for Romanies, rather than analytical concepts, and that the developmentalism that these labels invite is equally charged. We argue that multiculturalism and assimilation are not only ideological interventions, but also forms of political inclusion. We first analyse ethnographic data from our respective field sites to see why people in fact move and we describe an ethos of movement defined, on the one hand, by the Romanies’ structurally-induced drive to occupy and use whatever niches and crevices the non-Roma leave open and, on the other hand, by the Romanies’ sense of moving in a social, rather than a spatial sense. We suggest that these aspects not only contribute to the social reproduction of Romani distinction while living permanently in a world of others, but are also reflected into the forms that Romani politics take. By comparing and contrasting the situations across our two field sites we attempt to discern transformations of intra-communal and extra-communal politics as a result of state intervention, whether assimilatory, multiculturalist, or otherwise developmentalist in relation to Romanies.
Based on ethnographic fieldwork in Ethiopia's Somali region, this paper explores the different ways in which nomadic pastoralists are governed through the production of space. We illustrate this through an analysis of the expansion of schools in the Somali pastoral periphery through the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), Ethiopia's government social protection policy initiative. Drawing on insights from both Foucault's 'governmentality' and Lefebvre's 'production of space' theory, we deepen our understanding of the mutually constitutive relationships between governmental practices and technologies around the school and the production of space: the production of space around the school emerges as a governmental technology to transform the conduct of pastoralists in space. Governmental practices and technologies around the school include: the selection of the school site as government conceived and imposed space; the auxiliary apparatus and technologies of increasing school enrollment that make the school, as it turned out, a tool of limiting the spatial mobility of pastoralists, leading to sedentarization; and the mundane practices and services of the school that pastoralists acted upon themselves. We show how the interrelations of these produce (governable) space around the school to transform pastoralists' social relations in space and their spatial subjectivities beyond classrooms. Finally, while these effects and changes were not intended goals of PSNP, at least not explicitly, we argue that they are explained/informed by the broader sedentary metaphysics of the Ethiopian state in which sedentary lifestyles and livelihoods are taken for granted as the ‘right’ paths toward modernity and development – Ethiopia’s government ‘will to improve’ nomadic pastoralists rather than to dominate/harm them.
The Experience of Formal Education Among Mobile Hunter-Gatherer Children in the Global South

Noa Lavi
University College London

Velina Ninkova
UiT: Arctic University of Norway

Jennifer Hays
UiT: Arctic University of Norway

Aishah Ali
University of Cambridge

Silvia Lopes da Silva Macedo
University of Paris-Est Créteil

Helen E. Davis
Harvard University

Sheina Lew-Levy
Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology

“Formal education is one of the major global development initiatives and a top priority of the UN goals, particularly for communities considered ‘underserved’ minorities. This paper focuses on the experience of formal education among communities historically classified as hunter-gatherers. While globally diverse, such minorities are also commonly characterized by high mobility as well as personal autonomy, egalitarianism and a common ethos of sharing. However, most accounts of education programs do not distinguish hunter-gatherers from other marginalized communities. Nevertheless, across the globe, hunter-gatherers struggle more than most other minorities to successfully engage with formal education, even when they initially desire to, and experience much higher dropout rates than their neighbours. Not designed to work flexibly with nomadic people, schools often directly and actively contrast their mobility and other central values and thus join other development projects which aim to encourage or coerce hunter-gatherers to settle and adopt the state's values.

As a group of researchers working with different hunting-gathering societies throughout the global south, we show how families face particular challenges in their engagement with formal education, and flag out people’s own perspectives in order to better approach those challenges. We explore common negative perception school staff hold regarding mobility, personal autonomy and egalitarianism, and show how schooling actively work to reshape those practices rather than accommodating them. We demonstrate how such policies disrupt the transmission of cultural norms and values, language, traditional knowledge and adult-child relations within the community. We show how exploring local modes of learning, knowledge transmission and adult-child relations within the communities sheds light on the specific challenges children encounter. Last, by considering people’s own perceptions, aspirations and values, we provide a unique image of their creative coping mechanisms and the ways such mechanisms re-evaluate notions of school failure/success differently from formal school evaluations.
Schooled Tuaregs’ interventions for Mobile Pastoralists: Ambivalences and cooperations

Sarah Lunaček
University of Ljubljana

In Niger, Strategy for sustainable development of herding 2015-2035, among other axis of development, made a step away from exclusive sedentist view on development of pastoralism typical in the past. It finally admits the importance of mobile family pastoralism for livelihoods as well as for environment and mentions the need to adapt services to mobility. Those views close to productive use of variable landscapes perspective, are not much visible in practice, neither they are widespread.

