Being "On the Margins"

Being "On the Margins":

Exploring Intersections

Edited by

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Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing

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This book first published 2016

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

To Fred for his exceptional patience.
—Dimi

*To Margaret and Thomas Corcoran for their unending support,
and Susie Miles for encouraging me to explore the world of academia
beyond the thesis.*
—Su

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FOREWORD

In June 2014, the Symposium of the Street, funded by the North West Doctoral Training Centre, was convened at the University of Manchester. My aim in organising this event was to bring civil society organisations and academics together to share their experiences of working and facilitating research with street-connected children and other children and youth in vulnerable situations. I wanted to provide an opportunity to explore the intersections that exist between the different sectors and to start conversations that may lead to future collaboration, to improve the impact of research.

The speakers who delivered presentations and workshops at the symposium represented a number of different organisations and researchers working in countries across Europe, Africa and Asia. They talked about their work with street-connected children, children with disabilities, slum-based communities, un-documented migrants and asylum seekers. They discussed the day-to-day issues they faced when delivering interventions, advocating for effective social policy, litigating for inclusion, or monitoring and evaluating the progress made. All spoke of communities who live on the margins, positioned as out-of-place and unable to access aspects of mainstream society.

The chapters in this book present some of the papers presented at the symposium. The themes and sectors represented by the different chapters are many and varied. Together they offer a multidimensional approach to being on the margins of society, or working with such excluded communities. In exploring the different stories they represent Dimi and I hope that we may encourage a cross-sectoral approach to inclusion in its many forms.

The first steps towards collaboration relate to understanding and learning from each other's practice. We hope that this publication is a starting point towards that aim.

Su Lyn Corcoran
November 2015

EXPLORING INTERSECTIONS:
AN INTRODUCTION

SU LYN CORCORAN AND DIMITRINA KANEVA

This book is the proceedings from the Symposium of the Street, a one-day conference in 2014 that explored the experiences of delivering supportive interventions and/or facilitating research with street-connected children and other children and youth in vulnerable situations. The Symposium brought academics and members of civil society organisations together to discuss their work and explore the intersections that exist between these communities. The aim of the event was to consider how to improve the impact of research with street-connected children (a term we explain later in the chapter) by drawing on the lessons learned by researchers working in other sectors and academic disciplines, as well as to share the experiences of working with street-connected children. The chapters in this book have been authored by delegates at the Symposium. The communities they write about are to some extent positioned as out-of-place by society: they experience marginalisation as a result of social and political processes of exclusion and are invisible to policy or official welfare structures (e.g. Connolly and Ennew 1996; Moore 2000; Shand 2015; Thomas de Benítez 2011). As such these communities can be described as inhabiting liminal spaces on the margins of society. The chapters consider individuals who are street-connected, or rough sleeping (Chapters Two, Four, Seven and Eight), refugees or migrant populations (Chapters One and Five), slum dwelling (Chapter One), traditional fishing communities (Chapter One), English as an additional language learners who attend mainstream schools in England (Chapter Six), and children with disabilities (Chapter Three). The chapters represent research from a range of academic disciplines as well as organisational approaches to working with these communities. They focus on global approaches to advocating for such communities or generating data about them, as well as introducing individual communities in specific geographic locations.

Four of the chapters focus on street-connected children and youth; therefore, in this introduction we provide an overview of what it means to be street-connected and discuss briefly how the experiences of the other communities featured in the chapters intersect with those of street-connected children and youth and other marginalised groups. We focus in particular on the language used to label these communities and the liminality they experience as a result of their places in society. In doing so, we hope to emphasise the importance of interdisciplinary, cross-sectoral approaches to research and work with communities living on the margins of society. The Introduction concludes with an overview of the structure of the book.

