ANTHEM SERIES ON RUSSIAN, EAST EUROPEAN AND EURASIAN STUDIES

Anthem Series on Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies publishes original research on the economy, politics, sociology, anthropology and history of the region. The series aims to promote critical scholarship in the field, and has built a reputation for uncompromising editorial and production standards. The breadth of the series reflects our commitment to promoting original scholarship on Russian and East European studies to a global audience.

Series Editor
Balázs Apor – Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

Editorial Board
Bradley F. Abrams – President, Czechoslovak Studies Association, USA
Jan C. Behrends – Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung, Potsdam, Germany
Dennis Deletant – University College London, UK
Tomasz Kamusella – University of St Andrews, UK
Walter G. Moss – Eastern Michigan University, USA
Arfon Rees – University of Birmingham, UK
Marshall T. Poe – University of Iowa, USA
Maria Todorova – University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA

Ethnographies of Grey Zones in Eastern Europe

Relations, Borders and Invisibilities

Edited by Ida Harboe Knudsen
and
Martin Demant Frederiksen

ANTHEM PRESS

Anthem Press
An imprint of Wimbledon Publishing Company
www.anthempress.com

This edition first published in UK and USA 2015
by ANTHEM PRESS
75–76 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8HA, UK
or PO Box 9779, London SW19 7ZG, UK
and
244 Madison Ave #116, New York, NY 10016, USA

Copyright © 2015 Ida Harboe Knudsen and Martin Demant Frederiksen editorial matter and selection; individual chapters © individual contributors

The moral right of the authors has been asserted.

All rights reserved. Without limiting the rights under copyright reserved above, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise), without the prior written permission of both the copyright owner and the above publisher of this book.

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

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Exploring the Grey Zones : Gpvernance, Conflict and (In)security in Eastern Europe (Conference) (2013 Denmark)
Ethnographies of grey zones in Eastern Europe : relations, borders and invisibilities / edited by Ida Harboe Knudsen and Martin Demant Frederiksen.
pages cm. – (Anthem series on Russian, East European and Eurasian studies)
"The volume is based on the international conference "Exploring the Grey Zones: Governance, Conflict and (In)security in Eastern Europe", which was held at Aarhus University in Denmark on 1-2 November 2013."
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-78308-412-8 (hard back : alk. paper) – ISBN 978-1-78308-413-5 (paper back : alk. paper) – ISBN978-1-78308-414-2 (pdf ebook) – ISBN 978-1-78308-435-7 (epub ebook)
1. Post-communism–Europe, Eastern. 2. Informal sector (Economics)–Europe, Eastern. 3. Europe, Eastern–Economic conditions–1989- 4. Europe, Eastern–Social conditions–1989- 5. Europe, Eastern–Politics and government–1989- I. Knudsen, Ida Harboe. II. Frederiksen, Martin Demant, 1981- III. Title.
HN380.7.A8E97 2013
306.09437'09049–dc23
2015003721

ISBN-13: 978 1 78308 412 8 (Hbk)
ISBN-10: 1 78308 412 X (Hbk)

ISBN-13: 978 1 78308 413 5 (Pbk)
ISBN-10: 1 78308 413 8 (Pbk)

Cover photo © 2015 Martin Demant Frederiksen

This title is also available as an ebook.

CONTENTS

Chapter 1	Introduction: What Is a Grey Zone and Why Is Eastern Europe One? *Martin Demant Frederiksen and Ida Harboe Knudsen*	1
PART I	RELATIONS	
Chapter 2	Living in the Grey Zones: When Ambiguity and Uncertainty are the Ordinary *Frances Pine*	25
Chapter 3	Between Starvation and Security: Poverty and Food in Rural Moldova *Jennifer R. Cash*	41
Chapter 4	Brokering the Grey Zones: Pursuits of Favours in a Bosnian Town *Čarna Brković*	57
PART II	BORDERS	
Chapter 5	Good Neighbours and Bad Fences: Everyday Polish Trading Activities on the EU Border with Belarus *Aimee Joyce*	75
Chapter 6	Bosnian Post-refugee Transnationalism: A Grey Zone of 'Potentiality' *Maja Halilovic-Pastuovic*	89
Chapter 7	'Homeland Is Where Everything Is for the People': The Rationale of Belonging and Citizenship in the Context of Social Uncertainty *Kristina Šliavaitė*	107