Here I would address how social diversification due to schooling and urbanisation among Tuaregs (Imajeghan) influences their ideas and practices of development. Tuaregs with university degrees and jobs in town remain connected with their extended families on the countryside, who are practicing different forms of mobile pastoralism or searching for other opportunities, usually related to mobility. Despite schooled Tuaregs being themselves very mobile between countries, cities and countryside, and despite they consider nomadic heritage as part of their identity, they have adopted rather sedentist view of development concerning mobile family pastoralism, often considering nomads as poor (tchil«ùqawen). They support transformations into settlements with basic infrastructure and small farms with partial daily and seasonal mobility of herds. Those on administrative positions consider nomadism as outdated and in need of intensification, while those working in development projects expose the needs of mobile pastoralists for basic services.

Some schooled individuals are trying to find other alternative solutions in cooperation with mobile pastoralists, combining pastoralists' and scientific knowledge. I would present the case of Hamu, who was running a diary for camel milk with nomads, experimented on camel milk preservation in form of cheese and cooperated in veterinary research and services for camels of mobile family pastoralists. There are other examples of small practical innovations mobile pastoralists find useful.
Devolution and dynamics of Community land law among Pastoralists in Kenya

Rahma Hassan
University of Nairobi

In Kenya, the government has introduced tenure reforms to improve community governance of land. The reforms are implemented under a new law, the Community Land Act 2016. The land occupied by pastoralist communities is subject to these reforms and on the assumption that formalizing communal ownership among pastoralists would secure their rights to land and, importantly, improve governance of pastoralists land. In addition to the new law, the Constitution provides for a devolved structure of government with a mandate to develop planning for various areas, land survey and mapping. The county governments also hold communal land in trust and for the benefit of the communities until they are registered under the community land law. Based on primary data from the national government offices, Samburu County government, and local pastoralists communities in Samburu, this paper discusses how the interplay of the new law and the devolved structure of government, devolution, are impacting on pastoralists land rights. The paper argues that implementation of the new law is inadvertently leading to individualization of communal land therefore constraining mobility and threatening pastoralism lifeways. Relatedly, county governments established under devolution and land management do not provide for pastoralists’ voices in practice. The new institutional structures have not incorporated existing indigenous systems of land governance among pastoralists. The paper concludes that the lack of coherence among various institutions established under the law and those by the county governments as well as overlapping mandates of some of the institutions are constraining pastoralists access to land and driving immobilization among pastoralists.

Policy interventions and socio-ecological realities of rangeland conservation in the Indian Himalaya

Rashmi Singh
Ambedkar University Delhi

Himalayan rangelands are unique ecosystems harbouring a rare assemblage of wild fauna and flora. Pastoralism is the most important livelihood practice of these rangelands. Conservation discourses associated to socio-economic changes and effects of livestock grazing on rangelands, in general, have translated in policy implementation in Indian Trans-Himalayas in the form of restrictions of pastoral movements in the protected areas. In this paper, I present the social as well as ecological implication of one such conservation policy- a Grazing Ban implemented by the states of Sikkim in the Eastern Himalaya. Post ban, over 500 herdsmen were forcefully evicted from the park and livestock grazing was completely banned inside the park. Based on the primary data collected between the year 2017-2019, I show that the social impacts of the grazing ban include loss of pastoral culture, economic loss, and the exclusion of the pastoral community from the park and all these influences in turn resulted in social conflicts between the local community members, and emergence of new conservation challenges in the form of increased human-wildlife conflict. Vegetation surveys show that in absence of grazing the community composition has changed and the diversity indices reflect lower diversity. Overall, the grazing ban has neither benefited the pastoral community nor conservation agenda. I conclude that a successful conservation plan could be co-opting local knowledge and local institutions in identifying ways of cultural and conservation co-existence in Khangchendzonga Landscape, giving closer attention to the questions of equality and sustainability.
Rethinking pastoralist regimes of resource acquisition: towards a synthesis

Mark Moritz
Ohio State University

Roy Behnke
Imperial College London

Despite a well-developed theoretical framework of the commons, it has been challenging to develop general explanations for successful commons that hold across resources systems, primarily because of the complexity of both social and ecological systems, the configurational nature of the multitude of multidimensional variables, and the wide range of resource systems. It has been particularly challenging to describe and explain the governance of common-pool grazing resources in pastoral systems, primarily because common-pool grazing resources are characterized by spatiotemporal variability to which pastoralists respond with mobility. However, another reason why conventional models of the commons do not well explain the diversity and dynamics of pastoral systems is the epistemic bias of sedentism. This paper synthesizes ethnohistorical and ethnographic research on pastoral systems to describe and explain the diversity and dynamics of regimes of resource acquisition. We outline a radical reconceptualization of pastoral regimes of acquisition to common-pool resources to move beyond the epistemic bias of sedentism in the study of the commons.

