

SOCIALINĖS ANTROPOLOGIJOS IR ETNOLOGIJOS STUDIJOS

LIETUVOS

16(25)
2016

ETNOLOGIJA

LITHUANIAN ETHNOLOGY

STUDIES IN SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHNOLOGY

LIETUVOS ISTORIJOS INSTITUTAS
LITHUANIAN INSTITUTE OF HISTORY

LI VILNIUS 2016

Leidybą finansavo
LIETUVOS MOKSLO TARYBA
PAGAL VALSTYBINĘ LITUANISTINIŲ TYRIMŲ IR SKLAIDOS
2016–2024 METŲ PROGRAMĄ (Sutartis Nr. LIP-078/2016)

REDAKcinė KOLEGIJA

Vytis Čiubrinskas (vyriausiasis redaktorius)
Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas

Auksuolė Čepaitienė
Lietuvos istorijos institutas

Jonathan Friedman
École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris
Kalifornijos universitetas, San Diegas

Neringa Klumbytė
Majamio universitetas, Ohajus

Orvar Löfgren
Lundo universitetas

Jonas Mardosa
Lietuvos edukologijos universitetas

Žilvytis Šaknys
Lietuvos istorijos institutas

REDAKcinės KOLEGIJOS
SEKRETORĖ

Danguolė Svidinskaitė
Lietuvos istorijos institutas

Lietuvos etnologija: socialinės antropologijos ir etnologijos studijos – etnologijos ir socialinės/kultūrinės antropologijos mokslo žurnalas, nuo 2001 m. leidžiamas vietoj tęstinio monografijų ir studijų leidinio „Lietuvos etnologija“. Jame spausdinami moksliniai straipsniai, konferencijų pranešimai, knygų recenzijos ir apžvalgos, kurių temos pirmiausia apima Lietuvą ir Vidurio/Rytų Europą. Žurnalas siekia pristatyti mokslo aktualijas ir skatinti teorines bei metodines diskusijas. Tekstai skelbiami lietuvių arba anglų kalba.

Redakcijos adresas:
Lietuvos istorijos institutas
Kražių g. 5
LT-01108 Vilnius

Tel.: + 370 5 262 9410
Faks: + 370 5 261 1433
El. paštas: etnolog@istorija.lt
v.ciubrinskas@smf.vdu.lt

Žurnalas registruotas:

European Reference Index for the Humanities (ERIH)
EBSCO Publishing: Academic Search Complete, Humanities International Complete,
SocINDEX with Full Text
Modern Language Association (MLA) International Bibliography

TURINYS / CONTENTS

<i>Pratarmė</i> (Vytytis Čiubrinskas)	5
<i>Foreword</i> (Vytytis Čiubrinskas)	7

Straipsniai / Articles

Rasa Paukštytė-Šaknienė

Šeima ir kalendorinės šventės sovietinėje Lietuvoje	9
Family and Calendar Holidays in Soviet Lithuania. Summary	31

Waldemar Kuligowski

Festivalizing Tradition. A Fieldworker's Notes from the Guča Trumpet Festival (Serbia) and the Carnival of Santa Cruz de Tenerife (Spain)	35
Festivalizuojant tradiciją. Pastabos iš lauko tyrimų Gučos trimitų festivalyje (Serbija) ir Tenerifės Santa Kruso karnavale (Ispanija). Summary	53

Cozette Griffin-Kremer

Immigrant Integration through Festival: Technical Prowess, Empowerment and Inclusion in the Lily-of-the-Valley Festival in Rambouillet, France	55
<i>Pakalnučių</i> festivalis Rambujė (Prancūzija) kaip imigrantų integracijos būdas: jų meistriškumas ir socialinis pripažinimas. Santrauka	66

Iuliia Buyskykh

Carnival in Urban Protest Culture: The Case of Kyiv Early Euromaidan	69
Karnavalas miesto protesto kultūroje: ankstyvojo Kijevo Euromaidano atvejis. Santrauka	88

Monika Frėjutė-Rakauskienė

Etninių grupių pilietinė mobilizacija Pietryčių Lietuvoje: baltarusių, lenkų ir rusų savanoriškos organizacijos	91
Civic Mobilization of Ethnic Groups in Southeastern Lithuania: Belarusian, Polish and Russian Voluntary Organizations. Summary	123

