

New migrants' home encounters:

**An ethnography of 'Romanian Roma' and the local state in
Luton**

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This thesis is dedicated to Rahela, born August 2013

Abstract

This ethnographic study explores how ‘Romanian Roma’ migrants in the UK, without previous relationships to their place of arrival, negotiate their identity to *make place* in a diverse urban area. The thesis argues that state forms are (re)produced through embedded social relations. The restructuring of the UK welfare state, coupled with processes of labelling, means that the notion of public and private space is changing. Migrants' encounters with state actors in the home are increasingly important.

I lived with three families between January 2013 and March 2014, during a period of shifting labour market regulations and the end of European Union transitional controls in January 2014. Through mapping families' relationships and connections, I identify encounters in the home with state actors regarding children as a defining feature of place-making. The thesis introduces the term ‘home encounter’ to trace the interplay of discourses and performances between state actors and those they identified as ‘Romanian Roma’. Due to the restructuring of UK welfare, various roles assume different ‘faces of the state’. These include education officers, health visitors, sub-contracted NGO workers, charismatic pastors and volunteers. The home encounter is presented as a public ‘state act’ (Bourdieu 2012) where negotiations of values take place in private space determining access to membership and welfare resources. In addition, blurring boundaries between welfare regulations and immigration control mean that these actors' seemingly small decisions have far-reaching consequences. The analysis raises questions of how to understand practices of government in diverse urban areas; the affect of labelling, place and performance on material power inequalities; and processes of discrimination and othering.

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Introduction

How can they be here, how can they live here without access to anything' asks Sarah¹, a social worker, not directly addressing any of the eight of us sitting in the small living room. She looks dismayed at the Argentinean ID cards in front of her. The question hangs in the cigarette smoke for a moment. Paula, an equality and diversity education officer for the Children's Services Department, responds 'you know - they are legally here due to their Romanian nationality.

It is after six o'clock on a sunny June evening in Luton. Two social workers, Sarah and Rodney, are sitting on chairs near the doorway that separates this small room from the dilapidated extension beyond which is the narrow kitchen and damp bathroom. Catalina, a new migrant mother who arrived from Romania four months previously (but had given birth to seven children variously in Stuttgart, Brussels and Buenos Aires), sits on her low stool next to the kitchen. Radu, her husband, sits opposite her with the best view of the kitchen, the back door and the large TV that is playing Manele music,² smoking a cigarette. I am perched on the leather couch close to Radu, joined by two of their five sons. Their two daughters intermittently shuffle past the feet and bags that are blocking their path to the kitchen. Paula sits on a hard wooden chair close to Catalina. Catalina's grandson can be heard crying upstairs from one of the two bedrooms where her daughter-in-law, a refugee who had joined them from Croydon, is nursing her son who was born in London. The family does not speak English. However, when Radu hears Paula say 'Romanian' he vigorously points to his Argentinean ID card. 'No Romania', he insists. Sarah concedes all they can provide is a food

¹ Names of interviewees and places, apart from large towns and cities, have been changed (see Chapter 2).

² Manele is a distinct musical style in Romania that draws on Turkish, Greek, Arabic, Bulgarian and Serbian folk music with modern electronic instruments and beats from pop music (Haliliuc 2015).

parcel, leaving the family confused. Sarah and Rodney leave the house, while Paula remains to fill in the school registration forms.

This short extract from my field notes introduces many of the issues addressed by this thesis. The families I lived with between January 2013 and March 2014 in Luton become known to various others as ‘Romanian Roma’. As nationals from a European Union (EU) member state, they are entitled to exercise their right of free movement to enter the UK (see Chapter 3). However, transitional controls enforced between Romania’s accession to the EU between January 2007 and January 2014 placed specific regulations on families regarding access to the labour market, and entitlements to social protections. In addition to this formal legal change, the interpretation of these regulations shifts throughout the course of my fieldwork, including the very definitions of ‘genuine self-employed work’, ‘habitual residence’ and ‘right to reside’. Keeping the appropriate documents and ‘proof’ becomes a crucial part of everyday life for those who are trying to access their rights and entitlements (Darling 2014: 485). Adhering to these requirements also takes particular forms as almost all families are illiterate (Chapter 7) and, from their perspective, don’t have a clear source of authoritative information on bureaucratic processes. In addition, the proof required is out of reach for many who have been placed in a precarious position due to their background and experiences, exacerbated by transitional controls.

This thesis focuses on how new migrants negotiate and contest these regulations in order to *make place* in Luton. I define place-making as the set of social and material processes by which actors (re)create the experienced spaces in which they live (see the following section). Through the course of fourteen months’ fieldwork living with three new migrant families I observed that encounters with front line workers in domestic space have the most influence

on how new migrants *made place*. Crucially, these ‘home encounters’³ are primarily based on duties relating to children. The presence of children shifts the orientations of new migrants and those who they encounter, providing both opportunities for accessing rights and opportunities for surveillance (Clark 2008: 65). Mothers are placed in a position where they are required to fulfil ‘appropriate’ standards of mothering but without the resources through which this might be achieved.⁴ Children make new migrants visible or, using James Scott’s words, ‘legible’ to state bureaucracy (Scott 1998: 2).

Moreover, rumours of children being removed from families by the Local Authority gained increasing ‘strength’ through the course of my fieldwork (Chapter 7). Avoidance and evasion of faces of the state, including moving to different geographical areas in the UK or Europe, becomes a response to the perceived threat of loss of motherhood. This situation unfolds at a time of Local Authority restructuring and cuts to resources, not only affecting front line roles but also the duties bestowed on bureaucrats (Chapter 4). The decisions of front line workers are increasingly crucial to the experience of new migrants in this changing urban location. Encounters in the home lead to negotiations of identities in order to *make place*. Processes of place-making also shift identities.

³ ‘Encounters’ have a specific history in urban studies and geography but recently have undergone a revival as a subfield within the discipline that is concerned with living with difference (Valentine 2008) in public and semi-public spheres. There is a growing interest in everyday encounters in localities marked by significant social and ethnic difference (Amin 2002; Cattle 2001; Gilroy 2004; Kesten, Cochrane, Mohan and Neal 2011; Noble 2009; Wilson 2011; Wise and Velayutham 2009). This work has spurred the rise of the ‘diversity turn’ crystallised in the oft-cited ‘superdiversity’ framework proposed by Vertovec (2007). Vertovec’s intervention has accelerated a research agenda that reconsiders and reconceptualises interethnic contact, interaction, stereotyping, prejudice and the role of ‘affect’ in everyday encounters in urban space (Dirksmeier and Helbrecht 2010; Leitner 2012; Matejskova and Leitner 2011, Valentine and Waite 2012).

⁴ Following Lister (2006) I am not using the word ‘family’ or ‘parent’ because this language often masks the gendered dimension to policies relating to the care of children. However, this does not mean that men or fathers are absent and I do not want to perpetuate men’s effacement from participation in the domestic domains or their concerns about reproduction. On the contrary, men are crucial and are addressed throughout the following chapters. The focus is on mothers here because policies and practices targeted them specifically.

The location of the encounter is crucial. I use the notion of home critically and am attentive to research on the meaning and experience of ‘home’ which has proliferated over the past two decades, particularly within the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, psychology, human geography, history, architecture and philosophy (see Mallett 2004 for overview). In migration studies, the idea of diaspora unsettled the fixed notion of home (Gustafson 2011; Hannerz 1996, Blunt 2005; Nowicka 2007). Easthope similarly promotes a deterritorialised, relational explanation of home noting that ‘while homes may be located it is not the location that is ‘home’ (2004: 136). Previous research has provided insights into the home as a multi-dimensional concept or a multi-layered phenomenon (Bowlby et al. 1997; Duyvendak 2011; Rapport and Dawson 1998; Somerville 1992; Wardhaugh 1999), identifying the difference between home as a conceptual and discursive space of identification, and situating home as a nodal point in social relations (Olwig 2011).

The diversity of different conceptions of home, dwelling, and belonging point to the ‘rearrangement through the production, relocation and re-experiencing of physical, social and emotional landscapes’ (Knowles 2013: 168-70). This thesis does not aim contribute to the conceptual development of the home or the research intersection between migration and home studies. Rather ‘home’ is developed throughout the following chapters in its relationship to the term ‘encounter’. The thesis is therefore concerned with how the home space becomes salient in interactions with state actors. To this end, I follow Boccagni and Brighenti’s definition that home ‘is a relational, incomplete achievement rather than a pre-given and unproblematic domestic place. Even from a merely spatial point of view, the separation between domestic and non-domestic space can be marked, asserted and experienced in radically different ways’ (2015: 6). I am attentive to the different expectations and perceptions that are (re)produced within the home as a space. The converging and

contrasting meanings that flow through encounters are foregrounded in the ethnographic vignettes that follow.

The research question

The main research question of this thesis is: how do those who become known as ‘Romanian Roma’, who are from numerically small groups with no previous relationships to the place of arrival, negotiate to *make place* in a rapidly changing urban location? The next section defines the research question before defining two key terms (‘home-level bureaucrats’ and home encounters). Then I lay out the argument and review how it proceeds through the following chapters.

A rapidly changing urban location

The fieldwork on which this thesis is based took place in Luton, a town located approximately 30 miles north of London. According to the UK Office for National Statistics (ONS), the population of Luton in 2010 was 198,800.⁵ Luton’s population has some particular characteristics which make it interesting for this study. Luton’s local demographics exemplify processes of intensified globalization, shifting patterns of migration and mobility and growing global inequality (Castles and Miller 2009: 110; Hall 1993; Kofman 1998; Schierup et al. 2006; Touraine 2000; Vertovec 2007, 2015). Although there is wide

⁵ Research undertaken by the Research and Geospatial Unit in Luton Borough Council suggested that this was an underestimate of the population and a figure of 205,900 is more appropriate. This discrepancy reduces funding from central government granted to the Local Authority and is explored in more depth in Chapter 3.

recognition of these processes in scholarly literature, the social implications for localities are not yet well understood. Moreover, studies exploring these patterns have almost exclusively focused on global cities (Sassen 2001; Vertovec 2015; Wessendorf 2013). This thesis explicitly grapples with these issues in a town, not a metropolis. Luton is illuminating because it can be defined as a ‘down-scaled’ urban area (Glick-Schiller and Caglar 2009: 193). This term does not only refer to a smaller population but also the desirability of an urban environment and its ability to raise funds and capital (for example through raising local taxes). Therefore Luton is a more marginal urban context, but experiences similar issues to global metropolises, including the acute need to prioritise and reduce services alongside limited options to raise funds.

Luton has a long-standing negative image connected to its ‘working class marginality’ and has been previously represented as a manifestation of the failure of multiculturalism (Rootham et al. 2015). Luton suffered in the economic recessions of the 1970s and 1980s in which the car industry declined affecting Luton’s Vauxhall car plant which employed the majority of the largely male workforce. The most recent economic downturn saw Luton’s unemployment rise in line with national trends.⁶ The area is also associated with extremism and racist violence (Francis 2012). The English Defence League (EDL) emerged in Luton, a far-right movement whose stated aim is to oppose the spread of Islam in the UK (Allen 2010; Copsey 2010). In 2011 Luton was the site of the largest demonstration in the EDL’s history. Moreover, there was intensive media coverage of a small number of Islamist militants and four arrests of suspected terrorists that took place in Luton. The implementation of policies that affected migrants and ‘minorities’ had taken on increased salience at the local level.

⁶ Luton Borough Council. (2013). Annual Population Survey Data on Employment and Skills in Luton <https://www.luton.gov.uk/Environment/Lists/LutonDocuments/PDF/Planning/Observatory/APS%20Employment%20and%20Qualifications.pdf>

Luton has a younger population than the UK average, with 22% under fifteen years of age compared to 19% nationally.⁷ The pupil level school census in 2011 identified that 51% of children as ‘Black, Asian, Minority, Ethnic’ (BAME). Furthermore, since May 2004 there have been more than ten thousand new National Insurance registrations by people from new European Union member states. More than 80% were from Polish nationals. This rise in population triggered Luton Borough Council to commission independent research to establish the extent of ‘new communities’ in the Local Authority area. The resulting study, which was based on a combination of national and local administrative data rather than national census figures, concluded that ‘as many as 73 % of the total confirmed population in Luton may not have been living in Luton at the time of the last Census’ (Mayhew and Waples 2011: 6).⁸ They also concluded that there were concentrations of ‘new communities’ including Congolese, Somalis, Ghanaians, Nigerians, Turks and Zimbabweans in Luton (Mayhew and Waples 2011: 19). ‘New migrants’ became a term that was discussed at all levels of the local government administration, and was included in bureaucratic roles and mandates. Luton Borough Council also began to call itself a ‘superdiverse’ town in policy documents from 2012.⁹ Luton is therefore a highly appropriate location to explore how new migrants, from numerically small groups with no previous relationships to the place of arrival negotiate, *make place*.

Guided by the research question, I lived with three new migrant mothers who had moved to Luton in the previous two years and traced their networks and connections as they radiated

⁷Luton Borough Council. (2011). Census Briefing Luton’s Population, Research and Geospatial Information <http://www.luton.gov.uk/Environment/Lists/LutonDocuments/PDF/Planning/Census/2011%20Census%20Luton%20Summary.pdf>.

⁸ This local administrative data included the International Passenger Survey, Worker Registration Scheme, National Insurance Number allocations, Patient Register Data Systems, annual school pupil census, electoral roll, tax and benefits records and Local Land and Property Gazetteer

⁹ Luton Borough Council. (2013). Luton Borough Council Corporate Plan 2014-2017 [https://www.luton.gov.uk/Council government and democracy/Lists/LutonDocuments/PDF/Policy%20and%20Performance/CorporatePlan.pdf](https://www.luton.gov.uk/Council%20government%20and%20democracy/Lists/LutonDocuments/PDF/Policy%20and%20Performance/CorporatePlan.pdf)

out from the houses where they lived (including other areas of the UK and beyond). Each mother's connections led me to the next family, which triggered new experiences and connections. By following each new migrant I mapped the space of Luton through the families' overlapping and diverging understandings, their connections and how they moved through the space (see Chapter 2).

'Romanian Roma'

My aim at the outset of the research was to examine new migrants to Luton. Due to the methodology explained above (and in Chapter 2) my main research participants are new migrants who become identified as 'Romanian Roma'. The term 'Romanian Roma' develops through the narratives and discourse of front line workers over the course of my research. 'Roma' is a highly contested and political term, and I didn't hear any of those labelled in this way using the term to describe themselves (Kovats 2002, Guy 2001, Gay y Blasco 2011). For example Claudia, a new migrant mother, does not call herself 'Roma' but draws on her language and the way she dresses. She wants to ensure I am aware of the different language I am learning and tells me explicitly that I won't be able to speak this language in shops in Romania. She explains her family speaks '*Romanës*' not '*gadjekanes*' (Romanian). She also points out that a *romni* (a married woman) wears a long skirt (*fuwsta*) and headscarf (*diklo*). I also hear families using the word 'Gypsy' or '*Tsigane*' when referring to others' perception of them, such as 'that church not like Gyps' [sic].

I refer to the research participants as 'new migrants' as all the families had moved to Luton in the previous four years. The term identifies the only common characteristic I found between all the many different families. There are many axes of difference through which the families could be separated. These include migration trajectory, legal status, language spoken,

religion, urban and rural experience, family organisation, rituals and celebrations, dress, ways of cooking food, music and aspirations (Chapter 4). This provides some indication of the limits and problems connected to the term ‘Roma’.¹⁰ The construction of the Roma as a recognisable ethnic group, or ‘ethnogenesis’, may be considered an attempt on the part of the Roma intelligentsia, non-Roma scholars and international advocacy networks to meet the conditions set by the European official rhetoric for the recognition of the right to difference (Solimene 2014: 33). The term ‘Roma’ has turned ‘into a rather political identity’ (Kovats 2002: 1) that utilizes the ‘ethnological reason’ (Amselle, 1990) of the non-Roma as leverage for political struggles (Vermeersch 2012; McGarry 2010). The construction of Roma identity has confronted opposition from a number of directions, not least many of those individuals who have been identified as falling under this label (Acton 2013; Gay y Blasco 2011; Guy 2001; Kovats 2002; Okely 1983). Solimene (2014) argues that the diversity that can be seen within Roma groups (Vidra 2013; Grill 2012; Tesar 2013) presents a radical challenge to previous conceptions of ethnic groups.

In addition, I refer to research participants as new migrants because I do not intend for this thesis to add to debates concerning Roma identity or a distinct Roma ethnicity. This approach privileges one subjectivity or social cleavage above others as the primary category guiding discourse and action (Brubaker 2004; Caglar 1997; Glick Schiller et al. 2006). I am attentive to this throughout my analysis and argue that term ‘Romanian Roma’ can be seen as an artefact of racialisation (Chapter 8). However, despite this intention, my immersion in intimate family life and language learning inevitably means I have added to a body of knowledge regarding the migrant life of those identified as ‘Roma’. In particular some of the families addressed in this thesis speak Kalderash (Căldărari) Romani, a Vlach dialect. Those from Moldova spoke a different a slightly different dialect, which they called Vlahai that was mutually intelligible to Kalderash but had some different words.

I conceive the difference between ‘Roma’ and ‘non-Roma’ as a discursive distinction that draws its meaning from the contrast. For the most part it seems as though the term Roma is defined by those who consider themselves non-Roma. Therefore, this thesis investigates how categorisations operate and shape the relationship-building process from the perspectives of new migrants and the others they encounter. Rather than using ‘Romanian Roma’ *a priori* as

¹⁰ The problematisation of the category ‘Roma’ has been discussed in length elsewhere. See Solimene (2014) for overview.

a category of description or analysis, I explore how the label emerges in Luton between 2013 and 2014, how it is brought to bear on certain individuals, and what is at stake by being identified as such. This also opens analysis to explore how bureaucratic identities and understandings develop and are leveraged, appropriated or subverted.

Negotiations to *make place*

I define place-making as the set of social and material processes by which actors (re)create the experienced spaces in which they live. New migrants had limited social and material resources and therefore place-making can be represented as the ways they try to make their lives more liveable (or increase their room for manoeuvre in interactions with others). I define place-making as relational and constantly open to context specific reconfiguration. It is both a spatial and an institutional or political practice. It is not reliant on (but doesn't exclude) processes that lead to becoming rooted in one geographical space. In this way I follow critiques of the earlier anthropology of 'place' that posit place is 'carved out of space or superimposed on space' (Casey 1996: 46). Rather I consider place-making to be more about strategies of relationally 'being in the world'.

Luton is where these processes are grounded. Luton is also significant because of the increasing importance of discretionary decisions of bureaucrats. Some new migrants rely on bureaucrats' and volunteers' discretion in order to reside in Luton or, in some circumstances in the UK. Luton (and more specifically for some new migrants, the home located in Luton) represents the site where energy is directed to create and maintain relationships with bureaucrats and volunteers that may result in social and material resources. Luton is crucial to some new migrants because it is where they maintain these vital informal relationships. Therefore my definition of place-making is relational and formed of the processes that new migrants engage in with others to make a liveable life. This included but was not restricted to

Luton as a territorial area (Chapter 7). My methodology of using the body as a mobile spatial field (Chapter 3) allowed me to trace not only how new migrants *made place* in terms of a ‘sense of place’ but how this is inextricably linked to the embedded social relationships of each new migrant.

Through mapping new migrants’ sites of encounter I observed how interactions in domestic spaces between mothers and state actors, who have primary duties relating to children, shaped families’ social and spatial location. The defining feature of new migrant families’ place-making with regard to state actors in Luton is the care of children. Those without children live and work, for the most part, without encountering state actors. They assume the role of precarious workers without current or potential access to membership of the state. They live utilising the networks and support of kin and others to find places to stay and work. Although they have no opportunity to gain a form of membership, their actions do influence bureaucratic decision making (as will be argued in Chapter 6). While childless couples, single men and single women are ‘invisible’ to state bureaucracy (although they affect front line workers perceptions and experiences), similar ‘invisibility’ cannot be easily maintained by those with children.

The experience of motherhood and subsequently the experience of living with children alters new migrants’ social location. Children provide instances for negotiations with bureaucracy, representing a privilege and a danger, an opportunity and a threat. These interactions illustrate how identities are negotiated through endeavours to *make place*, and how processes of place-making shape identities, shifting new migrants’ relationships and orientations. Crucially, the domestic or ‘private’ home space is often the only site where many new migrants encounter ‘public’ or state actors. By invoking the public-private dichotomy, I am not arguing that welfare states have not previously entered the ‘private’ sphere to establish conditions for how people should live their lives. On the contrary, I argue in Chapter 1 that

the public space has always traversed, defined and regulated private space. Most welfare arrangements shape private practices and there is no uniformity in the effects of these multiple regimes of control (Ong 2006: 276). However, I argue there has been a fundamental shift towards entering the home space, which is exemplified in the changing faces of the state and the expanded duties bestowed on those who undertake these roles. I introduce the term home-level bureaucrat to foreground these changing dynamics and actors' situated positions. The main argument of this thesis is that the home encounter unsettles notions of public and private due to the implication of new migrants' intimate lives in their ability to access the state. This leads to identities being negotiated through place-making, and in turn processes of place-making shape identities.