Silent land grab, forced migration and displacement: A follow-up to the case of Herlen Bayan-Ulaan State Reserve Pasture Area, Mongolia

Undargaa Sandagsuren
The Australian National University

Since the 1990s, the government of Mongolia has introduced numerous neoliberal and conservationist policy reforms in natural resource management towards diversifying rural economies and enhancement of wildlife conservation efforts. The state shifted its focus from environmentally embedding pastoral production to exclusive land management. It allowed appropriation of pastoral lands to accommodate extractive mining, crop cultivation and intensive farming as well as expanding state special use and protected areas. However, in many parts of Mongolia, grassland conversion to these alternative uses often portray a silent land grab. The details of this process, in which the state appropriates land from rural territorial administrations and its pastoral residents is often murky and unclear. As a follow-up to the previous case of Herlen Bayan-Ulaan (HBU) Reserve Pasture Area (RPA), over contested property rights to pastoral resources (pasture, campsites and water), this paper presents a newly emerging case, in which the state claims exclusive management of the HBU RPA. In particular, it examines rarely encountered details of a complicated legal battle between local and national level state and non-state stakeholders. The concerns are over contested claims for rural jurisdictional authority, residential and property rights to access pastoral resources, and potential forced migration and displacement, which may arise from mismanagement of the RPA. This paper argues that current trends in development thinking focus more on adopting alternative economies and technologies, while paying scant attention to the enduring complexities involved in social transactions, particularly with regard to stakeholders’ numerous and conflicting rights and responsibilities over resource management. Overall, it concludes that overlooking these complexities while promoting alternative rural economies may have implications of intensifying dismantling of historically (state and community co-management) interdependent integrated management of resources for governing pastoral people, production and natural resources.
The bureaucratic trap: registered residence and sedentist bias in Italian policies of social cohesion for Roma and Sinti

Marco Solimene
University of Iceland

Stefania Pontrandolfo
University of Verona

This paper explores nuances and contradictions of local policies of social cohesion, highlighting how, due to the sedentist framework lying underneath them, their implementation can paradoxically contribute to the exclusion and marginalization of mobile peoples in Italy. Building on various ethnographic case studies, we analyze Italian local policies aimed at the inclusion of Roma and Sinti, with a particular focus on those groups who practice forms of mobility as service providers.

We address interactions and hiccups between the policies for Roma/Sinti implemented by Italian Regions and Municipalities, and the directives delineated by national and EU frameworks for Roma inclusion. We then argue that the discourse of development in neoliberal Europe, articulated through specific keywords such as ‘cohesion’ and ‘inclusion’ first creates Roma and Sinti as needy subjects with a problematic nomadic legacy, and then offers solutions to assist them.

In particular, we reflect on registered residence, an administrative device that plays a key role in Italy's local policies of social cohesion. Registered residence determines the access to rights such as housing, health, employment, education and political rights; as such, it has been instrumental to the discrimination of groups targeted by prejudice and may become a bureaucratic trap for Roma and Sinti, especially when they practice forms of mobility. Indeed, the explicit sedentist framework informing the mechanism of registered residence prompts a series of more implicit biases in local social policies. Registered residence thus expresses and contributes to the construction of borders and internal boundaries, which separate legit citizens from illegit ones. We finally reflect on the diffuse and tactical use, by both Roma/Sinti and local administrations, of ‘grey spaces’ of (in)formality as ways to circumvent the legal strictures imposed by the registered residence regulations.
Statelessness and Service Provision Implications for Communities of Nomadic Origin: the Bedouin and Nawar of Lebanon

Thomas McGee & Walaa Kayyal
University of Melbourne

Based on fieldwork conducted with the Bedouin and Nawar communities in Lebanon, this paper highlights the prominent concerns of individuals affected by statelessness belonging to - sometime formerly - mobile groups. Drawing on work challenging the assumed indifference or even hostility towards citizenship for members of nomadic communities in other contexts (e.g. Perrin, 2014), the paper complements the limited existing research with the Nawar community, while providing an update on the situation of the Bedouin in Lebanon since the start of the Syria conflict: noting that much of the published literature on the community focuses on the situation before 2011 (e.g. Chatty, Mansour & Yassin, 2013; Ruwad, 2010).