Vidmantas Vyšniauskas

Kultūriškumas sovietmečio Lietuvoje: kultūros namai ir Bažnyčia. Gižų atvejis	127
Cultural Identities in Soviet Lithuania: The Soviet Culture House and the Church. The Case of Gižai. Summary	152

Aušra Jurčikonytė

Sovietinė industrija ir poindustrinės atmintys: Alytaus namų statybos kombinatas.....	155
Soviet Industry and Post-industry Memories: Alytus Houses Building Complex. Summary	174

Recenzinis straipsnis / Review Article

Jonas Mardosa

<i>Gyvenimo etnografija ar gyvenimas etnografijoje?</i>	177
<i>Ethnography of Life or Life in Ethnography? Summary</i>	194

Recenzijos ir apžvalgos / Reviews

Vytis Čiubrinskas, Darius Daukšas, Jolanta Kuznecovienė, Liutauras Labanauskas, Meilutė Taljūnaitė. Transnacionalizmas ir nacionalinio identiteto fragmentacija (<i>Monika Frėjutė-Rakauskienė</i>)	197
Savas ir kitas šiuolaikiniais požiūriais. Contemporary Approaches to the Self and the Other. V. Savoniakaitė (sud.) (<i>Aivita Putniņa</i>)	201
Ethnographies of Grey Zones in Eastern Europe: Relations, Borders and Invisibilities. I. Harboe Knudsen, M. D. Frederiksen (eds.) (<i>Victor C. de Munck</i>)	204
Lina Laurinavičiūtė-Petrošienė. Žanro virsmas: Žemaitijos Užgavėnių dainos (<i>Žilvytis Šaknys</i>)	209

Konferencijos / Conferences

2015 m. SIEF XII kongresas Zagrebe (<i>Vytautas Tumėnas</i>)	213
EASA kongresas Milane (<i>Vida Savoniakaitė, Vytis Čiubrinskas, Auksuolė Čepaitienė</i>)	219
Sureikšminant antropologiją: EASA seminaras Prahoje (<i>Auksuolė Čepaitienė</i>) ...	223
EASA Medicinos antropologijos konferencija MAGic2015 (<i>Auksuolė Čepaitienė</i>)	226
SIEF darbo grupės „Ritualiniai metai“ konferencija Findhorne, Škotijoje (<i>Skaidrė Urbonienė</i>)	228
Šventėms ir apeigoms skirta konferencija Samaroje (<i>Žilvytis Šaknys</i>)	232
Etnologijos doktorantų konferencija VDU (<i>Viktorija Varanauskaitė, Gintarė Dusevičiūtė</i>)	235

Ethnographies of Grey Zones in Eastern Europe: Relations, Borders and Invisibilities. Anthem Series on Russian, East European and Eurasian Studies. Ida Harboe Knudsen, Martin Demant Frederiksen (eds.). London, New York: Anthem Press, 2015. 205 p.

Let me begin with two observations: first, all the chapters are at minimum, adequate, with most being superb in their ethnographic depictions of life in the grey zones of Eastern Europe. Second, my main criticism is one that was once given to me by a friend after I gave a talk on my research in Sri Lanka. My friend said (in essence), 'I really like your ethnographic descriptions, but all that theory got in the way.' This captures exactly what I feel about this edited volume. This volume is excellent because of its ethnography, and the metaphor of 'grey zones' is a worthwhile unifying concept. 'Grey zones' is a term taken from the chemist-novelist Primo Levi that references his time in a German concentration camp. As Levi was the son of two Holocaust survivors, its origin in his writings about Jews in concentration camps who did the Germans' bidding is a bad analogy for life in Eastern Europe. It is a concept imposed by academics on a wide range of practices that pervade in Eastern Europe particularly in the period from the 1990s (around the time of *perestroika*) to the present. Life in Eastern Europe has never been the same as living in a concentration camp. Unhooking it from its Holocaust roots would have been a useful strategy. Instead, the introduction emphasizes this connection.