Labelling communities living on the margins of society

The labels ascribed to the communities featured in the chapters of this book, by the media, political leaders or members of the public, determine the nature of the interventions and welfare programmes provided by the state and our social interactions with them. Often the way in which these labels are understood reduces individuals to a specific identity defined by that label. For example, at the time of writing, Europe is described as being "overwhelmed" by a "migrant crisis", or a "refugee crisis". The difference between the two labels is important, as the first suggests that the people arriving in Europe are moving from their homes in search of work, to be reunited with family or to escape poverty. Migrants are subject to national immigration laws. Refugees on the other hand, are defined as those who have crossed international borders as they flee persecution and armed conflict. They have status in both national and international law, and signatories to the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees must provide special consideration for refugees (Edwards 2015). If the people arriving on Europe's shores are refugees, states are therefore obligated to provide relief programmes. Thus, referring to the crisis as a "migrant crisis" provides a particular political standpoint, and portrays those arriving as less deserving of sympathy or support (Phillips 2014). However, both labels are politically loaded and dehumanising, failing to capture the individual stories of the people making the journeys to Europe and influencing the suspicion and negativity levelled at them by mainstream society (Phillips 2014). When refugees seek asylum in their new host country they will feel uprooted, and will need to begin a process of rebuilding their sense of self in relation to their new situation (Berman et al. 2009). Social interactions with the communities they are attempting to

integrate into will necessarily affect how welcomed and "at home" they then become.

The labels used to describe other communities featured in the chapters are equally loaded and have similar effects on an individual's sense of self. Children and youth living and/or working on the street are often referred to as "street children". The term "street child" is credited to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) following the United Nations (UN) International Year of the Child in 1979 (Veale et al. 2000). At that time there was an awareness of the rising numbers of children found living and working on the streets in lower income countries. International organisations aiming to support these children depicted them as parentless and originating from rural poor communities (Aptekar and Stoecklin 2014). As such they were portrayed as unable to support themselves without adult supervision. Such representations painted street children as vulnerable and in need of rescue. From the point of view of the State and mainstream society, the presence of children on the streets upsets "ideological construction of citizenship" which holds middle class values of the community, school and the family at its centre (Beazley 2015). Being on the street means, therefore, being out-of-place and not fulfilling society's ideal of childhood and the place of children (Cresswell 1996; Moore 2000; Shand 2015). The children's identities are thus constructed as "deviant criminals" (Beazley 2003) and are often described locally as trouble makers, turning to begging, stealing and drug use in order to survive.

The term street child, or youth[1], has become increasingly focussed on the two predominant understandings above of children on the street as being out-of-place: over-romanticised passive victims who need to be rescued or delinquents and trouble makers who need to be rounded up and removed by police and other authorities (e.g. Beazley 2003 and 2015; Panter Brick 2004; Thomas de Benítez 2007; van Blerk 2011). It has become a "construct loaded with powerful and emotive moral connotations" (Veale et al. 2000, 132). There have been efforts to develop new ways to define and describe being connected to the street. However, children and youth's experiences on the street are not always restricted to a particular definition, such as the child who may live on the street full-time but frequently returns home for a night or two at a time to visit family, or the child who works on the street during the day and rents a hut at night with other children from the street. In addition, their experiences are not always characterised by the negative aspects suggested by being

positioned as out-of-place. Baker et al. (1996) found that children living on the street in Nepal were less malnourished than their counterparts living in slum areas in and around Kathmandu, and there are multiple examples of children having developed more supportive familial relationships and social networks on the street than they enjoyed at home (e.g. Ayuku et al. 2004; Davies 2006; Hecht 1998; McAlpine et al. 2010). There are a number of phrases that are now used to label and describe children and youth living and/or working on the street that have been influenced by the various countries, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and political agendas responsible for describing the phenomenon in their particular contexts (Aptekar and Stoecklin 2014).

In many ways the choice of descriptor depends on the direction of societal gaze. Many researchers argue that emotional overtones attributed to the choice of language can stigmatise, especially when the aim is to invoke pity or hostility through a deficit construction of the identities of these children and youth (e.g. Aptekar 1988; Ennew and Swart-Kruger 2003, Glauser 1990; Hecht 2000). Therefore, choosing the language to describe children and youth living and/or working on the street is often the first hurdle faced by those who facilitate research or work with them. In this book, the authors concerned directly with children living and/or working on the street (Chapters Two, Four, Seven and Nine) explain the reasons behind the language that they have chosen to use, which may or may not be context specific. For example, Moss and Singh in Chapter Four, describe the children in their research in ten European countries as rough sleepers and include a comprehensive discussion into the broad definition of homelessness that these children fall into. As editors we choose to use the idea of street-connectedness, developed by Thomas de Benítez (2011), where varying levels of engagement with the opportunities and challenges inherent to living and/or working on the street are possible and often context specific. The definition is detailed as having four distinct parts, where the use of the phrase street-connected child (or youth):

(1) recognises each child as a social actor capable of developing relationships with people and places, and whose activities contribute to his or her identity construction;

(2) encourages a focus on children's emotional associations with public spaces, rather than on current, physical, presence on the street;

(3) recognises that children who have spent time working, hanging out or living on the street form attachments there – just as they have varying connections to family, community and wider society;

(4) recognises that street-based experiences make particular contributions to identity development that may differ from those experienced by other socially excluded children.