Chapter 7

'HOMELAND IS WHERE EVERYTHING IS FOR THE PEOPLE': THE RATIONALE OF BELONGING AND CITIZENSHIP IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL UNCERTAINTY

Kristina Šliavaitė

In this chapter I describe the way that members of the ethnically mixed Russian-speaking community in Visaginas, Lithuania, view their relationship with the Lithuanian state. Anthropologists and other social researchers have demonstrated that the perception of citizenship is not universal and is shaped by sociocultural context(s) (Bloch 2013; Dagnino 2006; Stack 2012; Yalçın-Heckmann 2012). The community where I conducted my research was formed in the Soviet period and its livelihood has been closely linked to the vitality of the nearby Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant. The majority of Visaginas's population moved to Lithuania during Soviet times when the plant and settlement were being built, and many of them believed in the ideas and the future of the socialist modernisation project (Šliavaitė 2005). During the Soviet era the Russian-speaking community in the settlement were like an 'island' in the eastern part of Lithuania, as they had few social connections with the surrounding population (Kavaliauskas 2002; Šliavaitė 2005). When the Soviet Union broke up, Lithuania granted citizenship to all the permanent residents of the country who applied for it. However, I will argue that formal citizenship does not necessarily guarantee that new citizens will develop a sense of belonging and attachment to the national community, or that they will have common perceptions of citizenship and similar expectations of the state. After the events in Ukraine in 2014, with the annexation of Crimea by Russia, Lithuanian journalists rushed to Visaginas to interview the local residents and ask them if they thought a similar scenario was possible in this predominantly Russian-populated part of the country. The concern expressed by these journalists reveals that there is a perception among the general public

in Lithuania that the Visaginas community's feelings of [illegible]c and national belonging could be ambiguous.

Residents of Visaginas have faced the situation of social uncertainty for more than a decade, starting with negotiations with the EU regarding the eventual shutdown of the nuclear power plant. I first came to Visaginas in 2000 as a PhD student in anthropology. My aim was to listen to local people and to observe everyday situations in order to become acquainted with their perceptions of the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the upcoming shutdown of the nuclear power plant. At that time the residents of Visaginas were highly concerned with how the proposed shutdown of the town's main industry would affect their everyday lives and the local economy. I heard numerous stories about economic and social decline in post-Soviet Lithuania, social uncertainty and insecurity, rising unemployment and the moral degradation of the community (Šliavaitė 2005). Nearly ten years after my initial research I returned to Visaginas to do a follow-up study on the socioeconomic consequences of the shutdown on the local people. I wanted to find out how the residents of Visaginas had adapted to these changes. Between November 2011 and June 2012 I visited regularly with a colleague. During my first visit we walked through the town as I looked for signs of change or stability. The most visible change was the two-storey supermarket in the centre of the town, which had numerous shops, a beauty salon and cafés; it was a popular place of meeting and shopping for the local people. Informant interviews were still dominated by the themes of uncertainty, social insecurity and economic decline, this time caused by the world economic crisis of 2008 and the closure of Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant in 2009.

In this chapter I argue that socioeconomic insecurity and uncertainty as well as feelings of ambiguity about civic and national belonging shape people's perceptions of the state and considerations about citizenship. The concept of citizenship commonly includes the dimensions of community members' legal status, identity and civic activity (Kymlica and Norman 2010 [2000], 30–31). Numerous pieces of research have demonstrated that different projects of citizenship are developed in the same political community by different actors (Dagnino 2007; Stack 2012), and that notions of citizenship are moulded by sociocultural contexts and historical developments (Bloch 2013; Dagnino 2006; Mataradze 2011; Yalçın-Heckmann 2012). Anthropologists and other social researchers question the universal understanding of notions such as 'democracy' and 'citizenship' and emphasise the necessity of investigating what meanings local population(s) attach to these globally circulating concepts (Robins, Cornwall and Lieres 2008). Citizenship presupposes citizens' rights and duties in a certain political community, and this raises questions about changing notions of citizenship in the period of globalisation and intensified migration (O'By[illegible] 2005; Ong 2000; Soysal 2000). Researchers emphasise the need to perceive and analyse citizenship in relation to social inequality (Kipnis 2004; Shachar 2009). In this chapter I focus on the ways my informants construct their relation to the nation-state and the emic meanings they attach to the notion of citizenship. The ways my informants construct their relation to a state are often ambiguous and situational; I perceive their relationship as a grey zone where boundaries between we/they, official/unofficial and acceptable/unacceptable are negotiated. At the same time, along with many other social researchers I argue that the stories described in this chapter point to a general change in notions of citizenship and belonging in the period of globalisation and migration.