Defining home-level bureaucrats

Returning to the vignette at the beginning of this chapter, Paula and Sarah along with the other front line providers (detailed in Chapter 4) are at the forefront of grappling with Luton's demographic changes. In addition, population shifts are coupled with cuts to resources, indicative of a national policy of austerity fuelled by the 2007 financial crisis. Budget cuts are estimated to be three times greater than the reduction in local government budgets during the recessions of the 1970s and 1980s in the UK, exacerbated by rising demand for services both through demographic changes and the wider costs of recession including low incomes. The effects of these budget cuts are detailed in Chapter 3, but a crucial aspect to mention here is the changing nature of front line work. The actors who assume the 'face of the state' are becoming increasingly diverse, including subcontractors, non-governmental actors, volunteers, religious organisations, landlords and neighbours.

Changes to front line services are fundamental to the shift in notions of public and private space. I introduce the term home-level bureaucrats (Chapter 1) to describe the effects of these changing conditions for front line workers. Crucially, I place these bureaucrats within racialised and gendered hierarchies. I am attentive to how this shift also interacts with a political climate that has turned explicitly hostile for migrants in the UK, increasing pressure on those at the front line to patrol and restrict access to services (Cohen, Humphries, Mynott 2014; Yuval Davis et al. 2013). Although welfare professionals and bureaucrats have long been tasked in a multiplicity of ways to instil appropriate norms on their 'clients', I argue that the rollback of the welfare state, the assessment of 'worth' now implicit in welfare

regulations, and changes to immigration law, have all fundamentally changed the role of front line workers, blurring the boundary between welfare regulations and immigration control.¹¹

This represents a fundamental reshaping of public and private space through the investment of migration controls to front line workers who enter the domestic spaces of new migrants. The incursion into the home by welfare bureaucrats, which was historically the preserve of the ‘helping professions’, is an incursion by the state. In some circumstances these actions also represent an incursion by the borders of the state into the home (Chapter 7), shaping not only access to social rights but also the national territory. This thesis addresses the fundamental reworking of the public-private dichotomy in a rapidly shifting urban area through the notion of the ‘home encounter’.

Defining home encounters

A long tradition of social science addresses the means by which the state controls and shapes the lives of subjects. Previous research often creates a division between front line service providers and ‘clients’. Many studies only examine the experiences and perspectives of one side of the interaction (Dubois 2010; Hjerne, Juhila and van Nijnatten 2010; Graham 2002; Rowe 2012; Wastell, White and Broad 2010; Hagelund 2010; Maynard-Moody and Musheno 2012). Where research does focus on relationship-building between bureaucrats and their subjects, this is often confined to bureaucratic experiences in one area, such as those whose remit falls within education, health, housing, law or welfare benefits (Briggs 2006; Cedersund and Olaison 2010; Dingwall 1993; Lessa 2006; Lewis 2000; Ottosson, Eastmond

¹¹ Cohen et al. (2014) detail how the connection between immigration control and welfare regulations has long been present, drawing on academic literature such as Castles and Kosack (1973); Layton-Henry (1992); Miles and Phizacklea (1984); and Sivanandan (1982).

and Schierenbeck 2013; Watkins-Hayes 2009) or non-government actors that take on these roles (Forbess and James 2014; Kim 2013). Moreover, the literature that focuses on the relationship between bureaucrat and client has often focused on micro interactionist discourse analysis which can mask structural and contextual dynamics (Bredmar and Linell 1996; Wilson 2013).

In contrast, due to living within new migrant homes, I draw on the perspective of all actors who may assume a bureaucratic role by entering the domestic space, being attentive to their differing mandates, institutional affiliations and motivations. Therefore, rather than considering bureaucrats within the same profession, I consider all state actors who shape the bureaucratic identity of a given family (or families). Due to the length of time I lived with the families, I am able to trace how different meanings between families and others develop and how all actors understand their roles and negotiate relationships.

Drawing on these observations, this thesis explores the relational production of meaning that was acted out in the space of the home, introducing the term ‘home encounter’. The perspective of the ‘encounter’ avoids a separation between new migrants and others in favour of an approach that presents *the home encounter as a space of negotiation of values where different relations of power and struggle play out*. The aim of this approach and methodology is to provide a framework to analyse the embedded relations between these various positions and envisage meanings as mutually, if unevenly, produced (Chapter 2). Therefore ‘the home encounter’ sheds light on the multiple actors, rationalities and experiences that flow through these encounters in new migrants’ domestic spaces that result in how ‘clients’ are defined; and how different actors assess, use, deflect and combat forms and norms of regulation, depending on their interests and reading of the values encoded in these processes.

The term ‘home encounter’ also indicates the uneven nature of these negotiations. The etymology of the word ‘encounter’ has been attributed to the Latin ‘occursus’, meaning bumping into someone on a racing track (*cursus*). The happenstance and accidental nature of the coming together of two people is a useful term to describe the micro-politics of interactions in urban spaces. However, when applied to the private space, the transgressive nature of these interactions is brought to the fore in the juxtaposition of the two words ‘home encounter’. The home encounter is not a serendipitous interaction but a planned meeting. The power to plan the encounter rests almost solely with the bureaucrat and not those residing in the home. Therefore the term ‘encounter’, when applied to the private sphere, is inherently transgressive and evokes the values that are ascribed to the public space within the private space.

Thesis overview

The aim of this thesis is to answer the question, how do those known as ‘Romanian Roma’, who are from numerically small groups with no previous relationships to the place of arrival, negotiate to *make place* in a rapidly changing urban location? The main argument of the thesis is that public and private space is being reworked with implications for access to the state, affecting the (re)production of identities through place-making and vice versa. The filtering that previously occurred at the national border now takes place within the national territory, in this case through access to welfare controls. Concurrently, front line roles have shifted and, coupled with processes of labelling, these processes lead to encounters in the home principally with new migrant mothers. The incursion of state actors into the domestic space of new migrants implicates their intimate lives in accessing forms of membership.

Moral worth becomes linked to gaining access and the new migrant mother is cast as the negotiator between the two. This leads to intensive identity work in order to *make place*. These processes of place-making also shape identities.¹²

Chapter 1 outlines the conceptual tools used in the thesis to analyse home encounters. I explain my understanding of how the individual's relationship with the state is inscribed and how the dichotomy between public and private space is (re)shaped. I use the advances made by Balibar (2002: 79, 2004: 2), who argues that the state has become 'deterritorialised'; and Mezzedra and Neilson's (2013: 159) concept of 'differential inclusion', where pressure of flexible labour markets advances the fragmentation of the welfare state. This fragmentation and restructuring has led to the reimagining of western European states as 'post-welfare' states (Dubois 2013). In order to understand how the state exercises control I follow interventions by Mountz (2003), Dubois (2010) and Thelen (2014), who insist that to locate the state we must analyse the everyday workings of local bureaucracies. I bring together these strands to develop the notion of home encounters. I argue that the negotiations of values that take place in these interactions can be conceived as 'state acts' (Bourdieu 2012) and, due to the restructuring of the welfare state, are unsettling notions of public and private space.

When referring to the fragmentation of the welfare state I specifically note the changing structure and duties bestowed on those at the front line of service provision (see Chapter 4) and the shift from entitlements to assessments of deservingness and moral worth. I argue that the processes stemming from the blurring of immigration control and welfare regulations, and the diffusion of these duties through front line roles in domestic space, is part of a distinct

¹² Stuart Hall identifies that the concept of identity has been the focus of anti-essentialist critique from different perspectives and disciplines. Hall proposes as a synthesis of these debates, concluding that 'identities are never unified and, in late modern times, (they are) increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular, but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices, and positions' (Hall 1996: 4). In Fortier's words, 'identity is a momentary positionality which is always already becoming' (2000: 2). This perspective also draws on the influential work of Beck (1992) and Giddens (1991).

governing logic that subjects both bureaucrats and their ‘clients’ to surveillance and disciplining.

The intimate lives of new migrants and those they encounter are increasingly implicated by two changes to front line bureaucratic work. First, front line workers are decreasingly employed directly by the Local Authority (as opposed to subcontractors); and second the duties bestowed on front line workers are increasingly diffuse. Seemingly small decisions made by these front line workers have wide ranging consequences for the terms on which new migrants can negotiate to *make place* in the UK. These theoretical frames will be developed in subsequent chapters to elucidate the main argument of the thesis, that public and private space is being reworked with implications for accessing membership. The filtering that once occurred at the national border now takes place within the territory, in this case through access to welfare controls. There are shifts in those who assume different faces of the state, and their duties are being expanded. Once again, the incursion of the state into the intimate lives of new migrants leads to negotiations of identity in order to *make place*, and to processes of place-making which then shape identities.

The methodological aspects of my research are discussed in Chapter 2. I illustrate how I mapped interactions and came to focus on home encounters as the key site of negotiations of place-making. This thesis represents an ‘extended case’ in which I isolate the important elements of the encounter and then trace these elements out to consider wider historical and social aspects. Through this process the significance of the home encounter becomes clear (Mitchell 1956: 2). Chapter 2 is also attentive to the particular way I approached and addressed the research question and how I *made place* through engaging with the space beside new migrants, following their networks and connections. I describe my fourteen months of ethnographic fieldwork and outline my epistemological standpoint. I explain how anthropological knowledge (as any kind of knowledge) may be conceived of as a

metaphorical description of the world by anthropologists, who are themselves trying to make sense of the metaphorical descriptions of the world produced by the persons they meet in the field. Chapter 2 also addresses my ethical negotiations, language, and issues of power and consent.

Chapter 3 argues that domestic space becomes the crucial site of interaction between new migrants and faces of the state. The chapter contextualises the individual negotiations between new migrants and state actors within broader considerations that are drawn on in Chapter 4. I examine changing legal migration regulations for European Union accession country nationals and how policy towards children has developed at the European, national and local level. This highlights the shifting and contingent nature of the legal and policy environment that accompanied these new migrants and the local practices of austerity, discourses of uncontrollable populations and effects of welfare fragmentation (Boccagni 2015; Good 2007; Joppke and Eule 2016; Moorhead and Robinson 2006). The chapter strengthens the main argument through isolating the importance of the safeguarding children agenda and exploring how the logic of early intervention in safeguarding children draws bureaucrats into the domestic space; illustrating how immigration control and welfare regulations have become fused; and arguing that there is increasing focus on ‘deserving’ behaviour as a foundation for social protection (rather than structural inequality). Chapter 3 provides the background to explore the different optics through which state actors and others view the home space and the political and social environment through which actors may exercise room for manoeuvre.

Building on this background, Chapter 4 examines the trajectories of new migrants and the others they encounter in the home. I argue that the organisational structure of front line bureaucratic roles, and the duties bestowed on them are changing the faces of the state for new migrants, revealing their intimate lives as a basis for accessing membership. I draw on

Lipsky's foundational work on 'street-level bureaucracy' as an analytical framework for examining the contexts, circumstances and statuses of practitioners (1980 / 2010). I define the term home-level bureaucrat as an extension of Lipsky's concept. Crucially, my advance is to propose the term home-level bureaucrat as being attentive to the emplaced and situated nature of these particular roles.¹³ I detail how mothers become 'visible' to argue that roles and trajectories shape mothers' and others' expectations and perceptions of the home space¹⁴ including the implications for the development of the term 'Romanian Roma' and the meanings and perceptions linked to that category.

Chapter 4 also outlines two developments in front line work. First, those undertaking these roles are increasingly diverse and also less directly accountable to the Local Authority through subcontracting and volunteering. Second, the complex duties of home-level bureaucrats, and the shifting and ambiguous legal statuses and entitlements of new migrants, mean that seemingly small discretionary decisions undertaken by home-level bureaucrats have wide ranging consequences. This chapter concludes by illustrating the complex webs of relationships that new migrants engage in, which place different constraints and expectations on their performances through the increasing significance of the home encounter.

Chapter 5 then argues that the space of the home encounter defines the parameters through which those encounters can take place. The chapter elucidates this argument in two ways. First I detail how the objects in the space *take* meaning. In other words, the chapter provides the ethnographic data to argue that materiality is leveraged with different intentions and creates different understandings revealing different values. Second, the chapter details how objects in this space *make* meanings and thus how materiality is used to express and codify

¹³ I follow Evans and Harris' intervention (2006) that the most productive approach to applying Lipsky's work to avoid jumping to extremes is as a 'tentative analytical framework', rather than a rigid model.

¹⁴ Biehl defines 'home spaces' as the confluence of multiple variables which include physical aspects alongside the 'manifold and often conflicted conceptions, relations and meanings' that are embodied in spaces (2014: 597).

disjunctures in values. In particular, the chapter explores how toys and the management of the home space when children are present, emerge in discourses and infuse understandings of relationship-building. The chapter thereby expands and confirms the argument that meanings drawn from the material space of the interaction are used to (re)inscribe the values associated with categories and performances.

Chapter 6 builds on the previous chapter's analysis of the material home space to shift the focus to social space. I utilise Munn's notion of the body as a mobile social field (1996: 451) to argue that understandings of different bodies in relation to others act to (re)create the space in shifting, manifold and complex ways. This analysis unveils the home as a site of highly uneven production of meanings. The ethnographic vignettes in this chapter examine the roles of absence, presence, time, and silence. This chapter also focuses on how understandings of relationships act as a mode of boundary-making to create 'exclusionary' spaces within the home. Through tracing the disjuncture in different actors' understandings of public and private the chapter illustrates how values are ascribed to different bodies and performances. The chapter concludes by reviewing these different processes to argue that they make notions of public and private further blurred and highly contingent.

Chapter 7 argues that meanings are transformed or (re)inscribed through discourses among and between new migrants and others. In addition, this chapter provides the ethnographic data to argue that the meanings produced in encounters implicate the intimate lives of new migrants. First I detail how different forms of communication and performance are attributed different 'weights', particularly focusing on the role of illiteracy and how this shapes decision making. These forms of communication are humour, rumours and written documents. Second, this chapter illustrates how, through these processes, welfare state restructuring affects access to forms of membership of the state. For these new migrant families, access becomes predicated on knowledge drawn from various 'elsewheres', family relationship

histories, and family status. Third, the chapter reviews how a relational production of meanings unfolds through encounters, shaping decision-making for all actors involved.

Finally, the chapter reviews the ethnographic data to argue that home encounters can be conceived as state acts which are relationally produced and are infused with diverse forms of practices and discourses, shaping who is considered to belong within or outside the nation. This has implications for how new migrants negotiate their identities in order to *make place*, and how processes of place-making also shape identities.

Uses and limits of the thesis

Clearly, there are many areas of these new migrants' lives that do not deal with state actors or key institutions of the UK state. Other kinds of self-formation occur outside institutional webs of power relations. While selecting a focus is necessary in any project, the corollary is that all projects must remain aware of their limitations. This thesis explicitly does not represent a study of a neighbourhood, of Luton or of an ethnic group in the UK. Rather, I consider new migrant encounters with the welfare state as dynamic everyday processes of making and self-making that have roots in the experiences of earlier generations of migrants and the governance of the urban poor. This approach foregrounds how new migrants and others negotiate meanings in a relational perspective through placing emphasis on encounters rather than solely focussing on 'Romanian Roma' migrant lives, front line service providers in the context of welfare restructuring, or Luton as place undergoing demographic shifts. This is crucial in order to locate these new migrants and the others who they encounter within wider processes of racialisation and class based prejudice.

My approach in this thesis constitutes a shift from considering new migrants on their own to a framework where home encounters with state actors are exposed as a struggle with multiple and shifting workings of power for those on all sides. By placing emphasis on encounters I take the position that there is not one *a priori* analytical domain in which to understand how membership or access to the state is constituted.¹⁵ Rather what matters is to identify the various domains in which pre-existing racial, ethnic, gender and cultural forms are problematised and become recast by social technologies of government that define ‘clients’ or subjects.

By advancing the ideas of ‘home encounters’ and ‘home-level bureaucrats’, this thesis provides the framework to analyse these processes, not by privileging the perspective of an individual or group, but through accounting for the positions of new migrants and the others they encounter in their domestic spaces.

¹⁵ This also highlights the way in which citizenship has never been a bounded and static category or idea (Balibar 1998; Isin 2008; Mezzadra and Nielson 2012).

Chapter 1. Framing home encounters

Introduction

I'm walking along the high street in Wilton Rise when I meet Doru smoking outside the 'Sunshine internet café' run by Somali refugees. Doru stops me and asks 'so kheres rakli? Kai zhas?' (What's going on young lady? Where are you going?). We begin a conversation and he is telling me about how he loved living in Madrid but that there is nothing there now when his oldest son, Puju, emerges from the internet café. He is followed by one of the Somalis who work there. Referring to Doru the man from the cafe says 'this guy is a good man – he comes into my shop all the time. Spanish man – you should come too. He is good customer.' They begin speaking in Spanish to each other before he goes back into the shop. Doru invites me for coffee to meet his wife Lenutsa.

Puju drives us and when we arrive at the house I immediately recognise Doru's daughter-in-law, Bianca, who is married to Doru's second son. Paula had stopped a deportation order for her following the birth of her first child in 2012 by sending proof of her indefinite leave to remain to the Home Office (her asylum application had not been resolved when Romania acceded to the European Union in 2007). Bianca tells me she had 'socialo' (child benefit) but it had stopped and she doesn't know why. She had also given birth three weeks ago to a baby girl, Catina. I offer to tell Paula, as I know she already has a connection with her. However, at this point Puju comes to sit next to me on the couch and tells me his story. He has three children and his wife has left the UK to live in Spain with another man. He has lived in Luton

for ten months trying to find work but to no avail. His three sons run around the room while Lenutsa makes me coffee and tries to place it somewhere where the boys won't scald themselves. Filip is seven, Versace is five and Marco is two years old. The oldest two boys were born in Spain and have never attended school. I ask him whether he wants to register the children in school but he refuses. He says sharply that no one can come to the house and only if they have child benefit to pay for food and school clothes can he put the children in the school. He seems aware that becoming visible to bureaucrats has concomitant responsibilities that he does not have the resources to fulfil, provoking strategies of evasion. I turn again to Bianca but she also tells me she doesn't want anyone coming to the house.

This short extract from my field notes indicates why the initial aim of this research was to explore the everyday lives of new migrant families in a diverse urban area. I was fascinated by interactions such as those between the Somali café owner and Doru. However, throughout the course of spending fourteen months sharing our everyday lives I observed that a crucial determining factor regarding the organisation of daily life, material conditions of living and representations of the world was the presence of children. This reflection stemmed from the many conversations such as those between Puju, Bianca and me. Those without children live and work with little, if any, direct encounters with state actors in their daily life (see Chapters 5 and 6). These new migrants assume the role of precarious tolerated individuals as they have no current or future potential claim to social rights or membership but also don't provoke immigration controls or expulsion.

However, those with children are placed in a different position regarding their residency in the UK. They are perpetually under threat of assessment and when children become 'visible' to state actors various bureaucratic processes are mobilized (see Chapter 4). New migrants are required to negotiate values with various others in their domestic space in order to sustain

their geographical and social location in the UK. The presence of children therefore shifts daily organisation and the terms on which lives can be lived. This shift and orientation towards engagement with the welfare state machinery has a dual nature. On one hand it unveils new migrant families to surveillance and disciplining; and on the other it provides the opportunity to gain social rights and a form of membership. However, the terms on which this access is predicated are highly contingent (Chapters 5 and 6). In addition, the small number of cases where children are removed from a family shape decision making strategies including avoidance and local, national or international movement (Chapter 7). This also determines choices regarding mobility or stasis and thus the meanings attached to place-making in this urban area.

In light of these observations, the thesis explores the negotiations of values that are entered into by new migrants and various others (Chapter 4). The thesis argues performances of values linked to the ‘appropriate’ care of children shape whether and on what terms new migrants encounter the state and are able to access a form of membership.¹⁶ The interactions between these different actors can be seen as the site where the boundaries of access are negotiated and decisions regarding inclusion and exclusion are based. Crucially, these encounters occur in the domestic spaces of new migrants between mothers and female front line service providers who are themselves often from migration or minority backgrounds.

State effects can be identified in these home encounters through the performances that take place primarily between migrant mothers and female front line service providers. Home encounters become the site where values are contested and negotiated, and are therefore where the opportunity for transformation or re-inscription of meanings takes place. To gain an understanding of the wider implications of these interactions I draw inspiration from

¹⁶ I use the term performance in its meaning developed first by Berger (1963/2011: 159) and then by Goffman who defines ‘performance’ as the face to face interaction that ‘influences the definition of the situation which individuals will come to have’ (1969: 5).

different concepts that I introduce in this chapter and develop in the subsequent chapters when presenting ethnographic material.

This chapter provides the theoretical scaffolding on which the argument proceeds. I argue that shifting migration controls and the restructuring of the welfare state (exemplified by the changing faces of the state and the duties bestowed on them), when coupled with processes of labelling, lead to encounters in the home. Although migration controls shift, the borders of access are reproduced through ascriptions of different values to different subjectivities. These values are brought to bear on and by the individual through relationships of power. Following the conceptualisation of Europe as a deterritorialised borderscape I argue that the filtering of people through migration controls that once occurred at the limit of the territorial bounds of the nation-state now extends within the territory (Balibar 2004: 2; Mezzedra and Neilson 2013: 159). I utilise this theory to explain how migration controls become crystallised through new migrant mothers' interactions with those who enter the domestic space. I argue that this results in negotiations of identity in order to *make place*, and that processes of place-making shape identities. This first theoretical chapter meets two demands: explaining what is referred to when talking about new migrants and the state, and outlining the theoretical framework within which the relation between the two may be inscribed. I review these two aspects and relate them to my argument before critical analysis of the theoretical literature.