The grey zone, as stated in the introduction, is both territory – a geographical space that is empirically real (and not a map) – as well as an analytical lens (or map) through which to see and gain in-

sight into the everyday lives of ordinary people as they deal with government agents and professionals (e.g., doctors) or as they live in discomfiting cultural spaces, such as Maja Halilovic-Pastuovic's depiction of Bosnian post-refugee immigrants to Ireland, who after twenty years, are neither Irish nor Bosnian.

The introduction is, for me, the weakest piece in the volume. Its evocations of life in Eastern Europe are both dogmatic and disconcerting. I will take two examples. The authors quote the passage 'every office drudge knows that it is the grey areas not the rules that actually make bureaucracy work, for better or worse' (p. 4, taken from Robertson 2006). Well, 'drudge' is sort of demeaning: are all office workers 'drudges'? Do they all know this? What if we have only grey areas but no rules – would the bureaucracy work then? How does this reflect on Europe? Are Eastern European bureaucracies akin to (as the authors note above this quote) collusion between the mafia and police? I think such an implication is both dogmatic in its assertiveness, anti-grey in its assuredness, and wrong in its simplification. A second quote that paraphrases Veena Das goes as follows '... violence, rather than being an interruption of life, may enter into the recess of the ordinary.' This is not the Eastern Europe I am familiar with. The introduction is over the top and soaked in academese that portrays not a grey zone but a sort of blue velvet milieu of pervasive, ominous uncertainty. The authors of the introduction seem to validate my interpretation when they write '...the main objective of the volume is to focus on local negotiations of political and cultural boundaries...and people's everyday strategies when subject to constant insecurity and ambiguity' (p. 7). This might be a statement concordant with a broad brush approach to depicting social conditions in order for politicians to justi-

fy additional funding for getting tough on crime. I am pretty sure that no one lives in constant insecurity and ambiguity in Eastern Europe and, if so, then a similar case could be made for the rest of the world's inhabitants.

The articles in the relational chapter are, for the most part, outstanding. Particularly the articles by Frances Pine on the public/informal economy of Poland and the chapter on a Moldovan community by Jennifer R. Cash in which is described how the official statistics on poverty do not match or accurately map onto the grey strategies used by community members to negotiate and construct their ordinary 'food secure' lives. Both of these authors use ethnographic case studies coupled with more general information to describe the link between grey zones, the national shift in orientation to the EU, and their hybrid, flexible adaptations to local conditions. The second set of chapters is called 'Borders' and begins with an article by Aimee Joyce, one of the best articles in the book, titled 'Good Neighbors and Bad Fences,' which concerns trade across the Polish-Belarusian border. The theoretical part is clear, concise, and used to explain the author's ethnographic examples. In particular, she shows how greyness and indeterminacy becomes incorporated into ordinary life in a way that leaves room for both a cultural ethos of neighborliness that steeps the relationships between Poles, Ukrainians, and Belarusians in these exchanges and allows for a turn to the EU. This EU versus the grey zone continuum is described, with an emphasis on the latter, as pragmatic adaptations to the contingencies and conditions of everyday life for residents of a border town. Maja Halilovic-Pastuovic's chapter on Bosnians residing in Ireland since 1992 who still return 'home' during the summer for a month or longer and thus live in two worlds provides a starting point for vie-

wing post-refugee immigrants' grey zone identity affiliations. The article is long on theory and short on ethnographic material; I wish it had been the other way around. Neither the stories about their lives in Ireland nor back home are well-developed, and the reader wishes to gain more insight into the people the author's theoretical architecture was intended to house.

Kristina Šliavaitė conducted field research on Russians who settled in the Lithuanian town of Visaginas expressly to work on the (now defunct) nuclear power plant. Her work concerns Russians who are now Lithuanian citizens and their conceptualization of citizenship. Her analysis centers on the stories of two key informants representing two generations of Russian residents: Volodia (representing the older generation) and Taras. To her credit, she notes that both informants were not chosen just as a matter of convenience, but because their narratives were representative of the views held by her other informants. The author describes in concise detail the context and personalities of her two informants. The reader is drawn to the material because the author doesn't go immediately to sound bites or quotes, but spends time fleshing out the details her informants – they are important to her and hence their stories become important to the reader. Both informants view their own identities as disconnected from national identity and state citizenship. However, as Šliavaitė describes, both view citizenship predominantly as a socio-economic resource. The author shows that this conceptualization of citizenship is partially a product of detaching citizenship from national identity as well as a socio-cultural continuation of what Verdery called 'social paternalism.' The informants' conceptualization of citizenship is pragmatic and grey because rather than seeing nationality and citizenship as officially intended – as