Some Contextual Information and Methodological Notes

Visaginas was built during the Soviet period as a settlement for Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant employees and their families. During the Soviet period the town was named Sniechkus, after the Lithuanian Communist Party leader; it was renamed Visaginas in the 1990s. The construction of the town started in 1975 and was supported by the Soviet authorities in Moscow (Kavaliauskas 1999, 2003). The people who were involved in the construction of the town and the plant were high-level professionals working under the rule of a special ministry responsible for the construction and management of nuclear objects in the Soviet Union (Kavaliauskas 2003). The majority of these professionals had worked at other Soviet nuclear industry sites prior to being assigned to Sniechkus (Kavaliauskas 2003). As the construction of the power plant was a project of key importance to the Soviet Union it provided high-quality construction supplies, and the residents' personal and family economies steadily improved (Kavaliauskas 2002, 2003; Šliavaitė 2005). The population of the settlement increased from 2,395 in 1978 to 31,579 in 1989 (Kavaliauskas 1999, 34–35). After Lithuania gained independence in 1991, a portion of Visaginas's population emigrated from the town and from Lithuania altogether (Kavaliauskas 1999, 51). In 2001 the population of Visaginas was 29,554, and the majority of the inhabitants were Russians (52.4 per cent); Lithuanians were the second-largest group (15 per cent), followed by Belarusians (10 per cent) and Ukrainians (5 per cent) (Lietuvos Statistikos Departamentas 2002). By 2011 the population of Visaginas had fallen to 22,091, a decrease of 25 per cent since 2001 (Lietuvos Statistikos Departamentas 2011). This could be a reflection of general demographic processes in Lithuania during this period, which were characterised by low birth rates and increased emigration (Stankūnienė 2011; Lietuvos Statistikos Departamentas 2011).

The nuclear plant, the symbol of the community, was closed in 2009. Its closure was a major point of discussion in Lithuania's accession negotiations with the EU (European Commission 2008). The Lithuanian government made the decision to close the first reactor of the plant before 2005 and the second before 2010 (European Commission 2008). The plant was closed because it was considered unsafe: Ignalina's reactors were of the RBMK type, the same type as those at Chernobyl (European Commission 2008). However, the nuclear power plant remains an important industry and job provider for the inhabitants of the city, even after its closure, as it employs people in decommissioning works.[1] The number of registered unemployed individuals in the municipality of Visaginas was 1,700 in 2009 (9.4 per cent of the local workforce) and 2,700 (15.2 per cent) in 2010, but dropped to 2,100 (13.9 per cent) in 2012.[2] The level of unemployment in the municipality in 2012 was lower than levels in the municipalities in nearby regions (Utenos Teritorinė Darbo Birža 2012). This could be explained by high emigration rates as well as employment provided by the plant through decommissioning works.

This chapter is based on empirical data collected in Visaginas between November 2011 and June 2012. These investigations were part of the larger research project 'Social Challenges for Ethnic Minorities and New Immigrant Groups in Lithuania after Joining the EU' carried out by the Lithuanian Social Research Centre. In total 17 in-depth interviews were conducted with members of the Russian, Belarusian and Ukrainian ethnic groups. The interview and participant observation data collected during my first piece of fieldwork in Visaginas in 2000–02 provided me with a solid foundation for developing this study (Šliavaitė 2005). Both projects were conducted during periods of social uncertainty for the inhabitants of Visaginas, in terms of the closure of the plant and the world economic crisis.