This thesis rests on the theory of the deterritorialised state where state boundaries are not at the physical borders of the nation but are (re)produced, albeit unevenly, through social relations. This perspective can be seen to build on Foucault's analysis of power as a field of multiple forces (Foucault 1979, 1991). The notions of governmentality as well as bio-power have been used to rethink the state as a contradictory ensemble of practices and processes (Brown 1995; Mitchell 1991; Trouillot 2001). Building on these debates there was a reassessment of the role of the state (Appadurai 1996; Aretxaga 2003; Hannerz 1996,

Trouillot 2001). In addition, the ‘spatial turn’ in the social sciences spurred the rescaling of the nation-state through a new theoretical lexicon. The state could be conceived as stretching and mutating far beyond and also as emerging within a located, cartographical territory (Brenner 2004). Trouillot observes that ‘state power is being redeployed, state effects are appearing in new sites, and, in almost all cases, this move is one away from national sites to infra-, supra-, or transnational ones’ (2001: 132).

It has been well established that ‘the state’ is a problematic concept to define precisely. Mountz draws on Joe Painter’s (1995: 34) ‘working definition’ of the state arguing ‘states are constituted of spatialised social practices which are to a greater or lesser extent institutionalised (in a ‘state apparatus’) and which involve claims to authority which are general in social scope and which secure at least partial compliance through either consent, or coercion, or both’. Crucially for my argument, this perspective and the rescaling of the state broke the correlation between nation-state and a bounded national territory. The state became describable as ‘deterritorialised’. I build on this concept to argue that the negotiations in the home represent the filtering that previously took place at the national border and can be conceived as where state forms are defined and (re)produced.

I advance two perspectives to argue that the home is a site where state forms are (re)produced through social relations. First, I review how the state can be conceived as deterritorialised and where membership is not based on a body being physically tied to the territory of the nation-state, but a body being fit for the practices the state promotes. This shift signals the decoupling of the post-war dyad of the citizen-worker as the underpinning of membership. In Mezzedra and Neilson’s words, this represents a continuing process of ‘differential inclusion’ (2013: 165) where territory, membership and access to social rights is increasingly fragmented.

The notion of the ‘encounter’ is examined within the framework of the ‘relational state’ where front line workers and new migrants are conceived as active agents that work the boundary between different subject positions, drawing on different material and symbolic resources. Conceiving the state as ‘relational’ opens a rich field for anthropological enquiry to address the question of how state formations are continuously recreated and transformed through embedded relations (Thelen et al. 2014: 7). The encounter therefore represents the relations of power that are inscribed in subsequent narratives and discourse.

Second, I review the home as a space and build the theoretical scaffolding which will be elaborated in the analysis of the ethnographic material in Chapters 5 and 6. The home is seen as a material, social and symbolic space or ‘field of action’ which shapes and is shaped by actors’ ‘basis of action’ (Munn 1996: 450-1). Analysing encounters as they unfold allows the examination of different subjectivities to trace shifting power relations. These processes can be conceived as ‘stratified reproduction’ (Colen 1995: 178) where the daily and generational work of maintaining human life is reproduced within specific parameters that sustain divisions based on particular values. This is not a new observation: it is well established that social welfare provision involves surveillance and superintendence by agents of the state on poor families, particularly poor women in their domestic space (Dingwall 1984; Piper 2005: 14).¹⁷ The advance I make here is that these familiar welfare-related dynamics have taken on a different meaning due to the shift in duties in front line work. State actors’ incursion into

¹⁷ Donzelot has traced the techniques of moralisation which grew from the relationship between philanthropy and the state that lead to the forerunners of social work such as the Charity Organisation Society (1990: 5). Dingwall has also reviewed the emergence of charities such as the NSPCC where the involvement of religious organisations (including Catholic, Jewish and Protestant) ‘attests to an ideological agreement around the basis of the evangelical critique of industrial society for its alleged effects on people’s moral nature’ (1984: 218). Dingwall also posits that the creation of health visiting is the paradigm of this involvement as the working class were subject to ‘unannounced surveillance of all occupants of a social category defined purely by demography – the presence of young children – rather than assumed or perceived need. There was an underlying assumption that families with no guilty secrets had no motive for refusing surveillance. If surveillance were refused, then guilt might be inferred... The barriers around families were breached by women’s own invitations to enter the private space’ (ibid: 222). For historical developments of UK welfare policy towards children and the intervention of the state into family life see Hendrick (2005: 31-49).

migrants' homes now acts to reproduce the filtering that previously occurred at the national border. Those who may have been sifted at the border previously are now falling to the attention of front line workers. Many of these workers are far from Local Authority accountability, such as subcontracted NGO workers or religious volunteers co-opted by the new migrants they are subsequently called on to discipline.

I bring these two strands together to argue that the meanings made from different values play out as the boundaries of inside or outside the state are redrawn in the space of the home. I argue that by being attentive to both systems of differential inclusion and stratified reproduction the migrant mother represents the state's boundary making processes. Moral worth becomes linked to membership and the new migrant mother is cast as the negotiator between the two through her performances in her domestic space. This leads to negotiations of identity in order to *make place*. I also argue that processes of place-making shape identities.

The deterritorialised state, relationally (re)produced

It has been established that encounters with the boundaries of Europe no longer operate at territorial limits (Balibar 2004: 2; Mezzadra and Neilson 2013: 159). This section focuses on how immigration control can be conceived as shifting from gatekeeping at the territorial border to gatekeeping access to services. Mezzadra and Neilson's intervention (2013) advances the idea of 'borderscapes' to formulate a way of thinking about borders that does not dismiss the nation-state but shows that it is undergoing a fundamental mutation: "the nation-state" still provides an important political reference from the point of view of power

configurations and their articulation with capital-labour relations' (2013: 2). However, they argue that contemporary power dynamics and struggles cannot be contained by national borders or the international system of states they establish.¹⁸ A crucial element of their argument rests on classic border studies showing that borders do not just divide but also connect and thus do not obstruct global flows but 'become essential devices for their articulation' (ibid.: 3). In this sense, borders have not just proliferated; they become more heterogeneous. Although they argue from the perspective that nation-state boundaries are extending *beyond* the national territory, I argue and present the ethnographic material to illustrate that borders are being made *within* the national territory. Crucially, I do not argue that these processes are creating new borders, defined as fundamental schisms and mutations in the nation-state, but rather the border of the nation-state can be said to have shifted and is becoming more diffuse, stretching both beyond and within national territory.

This perspective draws on Balibar who argues that Europe itself is a borderland, a zone of transition and mobility without territorial fixity. He observes 'borders are being both multiplied and reduced in their localization and their function... the quantitative relation between 'border' and 'territory' is being inverted' (1998: 220). Following Bigo, who conceptualises borders as moving, disconnecting and reconnecting (2005: 77), and Butler (2007: 5) and De Genova (2002: 439), who observe the creation of 'deportable' populations within the national territory, I similarly conceive that borders shift, (re)appear and disappear within everyday life as people move through vectors of space and time.

¹⁸ The theoretical emphasis on diversity, fragmentation and disaggregation of the state has been critiqued as it presupposes the stability and apparent coherence of the organizational entity called the 'state' (Kapferer 2004). I address this critique by focusing explicitly on how state actors' practices are shaped by their relational setting and stress the structural embedding of state actors and their 'clients' (Dubois 2010; Heyman 2004. Larsen 2011, Olwig 2011). Thus I do not juxtapose ideas of 'globalisation' with an ideal sovereign nation-state nor do I posit that the involvement of non-state actors who have taken over former state responsibilities leads to a weakening of state power. Rather I argue that the reworking of public and private space and the new formations of state actors represent a coherent governing logic that acts to re-inscribe relations of power and (re)produce differential inclusion based on moral worth despite purportedly new or increasingly rapid movements of people and forms of governance.

In the UK, modern citizenship is based on the post-war development of welfare states guided by the *jus soli* model of citizenship.¹⁹ Institutions and practices developed through the idea of nation-states with fixed boundaries marking those who belonged and therefore had rights to welfare provision (Esping Andersen 1996). Developing notions of social citizenship, Marshall (1950) gave ideological support to the identification of rights with membership of a nation.²⁰ The notion of citizenship therefore implies social rights, but also implies exclusion of those deemed not belonging (Kofman 2000). However, exclusion and inclusion are not distinct categories but operate on a shifting scale. Lockwood (1996) introduced the term ‘civic stratification’ to make the analytical distinction between formal access (legal rights) and informal access (moral or material aspects affecting the enjoyment of a right). Morris builds on Lockwood to argue that these categories are in dynamic relation to each other (Morris 2003: 93). When nation and state are decoupled, not only do individuals belonging to different social groups experience the borders of exclusion in different ways, but borders simultaneously perform ‘several functions of demarcation and territorialisation... between distinct social exchanges or flows, between distinct rights...’ (Balibar 2002: 79). I argue that the boundaries between the dynamics of filtering, subordination and labour market discrimination that once occurred at the international border now take place within the bounded spaces of national societies, meaning that ‘borders between inclusion and exclusion have been pressed and become confused’ (Mezzedra and Neilson 2013: 159).²¹

However, to envisage the state as deterritorialised does not solve the problem of ‘locating the state’. Stuart Hall describes the inherently contradictory nature of the state: ‘the state is both

¹⁹ Since the abolition of the Citizenship of the UK and Colonies Act in 1983, at least one parent must be a British citizen or be legally ‘settled’ in the country. A child can also gain citizenship on their 10th birthday regardless of their parents’ citizenship.

²⁰ Etienne Balibar and Engin Isin spurned a field of enquiry that has been termed Critical Citizenship Studies which focuses on the need to think about citizenship as a process. Mhurchú (2014) reviews in detail how migration has questioned citizenship and reveals its inextricable link to the idea of bounded nation-states which ‘prioritises a metaphysics of presence’.

²¹ This argument is elaborated through the discussion of the legal and policy framework in Chapter 3.

of and over society. It arises from society; but it also reflects, in its operations, the society over which it exercises authority and rule. It is both part of society, and yet separate from it' (2006: 363).²² I see the challenge of analysing state forms as finding a framework that helps to understand these processes without eliminating or simplifying this contradiction. One way to understand the effect of this deterritorialisation is to conceptualise 'the state' as an everyday construction. I follow previous scholarly work that conceives the state as 'relational' and produced through embedded social relationships (Thelen et al. 2014: 7).

Firstly argued by Mitchell (1991) and developed by Mountz (2003) and Heyman (2004) this perspective posits that the state is not just constituted of, but constituted by, social processes of reproduction (Mountz 2003; Marston 2004; Coleman 2012). Mountz suggests that to locate the state in the everyday we must 'attend to representations, symbols, materiality and practices and the way that they are interlinked' (2003: 268).²³ This is inspired by a Foucauldian reading of power that posits that the state cannot be a unified entity that can be grasped but is constituted by 'instruments, techniques and procedures that may be brought to bear on the actions of others' (Hindess 1996: 110). The state, in Foucault's words, 'is nothing else but the mobile effect of a regime of multiple governmentalities' (Foucault 2010: 77). Following these scholars I locate 'the state' in everyday practices (Trouillot 2001; Mountz 2003; 2010). The state operates not as a locatable object but as a located series of networks through which governance takes place. This allows the conceptualisation of the state as emerging and dissipating in interactions. As Wendy Brown remarks, the state is a 'significantly unbounded terrain of powers and techniques, an ensemble of discourses, rules

²² The 'anthropology of the state' has successfully refuted the idea that the state can be studied as a unified totality drawing attention to the contradictory and shifting workings of state effects (Mitchell 1991; Taussig 1997; Abrams 1977).

²³ The relational perspective is not new in the social sciences or in studies of bureaucracy, firstly attributed to Weber, Simmel and Elias. At its core is the idea that sociality emerges at the points of interaction (Kearney 1995; Nash 1981; Ong 1987). Mountz (2003) advances this perspective through feminist geographical analysis to provide a methodological framework to locate state forms in these interactions.

and practices, cohabiting in limited, tension-ridden, often contradictory relation with one another' (Brown 1992: 174). When encounters are recast as fields of social relations, the boundary between those outside and inside the state becomes blurred. In addition, social relationships develop, affect and are affected by space. Therefore this framework foregrounds the sites where these encounters take place.

In this formulation, state actors and their 'clients' are examined as a series of relations. Locating the state in interactions allows the incorporation of the situated perspectives of actors to be brought to the fore. Following Mountz, the interlinking of symbols, materiality and practices emerge as salient to the meanings that are gained from interactions and thus feed into decision-making. State actors who are themselves relationally embedded (Thelen 2014: 7) have to reconcile the idealised versions of bureaucratic practice held in policy with the everyday and often incoherent enactment of those policies when faced with individuals (Mountz 2003: 627). This theoretical perspective also allows an analysis of the negotiations that take place within these interactions and how they become sites where different values emerge, are contested, and are either re-inscribed or transformed. I argue that these everyday interactions are 'state acts' as they are the sites of the delivery of public services, the implementation of state policy and where decisions around access to state resources take place (Lipsky 1980/2010). Dubois, drawing on Bourdieu's idea of 'state acts', notes they are 'inseparably symbolic and material, relying on abstract categories and on concrete objects – consisting of both discourses and bureaucratic routines – that shape the perceptions of the people as well as their material situations' (2014: 38). I argue that through the conception of a deterritorialised relational state, 'state acts' can represent the negotiation of the terms on which belonging and membership is based.

The interactions between state actors and their clients are not the only entry point for a relational analysis of the state. However, they do provide a privileged position from which to

examine how state effects are generated through observing mechanisms of inclusion and identification, as claims and decisions are made about who belongs to a given community and who will have access to limited public resources. As mentioned above, the interactions addressed here all took place in the domestic space, foregrounding notions of the public and the private. The public-private dichotomy holds particular constellations of meanings from the socio-historical genesis of Western nation-states. I address the particular salience of the post-war welfare state and the values underpinning the institutional settings that have created the structure of bureaucratic roles and duties. This is pivotal to situate bureaucratic perspectives, justifications and the parameters through which they understand their work.

The next section will elaborate on the meaning of the home, its relationship to the public and private space in Western post-war welfare states and the repercussions for (gendered) citizenship and social rights.

Home, private space, children and gendered citizenship

Enlightenment and industrialisation, spurred by the theory of the social contract that laid the foundation for Western European political systems, separated a space for living and a space for working (Pateman et al. 1987; Grant 1991). The split between public and private in this formulation, most widely referenced through the work of Aries (1977), fundamentally relates to the positioning of the individual with regard to the state. Poulantzas explains: ‘the individual-private is not an intrinsic obstacle to state activity, but a space which the modern state constructs in the process of transversing it... For it is not the external space of the modern family which shuts itself off from the state, but rather the state which, the very time

that it sets itself up as the public space, traces and assigns the site of the family through shifting, mobile partitions' (1978: 72). This description of the dichotomy between the state and the family points to the process of casting the individual into the role of the citizen and how this is permeated by imaginations of family and personhood. It also explains how 'the domestic' emerged as a European category of thought that underpinned highly stratified notions of public and private space (Aries 1977; Chapman and Hockey 1999: 10-13; Massey 2007: 237-8).

This historical context goes some way to explain how the space of the home is recognised as the physical and emotional setting for intimate lives. The power of defining the home as a private space is drawn from the contrast with public space. As Gal argues these distinctions only exist in reference to their context, and draw their meaning from the dichotomy (2002: 78). Public and private spaces do not have fixed definitions but draw meaning from the 'underlying logics' that create the contrast. In Davidoff's words, 'public and private is not a universal and timeless absolute, however the dichotomy is a powerful signifier of how our social worlds are ordered' (1999: 268). The 'public and private are co-constitutive cultural categories and they are also indexical signs that are always relative: dependent for part of the referential meaning on the interaction context in which they are used' (Gal, 2002: 80). I understand private space as a discursive phenomenon. Therefore the issue at stake is explaining the underlying logics that guide the public-private dichotomy in social relations. Certain ways of performing appropriate relations also become inscribed within spaces that are perceived as 'public' or 'private'. Crucially, by remaining attentive to whose meanings of 'appropriate' relations are privileged, and who has the ability to control the space, provides an important lens through which to pinpoint the way hierarchies of subjectivities develop in interactions. Thus mobilising the public and private distinction becomes a heuristic device for

grasping the multiple, shifting and contradictory workings of power that are in process through these encounters.

In this formulation, private space has become synonymous with 'home'. Emerging and inscribed by changing work practices through industrialisation, the intensification of the privacy of the 'home' in the face of the public world of work ensured that it became a locus for the self; but a self, as Strathern notes, located in a particular formulation of a family group within distinct parameters of 'polite society' (1992: 105-109). The creation of this type of family life is representative of the conceptual shift from the family as productive to a reproductive unit and made 'home and family interchangeable terms' (Oakley quoted in Allan and Crow 1989: 2). Home became the context for familial experiences.

Historically in the development of European welfare states the 'home' and 'family' were spatialised and intermeshed with the 'child' so as to construct a set of intertwined metaphors of dependency.²⁴ This was also accompanied by an idea that childhood encompassed distinct phases of life and throughout each phase, children were seen as requiring the physical and emotional nurturing that could best be supplied privately by their mothers at home.²⁵ This construction of the 'private' as the family's retreat was closely linked to the new definition of the woman's separate sphere, which glorified the role of the wife as a homemaker and full-time mother (Fraser 1987: 117-18, Lister 1997: 41-2). This construction effectively excluded

²⁴ James traces the emergence of the care of children to the seventeenth century where the notion developed that children needed careful social nurturing in the form of a caring control lest their potential for a change run wild and the adulthood, and hence future of adult society, be endangered. The creative potential that the child symbolizes is represented in terms of a 'twin dependency'. The child is rendered dependent upon the progress and process of both its nature and its nurture with any flux or change risking demonization. It is this which makes the image of 'the child' the dominant metaphor for other dependent experiences (James 1993).

²⁵ The new sociology of childhood literature which aims to give an independent and active voice to children has provoked a new way of thinking about the role of children and the way in which they have been specifically constructed by Western liberal democracies as valued in particular ways (Christensen and James 2008; Davidoff et al. 1999: 30; Olwig 1998: 231; Prout and James 1990). This can be illustrated by the recent 'Contesting Early Childhood' Routledge series which examines the effects of accelerated development of early childhood services and policies and illustrates how it has become increasingly steeped in regulation and control.

women from engaging in public political life: ‘an intrinsic feature of their naturalisation was embodiments of the private, the familial and the emotional. It was thus essential to the construction of the public sphere as masculine, rational, responsible and respectable’ (Werbner and Yuval-Davis 1999: 6). This development of meanings also allowed the containment of women and children inside the home and imbued mothers with the symbolic and active role as bearers of culture and tradition (Castles and Davidson 2000: 123-4; Yuval Davis and Anthias 1989; Yuval Davis 1997). These meanings are particularly significant for migrant women who are envisaged as central to reproducing ‘ethnic culture’²⁶ (Anthias 1992: 78) and thus passively transmit the identity and honour of a ‘community’ (Fortier 2000: 4; Tolz and Booth 2005: 3).²⁷

Advances in the anthropology of bureaucracy have also examined the mechanisms through which values regarding reproductive futures infuse policies, the structure of bureaucratic roles and how bureaucrats translate policies when encountering clients.²⁸ Within the cultural

²⁶ The feminisation of the global labour market has also led to a shift in fundamental concepts such as the public and private distinction. Developments within the field of gender studies and migration theory saw women as independent, self-reliant and active migrants themselves who played important roles within their family and migrant communities (Tastsoglou and Maratou-Alipranti 2003; Bauer and Thompson 2004). Women’s experiences were examined through race, class and gender inequalities (Phizacklea 1982, 1983; Anthias 1992). However, this research tended to ignore aspects of family and ethnic relations (Evergeti 2006) while also equating gender with women. This is gradually changing (Kofman 2000; Willis and Yeoh 2000). Kofman (2000: 15) outlines the history of gender and migration, taking stock of the pioneering work by Morokvasic (1983) and Leonetti-Taboada (1978) and the various conferences and journal special issues that have proliferated on this issue in the intervening decades.

²⁷ Previous scholarly work has explored the gendered, racialised and classed intersections between the ideas of home, family and motherhood and the implications for mothers’ lived experiences (Arat-Koç 1989; Bakan and Stasiulis 1994; Blum 2000; Blum and Deussen 1996; Glenn 1994, 1999; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2001.) leading to the analysis of social reproduction taking place transnationally through transborder families (Arat-Koç 2006) and through the research agenda inspired by the ‘feminisation’ of international migration (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003: 5).