a socio-cultural and legal affirmation of who 'we are' – it is understood as opportunistically void of any deep identity commitment or affiliation. Šliavaitė concludes by noting this opportunistic relationship to citizenship by denizens of a nation is not confined just to Eastern Europe but is a response to migration, especially in the context of globalization and its attendant de-coupling of ethnic identity from nation.

The final ethnographic section is called 'Invisibilities' and consists of three uniformly excellent, ethnographically rich chapters that focus on a world whose cultural sensibilities are reminiscent of that beloved Eastern European figure 'the good soldier Švejk' (or Schweik) created by Jaroslav Hašek in WW1. In the first article, the author, Katrine Bendtsen Gotfredsen, starts off in a darkly comedic manner by quoting then Georgian President Saakashvili's speech citing the end of bribery and corruption in Georgia. The author writes of how at the start of her fieldwork in the town of Gori she had asked for official demographic statistics about the town. Her requests were answered by comments such as 'I don't know...I think it will be very difficult to get that information. I'm not sure I understand.' The author explains why she needed the information to learn something about how people understand the political situation, to which her informant replied, 'And you think people will tell you the truth?' Exactly. The two themes that structure this wonderful, wry, rich article are that it is taken for granted by ordinary Georgians that the government is 'opaque,' information will always be shaped by hidden agendas, and people never obtain unfiltered actual information; second, any access can only be obtained through personal friend-of-friend networks. The author's argument is even more Schweikian in that she argues that her informants, and more generally the

Georgian population, perceive these invisibilities (of agendas and access) as so intrinsic to the operations of government that they themselves reproduce them. In other words, even were there no corruption, the people would believe it to be pervasive and present and act on those beliefs, therefore creating the social fact of corruption. The author is not studying the "'real" nature of formal politics' but rather the process by which uncertainty and mistrust have become primary emic markers of the "'politics"...that people attempt to live by' (p. 127). The author provides numerous situations of the darkly comic 'I couldn't make this up' variety that indicate how much Georgians perceive that social inequalities are correlated with whom you know as much as how much you earn. This is an excellent article that poses ambiguities in which reality and imagination reproduce each other.

Ida Harboe Knudsen continues this chapter with a discussion and a main case study of working blue-collar men who do not have employment in the official economy and created their own 'employment agency' by putting up a sign mockingly appropriating its official title – *darbo birža*. She notes how manual labor has fallen from status since Soviet times; now such workers are associated with drunks (*pijokai*) and bums (*bomžai*) by the urban, educated populace of Lithuania. The author takes the grey zone to include this 'unsettled' feature of identity. As in the article on Georgia, the author knows her informants and takes a strong ethnographic approach to sketching out how these unsettled identities engage as agents in this grey area of everyday life that is made, in large part, by the modern state and its concomitant culture of valuing and equating modernity with education and official white-collar type jobs while indirectly denigrating the status of blue-collar working men (note:

the author does not use the blue/white collar distinction). The author's description of the men, the centrality of alcohol in their lives, and her dilemma in paying them is a marvelous snapshot of reflexivity and thick ethnographic description. Their refusal to accept her invitations to a café because they did not belong there and their refusal to be viewed as beggars taking cash from her could make up an additional chapter on the ethical dilemmas of field work. The author emphasizes the emic construction of personhood within the larger context of both Lithuanian society and its recent socialist history. Her informants seek work to construct a personhood that is in part confluent with the past idea of the honored laborer and does not articulate well with the cosmopolitan, Westernized sense of personhood prevailing in contemporary urban Lithuanian society. During Soviet times, blue-collar work was attached to the state, but the workers of Harboe Knudsen's research mostly avoid such attachments. Harboe Knudsen concludes by demonstrating that it would be a misinterpretation to see her informants' continual and situated construction of personhood as imitative of a Soviet construction, but rather she views it, convincingly, as a normative adaptation to present-day conditions.