In this chapter I focus on two informants representing two different generations. The stories of Volodia and Taras contain similar themes to many interviews I conducted with other respondents from my sample group.[3] However, the interviews with Volodia and Taras were more extensive, both informants being open, talkative and providing rich data on the issues of interest to this chapter. Volodia belongs to what I call the older generation of Visaginas's residents: like many others he moved to Visaginas during the time when the plant and the settlement were under construction and the town was in need of a larger workforce. Taras is a member of what I call the 'middle' generation: he was born at the end of the Soviet period and his youth passed during times of political, economic and social transformation. An important thread that continues throughout Volodia's story is the importance of citizenship in the job market during periods of uncertainty. Taras's story

the state. Both stories reveal notions of citizenship and the interconnection between issues of citizenship and socioeconomic concerns.

Citizenship and the Job Market: Volodia's Story

I use the story of Volodia to show how some residents of Visaginas who moved to Lithuania in the Soviet period to work at the plant faced the challenge of having to reconsider their civic and national belonging after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. As my interview material reveals, choices of civic and national belonging are in some ways pragmatic, being based on socioeconomic interests and fuelled by feelings of emotional attachment or detachment regarding the political community. Volodia and other people in similarly disadvantageous socioeconomic situations balance different levels of attachment, the most conceptually challenging being their selection of citizenship, in order to minimise social risks and the consequences of unemployment. This story encourages us to rethink the perception of citizenship as being based on common identity and emotional attachment. Volodia does not perceive citizenship and identity as different sides of the same coin, which brings us to Yasemin Nuhoglu Soysal's argument that an increasing separation of rights and identities is characteristic of current notions of citizenship (2000, 1). Volodia does not perceive common identity as an important aspect of civic belonging. Instead, he develops his story around the issues of citizenship and employment.

I made contact with Volodia through a 'snowball' sampling strategy in 2012. We met for an interview in his flat, which is in a five-storey apartment house built during the Soviet period. Volodia is a thin and quiet man who talks slowly, but he made his points clearly. His calm demeanour came as a contrast to that of his friend Inokentii, who was also present during the interview and who interrupted our conversation a number of times in order to express his opinion on different issues. Inokentii was very emotional and emphasised his disappointment with the Lithuanian state whenever he could. Volodia and Inokentii are Russians and both came to Visaginas in the Soviet period. Inokentii is now retired and gets a pension; Volodia has been unemployed for some years. Both men perceive their status as having deteriorated in post-Soviet Lithuania in terms of their economic and social wellbeing. Both men emphasised that they were not needed by anyone anymore: neither in Lithuania nor in Russia. The main interviewee was Volodia, and I focus on the story he provided.

At the time of the interview, Volodia was 55 years old. He is unemployed. His wife is unemployed as well. They both receive social allowance, which, according to Volodia, is not sufficient to meet everyday needs. He and his

health problems and they were looking for a place n[illegible] favourable to her health. Over the years Volodia has not learned Lithuanian; he is a Russian and he considers Russia his homeland since he was born and spent his youth there. He mentioned briefly that Lithuania is also important for him since he has lived there for so many years; however, he used the expression 'a foreigner' (Russian: *все равно я считаюсь иностранцем у вас*) when he referred to his situation in Lithuania.[4] By this Volodia not only showed his discontent with his legal status as a permanent resident in the country, he also indicated that he does not feel a part of the society, that he is an outsider. His words were echoed by Inokentii, who added emotionally that they both 'have no status in Lithuania now' (*сейчас мы никто*). Gerli Nimmerfeldt has conducted research among the Russian population in Estonia, suggesting that it is important to address 'the feeling of being at home and being accepted by and part of society' (2011, 205). Volodia is one of those who does not feel a part of the larger Lithuanian community in any sense: culturally, socially or economically. His attachment to Lithuania is ambiguous and not based on a common identity or a sense of commonality, but is instead shaped almost exclusively by socioeconomic issues.