²⁸ The structure of bureaucratic roles has also been widely addressed in research exploring state social provision as it reproduces and modifies social inequalities that are commensurate with social divisions of gender, class, race and marital status (Morissens and Sainsbury 2005; Castles 2000; Dunkwu 1993; Siim and Squires 2008; Schierup et al. 2006) affecting material situations, shaping gender relations, structuring political conflict and contributing to the formation and mobilisation of identities and interests (Baines 2004; Barry et al. 2003; Ely 1995; Lister 2006; Ungerson 1990). This scholarly work has illustrated that the relationship between families and welfare systems are continually in a state of flux and impinge most violently on those who are positioned as

turn in anthropology Herzfeld (1992: 28-34) demonstrated that the form of nation-state bureaucracies and local-level practices put the symbolism of family and the language of blood and race at the heart of building, maintaining and manipulating classificatory systems of inclusion and exclusion. More recently empirical, conceptual and theoretical developments have meant that privileging common assumptions about family life and its histories in policy making can now be more readily acknowledged and challenged (Davidoff et al. 1999; Fink and Lundqvist 2012; Mackinnon 2006).²⁹ Fassin identified deep prejudices in the operation of policies about the ‘legitimacy and utility of certain categories of individuals, about their culture and their future, and about their obligations and their rights’ (Fassin 2005: 366).³⁰

Feminist political economy has provided the most effective tools to critically analyse ideas of family life and the policies that have related to social rights based on normative values of the family. Colen through her notion of ‘stratified reproduction’ aims to ‘de-naturalise’ childbirth and domestic labour.³¹ She emphasises that ‘physical and social reproductive tasks are accomplished differently according to inequalities that are based on hierarchies of class, race, ethnicity, gender, place in the global economy and migration status’ (1995: 78).³² The

deviant and thus of less worth in society (Abramovitz 1988; Chaudhuri 2005; Piven and Cloward 1971; Stack 1975; Susser 1996).

²⁹ Comparative social policy has led to a greater understanding of the range of international welfare regimes and their meanings, usefully illustrating how the development of welfare has been shaped by different economic and employment imperatives as well as the gendered divisions of welfare systems (Daly 2000; Daly and Rake 2003; Esping-Andersen et al.. 2002; Hantrais 2000; Kremer 2007; Lewis 1992; Orloff 1993; Sainsbury 1996, 1999). This has highlighted the many ways in which the state might take responsibility for social welfare (Abrahamson et al.. 2005; Bernini 2007; Fink et al.. 2001; Morgan 2006; Williams 1995).

³⁰ Fassin draws on Herzfeld’s (1992) re-examination of Max Weber’s analysis of bureaucracies (1922/1978) and Douglas’s description of institutions (1986). This has resonances with the strongest interpretation of the ‘cultural turn’ in policy studies which aims at the emancipation and empowerment of vulnerable groups in society by deconstructing the reality created by elites (Rustin 1999).

³¹ Social reproduction is the work of maintaining and reproducing people on a daily and generational basis. Connell argues that social reproduction is based on a gender system, namely a gender order, which reflects a historically specific configuration of state, labour-market and family relations to ensure that the continuation of society is accomplished.

³² Gendered and racialised restrictions have long been applied to migrants mediating both their entry to a nation-state and their access to welfare systems and labour markets. In Britain, it has been argued that immigration,

concept helps to identify and trace the effects of ‘arrangements by which some [social and biological] reproductive futures are valued while others are despised’ (Ginsburg and Rapp 1995: 3). It also draws attention to the power relations that shape how some categories of people are supported to reproduce while others are stigmatised or disempowered. I argue that the notion of stratified reproduction reveals the situated positions of mothers and the others they encounter. Through the idea of disempowered or stigmatised subjects, the state can be conceived as relationally reproduced on the basis of hierarchies of values as some mothers are supported while others are perceived as inappropriate mothers who produce unruly children. The assessment of values is crucial to understanding how relationships develop and identities are negotiated between mothers and others in the domestic space, with effects for how access to resources and membership is decided.

This section has reviewed the meanings infused into ideas of the private and domestic space and the role of gender and children; these meanings inherently structure encounters in the home space (as will be shown in the following chapters). I shall now move to address the position of embedded front line workers (who I term home-level bureaucrats) who interpret policies and put them into practice. Accounting for their situated positions is pivotal to the unfolding of welfare policies and the way in which the deterritorialised relational state is reproduced based on hierarchies of values.

marriage and nationality laws explicitly reflect the ideology of white, middle-class women as reproducers of the nation (Connell 1990; Stevens 1999).

Becoming a ‘post-welfare’ bureaucrat

As mentioned above, through a relational view of the state, front line workers’ personal histories and social positions are also brought into analysis (Dubois 2010; Thelen et al. 2014; Watkins-Hayes 2009) and therefore state institutions can be seen as complex and contradictory, with bureaucrats themselves socially situated. This also goes some way to explaining how state actors operate separately but remain influenced and regulated by political ideas, institutions and practices. Not only are policies imbued with certain normative values but bureaucrats are socially embedded and their actions are shaped by their own perspectives and backgrounds (Dubois 2014: 46; Satzewich 2013: 1452). This has previously been conceptualised as bureaucrats’ ‘discretion’, a mechanism that is inherently built into their roles and how social forms are reproduced (Lipsky 1980/2010; Soss et al. 2011; Dubois 2014).

Dubois has argued that in the last three decades there has been a shift in welfare policies that represent what he terms a ‘post-welfare’ state (2014: 40). These policies are based increasingly on behavioural criteria, rather than addressing structural inequalities (Jessop 1993; Benington and Taylor 1993, Bruegel 1999). In Dubois’ words, ‘what used to be simple bureaucratic practice has become a key instrument of contemporary social and employment policies that, in practice, increasingly reflects government over the poor that strives to remake dispositions and behaviours rather than socio-economic structures’ (Dubois 2014: 41). The fragmentation of public services; the imposition of financial targets in welfare services; the rise of ‘new public management’ (Andersen 2005; Ellison 2007; Clarke 2005; Lorenz 2006; Saks 1999); state-society arrangements increasingly guided by commissioning and co-governing; and transformations within civil society have elevated the significance of this

form of governance (Born and Jensen 2005; Clarke and Newman 1997; Clarke 2005). A further hallmark of this trend is the notion of deservingness that has gained salience in political and academic debates. As elaborated below in the analysis of the term ‘Romanian Roma mother’, deservingness signals a shift from a discourse based on rights to pre-welfare moral categories (Applebaum 2001; Chauvin and Garcés-Mascreñas 2014; van Oorschot 2006; Yoo 2008).³³

These developments in public services have highly gendered effects. Due to caring responsibilities women have historically been confined to low skill and low pay; to home-working or shift work. Women are overwhelmingly employed in human services and this kind of work is among the lowest paid (Connell 1990; Graham 2002; Kofman 2000; Lamphere 2005; Phillips and Taylor 1980).³⁴ Unpaid reproductive labour in the domestic space and the affective labour that takes place in the human services represent gendered conceptions of work. Not only has recent critique illustrated there is less recognition of the additional work needed in these roles, often referred to as ‘emotional labour’ (Hochschild, 1979), but also the majority of workers are increasingly black, minority and ‘ethnic’ women (Allen and Wolkowitz 1987; Kofman 2000). These roles are also increasingly removed from direct Local Authority control. I acknowledge that welfare provision has always involved a mixture of state, market and voluntary agencies often working in combination. However, the restructuring of welfare states with an increased emphasis on commissioning and outsourcing has intensified this process, placing greater reliance on the market and voluntary sectors.

³³ It has also been argued that notions of deservingness represent a new agenda which stresses that social justice is no longer about equality of outcome. Instead, rights are balanced by obligations (Andersen and Guillemand 2005; Lister 1997; Lorenz 2001). For further discussion see the following section entitled ‘Romanian Roma migrant mothers’.

³⁴ Graham identified that the bureaucracies where women predominate are often those in which there is direct contact with the public. Female civil servants have previously been portrayed as the emotional buffers between the public they meet on a regular basis and those ‘further up’ welfare bureaucracies where men are better represented and where policy decisions are made. Graham contends that emotional rapport might best be seen as a luxury of the male dominated parts of the welfare state whereas emotional skill, although not specifically a female virtue, is a feature of the street-level bureaucrat’s job (2002: 214).

In addition, those undertaking these roles are operating under certain conditions. Soss et al. (2011) argue that at each step of the policy process actors below control information needed by actors above and hold discretion over how to pursue pre-set goals. Actors above seek to discipline this discretion by setting benchmarks, controlling resources, monitoring performance, and promoting particular discourses and frames. Therefore the contemporary system is guided by a coherent governing logic that applies to those on the front line of service provision as much as to their clients. As illustrated in Chapter 4, those who are perceived to be ‘culturally proximate’ to clients are often given power to exercise over them (Ong 2003: 125-9; Watkins-Hayes 2009: 11-2). This phenomenon brings Cohen’s framework of marginalisation to the fore (Cohen 1999: 26-7). She uses the term ‘advanced marginalisation’ to describe how members of a marginalised group are called on to serve and discipline the most unincorporated group members (ibid. 63-9). In so doing they are required to ‘demonstrate their normativity and legitimacy through the class privilege they acquire, through the attitudes and behaviour they exhibit, and through the dominant institutions in which they operate’ (ibid. 64).

I argue that in a complex urban environment advanced marginalisation takes place not within one ‘group’ but within multiple ‘groups’ with intersecting relationships creating further complexities in home encounters. Bureaucrats are socially situated, and are themselves positioned within gendered, classed and racialised hierarchies. These positions are significant to how bureaucrats understand and undertake their roles. To foreground aspects of ‘advanced marginalisation’ I have termed the bureaucrats who are working on the front line in these conditions ‘home-level bureaucrats’. The idea of the home-level bureaucrat is crucial to the argument regarding the relational (re)production of the state where the sifting and filtering that once occurred at the national boundary takes place within territories through systems of differential inclusion.

Becoming a home-level bureaucrat

The home-level bureaucrat is analogous to Lipsky's concept of street-level bureaucracy but it foregrounds the gendered, racialised and classed dynamics of this role (1983/2010). The theoretical implications of the term are developed here and will be developed further in Chapter 4. Lipsky defined street-level bureaucracy in the following way:

‘the decisions of street-level bureaucrats, the routines they establish, and the devices they invent to cope with uncertainties and work pressures, effectively become the public policies they carry out...to the mix of places where policies are made, one must add the crowded offices and daily encounters of street-level workers. Policy conflict is not expressed as the contention of interest groups, it is also located in the struggles between individual workers and citizens who challenge or submit to client processing.’ (2010: xii)

Lipsky made two claims which were fundamental to the definition of ‘street-level bureaucrats’ and which are also crucial for the idea of the home-level bureaucrat. First, all street-level bureaucrats have higher demands than the resources available due to the structural constraints inherent in their role. Second, all street-level bureaucracies endeavour to treat all clients equally and have developed processes and procedures to ensure that this takes place. Street-level bureaucrats face clients who often do not fit ‘neatly’ into these procedures or regulations. This creates a dilemma between ‘how to treat all citizens alike and how at the same time to respond to the individual case’. Due to structural constraints such as time, information and resources it is impossible to respond to each case individually. Therefore

responses are formed through the ways categories and labels of people are created in the social world (Hacking 2004; Cederberg 2005; Sigona 2009).

The most crucial aspect of the delivery of public services in this formulation is the operation of discretion. As mentioned above, discretion refers to the negotiation that bureaucrats undertake when applying rigid policies to the unending variation of clients' individual circumstances.³⁵ Fundamentally, Lipsky argued, the effect is that bureaucrats can never be neutral in these processes and are required by the structure of front-line bureaucratic work to interpret rules and programmes as guided by their own background and experience. I elaborate below on the functions and meanings of discretion as a pattern of governmentality building on the conception of the 'post-welfare' state (Dubois 2013).

The crucial difference between Lipsky's formulation and what I observed is the form of the 'home visit' and the part that space plays in shaping these encounters. Certain bureaucratic roles are endowed with the potential to undertake home visits. Due to the historical fusing of the mother, child and home as outlined above such bureaucrats are often those that have duties linked to the care of children. Crucially, the home visit is not *prescribed* by these roles, but includes this possibility within the parameters of discretion. Therefore, in the case of home-level bureaucrats, the home visit is a response to the dilemma caused by the structural constraints inherent in their job. For example, a housing officer who is making a home visit as part of the requirements of the job would not be termed a home-level bureaucrat because the decision to enter the house was not discretionary but prescribed within the role. In contrast, a children's centre family worker who decides to make an unscheduled home visit

³⁵ The term discretion in reference to bureaucratic action was first used by Weber in his foundational work *Economy and Society*: 'precisely those views which most strongly glorify the "creative" discretion of the official accept, as the ultimate and highest lodestar for his behaviour in public administration, the specifically modern and strictly "objective" idea of *raison d'état*' (1922/1978: 979). Discretion, in Weber's view, might be conceived as the individual bureaucrat being able to make rational decisions. Elster (2000: 24) notes that Weber does not explicitly discuss how individual agents choose the appropriate means to a given end.

rather than making an appointment or inviting the family to children's centre, is a home-level bureaucrat. A volunteer who conducts home visits would not be considered a home-level bureaucrat because volunteers do not operate under the same resource constraints as those who are employed to fulfil a role (Lipsky 2010: 34). To clarify, in this thesis children's centre workers, educational officers, support workers who are funded solely by the local authority (and subject to their priorities and targets) are home-level bureaucrats. Volunteers are not home-level bureaucrats.

Therefore all home-level bureaucrats conduct home visits, but not all those who conduct home visits are home-level bureaucrats. Only those who have undertaken the discretionary decision to alleviate resource constraints inherent to their job by visiting the home can be termed home-level bureaucrats. They therefore operate under specific circumstances with certain understandings and expectations. The ways this unfolds creates different forms of encounter which are explored below. The term also describes a specific type of bureaucrat, who has the flexibility to leave their office and organise their own schedules. They have adjusted to the constant problem of not having enough resources or time, linked to a particular way of grouping clients and the historical fusing of the mother, child and home that has shaped the parameters of their job (by including home visits).

Therefore such bureaucrats have made a decision under similar structural constraints that it is worthwhile to conduct their role in the houses of migrants rather than the bureaucratic office or another space, such as a Community or Children's Centre. It is this characteristic and how the home space shapes relationships that is fundamental in the definition, actions and understandings of the home-level bureaucrat. Following Lipsky, who clarified his position in the revised edition of his seminal work, 'I do not include "all public services that interact with citizens" but rather "public service employment performed under certain conditions". These conditions mean that they cannot do the job according to their ideal conceptions of

their practice because of the limitations of the work structure' (Lipsky 2010: xvii). Crucially, this locates the problem of street-level bureaucrats and also home-level bureaucrats in the structure of their work without masking their individual understandings, perspectives and actions.

However, the term home-level bureaucrat differs from Lipsky's formulation through reference to the geographical and social situatedness of the home-level bureaucrat's role. Moreover, whereas 'street-level' implies a distance from the centre where authority resides, 'home-level', for bureaucrats, might imply a transgression due to the dichotomy between public and private space as described above. The uncertainty that emerges through home-level bureaucrats' narratives of the 'home visit' and the reproduction of gendered notions of public and private space is explored in Chapter 5. Mothers' different and shifting conceptions of encounters in these spaces will be explored and contrasted in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

In addition, there is a further crucial difference between home-level and street-level bureaucracy. There is a different orientation over time, which is pivotal in relationship building between bureaucrats and clients (see Chapter 6). Home-level bureaucrats may be in contact with the same family for a long period of time, or they may perceive that this would be the most ideal way to build a relationship and perform their role. A home encounter may not be perceived as a single visit and encounters do not take place through the luck of the bureaucratic queue. Therefore, home-level bureaucrats use time and resources in a different way to those who perform their role in an office (Chapter 6).

The post-welfare, home-level bureaucrat

This section provides the theoretical tools for Chapter 4, which traces the biographies and trajectories of home-level bureaucrats. Three structural factors can be identified that shape bureaucrats' decisions to make home visits.

First, the assumptions underpinning the safeguarding agenda mean that bureaucrats are required to find out details about the families they encounter (for example how a mother might be supporting her children and where she is obtaining money and other resources). This sentiment is evident through safeguarding and Ofsted³⁶ guidelines regarding 'target families'. Bureaucrats are also increasingly guided to become attentive to the broader conditions of everyday life when they encounter 'clients', reflected in the nation-wide initiative called 'Make Every Contact Count' (MECC). MECC was developed by the NHS and local government to reduce health inequalities and promote well-being. The initiative introduces a guiding principle that bureaucrats should use every contact with clients to assess their wider situation and refer them to different agencies that could provide support. Second, fragmentation of support services and reduced general or mainstream funding, places additional pressure on bureaucrats to know more about the personal situation of clients to assess eligibility for grants and provisions (for example, whether they were victims of domestic violence). Third, as more services are being provided by community and voluntary organisations based on ethnic group or religious affiliation, bureaucrats make assessments of

³⁶ Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. Ofsted inspectors conduct visits and regulate services that care for children and young people, and all services providing education and skills. Ofsted refers to vulnerable children and families as target groups with additional needs. The definition, published by Ofsted (2014) stated 'families the [Children's] Centre identifies as having needs or circumstances that require particularly perceptive intervention and/or additional support'.

the personal affiliations of a client and try to match them with the different groups ‘in the community’ in an effort to help them gain access to resources.

I argue that these three factors, coupled with the development of the term ‘Romanian Roma’ (see below) go some way to explain why home-level bureaucrats are drawn to the homes of new migrants.

The restructured welfare system has introduced a less rationalised model of service delivery with an expanded drive to counsel, encourage, discipline, and connect clients to resources and networks. For the home-level bureaucrats addressed here, this has led to a decrease in routines through their increased responsibilities to provide ‘messages’ beyond what might have been expected from their training or job title. Furthermore, as explained above the processes that encouraged bureaucrats to discover more information about their clients also presented them with a wide variety of complex situations that they perceived to be outside their sanctioned role. Thus the drive to understand more about clients in order to direct them to the correct service increased home-level bureaucrats’ discretion. In addition, the numbers of services are decreasing. When issues arise, there are often no other organisations to refer clients to. Therefore they have an extra level of discretion in deciding whether they take on additional work that is not in their understanding of their role.

A similar case was noted by Dubois in French welfare offices, where the practices of welfare policies shifted from trying to apportion rights and entitlements to motivating clients into certain types of behaviours (Dubois 2014). However, as the space opened for bureaucrats to become more entwined in the everyday lives’ of their clients, a corresponding but contradictory set of processes developed. Bureaucrats were also increasingly required to audit their time due to monitoring and evaluation procedures resulting from tighter funding regimes (Clarke 2005) and increasingly formalised and ‘professionalised’ policies that govern

practices relating to children particularly in ‘target’ areas (Chapter 3). Benchmarks, incentives and auditing go far towards explaining the patterns of treatment meted out to new migrants and goes some way to explain why home visits became the primary way service providers encountered this group of mothers.

There is an ongoing tension between less routine work and an increased pressure on targets, results, monitoring and evaluation of short term project funding. These two opposing pressures are becoming intensified as resources are stretched, administrative and legal categories proliferate, and clients are perceived to be less predictable. These two forces also lead bureaucrats to put in increasing amounts of work, even though they are less able to justify this work within the structures that are available.

A further dynamic has led to those who hold such positions being devalued. Dubois observes that with increasingly visible hardship in the client population, front line roles are considered as a vocation rather than a profession (2010). The notion of ‘vocation’ implies there is an inherently personal aspect which has led someone to choose a particular professional role. It also implies that the individual performing the task is gaining personal value from the role which is conceived to compensate for the low monetary reimbursement in terms of salary. The move towards an impression that front line roles are more vocational also brings bureaucrats’ personal and social dispositions increasingly into focus, while acting to devalue their work in terms of monetary worth and compensation in the labour market. Therefore front line roles are becoming less ‘valued’ and also the work that is done, although considered valuable, is increasingly difficult to account for and therefore is not acknowledged or valued within the existing structures.

The structure of their roles, an increasing drive to gain more knowledge about mothers through national guidelines, organisational restructuring and their own beliefs about ‘the right

thing to do': these factors all lead bureaucrats into the homes of mothers and shaped the encounters that unfolded. Bureaucrats are also aware that there are few other organisations that they can refer mothers to. As they become increasingly aware of the hardships faced by families and practices that seem to challenge their notions of good mothering, they have decreasing and fragmented resources with which to offer formal support and less recognition within organisational structures to validate the work they undertake.

It is important to reiterate at this juncture that the role of the home-level bureaucrat is not new. In the UK, women have been tasked to morally discipline other poorer women from the development of the Poor Law, *medical-hygienism* and the emergence of the Charitable Organisation Society (Gidley 2000: 9). However, the post-welfare home-level bureaucrat indicates that this role has taken on a new significance due to particular conditions.

This chapter has so far brought together several conceptual strands to provide a new theoretical intervention. I have utilised the notions of borderscapes, the post-welfare state, and home- and street-level bureaucracy to argue that the decisions and discretions of home-level bureaucrats are informed by systems of stratified reproduction. These decisions are fundamental to processes of differential inclusion. The next section provides the framework to explore how home-level bureaucrats and new migrants build relationships through exploring the development of the label 'Romanian Roma'.

Becoming 'Romanian Roma'

This section lays the theoretical groundwork for Chapters 5, 6 and 7, where the implications of establishing a bureaucratic identity in private spaces are fully explored. As justified in the

introduction, I use the term ‘new migrants’ throughout this thesis to designate the families I stayed with and I define this to include all those who resided in Luton for less than four years (although the three families I stayed with had lived in Luton for less than two years).³⁷ Not only are these new migrants, but no individual had an established network of previous relationships in the area.