(Borg et al. 2012)

Street-connectedness describes the situation of the street rather than defining the child or young person by the street. It does not immediately lend itself to the traditional stereotypes of street children as either victims or delinquents, but suggests a continuum of possible interactions with the opportunities and challenges that characterise life on the street.

Despite the development of the term to capture the multiple dimensions of street-connectedness, the very act of naming a child as a street-connected child runs the risk of essentialising who they are by reducing them down to a specific static identity, which fails to represent the fluidity of identity inherent to living and working on the street. Identities are how individuals make sense of who they are in relation to their world and the interactions they experience with other people. Aspects of these identities, particularly for communities living on the margins, are imposed upon them and affect the interactions they have with the public and the ways in which they are assisted and supported by civil society (e.g. Beazley 2015; Berman et al. 2009; Murphy et al. 1988). The language we choose to use represents political and philosophical precedents, so the act of naming and categorising a young person and assigning a particular identity determines the sector-specific approach that may be taken with regards to the research and support that concerns that particular definition. For example, the use of children with disabilities, as with street-connected children, aims to describe the situation in which the child finds him/herself, rather than label the child. However, if the researcher follows a social model of disability theory, which sees disability as a social construction or stigma that results from barriers imposed by society, then the child is a "disabled child", as it is society that enables the disability rather than the child's particular set of characteristics.

When these characteristics are translated into identities that are positioned as deficient, social barriers to inclusion reinforce inequalities and marginalisation of those constructed as disabled (Albert 2004; Corcoran 2015; Fanning et al. 2001). Social barriers experienced by street-connected children, refugees and asylum seekers, slum dwellers and so on, intersect with those of disabled children, making issues of language, philosophy and related theory important to the discussion. For example, when children from each of these communities attend school, they can be

positioned as being deficient in ability (e.g. Corcoran 2015). For some, access to education is problematic, which is discussed by Kasule Kirumira in Chapter Three, with regards to children with disabilities in Uganda. For others, it affects the learning approaches that are devised to support children and the implications of their positioning within the dominant school context, which forms the basis for Kaneva's discussion of children's experiences of learning English as an additional language in schools in England in Chapter Six. Such social exclusion, resulting from a deficit construction of children and youth's identities, is not confined to the field of education.

Cross-sectoral approaches

In a review of the literature related to research that had been facilitated with street-connected children and youth between 2000 and 2010, Thomas de Benítez (2011) highlights a disparity between the findings of academic research into street-connectedness and development/organisational practice. In addition, research into street-connectedness is often discipline-specific and not systemic, consequently providing a fragmented body of research that disassociates the experiences of street-connected children and youth from the "laws, policies, interventions and environments that affect them" (Thomas de Benítez 2011, ix). Such a disparity is not confined to research and practice concerning street-connected children. Thomas de Benítez (2011) advocates for street-connected children and youth to be distinguished from other children and youth when policies are developed and interventions designed, but also stresses that they should not be dealt with in isolation. In practice, there may be further fragmentation as approaches are not only sector-specific, but also the particular focus of the research, or the methods with which interventions are implemented, create particular specialisation.

Looking again at education, and inclusive education in particular, such fragmentation and specialisation is clearly evident. Inclusive education may be described by a definition developed by the Enabling Education Network. Inclusive education (EENET 1998):

- acknowledges that all children can learn;
- acknowledges and respects differences (age, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, HIV status, etc.);
- enables education structures, systems and methodologies to meet the needs of all children;

- is part of a wider strategy to promote an inclusive society;
- is a dynamic process which is constantly evolving; and
- need not be restricted by large class sizes or shortage of material resources.