When Lithuania gained its independence, Volodia was employed at Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant. He needed Lithuanian citizenship to keep his job because only citizens of Lithuania could be employed at an establishment of such strategic importance to the state. As Volodia described, keeping the job at the plant was the main reason why he applied for Lithuanian citizenship then. However, a few years later Volodia lost his job at the plant and decided to apply for Russian citizenship instead. He described his decision as being based on the necessity of finding a job, and he believed that he would be more successful in the Russian job market than in the Lithuanian one.

> The thing is that unemployment was killing me slowly [*эта безработица меня убивала*]. I was thinking about emigration. Since my mother was still alive, I had a right to gain citizenship [of Russia]. As long as my mother was alive. […] I was responsible for the family [to provide material support for his family in Visaginas].

Volodia was granted Russian citizenship and relied on his relatives when searching for a job in Russia. However, Volodia did not have positive experiences in his native land. As a result of his failure to find a well-paid job in Russia, he stated that he felt a stranger there as well.

> You know, the situation was such that I was not needed there [in Russia] either. I mean, my age, it was coming to the end [*возраст уже свой у меня истек практи[illegible]ески*], you know? […] I was a stranger among strangers, or a stranger among my own people [*чужой среди чужих или чужой среди своих оказался*].

Volodia again referred to his feeling of being a stranger (*чужой*) in Russia and belonging neither to Russian nor to Lithuanian society. He perceives his unsuccessful job search as being related to his age: he was over forty years old when he moved to Russia hoping to find a job. He believes that his age was the most important factor in his failure to find a job. Anthropologist Hilary Pilkington has investigated the process of Russian migration back to Russia from the former Soviet Republics in the early 1990s, documenting a number of social, economic and cultural challenges that migrants encountered upon their return (Pilkington 1998). Volodia's hardships in Russia could have been related to the country's social and economic constraints as well as its limited resources.

Volodia had to return to Visaginas. His wife had stayed in Visaginas and is a citizen of Lithuania. Volodia does not have Lithuanian citizenship anymore, and he is now perceived as a foreigner who can apply only for a permanent residence permit. He can apply for Lithuanian citizenship but would have to go through certain procedures, which include an exam on the Lithuanian language, the country's constitution and its history. Volodia speaks only a basic level of Lithuanian. During the interview Volodia described his decision to reject Lithuanian citizenship as a mistake. Now he considers it an advantage when searching for a job in EU countries. However, he will not attempt to apply for Lithuanian citizenship since he does not think he can pass the test in Lithuanian to the required level. He said: 'I have missed my time and it does not matter if I used to be a citizen of Lithuania or not'. Ayelet Shachar suggests that citizenship serves a 'gate-keeping' function (2009, 23) for certain social guarantees and economic rewards, and that the denial of citizenship by a wealthier country creates 'extreme inequalities in life prospects' (2009, 22). Volodia considers citizenship a resource that opens up possibilities of employment. Currently Lithuanian citizenship could open the doors to the EU job market, but Volodia's earlier decisions closed off these possibilities.

As the issues of economic wellbeing and belonging came up a number of times during the interview, a boundary between we/they was constructed. Volodia and Inokentii discussed social support for citizens provided by the state, both in Lithuania and Russia. Inokentii stated emotionally and abruptly that he did not receive any compensation from the state for his participation in the liquidation works after the Chernobyl catastrophe and related this injustice to his Russian citizenship: 'Yes. A Lithuanian receives [a compensation] because he was in Chernobyl. I also was there [in Chernobyl] but I do not get anything.' Whatever the reason for this situation, the interpretation presented

by Inokentii reveals the prevailing feeling of vulnerability among certain groups within the Russian population in independent Lithuania and their perception of themselves as 'others' or 'strangers'. The fieldwork material I gathered in Visaginas between 2000 and 2002 led me to the conclusion that some people in Visaginas considered the post-Soviet transformations of the country as certain deviations from the Soviet path of modernisation; my senior informants clearly saw themselves as part of the soviet modernisation project (Šliavaitė 2005). Both Volodia and Inokentii are representative of the older generation of Visaginas's population, and their sense of vulnerability is shaped by a general disappointment with the post-Soviet transformations and their changing status in society.