The decision to frame this study in terms of new migrants is based on two theoretical concerns. First, the term has been used here to indicate that they are part of a new pattern of migration in the UK, there has been a shift from post-colonial migration of large ethnic groups to smaller groups from a wider range of countries with diverse migration trajectories, speakers of a range of different languages and, crucially holders of many different legal statuses (Meissner and Vertovec 2014). These ‘new migrations’ are a salient feature of globalisation where movements are increasingly taking place over longer geographical distances at increased speeds (Castles and Miller 2009; Duany 2011; Evereti and Zontini 2006; Jordan and Duvell 2003; Schierup, Hansen and Castles 2006). However, I conceptualise new patterns of migration not as a change from stasis to mobility but rather mobility that has shifted in kind and direction, as a deviation from previous routes of movement or, in Heyman and Campbell’s words, ‘from reproductive to transformative flows driven by a realignment of capital’ (2009: 139).

Second, recent scholarly work has questioned the focus on ethnicity as the primary lens for understanding social relations. By utilising the term ‘new migrant’ I hope to grasp the intersections of ‘differences that make a difference’ as they emerge from interactions (such as class, age, gender, migration trajectory, religion and legal status) and to ask why categories make a difference in different contexts, thus enabling an analysis of mechanisms of power

³⁷ I did not encounter any individual who spoke *Romanë*s, or were identified by home-level bureaucrats as Romanian Roma, who had lived in Luton for longer than this time.

(Vertovec 2007; Wessendorf 2014). Framing the study in terms of new migrants is an attempt to overcome any essentialised and reified understanding of ethnicity or of culture, but rather to be attentive to the multiple and intersecting subjectivities between people that shape interactions (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002; Berg, Gidley, Oliver, Jayaweera forthcoming). This approach casts light on the underlying and shifting concurrent processes of societal differentiation, individual identification and group (dis)alignment. It also foregrounds my perspective that different subjectivities emerge as more or less salient within the lived experiences of migrants and home-level bureaucrats at different times and in different spaces.

Although I use the term new migrants, the categorisation of ‘Romanian Roma’ became the prevalent term used by home-level bureaucrats to identify the families I lived with. Therefore the term requires attention as categorisations do not just describe the world, but also act to construct it and portray the workings of the state through rendering populations legible and thus able to be disciplined and controlled (Scott 1998: 83). In addition, the power of the categorisation ‘Romanian Roma’ is brought into stark relief when the wide array of social differences among and between individuals is unveiled. I review these not to fetishize difference, but rather to point to the power of categorisations to privilege a particular subjectivity (namely ‘race’) above other characteristics.

The new migrants I live with have widely varying migration trajectories, legal statuses, nationalities, languages, religions, family structures, educational backgrounds and are engaged in a range of economic activities. Legal status includes UK citizens, refugee status (UK, Belgium, Canada), A2 migrants, irregular migrants and those who might be considered ‘over-stayers’ from Brazil and Argentina. In addition, the legal category of some migrants changes around them due to 2007 and 2014 accession arrangements. Entitlements also widely differ between and among families due to different places of birth, background, education,

employment and family position and how these characteristics are perceived and brought to bear by others. Therefore, although they are identified by religious volunteers and state actors as ‘Romanian Roma’, I find no common characteristic between all the different families apart from their newness in this particular area. The most prevalent common characteristic is speaking *Romanës* in the home. However, some new migrants I encounter only speak Romanian, and although they seem to understand *Romanës*, do not speak this language.³⁸

Crucially for this thesis, home visits are the primary and often only contact the individuals make with state actors (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7). The visibility of children and the duty of the state that takes precedence over the natural parent becomes the site of tension. Therefore, the interactions with bureaucrats with duties regarding the safety and protection of children hold crucial significance for new migrants to gain information regarding how they are perceived, what bureaucratic spaces are open to them and on what terms. However, the space shapes the encounter and the information that can be exchanged in multi-faceted ways (Chapters 5 and 6). In addition, due to the particular characteristics that become infused with the categorisation of ‘Romanian Roma’, being identified as such acts to increase the focus on the home and closes down other spaces of encounter and possibilities of transformation.

Bureaucratic categories act to define access to resources. However, it is often far from clear to those being categorised how they are being categorised or the effect it has on their access to rights and material resources. Previous scholarly work presents how migrants negotiate the categories that are laid open to them by bureaucrats (Boulton 1983; Fox 2006; Gillies 2007; McMahon 1995). Cederberg draws on the narratives of Somali and Bosnian refugees, civil servants and social workers in Sweden (2005). She shows not only how perceptions of ‘others are institutionalised in everyday bureaucratic practices, channelling relationships and

³⁸ See Chapter 2 for my conventions regarding language, transcription and translation in my field notes and in this thesis.

opportunities in specific ways and determining life chances for the ‘beneficiaries’ (Essed et al. 2004), but more importantly how ‘individuals govern themselves into the places designed for them... in the complex web of power relations’ (Cederberg 2005: 57). This is also identified by Hacking as the ‘looping effect’, describing the process through which ‘people respond to the way they are classified, how that changes behaviour, what kind of subjects it creates, how bureaucrats respond to this and try to make sense using their own personalities, histories, experience’ (2004). Hacking’s looping effect is salient as it refers to categories of people that are made up at the same time as these categorisations are being shaped and ideas surrounding the bounds of what is real, true, or appropriate are being made. This therefore foregrounds the relational aspect of the (re)production of meanings.

‘Romanian Roma’ migrant mothers

Mothering, particularly in the home space, is subject to a particular type of bureaucratic gaze and shapes the parameters through which perceptions and expectations are formed. The system of values operating through the bureaucratic gaze on the mother in the home has been identified through ethnographic accounts particularly of ‘working class’ mothers. Studies of the experiences of women with young children show clear social class differences (Boulton 1983; Gavron 1966; McMahon 1995), as do studies of how women socialise their children (Walkerdine and Lucey 1989). Fox provides an illuminating account of how current ideals of good mothering, or what Hays (1998) calls ‘intensive mothering’, entail middle class resources. Recalling the constellation of meanings that acted to fuse together public and private space around mothering and the nurturing of children in the home, Fox describes the variety of ways social class shapes mothering practices which developed from the nineteenth

century. Fox argues that this stemmed from the response of middle-class women to a crisis in social reproduction linked to the development of capitalism, and specifically how to prepare their children for adulthood (Fox 2006).

There is a particular construction of childhood and way of thinking about children as passive, dependent and in need of continuity and protection within a two parent household. Gillies traces how financial constraints, vulnerability and insecurity generated caring practices that enabled children to survive the ‘symbolic violence’ (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977) perpetrated by the education system. She argues that children’s needs are presented and imposed as if they were natural and universal, placing pressure on all mothers to justify their actions within a sanctioned model of child development. She argues that parenting that deviated from this model was perceived as a threat. Working class parents are represented as both too selfish and also not individualised enough to ensure the normal development of their children.

The contradictory nature of systems of classification and the tensions held within them has been eloquently described by Skeggs (1997), who argues that the ways in which white working class women have been positioned and the ‘exclusion from the possibilities of being a proper person have forced people to inhabit social relations differently. As subjects of constant devaluation (economically and symbolically), the women tried to make their life liveable, using a very different value compass, inhabiting the vectors of space and time differently’ (Skeggs 2014: 13). She traces how white working class women were read and interpreted through many different systems of inscription that were all historically attributed through dominant symbolic systems with negative value. The result was that when ‘amalgamated and stuck to one body they provided a systematic undermining of value and closed down possibilities for exchange, or at least exchange on the same terms, with bureaucrats’ (ibid.).

For white working class women, when value attributions contradicted one another in their local situations the women were able to produce value for themselves from these negative attributions and thus they re-evaluated the inscriptions. The negative value became less fixed and open to contestation. However, Skeggs (1997) argues that mothering practices were a form of social relations that was more difficult to contest because they were institutionalised, authorised and legitimised through being written into social relations across a range of different sites (education, social work, health care, and media). In addition to Skeggs' observation, for the mothers addressed here, these institutional and bureaucratic relations needed to be learned and performed in a manner that is recognised and acknowledged (Finch 2007: 77). However, mothers have very limited spaces in which to gain understanding of these particular performances and the contingent nature on which bureaucratic identities can be inhabited.

The values associated with being poor, being a migrant and producing children are also combined with the turn to demonise those claiming welfare, seen through the resurgence of the term 'deservingness'. Deservingness has its roots in nineteenth century pre-welfare state ideas regarding the moral worth of the 'undeserving poor', or able-bodied poor who could work but did not. Dubois (2014) usefully lays out how welfare claimants have become positioned as 'undeserving'. First, he argues the values associated with waged work define the social worth of individuals on the basis of their labour. Therefore, workers' value on the job market has become pivotal in the global economic restructuring and heightened since the economic crisis in 2008. This has devalued welfare and devalued the people on welfare. Second, it acts to brand people who are on welfare as lazy and as costing tax-payer money. This laziness is drawn into a narrative that sees this group as the source of economic problems and unduly taking benefits that they are not entitled to. There is a cumulative combination of the assumed character of the type of people who claim social welfare, the

conditions under which it is obtained, various biases concerning work ethic, individual responsibility for one's own circumstances, and the ideology of self-help.

Thus the economic and symbolic devaluing of these migrant mothers is the result of intersecting ideas that crystallised in the relationship between the 'Romanian Roma' migrant mother and her child. In addition (as will become clear in Chapter 3) due to the organisational context, the term 'Romanian Roma' is not only infused with the ideas regarding migrants but is also linked to those evoked by 'Gypsies and Travellers', which solidifies ideas around criminal activities, laziness and welfare scrounging (Clark 2008). The particular ways the term 'Roma' developed in political discourse and its amorphous nature had consequences for its location in UK policy documents, in media representations, and the perceptions linked to the figure of the 'Roma migrant' (Clark and Rice 2012: 190; Humphris 2013). This heightened in the months preceding the expiry of transitional controls in January 2014. A2 nationals were often presented as child traffickers, criminals, beggars or benefit tourists (Clark 2014). There was also fierce debate regarding the numbers of Romanians that might move to the UK. The extent of this coverage has been termed a moral panic (Clark 2015; Grill 2013, Allen 2014, Jordan 2013). This illustrates how being identified as 'Roma' had specific consequences for the migrant mothers addressed here, as will be more fully addressed in Chapter 4.

This section has shown that there is a particular bureaucratic gaze towards mothering and childhood creating different sets of values. The section also explains how this gaze acts to devalue those identified as 'Romanian Roma migrant mothers'. This will be built on in Chapters 5 and 6 where I show that new migrant mothers have limited opportunities to learn the categories and performances that are open to them and little room for manoeuvre to contest the expectations and perceptions linked to being identified as 'Romanian Roma'. The

following chapters will elaborate how negative values associated with these migrant mothers played out in more detail and the various social forms from which they stemmed.

Conclusion

My aim in this chapter is to provide the theoretical tools and build the framework that will allow analysis of the mutually constitutive, dynamic and shifting relationships between new migrants and state actors. Using this framework I explore the relational (re)production of meanings that are based on conflicting social values through which hierarchies develop and assessments are made.

This chapter argues that the ‘home’ becomes the crucial site of encounter between the individual and ‘the state’. The reasons why salient encounters for new migrants only emerged in the home space primarily between women is fundamental to understanding the parameters through which performances and negotiations of values are able to take place in the encounter and the possibilities for re-inscription. I present the definition of the public and private space as a discursive distinction relying on the relational context. Therefore, I do not conflate the private with the patriarchal family home and the state with ‘government’ and the ‘public’ realm (MacKinnon 1989: 187) but rather explore processes that enable the reproduction of these ideas and the values held within them.

Bhattacharjee stresses how we must be attentive to ‘the contradictory, multiple, and shifting definitions of the “private” and the “public” as necessarily without doing so we do not recognise the inherent “privateness of the national public”’ (Bhattacharjee 2006: 351). I would argue that it also neglects the publicness of the private as explained by Aida Hurtado:

‘there is no such thing as a private sphere for people of Color except that which they manage to create and protect in an otherwise hostile environment’ (1989: 849). This exposes the conceit about privacy: it is always at stake in the inequalities between those with more or less symbolic and material resources to guard their own ‘privacy’. In this formulation it can be seen how new migrants negotiate their private space and bureaucratic identities under particular terms. Therefore ‘home encounters’ alludes to the paradoxical situation where bureaucrats, in order to enact their duties equally, are pushed into the ‘home’. As will be shown in Chapters 5 and 6, this act inherently places new migrants at a disadvantage in negotiations. Not only do home encounters represent a particular kind of governing logic, but they also act to decrease mothers’ room for manoeuvre as they try to balance conflicting ideals of ‘good mothering’ while being aware of the spectre of migration controls, rumours regarding child removals, all framed by previous experiences of evictions and discrimination. This perspective on home encounters enables social relations and state forms to be analysed without fixing them as rigid objects but as processes that are in constant flux.

Through these processes around what I term ‘home encounters’, mothers are faced with negotiating systems of ‘stratified reproduction’ based on dominant norms of motherhood and ‘differential inclusion’ where moral worth is linked to the enjoyment of rights. In this chapter I have established the theoretical framework to later explore how these negotiations of values lead to relational (albeit highly uneven) production of meaning in these domestic spaces. Due to the fusing of immigration control and welfare regulations, these meanings shape access to and membership of the state, reworking the boundaries between public and private space. The ethnographic material that unfolds in the following chapters will unpack these processes and examine their effects.

Chapter 2. An ethnography of home encounters

Introduction

Maria and I are walking from the khangheri (Roma Church³⁹) along the main shopping street in Wilton Rise. It is around seven o'clock in the evening and some of the fruit and vegetable shops are beginning to close. She stops in front of one of them looking at a box of bananas on the floor and begins to negotiate the price with the street trader in a language I don't recognise. She produces a handful of coins from her handbag and hands them over, picks up the bananas and heads back to the church. She tells me she was speaking 'indiano' (which later I found out was Hindi) to the seller, who later told me he was a refugee from Afghanistan.

I wrote this when I was volunteering in Luton before I began this research project. These volunteering experiences and my previous MPhil research shaped the primary research questions I developed and therefore also shaped the methodology I chose at the outset. The research I conducted for my MPhil examined new migrants from Poland. It heightened my awareness of the challenges of using organisations as gatekeepers to meet and build relationships for research. This experience also made me attentive to the limited nature of interviews or participation in sporadic 'community events'. I became aware that in order to understand how new migrants were establishing themselves, including the perspectives of those with whom they were encountering, I required detailed and nuanced methods that could

³⁹ This church was referred to as 'khangheri' by the families I lived with. However, it was called the 'Roma Church' by the pastor Simon and other church volunteers. Therefore I have translated the word as 'Roma Church'. This is also helpful when comparing the Roma Church to the Cantorford Church which was called 'englezi khangheri' by the new migrants I lived with.

best be provided by ethnographic ‘thickness’. In addition, I was aware that my focus on new migrants might include those with a precarious legal status and therefore ethnographic methods were required to gain access and build trusting relationships. It was the research questions, based on my MPhil thesis and volunteering experiences, which led me to determine that ethnographic methods were required to capture the processes that were unfolding in Luton. In light of these considerations I spent the majority of fourteen months sharing my everyday life with new migrant families and their connections.⁴⁰

This chapter reviews the epistemological underpinning of the research and my understanding of anthropological knowledge. I then review the many different types of data I gathered, including my own embodied experiences, before turning to how I delineated the ‘field’ using Munn’s notion of the body as a mobile spatial field (Munn 1996: 451). I then place a chronology onto the fieldwork experience in order to create a clearer narrative of the ethnographic process. This includes how I came to live with three families, how I felt I was perceived by different actors at different times, and my negotiations with state actors. Finally I review how I conceive encounters themselves as a method before turning towards ethical entanglements, anonymity, naming and language issues.

Anthropological knowledge

This thesis is based on a social constructivist framework, that there is no world ‘out there’ and independent from the way we see it. Knowledge ‘creates’ the world by giving it shape and thus discourse and symbolic constructs configure the world. Anthropologists tend to

⁴⁰ I also spent some days and weekends in London in order to be able to reflect on my actions and ethical decisions.

repeat representations when talking about these constructs (such as ethnic groups, cultural meanings or values); thereby presenting these objects as if they actually existed (Brubaker 2004: 3). However, these representations might best be seen as schemes which function as methods that produce expectations (D'Andrade 1995: 79). Crucially, schemes are structured around paradigms. Therefore, within this framework, perceiving the world means putting it in relation to these schemes that give reality form and meaning (with the acknowledgement that the schemes themselves are reshaped and reorganized in the light of every new experience of interpretation). The chapters that follow can be seen as a narrative which gives reality a possible shape. In light of this perspective, this thesis resembles that identified as 'the extended case method' (Mitchell 1956: 1; Burawoy 1998) where researchers 'thematise our participation in the world we study' (Burawoy 1998: 5). In this thesis 'the 'field' (or the site where 'culture' could be seen to be negotiated) is the encounter between new migrants and others in the domestic space. The extended case method is the appropriate methodology because it allows the encounter (or 'case') to be placed within its significance in the wider sociological and historical context. Therefore, I isolate the important elements of the encounter and trace these elements out to their wider context to demonstrate their significance in the encounter I have described. This approach relies on both discursive and non-discursive knowledge by participating in the everyday life of those being studied (Garfinkel 1967). This is based on the insight that social experience concerns far more than just language (Amit 2003: 11) through 'the flow of intersubjective human experience' (Hastrup and Hervik 1994: 9). This leads to a further point that ethnographic fieldwork is inherently specific and therefore time, engagement and processes of incorporation play a significant role in the acquisition of knowledge.

The chapters that follow can therefore be seen to represent my understanding of the world produced by those I spent time with, which has been given shape by using the language

provided from my background and education, making these experiences interact and blend with my fieldwork. However, I did not just participate and 'observe' others. I was also being observed, talked about and reacted to in various different ways. Ethnographers and the 'observed' manipulate each other, negotiate and adjust their categories of thought, and eventually produce a fusion that results in new meanings (Rabinow 1977/2007: 6).

Although it often seemed uncomfortable I was aware that trying to remain disengaged or silent was not only fruitless, but acted as a false relief, creating a veneer of objectivity that I could never and didn't want to achieve. This perspective stemmed from the realisation that ethnography is data production, rather than data gathering. I was not setting out to gather data but rather document my participation in the site. Ortner stresses the importance of using 'the self - as much of it as possible - as the instrument of knowing' (Ortner 2006: 173). Thus only by accounting for my own anxieties, frustrations and mistakes, and relating the context in which I perceived events, can the real 'data' emerge. As Strathern comments 'rather than devising research protocols that will purify the data... the anthropologist embarks on a participatory exercise which yields materials for which analytical protocols are often devised after the fact' (2000: 279).

The act of gathering material takes place together with its continuing interpretation. As is the case with participant observation, patterns and priorities eventually imposed themselves and ideas and hunches that emerged during the encounter were explored or discarded as the fieldwork progressed (Okely 1994). According to this methodological approach, information is gathered mainly through the observation and careful annotation of everyday life practices and events; and through the detailed recording of interviewing, which should remain as close as possible to daily informal communication practices.

As part of this process the fragments of emotions, practices and lives need to be turned into writing. By reducing the complexity of reality and creating new connections, the act of writing presents the opportunity to comprehend the experiences of fieldwork. But this act also creates a perspective or ‘truth’ that, building on the anxiety created in the field, creates a new set of negotiations regarding the objectification of people, emotions and experiences that is unsettling. To overcome this, the ethnographic text must be seen as only one perspective, a reflection on the events that were experienced. In the words of Appadurai, ‘the ethnographic text is the more or less creative imposition of order on the many conversations that lie at the heart of fieldwork’ (1988: 16).

In light of understanding the mediating role of text, I use the present tense when writing about ethnographic experiences. Despite critiques of the ethnographic present I believe it ‘preserves the reality of the ethnographic encounter’ (Hastrup and Hervik 1994: 117). Moreover, it stops the ‘naturalisation’ of the data as a ‘stable set of social facts that have an objective existence independent of the linguistic and contextual settings in which they are expressed’ (Briggs 2006: 247). Abu-Lughod expresses how anthropologists have become highly conscious of, and troubled by, our role in shaping the words of people we live with. She proposes that ‘one way to alleviate some of the difficulties of this process of constructing a narrative is by making explicit how one has worked’ (Abu-Lughod 1993: 18). Therefore I have not removed myself entirely from the text or pretended that certain discussions were not directed specifically by or at me. I also comment on what is happening in the chapters that follow.

Shaping data

My data consists of field notes, life histories, detailed descriptions of specific encounters, and formal and informal interviews and conversations. However, it should be borne in mind that I also use the experiences of living, from the intensely boring to the highly emotional, such as the beginnings and endings of human life, evictions, redundancies and the joys of stopping a deportation order. All experiences provided a richness and nuance that could not be captured in field notes or interviews.

I used a patchwork of different methods shaped by the participation of different actors. My position as a researcher with both new migrants and their connections with state authorities required constant mediations and adjustments, in particular with regard to the issue of access to the different actors involved. Given the variety of subjects, it was necessary to adopt different techniques to suit their schedules but also to ensure that I was performing the role of researcher and my ethical duty to the research participants. However, I also needed to be flexible and open to engage subjects on the meanings and understandings of their role and behaviour.