Given the range of needs encompassed by such a broad definition, it can be adapted to particular situations and the needs of the researchers, organisations and countries developing research, policies and programmes of inclusive education. Focussing on children with disabilities Kasule Kirumira, in Chapter Three, explores the current situation of education provision in Uganda highlighting how global policy frameworks translate differently in specific local contexts. Developing a universalised approach to the provision of inclusive education, therefore, becomes difficult when the various organisations and researchers concerned with the delivery often work from very different philosophical standpoints. For example, some advocate and work towards systemic changes to infrastructure, while others focus on the development of expertise to provide technical support to children from specific groups (Lewis 2015). One solution is for a twin-track approach in which both are implemented, but this can be daunting for those who feel under-prepared to deliver the approach that they are less familiar with and so collaboration becomes the key (Lewis 2015).

Collaboration is becoming an increasingly integral part in how larger international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) interact with and support local partners. Chapters Nine and Ten are written by staff members at two such INGOs: Retrak and GlobalGiving UK. Retrak works with street-connected children and, as Corcoran and Wakia mention in Chapter Nine, the organisation has expanded its work to develop a community programme in Hosanna, Ethiopia. The project aims to prevent children migrating to the streets of Addis Ababa, hundreds of miles away, by working with other stakeholders in the community. GlobalGiving partners are small organisations working in a number of sectors. As well as providing a fundraising platform, GlobalGiving UK enables training opportunities to build the organisations' programmatic capacity and increase the impact of their work. Such collaboration also provides organisations with the opportunity to develop their organisational knowledge and deal with the multiple layers of disadvantage that are experienced by individuals characterised as belonging to the communities who are considered to be on the margins of society; for instance, street-connected children who also have a disability, or refugee children who

become street-connected. Exploring the intersections of experience of each community are useful starting points for such collaborations.

The complexity of the situation for street-connected children and youth implies that they share similar experiences to other marginalised and vulnerable children, such as those included in the chapters of this book, and so research tools and methodologies may be adapted and applied across these groups. For example, the Child Status Index tool developed for use with orphans and vulnerable children by Measure Evaluation (2012) has been adapted in the development of an assessment tool to measure the progress of street-connected children through reintegration by Retrak (Corcoran and Wakia 2013). In Chapter, Nine Corcoran and Wakia explain the lessons learnt since the end of the pilot period of using the tool, outlined in their *Evaluating Outcomes* report (Corcoran and Wakia 2013), focussing in the rolling out of the tool to small partner organisations as a method of monitoring and evaluation. Maxmeister and Harrison, Chapter Ten, look at impact on a larger scale through the ways in which data can be analysed, by sector or across sectors, with the GlobalGiving storytelling tool. Developed as a means of using storied data to gather information across the various GlobalGiving partner organisations, it contains (at the time of writing) over 65,000 stories which can be used by researchers to analyse their own data and corroborate their findings with trends in others' data.

The situation for those experiencing multidimensional aspects of disadvantage is complicated and the support they require can be more complex. Street-connected children with disabilities, for example, may require specialist care and educational support, as well as the standard levels of care on offer. Refugee children who are hearing impaired may require case workers or interpreters who are able to communicate through sign language, emphasising the importance of networking and collaboration within and across sectors. Academic research facilitated with and about children and youth from each of the communities, similarly benefits from an interdisciplinary approach. This collection of proceedings is therefore a collaboration that brings out the intersections in work with communities that live on the margins of society, which are discussed in detail in the concluding chapter, and highlights some of the issues that are specific to each group.

The Structure of the Proceedings

The book is split into three main parts: Policy, Experiences, and Measuring Impact. Part I comprises of chapters that consider policy, at the global and multi-country levels.

In Chapter One, Pais et al. engage with the political and methodological implications for both research and the European project through their discussions of work developed with three different communities: slum dwellers and fishermen in Portugal, and refugees and migrants in the UK. They recognise a "truth" in today's Europe of the existence of communities unable to take up a proper place within mainstream society. Being positioned as part of the "rabble", they occupy a space of invisibility that resembles a "third world" community. As such there are tensions in research that involves people living on the fringes of Europe.