Rather ambiguous boundaries are constructed between what are considered official and unofficial economic practices. Citizenship can be successfully exploited to get an additional, unofficial income. Volodia gets unemployment cheques from the Lithuanian state. Even though this social support is small, he values it very much. However, this support does not cover his basic needs, especially during winter time when expenses for heating consume most of his family income. From time to time Volodia earns unofficial money by driving newly bought cars from the EU to Russia. He explains that as a Russian citizen he can pass the border without paying taxes – which he estimates as amounting to up to 30 per cent of the price of a car. His last trip to Russia occurred during the incredibly cold winter days a few weeks before our interview. Volodia received 100 euros in cash for his services and considered this to be a profitable side-business. This kind of income should be considered as informal, and it is perceived as illegal by state authorities because it avoids tax. In addition, officially Volodia cannot collect any other income if he wishes to continue getting state unemployment support. However, the 100 euros gained for this small unofficial affair are almost equal to the monthly unemployment cheque he receives from the state. Volodia successfully explores his twofold legal status: as a citizen of Russia he is able to earn unofficial money; as a person who has a residence permit in Lithuania and a history of employment in the country he is entitled to social allowance from Lithuanian state. State institutions would perceive his activities as being illegal and unacceptable, but this is the only way for him to survive economically.

Citizenship entails certain individual rights in a political community (Shachar 2009). Therefore, citizenship may offer a variety of pragmatic rights and privileges such as access to government-funded jobs and certain social provisions. Volodia exploits his citizenship in a variety of ways in order to gain some economic security and profit. He has found himself in a situation of social uncertainty and ambiguity, and so he explores all the resources available to him to find economic solutions. His citizenship documents are one such resource.

Volodia does not complain much about the lack of social security provisions, nor does he ask for more from the state. Instead, he uses all options available to him in dealing with socioeconomic difficulties and is determined to find solutions. Anthropologist Sherry B. Ortner defines human agency as explicit goals and plans that are 'socially embedded' in the surrounding sociocultural context to achieve certain aims (2006, 129–37); Volodia demonstrates this agency. Volodia belongs to the part of society that is most vulnerable to economic and social challenges. However, he demonstrates agency and applies any resources available to him to survive constant transformations in both local and transnational conditions – including the more specific recent economic decline triggered by the closure of the nuclear power plant.

Social Insecurity, State Protection and Citizenship: Taras's Story

Taras's story further supports my claim that access to social provisions is an important factor in considering citizenship. Taras evaluates citizenship of any country first of all according to the social security it provides. Taras's case points to the importance of social provisions and guarantees from a state in building citizens' attachment. Anthropologist Teona Mataradze in her discussions of citizenship in postsocialist Georgia has demonstrated that citizens there merge the concepts of 'social citizenship' and 'social security', and argues for the separation of these concepts (2011, 472). Building her argument on the work of prominent social scientists, Mataradze argues that the concept of 'social citizenship' refers to certain social rights of each member of a political community and entails the state's formal support for its citizens, while the concept of 'social security' is limited to the most vulnerable groups and includes informal provisions as well (2011, 474). As Mataradze suggests, Georgian citizens' claims for universal state support could be explained by the state–citizen relationship formed during the socialist period (Mataradze 2011). I argue that Taras-like attitudes toward the state could be further fostered by the processes of globalisation and migration, when citizens of former socialist republics have new opportunities for employment and state support in economically better-off countries. As Lale Yalçın-Heckmann has suggested, 'freedom of movement has become a criterion for differentiating and judging between the national state and the social state, and between political citizenship and social citizenship' (Yalçın-Heckmann 2012, 1736).

Taras introduced himself as an ethnic Ukrainian. He was born in the 1980s; the same year his family moved to Lithuania. He lived in Sniechkus, attended a local elementary school and completed the first four grades. In 1990–91, when he was nine years old, all of his family moved to Ukraine as his maternal grandparents lived there. The family kept Lithuanian citizenship and had a

residence permit in Ukraine. In Ukraine Taras completed nine more years of schooling and gained a certificate as a professional driver, working in the country for a number of different companies. In 2000 the family returned to Lithuania: they had heard that the economic situation in the country was improving. All members of the family had kept their Lithuanian citizenship and this eased their return. Taras explained that citizenship of Lithuania granted them a right to travel without visas in a bigger part of Europe and consequently offered better job prospects:

> We had Lithuanian passports […] and we heard that there are better job opportunities in Lithuania, it is possible to travel abroad… If you had a Lithuanian passport you did not need visas…nothing…you could go abroad.