While the Syrian civil war has significantly impacted both the cross-border and internal movements of these communities, they are generally excluded from the humanitarian and development interventions responding to the conflict in Lebanon. The paper studies how the citizenship (or lack thereof) intersects with social marginalisation in this context to impact the lifestyle and livelihoods of these communities as well as their access to services. In doing so, it highlights the different situations of, and responses by, members of the traditionally pastoralist (seasonal migratory) Bedouin and the (often peripatetic) itinerant Nawar in Lebanon to their statelessness and attempts to resolve it and/or access services.

The paper concludes that while stateless people from nomadic communities often experience similar problems to Syrian refugees in Lebanon, they are excluded from many of the policies and services (including subsidised assistance and legal aid) targeting the latter.

Seeing Cattle Like a State: The Impact of Livestock Traceability Systems on Pastoralist Communities in Namibia

Veno Tjiseua
Agribank/Stellenbosch University

Dylan Groves
Columbia University

Livestock tracing systems are an increasingly prominent component of national livestock development policies around the world. In principle, livestock tracing systems allow governments to track and respond to livestock disease, livestock theft, and threats to rangeland health. In practice, livestock tracing systems are suffused with sedentarist assumptions, and their application to pastoralist communities has had a range of unanticipated consequences. Drawing on historical documents and qualitative interviews with policymakers, implementing bureaucrats, and affected pastoralist communities in Namibia, we review the sedentarist assumptions that inform the Namibian Livestock Identification and Traceability System (NAMLITS) system and trace how those assumptions have affected mobility practices and economic, social, and political lives of Namibian pastoralist communities. We then show the range of strategies that mobile peoples have deployed to resist and circumvent NAMLITS, and conclude with lessons for development practitioners considering livestock tracing systems as well as the mobile communities affected by them.
After ethnopolitics: New Travellers, new rights?

Freya Hope
University of Oxford

As a new alternative mobile community originating in the 1970s, New Travellers have had little engagement in the political or public sphere. This is partly through choice, as many identify as anarchists, and partly due to their formerly being viewed as inauthentic by state, society, media, and other Traveller and Gypsy groups. This meant that when the current government rolled out the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill earlier in 2021, which included a section criminalising trespass, New Travellers were initially left with few avenues to express the ways this would impact their lifestyle and culture, to challenge the implementation of the Bill. However, the current socio-political situation, along with the fact that New Travellers have now socially reproduced as a community over three and four generations, has created new avenues for the group's recognition and mobilisation against the Bill. The paper will examine the unintended consequences of the Policing Bill, as the most recent developmental project of land privatisation undergirded by the sedentist logic of the British State, whereby New Travellers have now joined with traditional Gypsy and Traveller activists, and other minority groups, to contest this legislation within the public and political sphere. In doing so, I will engage with the anthropology of rights and publics to explore the claims New Travellers are making that stretch beyond ethnopolitics and their potential burgeoning ethnogenesis, to simply demand the right to exist.

Panel 3b: Governing Mobility

'Sedentary bias' in migration programming in the Sahel: 'Fixing people' through voluntary returns

Ekaterina Golovko
Clingendael Institute

Being an important migration transit area lacking allegedly ‘appropriate’ border management procedures that prevent transnational crime and ‘irregular’ migration, the Sahel became an area of massive intervention on migration. The structuring logic of this intervention states that ‘fixing’ people in their countries of origin would create development perspectives and would improve overall conditions. In order to do so, the number of those migrating should be reduced and those in transit returned to the countries of origin. In the literature such an approach to development was defined as ‘sedentary bias’ (Bakewell, 2008), sharing and applying a sedentary model of development which aims to achieve better quality of life at ‘home’ rather than through migration. Such an approach to migration and development is a reflection of the colonial ‘development project’ that is still reflected in many of the new initiatives on migration and development. In fact, the approach to migration that the EU operationalizes through EUTF is the construction of the ‘migration paradigm’ (Claes & Schmauder, 2020), in which long standing mobility patterns are increasingly labelled as problematic, irregular, and linked to security objectives. Particular attention is given to the borders and borderlands as examples of ‘ungoverned’ territories that need both security and border management intervention in order to stop flows of illicit goods and of people that endanger the security of the EU. This presentation aims to look at the way sedentary bias is implicitly included in the migration governance promoted by the EU in the Sahel through EUTF funding and critically analyze it.
Countermapping Ethiopia