In Chapter Two, Nwamaraihe's exploration of street-connected children within current international agreements and global treaties such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) highlights the prospects, or lack thereof, for such children to claim their rights within these avenues. She looks at the problems of litigation for street-connected children and various cases that have been before the court in a number of countries. In light of the drafting of the general comment for street children in the UNCRC, she also looks at the implications on the ways in which the judiciary necessarily try and represent street-connected children. Nwamaraihe advocates for international adjudicatory bodies to address core factors that contribute to the predicament of street-connected children.

In Chapter Three, Kasule Kirumira assesses the extent to which global agreements concerning children with disabilities and their access to education are translated into practice in Uganda. Interviewing key stakeholders, from parents to head teachers and policy makers, he develops a comprehensive picture of education for children with disabilities in both rural and urban areas. He outlines the practical challenges that frustrate the implementation of policy and practice in inclusive education.

In Chapter Four, Moss and Singh take a grounded theory approach to exploring the situation of rough sleeping children in ten European countries, to raise awareness of the situation and inform services aimed at

supporting them. They assess the nature of the problem itself and establish the differences and similarities of the children's situations and experiences. In addition they discuss the auto-ethnographic dimension, in that researchers working with communities who are stigmatised and/or vulnerable must be aware of the power dynamics as well as the emotional investment they make in the process of facilitating the research. The project aimed to increase the knowledge base relating to rough sleeping children, and the organisations supporting them, to develop effective policy, strategies and services and challenge current policy, practice and thinking about the children sleeping rough in Europe.

Part II considers issues affecting children on the ground. It focusses on research with children and young people and highlights key barriers to accessing aspects of mainstream society.

In Chapter Five, Murray outlines the Article 26 project that works with 18 universities across England, to provide opportunities for students from an asylum seeking background. She then discusses access to higher education (HE) experiences of forced migrants or those with a non-established status in England and Sweden, using a political perspective to highlight the barriers and enabling factors in each of the contexts. The research, currently being developed as a doctoral thesis, focusses on two theoretical frameworks that complement the analysis – Foucault's governmentality and Bourdieu's capital and habitus. Murray argues that migrants in England are refused access to HE as a result of their unsettled status which forces them to remain on the margins of society without being able to contribute to the welfare state.

Chapter Six highlights Kaneva's research with children who are learning English as an additional language and attend mainstream schools in England. She explores the positioning of children learning EAL informed by the support practices they experience within school. Conducting her analysis using the thinking tools of Bourdieu, Kaneva argues that learning support approaches that require withdrawal from whole-class teaching lead to isolated positioning in relation to the dominant school context.

In Chapter Seven, Corcoran examines the diverse transition journeys of young men who had previously lived on the street in Kenya. She explores the nature of their relationship with the street, and the ways in which they actively (re)engage with the opportunities found there, after they have

"left" it. She explains the definitive role of economic and social capital in making a decision to live on the street or to leave it behind, and the impact of education and further training. The need for frameworks that consider the diversity of the reasons to join or leave the streets is called for, emphasising that young people in such circumstances may be required to make more complex choices that support both educational and economic gains.

Chapter Eight discusses Sansom's work with S.A.L.V.E International in Uganda. She outlines the realities of young people living on the streets of Uganda who use *Mafuta* (aeroplane fuel) in order to deal with their day-to-day lives. The negative perceptions of these young people are shaped by policies related to illegal behaviours and social expectations which in turn shape their further behaviour and life chances. In this way, young people are regarded as out-of-place and disturbing social norms. Sansom interprets the survival strategies of children on the street as adoption of new/different personas in order to survive loneliness in their multiple identities whilst lacking a sense of belonging. Accepting help to deal with substance misuse is seen as a way out for young people and their reintegration into society.

Part III focuses on measuring the impact of research and interventions with communities featured in Parts I and II, specifically with regards to monitoring and evaluation and the sharing of information that could take place between organisations and academics.

Corcoran and Wakia, Chapter Nine, impart lessons learned by Retrak during the pilot stage of implementing a new monitoring and evaluation procedure, which uses the Child Status Index to measure the wellbeing of children they assist to leave the streets, and the roll-out of the toolkit to partner organisations for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

In Chapter Ten, Maxmeister and Harrison explore how the GlobalGiving storytelling tool collects insights from narratives about social problems through online tools that can produce visual representations of the data. The aim of the tool is to shed light on complex issues and their composing elements. The method and tool could be of use to organisations working to "uproot social problems", therefore providing a bottom-up approach to problem solving, e.g. to understand and address the needs of street-connected children from within a community/organisational context. GlobalGiving's storytelling project

focusses on collecting and analysing the stories and providing guidance on how to read the analyses via wordtrees. The resulting database of stories can provide programmatic, organisational and global overviews of patterns and trends in data.