Taras was in his twenties at the time and did not know the Lithuanian language since he had lived in Ukraine for the previous decade. Within a month of his return he was asked to serve in the Lithuanian army. Taras learned Lithuanian in the army and he is proud of that. However, his language skills have deteriorated since then because he did not speak Lithuanian after his service was completed. His poor language skills diminish his chances of finding a job in other regions of Lithuania. After serving in the army he married and stayed in Visaginas. He has a child who needs constant medical assistance and therefore his wife cannot work; she receives a social allowance from the state. Taras said that before the economic crisis he worked at a local company and that his family's economic situation was stable due to the combination of official and unofficial income he received there.

Like Volodia, Taras described common Lithuanian economic practices that reveal ambiguous boundaries between official and unofficial incomes. When Taras worked he received an official salary, which he described as being 'higher than minimum wages'. The employer paid taxes to the state. However, he told me that his paycheque was not enough to meet his family's needs. However, supplemental unofficial income was also available. First of all, as a part of his monthly paycheque the same private company also paid him unofficially, i.e. 'in an envelope' (Lithuanian: *vokelyje*). Secondly, he provided additional services to the clients of the company, and the clients paid him in cash without paying any taxes to the state. The official money, which was taxed, and the unofficial money, paid in cash by the employer and the clients, made the family's economic situation satisfactory. The phenomenon of getting a portion of one's salary 'in an envelope' has been described in different places across the postsocialist area, and in some cases even the local terminology used to describe the practice is identical (see an analysis of a Latvian case in Sedlenieks 2003). Such income is usually interpreted in relation to practices of corruption or as a strategy for survival (Sedlenieks 2003). Taras described his economic situation as ordinary and perceives the combination of official and unofficial income as essential for making the ends meet. However, the perception of untaxed income 'in an envelope' as an ordinary part of everyday life reveals certain attitude towards the state: that the state has to provide its citizens with social security money, but that citizens do not have a duty to pay obligatory taxes. A study by Klavs Sedlenieks describes how informants in Riga tolerated tax avoidance and aimed to legitimise such practices by offering different rationales, including the belief that the government would not use the money in a rational way (Sedlenieks 2003, 45). Taras does not provide any arguments to legitimise the system of tax avoidance and depicts it as an ordinary, common practice and the sole way for economic survival.

Taras's unofficial income started declining with the onset of the world economic crisis in 2008: people did not need as many additional services since they were buying less; and the employer cut down Taras's official salary and unofficial payments. During the crisis Taras's income was reduced a few times and eventually he lost his job. At the time of the interview Taras had been unemployed for a few months and had been receiving a small social allowance from the local branch of the labour exchange. He was entitled to this support for half a year. He does not expect that the job exchange branch will help with employment, and intends to rely only on himself. He is even considering getting officially divorced, as his wife then would be a single mother and his son would receive more support from the state. Taras considers all available institutional/systemic resources in order to provide his family with income. In his view state support is not efficient, and he is ready to use any holes in the legal system in order to reach economic stability.

Taras has considered leaving for a more economically developed country in the EU and finding a job there. He estimates that the other more developed EU states take better care of their citizens. In this way he demonstrates the perception that the state is responsible for the social security of its citizens:

> You know, I was in Germany and I was told that if you worked there officially for a year and rented a flat, then if you lost your job or decided to quit, then the state of Germany would cover your costs for your apartment, kindergarten, education, medical services, and would even provide me with some allowance to cover everyday needs […] And here [in Lithuania] what? Everybody leaves.

Taras relates the concept of homeland (Russian: *Родина*) to the idea of social security and support being provided by a state to its citizens. For him

homeland and citizenship are related to state-guaranteed social protections and social provisions; i.e. the relationship between a state and its citizens is built around the idea of a state caring for its citizens.