In addition, my treatment of different types of ‘data’ or materials gained from particular research instruments deserves a note of clarification. I was attentive to the inherently performative aspect in all interactions, particularly in narrations of events or when different actors related segments of their life histories. In Cederberg’s words ‘what people think about their situation, and what they tell you about their experiences, is a result of various processes of different personal histories, personalities, opinions, positions and expectations that all intersect’ (2005: 81). Thus, when writing field notes I made detailed descriptions of the time, place and context and my relationship and thoughts and feelings regarding the interaction.

This practice was particularly useful when analysing interviews with bureaucrats. Bureaucrats' reflections invoke the theoretical debates concerning memory; and the politics surrounding what we remember, forget and construct which is shaped by history, politics and of our situated experiences. I take a similar perspective to Radstone and Shwarz who argue that 'memory is active, forging its pasts to serve present interests' (Radstone and Shwarz 2010: 3). Therefore, I don't consider these descriptions as any less illuminating. All narratives are a 'redescribing' of the world, where something new is brought into the world by the means of language. As Carr (1986) identified, temporal distance does not lead to distortion or falsification but carries the 'positive and productive possibility of understanding' (Carr 1986: 120). This resonates with the notion of 'productive nostalgia' where memories acquire a tangible form and become 'embodied and enacted in practice rather than solely in the imagination' (Blunt 2005: 719). Thus the advantage of hindsight, the opportunity to make sense of things anew, is crucial to the understanding of narratives. As such these narratives are placed within their spoken context.

All interview recordings were transcribed carefully to include pauses and breaks. I then anonymised all of the data including all of my field notes, diary entries and recorded interviews. I used the anonymised data in the analysis. I read through all of the data making notes on common themes by using NVivo. These themes were then collated and expanded through my literature search. As the focus of my thesis had changed substantially through the course of the fieldwork I revisited previous scholarly work. Each chapter of the thesis had a number of themes drawn from the ethnographic data. As each chapter of the thesis took shape I compiled more ethnographic examples relating to each of the themes. At the beginning I started with very general themes, such as those who had no access to the state. I then utilized the codes from NVivo to find examples in my field notes and also conducted a series of text searches in order to find excerpts from my field notes. One set of examples set off a new

round of thoughts and avenues to pursue. In this way the ethnography grew to include different and intersecting themes as different actors' experiences took on new relevance. Thus the research questions and analysis developed as the writing progressed.

The methodology of the encounter and the encounter as methodology

The encounter itself can be considered as an important methodological approach. I follow feminist critical analysis that argues that investigations should begin from the lives of marginal groups and their histories (Haraway 1988) and that there is a 'need for a different entry point for analysis that approaches the individual in their role as citizen starting from marginal groups rather than an institutional or representational angle' (Andrijasevic 2013: 49). Drawing from this, the encounter as a methodology can be seen as a way to start from the negotiations and actions between new migrants and others, rather than from an institutional perspective.

A further key consideration was how to 'create' or 'cut' my field and thus delineate the home encounter. I was inspired by Nancy Munn (1996: 450) who draws upon Lefebvre's duality of social space as a 'field of action' and a 'basis of action'.⁴¹ She constructs the notion of a 'mobile spatial field' drawing on the idea of a 'field of action' (1996: 451) that can be understood as a culturally defined, corporeal-sensual field stretching out from the body at a given locale or moving through locales. In other words 'it is a space defined by an actor' (ibid.). She argues that space cannot be seen simply as referring to culturally meaningful terrestrial places as this 'disarticulates the dynamic relations between spatial regions and

⁴¹ When referring to Lefebvre I follow Smith's restricted use of his terminology of space that 'space is in any meaningful sense produced in and through human activity and the reproduction of social relations' (1998: 54).

moving spatial fields'. Munn uses spatiotemporal analytics (of location, distancing, movement, relative duration and boundaries) and considers space-time as a symbolic nexus of relations produced out of interactions between 'bodily actors and terrestrial spaces'; this allows her to question the locus of powers of exclusion and how boundaries emerge and are signified in cultural practices in the same paradigm (1996: 449). Although Munn is discussing exclusion in terms of sacred spaces, I utilise her concept to describe the way that excluded spaces are created within homes. The chapters that follow trace the way that this spatial exclusion manifests at different times and becomes pivotal in the articulation of boundaries of access, blurring boundaries between public and private space.

Lefebvre describes the 'basis of action' as 'places whence energies derive and whither energies are directed'. This provides a useful frame through which to view the mothers (and others that entered their domestic space) as both deriving different energies from the home space, and directing different energies towards the space, motivated by different logics and aiming for different consequences. Using this frame brings to the fore different values, perceptions and expectations entwined in the home space. It also allows an intersectional analysis of the salience of different characteristics as they unfold within the interaction.

This perspective draws inspiration from the key premise of the 'diversity' approach: to allow categories of difference to emerge from the data, rather than privileging one axis of subjectivity as the key driver of social outcomes in all situations (Meissner and Vertovec 2014). This approach has a long history, mirroring Simmel's observation that 'individuality grows as people come to be placed at intersections between different groups; each membership may be shared with numerous people, yet the particular individual may have a combination of memberships shared with nobody else' (1965: 127). The notion of intersectionality is relevant here regarding scholarly work on the co-constitution of categories (Cho, Crenshaw and McCall 2013; Clark 2013) and the way in which social divisions need to

be studied at different analytical levels, as their ontological base and their relations to each other differ (Yuval-Davis 2006).

However, what has come to be termed ‘gendered intersectional analysis’ is confronted with a set of challenges due to the inherent complexity of the concept. This is echoed by Leslie McCall who states ‘despite the emergence of intersectionality as a major paradigm of research in women’s studies and elsewhere, there has been little discussion of how to study intersectionality; that is, of its methodology’ (McCall 2005: 1771). My approach is to use the encounter as a methodology that allows interactions to be analysed as a relational process where different characteristics become salient at different moments as actors move through vectors of time and space.

This heeds Massey’s call that ‘space must always be conceptualised integrally with time; indeed the aim should be to think always in terms of space-time’ (Massey 1994: 2). I use this approach to trace how new migrants and others experience place and how embodied movement embedded in social relationships creates place. Space is conceptualised not as a container but as movement (Pandya 1990). I found this illuminating in order to identify the convergences and contradictions of different meanings in domestic space. This applies in terms of meanings attached to the material and physical as well as in bodily practices, routines or thoughts and feelings performed or verbally expressed. These meanings were inscribed differently by the individuals moving through different spaces.

Using the movement of people through spaces and moving with them helped me to understand the way new migrants *make place*, what motivates them to go to certain places, how this is shaped by different embedded relationships and how their performances change in different spaces. I was attentive to how this played out in Luton and I also followed new migrants’ movement to Romania, undertaking three trips of between two and five days to

villages in Moldova, Oradea and Bucharest with different families. I also followed migrants to different areas of the UK, including Manchester and Croydon. These experiences have shaped the analysis and I draw on them when making sense of the social and material processes by which actors (re)create the experienced spaces in which they live (Chapter 7). I also became aware of the routes and paths that new migrants came to know; how that affected the meanings they made from different spaces; and how that shaped the opportunities that could be open to them (such as knowing where the Job Centre was located). I gained knowledge of the town from the perspective of different individuals and mapped the areas and routes that particular families or individuals took and knew about. Being attentive to these practices also illuminated the way those who are illiterate navigate space without being able to read. For example, I did not observe anyone looking at maps or searching for locations on the internet. I was aware that people used particular markers to find their way to other people's homes, rather than looking at street signs. In addition, none of the women drove a car. Therefore their movement through the town was always on foot (some in high heeled shoes and long skirts), usually pushing a buggy or accompanied by children. This affected routes, duration, motivations for moving and making their own understandings of Luton (*foro*), Wilton Rise (*indiano centro*) or the administrative centre of the town (*englezi centro*) (see Chapter 3).

I was also aware of my own movement and how it created a particular understanding of the town. Families often asked me why I didn't buy a car (also many men were eager to sell me a car). This was very tempting particularly in the winter months when walking the streets in the snow or rain became intensely tiring and cold. I also thought that a car might be a place where I could write notes quickly and have some time away from the hustle of family life. However, I decided against this due to the methodological standpoint described above. I was keen to experience walking through the town with mothers, driving in cars with bureaucrats,

and driving in vans with men. This also heightened my awareness of the range of choices that were open due to the availability of different forms of transport, the requirements of different forms of company in different situations, the role of dress, and the rhythm of the day.

There is a key methodological issue regarding my position and presence in the space of interactions and how that has affected what I observed between new migrants and bureaucrats. I have accounted for this in the analysis in varying ways. First, the length of time I spent with both new migrants and bureaucrats, including moments of shared positive emotions and tensions, presented particular opportunities but also challenges. I oscillated between observing and being drawn on in interactions by migrants or bureaucrats or both. At some points this was to act as an authoritative voice or to corroborate a narrative. As my language skills increased some bureaucrats and new migrants asked me to interpret words or phrases which was a source of tension for me. However, as funding for interpretation was being cut, I became part of the interaction through this involvement (see section on ethics below). All interactions were shaped by the particular context and therefore I did not use one particular methodology but responded to the action as it unfolded using my previous knowledge, experience and relationships. Over the course of the fieldwork my relationships developed and changed. Reflecting on these changes was a source of further data when analysing home encounters. In addition, I visited new migrants' houses many times. Therefore I was aware of how I was treated when bureaucrats were and were not present, and any change in this behaviour was noted in my field notes. Similarly I attended bureaucrats' meetings, often talked to them before or after an interaction, and conducted informal conversations with them in cars during home visits or when we met on the street or in a café; alongside the formal interviews that I conducted. I used all of this information to reflect on my role in encounters and the knowledge that was being relationally produced. I noted whether or how bureaucrats involved me in the encounter, what questions they asked about

the research, and how they introduced me to their colleagues and clients. These reactions and observations were all written in my fieldwork diary and were used when analysing the interactions.

I also tried to be as explicit as possible when explaining what I could not share with different actors, and was aware that there were issues and circumstances that they would not share with me, particularly regarding child protection. However, at some points sharing was unavoidable due to the high emotion in the encounter or the need to make sense of situations together. In these instances I have not included what I considered to be confidential and personal conversations in this thesis. This was either explicit, where someone asked me not to include it, or where I consider that the individual was sharing information with me personally and not as a researcher. Although I have not included the event or the narrative that was spoken, these events have unavoidably influenced the way I have written about different people's motivations and understandings. I believe this is a great strength of anthropological research and should not be masked. On the contrary I believe it is this element, of the events and stories that are not shared on these pages, that provide the nuance in the analysis and a greater understanding of the complexity and contradictions that emerge as social life unfolds. Therefore although there are some details that have been omitted from the narratives, these understandings have been reformed in the analysis and the nuance of choosing what to include. However, without doubt my presence affected the way people behaved and the way that they presented themselves. This may be one of the deepest challenges and yet the source of the most insightful power of ethnographic research.

‘Cutting’ the field: chronology of fieldwork

This section serves to create an order and forces the chaos and unpredictability inherent in the research process into a clear narrative. ‘Cutting’ is used here for many reasons. It alludes to the way in which I have chosen what to write about and how I ‘cut out’ my own role in different circumstances to remain ethical; and to balance my relationships with bureaucrats, volunteers and new migrants. During the study I (as well as my informants) moved constantly ‘in-between’ different identity positions. This movement is important, between ‘cutting’ the figure of an objective researcher one moment and ‘going native’ the next. The usual injunction of ‘going native’ in terms of participant observation implies that one can experience being moved about as a member only if one is ‘there’ in the first place as a member. Participating means being around long enough to observe what is happening to others. It also means being involved so that things happen to the researcher as a member. As I became ‘visible’ and ‘available’, others used me for their own ends, or felt me to be in their way.

The way in which I was perceived was premised on the way in which I gained access to different people in ‘the field’. I visited Luton for the first time by being invited to talk about my experiences working with Roma migrants in London to the British Red Cross in January 2010. I became increasingly involved with different families through contact with the Red Cross and Simon, the pastor of Cantorford Church (*englezi khangheri*) and the Roma Church (*khangheri*) who had taken it upon himself as a personal mission to help those he identified as Roma in the area (see Chapter 4). The church was struggling to find volunteers to look after the children and I volunteered there over the course of a year. I also began learning the language spoken in the church with Maria, who also spoke very good English.

Following the commencement of my PhD programme, I began fieldwork in January 2013 and moved into a house with Dan, Christina and their five children in February 2013, by which time they had lived in Luton for 11 months. My aim was to live with different new migrant families, trace the way in which they made connections and follow their networks. I had hoped that this would lead me to different families that were not identified as Roma. However, it emerged that the main network of contacts was with other family members. I was faced with a dilemma. I could choose to find another family arbitrarily based on language, legal status, ethnicity, nationality or some other ‘cleavage’. However, this seemed to be negating my aim to let social cleavages emerge from the data, and my methodological approach to trace the ‘field’ as connections that radiated from this first family. Therefore the second family I lived with, Georgeta, Rosvan and their two children, I met with Christina at the Roma Church (*khangheri*).⁴² They had moved to Luton in March 2013 and had just moved from staying with a relative to a house of their own near Wilton Rise and had a spare room. They were from an urban centre in south Romania, rather than from rural Moldova. I lived in this house between July 2013 and October 2013. I then moved to live with Violeta, a relative of this family, and her four children between November 2013 and February 2014.

Finding houses and switching roles

As mentioned above, I began living with Dan and Christina and their five children in February 2013. I first spoke to Dan at the *khangheri* one Wednesday evening when I began my research in January 2013. One month later, Dan’s brother Grigore was granted housing

⁴² The development of the *khangheri* or ‘Roma Church’ is important to the trajectories of many families in Luton and will be explored in more detail in Chapter 3.

benefit and moved out of Dan's house to live in the middle of Wilton Rise, close to the church with his wife and four children. Simon, who referred to himself as the *pastoro* of the *khangheri* (Roma Church), knew I was trying to improve my language skills and suggested I move in with Christina and Dan as they had five small children and therefore I could communicate with them, live in their spare room and contribute two hundred pounds towards the rent of the house. He arranged a meeting where I visited them and explained my research. At this point Simon was translating for me and they seemed happy with the research. I was worried that it was the payment of rent that was the reason they agreed. However in retrospect, I believe this was not the case. When I told them I was moving out, they said that they didn't want any money from me and they just wanted me to stay. Dan went as far as to say that I am his 'big one' and that he now had six children. I also justified my payment of rent because it would seem unethical to take a room from them that they might have been able to rent to others. Also, they insisted that I eat with them and therefore this money also contributed to the food, water and electricity that I was consuming.

My situation changed in each family. In the second house I paid the same rent but also was asked for contributions for many other aspects of daily life, such as being sent to the shop to buy coffee or being taken on a trip to the supermarket and then left to pay for the food. However, this altered after a period of time and particularly when I assisted in the birth of Georgeta's granddaughter. Then the requests shifted to calling other people to ask them for assistance to help with the rent or with specific material items, particularly for the new baby. These requests made everyday life tiring. Despite the effect of time which acted to increase my feelings of being at ease, there were times when my outsider status suddenly emerged. For example, Georgeta once threatened her son who refused to go to school that the '*rakli*' (non-Roma girl) would tell the police and he would be taken away. My personification as a

terror to the children was a harsh reminder of my position as an outsider placed inside the house.

In the third house, Violeta refused to take any payment from me. She was in receipt of temporary accommodation from the Local Authority (the only family I know who had gained such accommodation) and stated that God had given her the house and therefore it was a gift from God for me to stay. In return we went shopping together and I would buy her household items such a new toilet seat, paint, food, flowers; or I would take her for lunch after her cleaning job in the morning or provide childcare for her daughter or grandchildren.

I spent my days in a variety of ways depending on the rhythms, routines, obligations and desires of the family. I often passed time with women either in the house, walking around the town, or visiting other families. I was not asked to complete household chores by myself, which was the position of other young unmarried women in the house, however I often volunteered and was allowed to take part. Therefore I often helped to cook food or wash up afterwards. The only activity that I was allowed to complete unsupervised was looking after children and, after weeks of instruction, making coffee. I also accompanied mothers and children to dental appointments, doctors' appointments or occasionally to the local school. I also helped read letters and fill in forms. I also attended prayer meetings which were organised on weekday evenings and church services on a Wednesday and Sunday evening. Occasionally I would visit car boot sales with families either to sell clothes or household items. I also attended birthday parties, weddings and celebrations for the birth of a healthy baby. I spent evenings helping children with homework, looking after children, language learning, providing English lessons, looking at Facebook or YouTube videos or watching Romanian TV. In the warmer summer months, evenings were often spent visiting other families and sitting outside drinking fizzy drinks and eating sunflower seeds. On occasions I

left the house to spend a day accompanying frontline service providers although this was often arranged ad hoc depending on their schedules rather than in advance.

I had a bedroom of my own in each house next to the other bedrooms on the first floor. For the most part, I did not share this room with anyone. However, occasionally many visitors arrived. This was particularly the case in Georgeta's house. There were not enough beds and couches for everyone so Georgeta and I shared a double bed. In addition, when Violeta's daughter came to stay, Violeta and I shared a double bed in the room where I slept. Violeta's daughter slept with the youngest children in another bedroom. Up to four young children would happily sleep in a double bed together. In all houses there seemed to be an abundance of blankets that would be rolled up and stored during the day. Therefore many visitors could be accommodated at any time.

I kept the door open to my bedroom so that the family could see me writing my notes on my laptop. This provoked a lot of questions which gave me the opportunity to explain in more detail exactly what I was doing. At one point Christina asked whether I would write about 'now' (*akana*) on my laptop and (although I wasn't planning to at that point), because she had asked me this question I said that I would. She then told me that I was always 'working, working, working' (*butji, butji, butji*) and that I should just ask her and she would tell me everything about 'Romanians'. It was difficult to describe my 'work' which was often placed in terms of helping either in the family with the household chores or with reading letters or 'work for God, like Simon' (*butji devleski, sar Simon*).

I often asked people if it was okay to write it in my book and they always said yes when I asked them; however, I often wondered whether they knew what it meant (see below on ethics). I told everyone I was a student but sometimes this was confused with social work students who also volunteered for the church. I then made it clear that I was writing a book

about what was happening to them and their family in Luton. I was surprised when people started to tell me ‘put this in your book’ or ‘you write this’. This happened more often than not when mothers felt as though someone was cheating them. Maria also joked with me ‘I know you write me – you put me in the book’. However, when I was introduced to someone I had not previously met they were much more interested in my family and where I had come from, who I was staying with and for how long, rather than my ‘work’. What I felt defined me, as a PhD student, I realised was not very interesting to them. They were far more interested in defining me against the social relationships that I upheld with my family and the other families that they knew in Luton and, in the short term, whether I could help them with a phone call or reading a letter. This became particularly apparent to me as a defining feature of my reputation. People did not know me by ‘my book’, but the fact that I wasn’t married, didn’t have children, and that my mother had died. When I was introduced to people I was often described as ‘not married’, ‘alone’ or ‘with a dead mother’ (*chi maritime, korkorro, laki day si muli*), which arose feelings of pity, on occasion to my deep embarrassment. I then had to often repeat that I had a partner and was a student working on a book.

Not only did my role change towards different people, it also changed in context with the same person. On some occasions I would be given a lift by a group of men and sit in the front seat being asked about my family and interactions with bureaucrats. At other times, for example on the way back from church and when we were travelling as a family, I would sit at the back with the children and be treated very much like a child. Sometimes I was told that I could speak the best and that I was the only one who could help; at other times I was told in no uncertain terms to keep quiet. Therefore my fieldwork roles constantly shifted according to the context and the length of time I had known a family. When in the house I was not included in group conversations with men, or when there was a prayer meeting and men and women were separated. Therefore, in the context of religious matters, I was treated as a

young unmarried woman. I also became very frustrated when I was always left in the house when something exciting seemed to be happening and all the men would bundle into the car in the evening. However, when accompanying a family to a doctors' appointment I was placed at the front of the group and told to speak. If the doctors' appointment was considered to have gone well, I was often taken for coffee and the family insisted on giving me a lift in their car to wherever I wanted to go. On these occasions I was placed in the front seat of the car. In Georgeta's house, despite wearing jeans and not a skirt and headscarf, service providers thought I was an older daughter. I had to make clear that I was a PhD student researching new migrant families to the UK. However, this gave me an insight into the expectations and perceptions of service providers who clearly had come across many inter-generational complexities of families living in the area.

New migrants often told me to write down their passwords and personal information in order for me to use them on bureaucratic documents (for example birth dates). I made a point of never keeping this kind of information. If someone was insistent I would write it down and give it to them to keep in a safe place with their other documents. Mothers became annoyed that they kept having to find an identity document to tell me the date of birth of a child (they did not memorise this information). However, I felt it was important that I tried not to commit these dates to memory and to ask them each time and explain that I was not holding this information to separate myself from bureaucratic processes.