Notes

[1] There is no clear cut definition of "youth", as it denotes a transitional stage from childhood to independent adulthood. A child is often defined as being below the age of 18 years, but this can vary depending on country context. In Europe, in particular, there is no consensus about either the minimum or maximum age for this phase, as the end of compulsory schooling and the ages of consent or for legal voting, differ for different countries (Walther et al. 2002). The definition of a youth as being 15-29 years old is, therefore, often used in research. The African Youth Charter definition of a youth is 15-35 years old (Aryeetey et al. 2014). We choose to define a child as being below the age of 18 and a youth as 15-35.

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PART I

POLICY

CHAPTER ONE

WORKING "WITH" LOCAL COMMUNITIES INSIDE THE BIGGER PICTURE

ALEXANDRE PAIS, RHETTA MORAN, MÔNICA MESQUITA, HAUKE STRAEHLER-POHL AND NATIVIDAD ADAMUZ

Introduction: Europe's rabble

The economic crisis that has been presiding over Europe for the last six years, together with an escalation of inward migration by undocumented people, has increased the numbers living in third world conditions in Europe. Europe's excluded "rabble" (Ruda 2013) can often include communities of displaced people, slum-dwellers and/or refugees, but can also include European citizens living with, for example, chronic unemployment, low wages, addictions, homelessness or other instances of social fragmentation. These are groups of people who, lacking in social capital have at best a precarious place within the organised totality of the European Union, and at worse, no place at all – despite formally belonging to it. They are the "part of no-part" (Rancière 1995) of the European social body.

In this chapter we will refer to these groups as "local communities". Here, the term "local" acquires a specifically literal meaning if we consider that most of the people living in these communities are inhibited, due to economic, legal, linguistic and/or cultural impediments, from moving out of a confined geographical space. Such groups of excluded people are sometimes perceived by political authorities as having problems that can be addressed through public or charitable programmes of rehabilitation. More often, they are simply ignored and confined to invisibility. Most dangerously, however, they may be seen as a threat to

social order and stability, against which severe measures ought to be taken. In all cases, Europe's "rabble" is often perceived as being extrinsic to the European project – a project officially based in the principles of equality, democracy, solidarity and inclusion.[1]

The central premise of this chapter is that the so-called "rabble" is an intrinsic part of the European project, and the ethical, social and cultural potential of Europe is inextricably bound up with the ways it relates to and treats those who, while living in Europe – many of them Europeans themselves, currently lack a proper place within civil society. It is this so called "rabble" that, in a great many respects, resembles third world[2] communities, that is the "truth" of today's Europe where this "rabble" indicates the limits or boundaries of the European project.

Both in spite of and because of their "local" character, Europe's excluded communities are privileged spaces to study the global problems that face Europe today. Working with these communities allows us not only to address some of their particular problems, but also the problem of a European Community that allows or even generates outcast communities amidst official discourses of equality, freedom and solidarity.

In this chapter we discuss some of the political and methodological implications for both research and the European project itself, by referring to the work developed with two local communities based in the United Kingdom and Portugal. Our purpose is to highlight the tensions in research when addressing people living on the fringes of Europe, but also to posit those tensions as a reflection of broader political and economic arrangements where these communities are located. The work developed with the communities of Refugee and Asylum Participatory Action Research (RAPAR, Manchester, United Kingdom) and Bairro (Costa da Caparica, Portugal) intends to problematise and reflect upon the broader dynamics of European politics and European identity. By working within local communities, researchers are in a privileged position to investigate the tensions and contradictions that arise from the necessity of integrating – within a shared (political) model – the diversity of cultures and social realities that make Europe a unique constellation of different life-worlds.

We start the chapter by briefly describing the two local communities with whom we have been working, and from which emerged the reflections developed. Afterwards, we present our strategic approach to the work with local communities, both politically and academically, and