Jed Stevenson
Durham University

Pastoral and agro-pastoral peoples in Ethiopia and elsewhere have long been subject to efforts at sedentarization, often accompanied by projects of mapping and delimiting their territories and dwelling places. In recent years however digital tools and the expansion of telecommunications networks have placed the means of production of mapping technology within reach of some of these peoples. In this presentation I describe the experience of working with communities in the Lower Omo who have collaborated in an effort to record forms of customary land use and places of importance to them, in territories that are threatened by annexation by outsiders. This process of countermapping is facilitated by the Sapelli software package, initially developed by a team at UCL and recently adapted to the lowland Ethiopian context by my colleagues and me. The software is intended to make community mapping and GIS technology accessible to people with low or no literacy. I will share some of the challenges as well as the achievements of this project.

The Hidden Costs of Externalising European Borders into Northern Niger

Hannah Rae Armstrong
International Crisis Group

From 2015 to 2018, EU policies aimed at containing migrant departures via the Sahel damaged local economies in northern Niger, strained fragile conflict management mechanisms, and exacerbated intercommunal tensions between Tuareg and Tebu groups. Over the past two decades, against the backdrop of a small and declining formal economy, trade in drugs, gold and people generated unprecedented revenue in northern Niger. Alongside Niamey's political will to devolve power to northern nomadic representatives, these forms of illicit and semi-licit trade - usually permitted or co-managed by southern actors - created jobs and furnished revenue streams that served as a lifeline to vulnerable mobile communities. They also helped to consolidate peace following the 1990s and 2007-2010 rebellions fueled by economic marginalization and underdevelopment. In 2015, in a move officially intended to protect migrant rights and Niger's borders but in large part the result of European lobbying to curb flows, the Nigerien parliament passed a law banning the passing of migrants. Many Nigeriens perceive the billion euros that the EU committed in aid to Niger for 2017-2020 as a quid pro quo for this law and its enforcement. The law's implementation the following year had a devastating impact on the northern economy, while also empowering security forces to stop citizens of West African countries and detain Nigerien drivers for no other reason than being together in a vehicle headed north in Niger. Furthermore, its uneven application, with Tebu traffickers far more likely to be targeted and have their vehicles seized than their Tuareg counterparts, inflamed intercommunal tensions that turned violent in some cases. Regional officials said the risks of potential violence far outweighed the benefit of prospective development projects, whose funding they noted seemed to end up back in European pockets.
Time to move: challenging sedentist biases through a temporal analysis of pastoral mobility

Natasha Maru
Institute of Development Studies

Development interventions have often imagined pastoralists as backward and unproductive because of their mobility. Despite advances in understandings that reposition pastoral mobility as an advantage, a sedentist logic continues to permeate policies and programmes making them problematic for pastoralists. Drawing from a case study of the Rabari pastoralists of western India, I take a step back to show that the sedentist bias derives from a spatial understanding of pastoral mobility. The binary between sedentary and nomadic has limited understandings of mobility to a spatial phenomenon, resulting in a top-down mapped view that reduces the complex, multiple, variegated, and multi-sensory experience of moving into a vacuous journey from point A to B.

But mobility is a function of both space and time. How we move is always a matter of tempo, duration, intensity, and timing. My paper sees mobility as duration, as flowing through time, rather than as apprehended from fixed positions, as displacement. It shows how pastoral mobility pleats in multiple and simultaneous aspects of time such as the time of clocks and calendars, diurnal cycles, circadian rhythms, and seasons, as well as age, generation, ideas of progress and modernity, the past-present-future, the synchronization, ordering, sequencing, and timing of events and activities. All these aspects interpenetrate and have a bearing on each other and mobility.

Looking at the temporal dimensions of mobility, brings us closer to the lived realities of pastoralists and allows us to explore what mobility means to them. The Rabari case study reveals how they engage with development interventions based in a sedentist ontology – not through subjection or subversion, but rather dialectically. Recognising the temporal footprint in pastoral mobility dispels the homogenising effects of rigid chronologies - enshrined in bounded, fixed, linear and singular notions of progress and modernity - and practically offers the opportunity to capture the pastoralists’ capacity to adapt to changing times.