However, I was often tested about my knowledge and was often asked about the situations of others; for example if they had jobs, where they lived, if they had a big house, the number of children, what benefits they had and whether they had National Insurance Numbers. I quickly realised I was gaining knowledge that many didn't share with other members of the family. Siblings would be guarded about where they were getting help and under what circumstances. Showing particular forms of wealth was important (for example buying a large decorated

birthday cake for celebrations) but exactly where money came from was not discussed. One new migrant mother told me that I knew more about everyone in Luton than she did about her own family. I soon learnt that the best response to questions about others was to be very clear and say that I didn't speak about things that they wouldn't be happy for me to say to someone else about them. However, this was a constant source of tension and negotiation and had to be suited to the context and my relationship with an individual.

My relationships with new migrant families shifted and oscillated throughout the period of fieldwork. I noticed that women stopped asking me for money when I saw them begging on the street. This was forcefully made clear to me when I met three women in the street, one of whom I had not met before. This woman began to 'perform' in the way of engaging in a begging encounter and when she offered her hand to me it was slapped away by one of the other women. She then took her bag and hit the woman on the back and all of them proceeded to laugh, and so I joined in. The two women I knew then proceeded to ask me where I was going and what I was doing and told me to come to see them when I was 'free' (*libero*). During the latter part of my fieldwork it was unusual for me to walk anywhere around Wilton Rise or the train station and not meet someone I knew. These meetings would provoke a new round of conversations, meetings or going back to their house for coffee.

My negotiations with state actors

From the outset of my fieldwork I wanted to explore how new migrants made place including their interactions with the state. I began to hear about different individuals through conversations with new migrants and through Simon, the pastor of the Anglican Church

attended by some new migrant families, and the pastor of the *khangheri* (Roma Church).⁴³ However, I found it very difficult to contact and engage with these bureaucrats. A key turning point came when I began to know increasing numbers of families and they asked me to call particular bureaucrats who they had heard were ‘for the school’ or had helped a relative gain child benefit. At first, this was a point of anxiety for me as I thought that I was using my knowledge of the family to further interactions with bureaucrats (see ethics section below). However, I became aware that they would have called the bureaucrat in any case, and rather than this being an instance where I was using my knowledge to manipulate the situation to suit my own agenda, they were positioning me.

As this started to happen, different bureaucrats became more conducive to talking to me about my research, my aims and my own background and experiences. The different trajectories of my relationships with different actors is explored in more detail in Chapter 4 as it cannot be separated from my understanding of their social location and position. However, I also formally interviewed Directors of Services in the Local Authority to make them aware of my research and the relationships I was developing with bureaucrats. I had disclosed my information sheets and consent forms and discussed my ethical guidelines with the Heads of Department for Housing and Community Living, Public Health, Social Justice, Community Development and Children and Families. I also used this opportunity to ask them for further contacts and by the end of the fieldwork I was being consistently referred back to people that I had already interviewed. I believe that the label of Oxford University was pivotal to some of these meetings (although I often had the impression that my slightly dishevelled appearance was not what they expected).

⁴³ The way Simon referred to himself and how others (including new migrants and employees of the Diocese of St Albans) referred to him shifted throughout the period of the fieldwork and is discussed in further detail in Chapter 3.

My research question therefore created a field of inquiry that became a mixture of the policies and practices that were being enacted on and through the bureaucrats and new migrants. In order to understand the range of bureaucrats, volunteers and NGO workers that were being spun into the web of connections that unfolded I needed to make these spaces ‘unfamiliar’ with the aim of learning their ‘bureaucratic language’, or their ideas, values, everyday gestures and practices. With new migrants ‘wasting’ time was key to differentiate me from bureaucrats. However, with bureaucrats I had to be careful not to waste their time, to conduct my research in a way that suited their everyday routines and practices. I had to fit my own research tools around their day and the way in which they were able to give me time. This included going on home visits and having conversations while driving in the car, e-mail conversations, arranging ‘formal’ interviews at times that were convenient to them, attending meetings and having quick ‘catch-ups’ before or after encounters.

The length of time I spent in Luton was also crucial to gaining access and building relationships with bureaucrats. This became evident due to the similar reactions of bureaucrats when I told them I was living in Luton (not London) and would be staying for at least 12 months. This was often met with the stories of journalists or politicians who ‘dropped in and dropped out’ as they wanted a regional story or perspective that was only a thirty minute train ride from central London. This came particularly from Directors of Services or those located in the ‘strategy’ department, as their proximity to London meant that Luton was constantly being evaluated by national civil servants and the national media.

There was also a further element to this. When I explained my research was with new migrants, bureaucrats often assumed that I had chosen Luton due to its connection with the English Defence League and the group then known as al-Muhajiroun (later Islam4UK). When I explained my research was not focused on this aspect of Luton and that I was living in the town, this helped to build relationships. At different times the bureaucrats that feature

in the following chapters also quizzed me in detail regarding my own background, family, education and the reasons behind this research and my PhD. These questions and how I answered them provided a useful insight into the process of being researched and the partial nature of interviewing. It also highlighted the role of the relational nature of knowledge production in ethnographic fieldwork. I spent a lot of time with one educational support worker, Paula. Despite her willingness to understand ethnographic fieldwork, at times she also seemed frustrated that I didn't have a clearer or more specific research question and that I could not describe exactly what was going to be included in my thesis. I also found it very helpful when she introduced me to those I hadn't met before as she explicitly stated my position as a PhD researcher for new migrants and Luton council. The way I was described when someone introduced me was a crucial moment to ensure that my role as a researcher was upheld.

Ethical entanglements

There were many ethical entanglements in the process of conducting this research and also in managing the material and deciding what can be written down and fixed in these pages. There is no easy solution to these entanglements but they warrant discussion and reflection. The aim of the research, exploring how new migrants negotiate to *make place* in a rapidly changing urban location, continuously generated novel situations that required me to reflect ethically on my role and research. I developed ways of thinking about situations and making decisions to ease these dilemmas. I decided that if someone asked me for help directly then it would be unethical not to provide them with information about different bureaucrats. For example, referring people with children to their Children's Centre and those with employment

difficulties to Lisa at Pathways (see Chapter 4). This meant that, on occasion, I created the situations that were at the heart of my research. However, I began to know that people were often aware of these options, had heard about a particular person or office from a family member, or in some circumstances had already been in contact with them. Therefore, I came to realise new migrants' asked me questions to check what I knew as much as to gain new information for themselves. Many were active in positioning me for their own ends as much as I might be seen to be positioning them.

I was cautious about my role and I explained what kind of questions they would also be required to answer when they went to different agencies. I was aware that parents in particular were overly cautious regarding presenting their children at bureaucratic agencies and therefore that I was not putting families at risk if they were willing to be referred. However, I was also worried that the more I became involved in 'helping' bureaucratic processes the more I would be viewed as someone who was linked to the state. I was also attentive to try to manoeuvre against being placed by bureaucrats or new migrants in the role of a 'middleman'. A further anxiety was caused when I was asked about my opinion and what I thought was the best course of action in terms of bureaucratic processes. I was often asked 'what will happen for Romanians. What does England want for us?' or 'what do you think is good?'. These questions intensified as January 2014 approached which signalled the lifting of the transitional controls. Rumours regarding 'closing the door' (*pando o'wudar*) to Romanians and being evicted also proliferated at this time. The reasons for asking me were due to my English language ability (and knowledge of how to 'speak well' (*das дума май mishto*) and, although I fervently denied it, privileged knowledge of 'the system' (*systemos*). These comments were often used to try to secure my involvement in a bureaucratic process and I often had to negotiate my position to extricate myself from the situation or refrain from giving advice.

To what extent were all of the people I shared time with giving me their ‘informed consent’? This question arose in many different situations throughout my fieldwork. As Barnes (1963: 133) discusses, the motives of social scientific research are never entirely clear to informants even in the contexts in which there are no linguistic or cultural barriers to separate the researcher from the researched. This is because informants generally lack familiarity with the intellectual and social context in which the research is embedded, such as how questions arise, how they are addressed, how results are disseminated and to what end. Anthropological inquiry is embedded in social relations, just like relations with anyone else, which in my experience are infused with bonds of friendship and good-will and also intense tensions and difficulties. It has been noted by Besnier that ‘ethnographers are working with complex allegiances and obligations, and from complex identity formations’ (2009: 27).

I employed various strategies in an attempt to make the research process clear to the participants. If there was a member of the family who could read in English I paid them to translate my information sheet and consent form. They could then ask me about words they didn’t know and we could talk about them. By asking them to translate what I wanted to do, not only did I gain a way of explaining my research more clearly to other family members but I could have an open conversation with a person about the research without them feeling under any obligation to participate. After we had discussed it, I then asked whether I could also write about their experiences. I found this to be an effective way to broach the topic of consent and to make sure that I could talk to people about the research without them feeling as though they had to be part of it.

For bureaucrats, I found arranging interviews was the best way to explain the research as it seemed to be what they expected from my role as a PhD researcher. It therefore acted as a space where they could ask questions and give me their ‘consent’ through signing my consent form and keeping the information sheet with my business card. Arrangement of interviews

occurred in different ways with different people depending on their situation. I asked them where they would like to meet. I conducted interviews in offices; in the local theatre's café at one end of Luton next to a large car park and the train station; in Debenhams café in the middle of the new shopping centre; in the middle of Wilton Rise in coffee shops; and in pubs or community centres. Each location suited the individual. They also chose the location and time, which gave me a glimpse into the patterns and rhythms of their day. Ultimately, ethical decisions were reached when reflecting on exactly what to write. This was a combination of using my memory in hindsight to evaluate how well I had explained my research and their 'consent' alongside a judgement on what different people shared with me as a researcher.

A note on names, naming and anonymity

The reason for not giving people their own names is an ethical decision which I have upheld throughout this research. This is despite some participants feeling as though this is a betrayal of our time together. In addition, despite my assurances, some new migrants are also concerned that if I change their name, I can also lie about them. The process of writing about names is complicated in this research. Some families gave each person two names, a 'family name' (*anav familiya*) and what became known to me as a 'passport name' (*anav passporto*). I witnessed the process of one new baby being given a name. The father is asked to speak the name out loud to the other members of the family. At this point he says the family name first and then the passport name. Although it is the father who 'says' the name, in this instance the father's mother had been slowly persuading him about the name from the moment the child was born. The confusion regarding names and its salience for bureaucratic processes is also illustrated through the example of trying to get a Canadian passport renewed. Radu was born

in Canada following his family gaining refugee status there, but his passport had expired. Paula called to make arrangements for it to be renewed however the family fails the security questions. Following many calls and conversations between Paula and the Canadian embassy, Paula found that the family failed because the wrong answer was provided for the maternal grandmothers' name. Radu's mother had previously given her family name, but in the UK they had become practised at providing their passport names for bureaucratic processes. With the help of Paula and one Canadian bureaucrat who exercised some room for manoeuvre, the passport was renewed and Radu is able to be enrolled in school.

I also asked people to choose a name that they would like me to call them in 'my book'. This was illuminating for some, for example when I asked Christian he became a little unsure and then within five or ten seconds settled on 'Christian' and was very happy to be referred to using this name. However, for many new migrants this question was very confusing. Gigi was sure that he wanted this name which was based on his Facebook name (which was entirely different from any other names). When I asked Christina to choose a name she asked me to choose myself a name because she found it difficult to say Rachel. I therefore had a 'family' name that, for the children in this family, is the only name by which they know me. Maria became very confused and thought that if I changed her name then I could tell lies about her. Sergui also thought that I could get him mixed up with someone else if I changed his name. I explained that the reason for giving participants different names was to keep their life a secret. However, this prompted Maria to say she wanted people to know her life and that I should tell the truth (*cheches*). Sergui similarly wanted people to know the truth about what had happened to him and his family and how hard things are in England for Romanians.

The family name is not individuating as I came across sisters who had different passport names but the same name used in the family that related to a characteristic such as 'fiery', 'black', 'smallest' or 'the asker' (*piparka, kali, tsini, pusha*). It was clear that some family

names could change for example one grandmother was referred to as *phurri* ('old woman') in one family. Family names also seemed to be passed from grandfather to father to son, as in the case of Sergiu or Miron with the youngest being given a diminutive such as Mironitso. In the chapters that follow I have given each person one name. However, it should be born in mind that some bureaucrats became very confused with different names to the extent that I heard one bureaucrat mention they thought that it was a strategy to confuse or deceive bureaucratic processes.

When analysing the data I came across earlier versions of things that I had got wrong or pieces of information that people had told me that were not the same as later stories told. They also told me different names at the beginning. I therefore kept these 'errors' in my data and anonymised the many different names that people had given me. I have used these errors as further sources of analysis as people change their narrative to suit their perception of me and the situation.

Language

As mentioned above, I began learning *Romanës* when I volunteered for the Roma Church (*khangheri*) in Luton. This started through learning the names of colours and objects with children. I found that I was able to keep their attention if they were teaching me things and laughing at my mistakes. One mother who spoke the best English told me she had taught Simon *Romanës* and she could teach me. She was my first teacher and became Maria, one of the women with whom I spent the most time.

When I moved to Luton I found it difficult to persuade people to talk to me in *Romanë*s as new migrants wanted to practise their English or wanted to teach me Romanian because they thought it would be more useful for me. At the beginning they kept checking that I knew I was learning ‘our language’ and if I went to Romania it wasn’t the language that people spoke in the shops or the university. When I tried to find a language tutor, I was often met with the same response, that the one person I asked would only teach me if they were my only teacher. At first I thought this was because different people wanted to monopolise my time. But later I realised that this was because there was a lot of variation in the language, particularly among families from different parts of Romania. Maria told me later that she thought that I would call her a liar if ‘I go to different people’ to learn the language.

I was also attending formal Romanian lessons during this time but for the latter part of my fieldwork I put all my effort into fully learning and understanding *Romanë*s. Romanian was not useful for many reasons. First, it was not the primary language families used inside the house to talk to each other. Second, many children had been born outside Romania and had spent very little time there and therefore they didn’t speak Romanian. However, I utilised my limited Romanian to help me understand the TV programmes we watched. Although this was also confusing as the favourite programmes of many women were Bollywood telenovelas that were subtitled in Romanian. As many women couldn’t read, they called upon their children or grandchildren who had not lived in Romania to read the subtitles aloud, often making many mistakes or going very slowly. The subtitles often changed before they had reached the end of the sentence because this language was unfamiliar to them, creating arguments between children and adults.

I made the most language progress with Georgeta who spoke very little English and later with Violeta. In the latter part of my fieldwork Gigi, who was also an interpreter for social services, began meeting me in Luton central library between five and six o’clock in the

afternoon. I tape-recorded these meetings and replayed them to practice my language skills. When adults from different families met each other they would speak in Romanian and not the family language. However, most of the time different families passed without saying anything to each other, or actively avoided each other. There was very little mixing of families in the church. I asked Gigi why families spoke in Romanian and not *Romanës* and he said it was due to respect. I could communicate between families although I often made mistakes that were funny or embarrassing; or on some occasions my mistakes caused silences or glances at which point I tried to make a note and asked the person who I knew the best in the group what the problem was. For example my use of *ibomniko* for some families meant boyfriend, but for others meant more like a master (with the connotation that he was in some way tyrannical or mistreating me and instead I should use *piramno*). The most revealing aspect of language learning I encountered was when I was leaving Luton. When I told Violeta I was moving she responded ‘give me back my language!’ (*dem me murre shib palpale!*) In the chapters that follow I cannot repay to them the gift of learning to speak with the family in their words.

Language conventions

The majority of my field notes were written in English and therefore most of the quotes and the paraphrasing of speech in this thesis are in English. Therefore, when I have written something without translation it was written in English in my field notes and is a direct quote from what I wrote down. When I have paraphrased what someone said or where I couldn’t remember their exact words, I have not used quotation marks. Where I have written in *Romanës* this signifies that it was spoken in this language and I wrote it down in my field

notes in *Romanës*. I have included writing in this language because it was spoken in *Romanës*, and it highlights a particular point or a sentiment that can't easily be translated; sounds disjointed in English; or has a different connotation in English.

Conclusion

In this chapter I discussed the methodological aspects of my research. Reflecting on knowledge and fiction, I argued that we perceive the world by putting it in relation to models that endow reality with form and meaning. Anthropological knowledge may be described as the attempt to present a possible world by making the metaphorical description of scientific discourse interact and blend with the models and schemes an ethnographer acquires in the field. Within this epistemological framework I then described in detail my experience and my ethnographic fieldwork, including how I used the encounter as a method to examine cleavages as they emerged from interactions in the home. I also elaborated my ethical standpoint and how this ultimately rests on what I have decided to fix in these pages and what remains in field notes and memories. In the background was the overall context within which my existence and that of the new migrants unfolded: Luton in a moment of accelerated demographic change, welfare restructuring and European Union accession. The next chapter will present a systematic view of this background. I will explore the policies at the European, national and local level and focus on the development of policy regarding migrant children in this context and how immigration controls can be identified in the policy and practice of regulating access to welfare.

Chapter 3. Situating encounters: European Union enlargement and child welfare

Introduction

This chapter examines the processes at different scales that lead to new migrants' encounters in homes and why these encounters assume significance for accessing the state and new migrants' place-making. In particular, it justifies why mothers and relationship building with home-level bureaucrats represent a crucial analytical site. As outlined in Chapter 1, the state cannot be seen as a unitary force: 'studying state power requires that we think not in terms of an overarching state apparatus, but in terms of a multiplicity of networks through which various authorities, non-profit agencies, programs and experts translate democratic goals in relation to target populations' (Ong 2003: 80). Following this approach to the state, this chapter unpicks the different but interplaying logics of home encounters to argue that the home is the most significant site to examine the 'multiplicity of networks' that shape new migrants' place-making. This argument provides the background against which to explore the trajectories and experiences of actors in the following chapter.

The aim of this chapter is to trace how the presence of children mobilises state acts for new migrant families; and the processes that lead to home encounters. This chapter begins with reviewing the relevant global shifts in the post-Cold War era, through European, national and local contexts. I argue that there are two crucial factors. First the changing legal regulations and migration regime governing Romanian nationals' movement to the UK and second the

social location of the child in the UK; welfare state including the social and political underpinnings of the UK's 'Every Child Matters' agenda.

I then move to the Local Authority level in Luton to illustrate the significance of these two processes for home-level bureaucrats, volunteers and new migrants. I explore the changes that occurred in Luton following the economic crisis in 2008 and the subsequent austerity measures and welfare restructuring. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to document all the wide-ranging changes that occurred within the Local Authority at this time, but I shall overview the most salient changes that shaped the encounters between mothers and various others who undertook the role of mediating their relationship with the state. In particular this chapter serves to illustrate the restricted space in which new migrants are positioned and are able to position themselves. The chapter unveils how small decisions made in the home by bureaucrats whose primary duties relate to safeguarding children assume crucial significance. I also explain how volunteers move into gaps that were previously filled by statutory agencies. I explore how this is also underpinned by a particular perspective on children and mothers. Throughout this chapter I highlight the ways in which policies and practices draw formal and informal boundaries around access to membership (Lockwood 1996).⁴⁴ I illustrate that the use of welfare exclusions as a means of migration control signifies a transfer of 'gatekeeping at the border' to 'gatekeeping access to services' (Van der Leun 2006: 312) within the national territory and as such represents a 'deterritorialisation' of the border (Balibar 2004: 2). Building on the theoretical framework from Chapter 1, which posited that state forms can be conceived as emerging within these encounters, this chapter illustrates why these actors and the site of the home become a crucial site of interaction.

⁴⁴ This will be explored further in Chapter 7 in the context of rumours assuming the role of boundary-making.

Shifting EU regulations

I argue in this section that the legal regulations and requirements placed on new migrants created ambiguity regarding their entitlement to social rights. This was exacerbated by the way new migrants with diverse migration trajectories and legal statuses were all placed in the developing category of ‘Romanian Roma’. (How these categories were negotiated and the ambiguity that arose is the subject of Chapters 5, 6 and 7.) This section reviews the legal and policy landscape to provide the background for the different interpretations and understandings that emerge in the chapters that follow.

Historically, individuals migrating from Romania have been subject to many different migration regulations. Between 1970 and 1989 anyone crossing the border from Eastern Europe received residence permits as a ‘single humanitarian action’ (Matras 2000). The end of the Ceaușescu regime in Romania precipitated stricter interpretations of the law and gaining refugee status became more difficult throughout the 1990s (Clark and Campbell 2000; Humphris 2013; Sigona and Trehan 2010).⁴⁵ Concurrently, the end of the Cold War triggered a rapid deepening and widening of European integration. Austria, Finland, Sweden and most Central and Eastern European countries became EU Member States, more than doubling the number of Member States from twelve to twenty-eight in three decades.

Romania acceded to the European Union (EU) in May 2007. Nationals from EU accession states cannot claim asylum in the UK. Under a Protocol to the Treaty of Amsterdam, commonly called the Aznar Protocol, asylum applications from an EU national to another EU country is dealt with on the presumption that it is manifestly unfounded (Humphris 2013). It

⁴⁵ Sobotka shows that there are very strong similarities between Roma and non Roma migrants’ socio-demographic profile (Marešová 1996: 49–56 and Juhász 1996: 69–80 quoted in Sobotka 2003).

is assumed that all EU member states respect the fundamental rights of their nationals, irrespective of their ethnic origins and religious beliefs. In addition, under section 115 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1999, individuals from the EU that move to the UK are not subject to immigration rules. However, there are certain conditions attached to them residing for more than three months in the UK (see below).