The next paper is on Georgia and while, to my mind, too thick with academese, does make the interesting point that the emphasis on political transparency leads paradoxically to making corruption and mafia crime invisible. Unfortunately, nowhere in this chapter is this made clear via ethnographic examples. Though what we do understand is this informal economy of favors has been and perhaps will continue to be a part of Georgian society even if its loci and sources are no longer visible. The article agrees with Gotfredsen in that what appears to be real is not.

The main case study is of Levan, a sixty-year-old man who noted that one of his 'main principles in life' was to never hold 'a proper job' (p. 159). In 2009, the author interviewed him mostly about his life in organized crime. The interviews took place in Levan's apartment in Batumi (the second largest city of Georgia, on the Mediterranean coast). Levan was in and out of jail during most of his adult life. As he matured, he became a member of a jail gang called *vory-y-zakone*, a 'fraternity' of prisoners who created their own codes to regulate and live their life by. These fraternity codes were, the author states, 'in opposition to the official laws of the Soviet system' (p. 160). After the demise of the Soviet system, the fraternity spread to wider society and became successful, like the mafia perhaps, with the proviso that the former was viewed by wider society as equivalent to Robin Hood (at least according to Levan), putting a brake on the 'avarice and corruption' pervasive in wider society. Levan referred to himself as an 'honest bandit,' hence the title of this chapter. In order to eradicate crime and corruption, the government adopted a 'zero-tolerance policy' inspired by the successful New York police policy of the same name. A difference was that the latter policy was accompanied by a community program through which police and community got to know each other and build trust. The program appears to be successful. In 2009, sometime after the last interview, Levan left Georgia to live in Ukraine where he died in 2011, and being the 'last honest bandit' so apparently did the *vory-y-zakone*. The author flounders a bit in search of a conclusion, which seems to be that grey zones remain but now, rather than through the mafia, they become, according to the author, near 'impossible to determine who was now doing the same thing in their place' (p. 168).

Sarah Green provides concluding remarks about the nature of grey zones vis-a-vis border in 'the eastern peripheries of Europe.' Green equates borders with categorization, classification, and a means to 'remove ambiguity.' Grey zones stand in symbolic opposition, as I understand it, to both borders and assertions of a truth value, fact, or precision when, at least in this case, referencing geographical areas. In fact, Green seems to suggest, borders in their artifice of precision are also lightning rods for contention and sources of ambiguity as different 'sides' claim different border lines. She writes 'greyness is generated by contesting the proper location of borders or by the coexistence of overlapping, parallel or mutually contradictory border regimes' (p. 174). This sort of abstract and metaphorically thick writing is, for me, near impossible to decipher. What exactly is greyness? Is it an argument of where to draw the lines? I think neither party finds their argument grey. May the academic, viewing from 'above,' however, consider it grey? Is the color metaphorical of only borders? Isn't grey a color? Is there a proper location that is being contested or is it, as I would conjecture, the conceit that there is a proper location? What are parallel or overlapping or mutually contra-

dictory border regimes? Can they be mutually contradictory or just contradictory? The writing continues in this vein and I am reminded of my friend who liked the ethnography but not the theory of my foray into public anthropology. In this book, for me, the ethnographic work is valuable and rewarding, but the theory could have been toned down and written in plainer English.

Pragmatically I would consider using this book in a class on Eastern Europe for its genuinely rich ethnographic chapters. I like the concept of grey zone but suggest 'gore zone' as perhaps a more apt metaphor – those slices of geographic territory that are not measured on cadastral maps. The users of the concept are caught in a paradox that the term references ambiguity in various slices of life – from borders to relationships – yet greyness, as used here, is typically a product either of top-down efforts to make people and territory legible or of weak, ineffective bureaucracies and laws. Thus, the emphasis is on ambiguity, but at the same time the term itself is effulgently polysemous and ambiguous. In seeking to explain it and make it lucid, giving it clarity, we destroy what it is intended to reference. Perhaps it is this point that makes theorizing grey zones an unenviable task.

Victor C. de Munck
Vytautas Magnus University,
State University of New York