> I do not know… I think that Lithuania or Ukraine, they are the same thing…I think that I do not have a homeland. I think that homeland has to be like a… for example if you ask a German person in Germany where his homeland is. Everybody would say that their homeland is Germany. Because they have laws, a government that does many things for the people. And here [in Lithuania] they just cut everything [social allowances] off.

Taras's case reveals that the social protection provided by a state for its vulnerable groups in the form of social security and unemployment paycheques is of crucial importance in building citizens' attachment to the state and a sense of belonging. Anthropologist Katherine Verdery has used the term 'socialist paternalism' (1996, 63) to describe the relationship between the state and its citizens under the socialist regime. The transformation of the Soviet state in the post-Soviet period is often described as a 'state retraction' (Pine 2002, 99) or 'state withdrawal' (Read and Thelen 2007) to show that citizens are left socially and economically unprotected by state institutions and have to survive by their own means. On the other hand, the notion of state withdrawal, which was broadly used by researchers to interpret sociopolitical processes in the early post-Soviet period, has been assessed critically in later academic discussions (Read and Thelen 2007; Thelen, Cartwright and Sikor 2008). Mataradze has related Georgian citizens' perceptions of the state as social provider to the paternalism of socialist state (2011, 482). Taras was born at the end of the Soviet period and has lived through socioeconomic transformations, so it would be too simplistic to attribute his perspective to the socialist legacy. Rather, in his case expectations of state protection are formed through processes of globalisation and migration when experiences of the social politics of wealthy countries are compared with domestic practices. Issues of identity or the distinction between we/they in a cultural sense lose their importance; access to certain socioeconomic benefits becomes the most important factor in building an individual's attachment to a state (for comparison see Yalçın-Heckmann 2012).

Concluding Notes

These two stories reveal how informants build their relation to the state such that it can be described as a grey zone. By this I mean that the relationship contains aspects of ambiguity and situationality. At the level of the individual, the ambiguity of one's national and civic belonging can be productive in opening

such cases the borders between we/they are seen as transgressible, situational and ambiguous. Secondly, the state is expected to provide full social security with minimal investment from citizens in the form of taxes. The need for state protection is related to certain expectations of state paternalism formed during the Soviet socialist period (Verdery 1996; Nielsen 2006 [1986]; Mataradze 2011) and fostered by recent processes of migration, which result in social support provided by economically more successful states being perceived as normal and ordinary.

These stories point to how notions of citizenship change when identity and cultural commonality are no longer perceived as the basis of citizenship (see also Soysal 2010). Citizenship was conceptualised pragmatically by both informants as they considered the advantages it can provide under certain circumstances, e.g. as a 'gate keeper' through which they can access government-predicated advantages and possibilities (Shachar 2009). These stories also support the arguments of those researchers who emphasise the need to analyse citizenship in light of issues of social inequality (Kipnis 2004). From the perspective of the state institutions, my informants would be seen as exploiting the state for their own benefit. In their own view, they are exploring the resources available to them in order to survive a situation of chronic socioeconomic uncertainty. As it has been pointed by Steven Robins, Andrea Cornwall and Bettina von Lieres, 'in the scramble for livelihoods and security, poor people tend to adopt plural strategies; they occupy multiple spaces and draw on multiple political identities, discourses and social relationships, often simultaneously' (Robins, Cornwall and Lieres 2008, 1079).

Additionally, I would like to point out that the above-mentioned dimensions of what I (and others) have referred to as a grey zone in the sphere of citizen–state relations must not be perceived as specific to the post-Soviet state or to post-Soviet citizens. I suggest that similar state–citizen relationship manifestations can be found in different societies (see for example Robins, Cornwall and Lieres 2008; Mataradze 2011) and should be examined with regard to processes of globalisation, migration, the demise of the nation-state ideology, and global economic processes.

Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Victor C. de Munck and Janina de Munck, my colleague Monika Frėjutė-Rakauskienė and the editors of this volume for their insightful comments and suggestions, which helped me to improve this chapter significantly. The qualitative research in 2011–12 was conducted within the framework of the research project 'Social Challenges for Ethnic Minorities and New Immigrant Groups in Lithuania after Joining the EU' which was funded