Romanian and Bulgarian nationals (A2 migrants) were subject to particular regulations between accession in 2007 and when these transitional controls expired on 1st January 2014. I began living with new migrant families in January 2013 and concluded fieldwork in March 2014, and therefore the fieldwork was conducted during the time transitional controls were lifted; marking a specific period of change in the regulations governing new migrants. However, as the following chapters demonstrate, the regulations regarding A2 migrants were shifting throughout 2013. Moreover, the end of transitional controls were imagined and experienced in very different ways and set in motion a diverse range of actions.

I shall now address the legal regulations and requirements placed on citizens of Romania following the country's accession to the EU. As will be illustrated, despite various regulations and court rulings, large uncertainties remain in the application of the fundamental right to free movement and associated social rights, especially around defining work and legal residence.

Freedom of movement of workers was one of the four freedoms expressed in the Treaty of Rome in 1957 (also including goods, services and capital). However, although all EU nationals can exercise free movement rights, only certain categories of persons have, under European law, certain guaranteed rights attached to their residence in the host country. The 1958 Coordination Requirements stipulated any discrimination against nationals of other Member States was illegal; and the 1992 Maastricht Treaty formally integrated a concept of

EU citizenship into the Treaty. The 2009 Lisbon Treaty and Charter of Fundamental Rights further embedded this concept:

‘Every citizen of the Union has the freedom to seek employment, to work, to exercise the right of establishment and to provide services in any Member State’ (Art. 15).

‘Everyone residing and moving legally within the European Union is entitled to social security benefits and social advantages in accordance with Union law and national laws and practices. In order to combat social exclusion and poverty, the Union recognises and respects the right to social and housing assistance so as to ensure a decent existence for all those who lack sufficient resources, in accordance with the rules laid down by Union law and national laws and practices’ (Art. 34).

Another development guided the policy and legal framework concerning intra-EU migration. The Free Movement of Citizens Directive (2004/38/EC) brought together two regulations and nine directives with the aim of simplifying the legislation on the right of entry and residence for citizens of EU Member States. It established that EU workers have the same rights as nationals (and those who have been resident in a Member State for a minimum of five years). It also established that Member States could withhold social assistance for the first three months if an EU migrant citizen was ‘inactive’ or did not fulfil the residence requirements. Those who wish to stay for longer than three months must hold a qualifying status. These include being a jobseeker, worker, self-employed, economically inactive and self-sufficient, student and self-sufficient, a family member accompanying or joining an EU national who satisfies one of the other statuses, or a pensioner.

In addition, two new EU social security regulations came into force in 2010 (Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 and No 987/2009). Based on the principles of freedom of movement and non-discrimination, these directives and regulations specify that the coordination of social security

is no longer limited to economically active persons. They stipulate that nationals of EU Member States also have access to special non-contributory social security benefits based on the same conditions as nationals (in the UK this included State Pension Credit; Income-based Jobseekers Allowance; Income-based Employment and Support Allowance; and Disability Living Allowance⁴⁶), if they are ‘habitually resident’ in a Member State. The UK also imposed a ‘right to reside’ test in addition to the habitual residence test which determines the eligibility for a number of social benefits. The European Court of Justice has challenged this practice arguing that it constitutes discrimination against EU citizens who are disentitled by the UK government to their legitimate social rights (European Commission 2013). As EU nationals are not subject to immigration controls these right to reside tests are implemented by social welfare actors when deciding whether to grant an individual social welfare benefits. The introduction of the ‘right to reside’ test is crucial and marks a shift in the way the UK control access to the state. Critically, it was the foundation of using welfare exclusions as a means of migration control. The significance of the right to reside test and the decision regarding whether an individual was ‘habitually resident’ emerged as pivotal to home-level bureaucrats as these shifting regulations were variously understood.

In addition to the shifting definition of ‘right to reside’; the interpretation of a ‘worker’ also emerged as a site where boundaries around access and membership could be drawn. The transitional controls imposed on A2 migrants restricted their access to the labour market. This is important because workers are protected through the principle of non-discrimination from the point of taking up residence, whereas the status of those not considered workers or jobseekers is uncertain. Transitional controls prohibited A2 migrants from claiming Treaty rights as a jobseeker. In addition A2 migrants were only allowed to be employed through two quota-based schemes for low-skilled work in the agricultural and food processing sectors.

⁴⁶ Between 2013 and 2017 Universal Credit replaces these six existing payments for working age people. For the debate regarding the Universal Credit scheme see Dwyer and Wright 2014.

This was designed to limit low-skilled A2 migrants' access to specific types of jobs in the UK labour market. Bulgarian and Romanian nationals were required to obtain a 'worker authorisation document' before beginning employment in the UK and had limited access to the benefits system until the restrictions expired on 1st January 2014. A2 nationals were unable to gain National Insurance Numbers without proving that they were a worker or were self-employed. They were not permitted to gain a National Insurance Number as a jobseeker or be employed unless specified by worker authorisation documents (as previous accession migrants had been permitted to do).

Due to these regulations the definition of 'genuine self-employed work' becomes pivotal to deciding of whether an individual is allowed to exercise Treaty rights or not. However, as illustrated by home encounters in the following chapters, the definition of 'work' and 'genuine self-employed work' is constantly shifting and open to interpretation. Therefore, the processes that were set in motion by the transitional controls added to the process that had already been put into place by the right to reside test. The controls acted to increase the ambiguity in the regulations for EU nationals, placing further significance on the discretionary decisions that were made by service providers as gatekeepers in homes.

Following the expiry of transitional controls in January 2014, there have been a number of measures aimed at restricting EU migrants' access to social assistance. Although these changes came into force at the end of my fieldwork, they provide an indication of the policy direction towards EU migrants and the formal and informal barriers to accessing membership to migrants in general (Oliver and Jayaweera 2013). A key change was the introduction of a statutory presumption that entitlement to income-based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) would be limited to a period of three months unless the jobseeker could pass a Genuine Prospect of

Work assessment.⁴⁷ In addition, on 1st March 2014 the UK government introduced a minimum weekly income of £153 to define the status of ‘workers’; which was equivalent to 23 hours at the UK national minimum wage of £6.50 per hour.⁴⁸ If at the end of three months unemployment the jobseeker does not have ‘compelling evidence’ to show they have a ‘genuine prospect of work’; their JSA will end.

Courts and legal advisors seem to be unsure of the consequences of these changes in practice. Eigmüller has argued that the boundaries of what might constitute EU citizenship are being decided in the European Court of Justice (2013).⁴⁹ There is room for manoeuvre in the interpretation of this regulation as EU nationals may be able to argue that they should receive out-of-work benefits for longer than three months if they have been unable to find a new job. However, in the first instance, the decision is made by the Job Centre assessor. Criteria on which they may base their decision include considering it would be disproportionate to withdraw benefits in the individuals’ particular circumstances; their degree of ‘integration’ in UK society; and proof of previous periods of employment. Therefore, a situation has been created where, in the eyes of state bureaucracy, EU nationals are only able to reside within the UK national territory if they are ‘self-sufficient’ and do not constitute ‘an unreasonable burden on the social assistance system’ (ECJ Case C-333/13).

However, particular issues arise where children are visible. Children are subject to a different set of legal and policy conditions (see Chapter 1 for the historical and social underpinnings of

⁴⁷ In addition on 9th February 2015 this assessment was extended to all remaining EU nationals whose entitlement to JSA started prior to 1st January 2014.

⁴⁸ From 10th November 2014 the period for which JSA can be paid to jobseekers was reduced to three months.

⁴⁹ The most salient is the Dano Case. The European Court of Justice ruled in favour of the German authorities who restricted welfare benefits (Hartz IV benefit) to a Romanian national, Ms Dano, and her child who was also a Romanian national. Her lack of qualifications, language ability and work experience in Romania and Germany were considered important criteria for refusal. The ruling stated that the various regulations ‘do not preclude the national legislature from choosing to exclude nationals of other Member States from entitlement to a special non-contributory cash benefit on the basis of a general criterion, such as the reason for entering the territory of the host Member State, which is capable of demonstrating the absence of a genuine link with that State, in order to prevent an unreasonable burden on its social assistance system’ (ECJ Case C-333/13).

the child in the family). EU nationals are required to bring up children in an ‘appropriate manner’. The right of the state in these matters is greater than the right of the primary carer of a child. In cases where a migrant with children is at risk of destitution, they should qualify for support from the Local Authority under the Children Act 1989 (including those who have legally been deemed ‘No Recourse to Public Funds’). However, there are exclusions for EU nationals. They are denied support provided under Section 17 Children Act 1989 and Section 21 National Assistance Act 1948. This becomes an issue for those EU nationals with children where the child is perceived to be ‘at risk of destitution’, opening further areas of legal and bureaucratic uncertainty. In addition, these legal regulations intersect with other policies such as support for those who have suffered domestic violence. A constellation of policies and entitlements are created that place weight on the discretionary decisions of home-level bureaucrats.

The first section of this chapter has reviewed the shifting legal regulations for EU migrants. I have argued that this represented a shift from gatekeeping at the territorial border to gatekeeping access to services. I have shown how the shifting definition of ‘right to reside’ and ‘genuine self-employed work’ acts to create boundaries of membership. Following further regulations for EU nationals, the conditions have been created where individuals are tolerated within the national territory but without current or potential access to membership or social rights. The next section will explore the changing social location of ‘the child’ in the UK welfare state before turning to illustrate how these two processes, shifting EU migration rules and the governmentalisation of the vulnerable child, played out in Luton. This will demonstrate why encounters in the home between new migrant mothers and bureaucrats became the crucial site of negotiations regarding access to the state; and explore the practices, understandings and performances which shaped decisions.

EU nationals and the Children Act

In this section I elaborate on the claim above that the visibility of children induces a set of mechanisms that brings forth a tension between migration regulations and the values associated with children (Chapter 1). Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (s17) outlines the duty of Local Authorities in England and Wales to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area who are ‘in need’; and to promote the upbringing of these children within their families. As identified by Price and Spencer (2015), s17 has a broad scope and can include the provision of accommodation and financial support if families with dependent children are destitute. The support is administered by Children’s Services Departments within Local Authorities.

Prior to 2002 there were no restrictions for families accessing s17 Children Act (apart from asylum seekers under section 122 Immigration and Asylum Act 1999). This meant that any family excluded from public funds could access s17 if they became destitute. However in 2002 restrictions were introduced utilising Schedule 3 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 (NIAA). Four categories were restricted: nationals of EU countries, people with refugee status granted in other EU countries, refused asylum seekers who have failed to comply with removal directions, and people unlawfully in the UK. Therefore nationals of EU countries are not eligible for support through the Children Act 1989.

In policy, there is another avenue through which nationals of EU countries could gain social support. Local Authorities are able to conduct a Human Rights Assessment. Where the family are EU nationals, it must be established whether any member of that family is exercising Community Treaty rights in the UK and whether the provision of s17 support is necessary to

prevent a breach of that right.⁵⁰ Therefore the discretion regarding ‘genuine self-employed work’ re-emerges for A2 migrant families. In addition, the Local Authority must be satisfied with the information available to them that the child would be ‘in need’ on return to their country of nationality, and that there would be a breach of the European Convention on Human Rights if s17 support were not provided. If these conditions are not met, it can conclude in the Human Rights Assessment that there is no s17 duty in the UK. Children of EU national parents who are considered ‘destitute’ therefore hold an ambiguous position in relation to law and policy in the UK. The decisions regarding their status are fragmented throughout different laws and policies that rely on the seemingly small decisions of home-level bureaucrats.

Children as a social investment

The previous section traced the legal regulations governing new migrant families from EU Member States and their contingent access to social support. This section explores UK policy towards children and focuses on two aspects. First I place the development of policies in their wider context to unveil their potential motivation and intentions. Second I review how these policies were interpreted and utilised to provide the licence through which home-level bureaucrats enter homes of new migrant mothers. This provides the foundations from which to explore the perceptions and behaviours of bureaucrats who came into contact with the new migrant families addressed in the following chapters.

The most relevant legislation for bureaucrats who came into contact with new migrant families was the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda. Partly a response by the New Labour

⁵⁰ These are rights as workers, jobseekers, self-employed persons, self-sufficient persons or students.

Government to the death of Victoria Climbié, Every Child Matters was published in 2003. It gained cross-party support and was quickly transformed into the Children Act 2004.⁵¹ Although Every Child Matters is the name of the Green Paper, it emerged through conversations with home-level bureaucrats that it acted as a guiding principle or inescapable imperative that drove their actions (Chapter 4).

The Every Child Matters agenda developed five outcomes to be the drivers for monitoring and subsequent policy including: Be Healthy; Stay Safe; Enjoy and Achieve; Make a Positive Contribution; and Achieve Economic Well-Being. The Green Paper and the 2004 Act focus on visible symptoms and measurable outcomes that correspond to these five areas. The 2004 Act resulted in the combining of education and social care functions. The Commission for Social Care inspection has been subsumed into Ofsted, exemplifying the takeover of social care by education. The 2004 Act also delegates full accountability for the delivery of services to Local Authorities. It places specific responsibilities on Directors of Children's Services and other lead members in the Local Authority. These duties include working with Chief Officers and senior managers in Local Authority services. The Act also requires organisations in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors to put in place shared governance arrangements, policy structures and practice arrangements and create a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

However, it has been argued that decision-making processes within care planning are becoming fragmented as the relationship between the state and the family places emphasis on the education of the child, not the welfare of the family is placed at the forefront. Lister (2006) locates this shift within a paradigm of gendered citizenship where children are defined

⁵¹ There is evidence that this policy direction existed prior to the inquiry into Victoria Climbié's death (see Frost and Parton 2009). As a comparison, Parton examined the events around the death of Maria Colwell in England in 1973 and argues that 'the debates about the nature of child abuse and what to do about it are in essence not technical but political debates about the good society, and the relationship between the family and the state' (1985, xi).

as a future investment and not current beings. Parents (and particularly mothers) facilitate this investment (Humphries 2002; Lister 2006). This has been identified through policy analysis where the child is the focal point in recent pledges, policies and programmes as well as in new spending priorities (Pinkney 2000; Ridge 2004). Lone mothers attracted specific attention from these policies, though the main aim of welfare reform was to get mothers into work.

It has been argued that the Every Child Matters agenda (ECM) was heavily influenced by the ‘new welfare architecture’ envisaged by Esping-Andersen et al. (2002: 30), who emphasised that ‘a social investment strategy directed at children must be a centrepiece of any policy for social inclusion’. Lister acknowledges that all New Labour’s policies cannot be reduced to the ‘social investment template’ and warns against viewing the state as a monolith with internal coherence. However, she argues that ECM does represent New Labour’s strategy and is consistent with, even if not reducible to, the social investment state template (Lister 2003, 2006). Emergence of this template can be traced to the idea of ‘hard working families’ identified by the New Labour government in 1990s as ‘the corner stone of social order, responsibility and security’ (Clarke and Fink 2008: 232). This aim was further solidified when the then Prime Minister Tony Blair delivered a promise to eradicate child poverty by 2020. The child became an investment, as New Labour placed a future perspective on the child as becoming a citizen worker (Dobrowolsky 2002; Dobrowolsky and Jenson 2005; Jenson 2009; Lister 2003).

Previous scholarly work has demonstrated that mobilising around the rights of children is not new (Dingwall et al. 1983/2014; Dobrowolsky 2002; Hendrick 2005). However, specific critiques have been levelled at the 2004 Act. The reframing of the social investment state focuses on the ‘needs’ of specific children but not the structural determinants that create those ‘needs’. This shifts the responsibility to ‘take advantage of life’s chances’ (Hendrick 2005:

56) solely onto the individual. The focus on measuring visible symptoms could mask any critical dialogue about the structural inequalities in the UK through which they emerge and become visible. In addition, the gender neutral language of ‘parenting’ obscures the division of labour in which women carry the main responsibility of caring for young children (Lister 2003). Fawcett et al. (2004) argue that ‘many of the initiatives are predicated on parents changing their own behaviour and represent the increasing social control of childhood’ (p. 43). The combination of the focus on mothers and the ideals of ECM indicates one aspect that made mothers and their performances a crucial sphere of action.

The ECM agenda has also been critiqued as invading children’s right to privacy as set out under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The drive for ‘joined up services’ has led to monitoring behaviour and sharing this information on databases held by the Local Authority, such as Contact Point which stored an electronic record of every child in England including any contact with state agencies.⁵² Through encouraging information sharing and increasing partnerships and sub-contracting to the third sector, this has also drawn a large range of informal roles into the formal surveillance process (Garret 2009; Parton 2008, 2011). The marketization and privatisation of children’s social work has been well charted and critiqued (Harris 2003; Garrett 2009; Jones 2015). This became apparent in Luton where a number of third sector organisations and volunteers were drawn into this process in different ways (see Chapter 4).

ECM also focuses on ‘early intervention’ which involves collecting information on children before problems arise with the aim to intervene as quickly as possible to promote

⁵² There have been a number of changes since the Coalition Government came to power in 2010 including the abolition of the Contact Point database. The Coalition Government also renamed the Department of Children, Schools and Families (which had been set up in 2007 to reflect the priority of working across different Government departments) to the Department of Education which signals a shift away from this aim. This illustrates a different set of ideologies around state intervention in childhood. However, many of the bureaucrats that came into contact with children were working with the principles of Every Child Matters.

safeguarding (Gray 2014). This has been described as a different type of work when compared to previous incarnations of ‘child protection’ and provoked Frost to coin the term ‘safeguarding gaze’ to describe the increased checks and surveillance of childhood through practice, policy and inspection (2011: 48).⁵³

The focus on ‘early intervention’ was also extended to include formalisation and governmentalisation of care for babies and toddlers. This accelerated a process that had been in motion since the mid-1990s which saw an increase in state legislation and ‘professionalisation’ of the period between the birth of a child and them attending school at age five.⁵⁴ Before the 1990s there was an underlying assumption in legislation that this time was a matter for families to organise themselves, and initiatives were limited to families who were considered to be facing ‘severe problems’. Major changes included the establishment of a statutory framework in the Early Years Foundation Stage; the introduction of regulation for pre-school provision; leaders of pre-schools having a graduate qualification and ‘professionalisation’ of the workforce as a whole; and the establishment of Children’s Centres across England. Children’s Centres became crucial to new migrants’ bureaucratic relationships and forms of accessing state entitlements (Chapter 4).

Children’s Centres evolved from the New Labour policy of *Sure Start*. Sure Start Local Programmes (SSLPs) first emerged in 1998 with the aim of giving children the best possible start in life by improving childcare, health and family support services. Dobrowolsky argues that Sure Start was geared towards positive outcomes and based on an American initiative, Head Start, which had proven to be a good investment: ‘the Labour government cited US

⁵³ See Dingwall for the emergence of Local Authorities’ child protection duties from 1872 (1984: 221).

⁵⁴ This was precipitated by the fundamental shift that can be seen in the second half of the nineteenth century which saw the passage of many child-oriented laws, the founding of national state institutions designed to provide for children and the growth of child welfare philanthropic organisations (Hendrick 2003).

results “ American research suggests that for each \$1 invested in a pre-school child, the return to the taxpayer over time is \$7 saved” (2002: 54).

Central government funding was made available for 250 SSLPs targeted at the most deprived areas in the UK. In 2002, the Government extended the programme for Sure Start Children’s Centres nationwide. From 2002 to 2010, more than three thousand Children’s Centres were developed over three stages according to how the relative deprivation of each area. Therefore some Children’s Centres in deprived areas included building new centres (usually on school sites) whereas in others, they were simply a signposting service based in libraries or medical practices. The different priorities given to each Children’s Centre based on the measure of deprivation goes some way to explaining the different ways of working in the two different Children’s Centres I encountered in Luton (see Chapter 4) and the different experiences and perceptions of new migrant mothers. Control of Children’s Centres, including funding and commissioning, was passed to Local Authorities. In addition, Sure Start involved voluntary and charitable action at a local level and initiatives were often funded through and by them. This accelerated a process of contracting out services and the establishment of public / private partnerships with Local Authorities (Sheldrick 2002: 138).

The aim of Children’s Centres was to reach every young family in every community with the core purpose to ‘improve outcomes for young children and their families and reduce inequalities between families in greatest need and their peers in child development and school readiness; parenting aspirations and parenting skills; and child and family health and life chances’ (Department for Education 2013: 7). This included child development and school readiness; parenting aspirations and parenting skills; child and family health and life chances’. One aspect of Children’s Centres’ ‘core purpose’ is to ‘take steps to identify parents or prospective parents who are unlikely to take advantage of early childhood services that may be of benefit and to encourage them to take advantage of these services’ (ibid.: 21).

This helps to explain the drive of Wilton Rise Children's Centre to try to engage the new migrant mothers and their concern regarding 'invisible new migrant populations'. Children's Centres also have an added pressure to act as hubs for multi-agency team and 'have a role to play in bringing together all professionals who work in the area; to learn from each other's expertise; and provide integration support and extra help as required to families' (ibid.: 19). This also goes some way to illustrate the underpinnings behind the multi-agency meetings that took place in Children's Centres in Luton and the role of the Children's Centre manager in coordinating and shaping the way that individuals engaged with state bureaucracy (Chapter 4).

Moreover, since 2010 Children's Centres have had to cut budgets and change their services, provoking concern that Children's Centres might disappear entirely. To address this, a recent Education Select Committee has been established. Many Local Authorities have justified their Children's Centres to this Committee through arguments based on the foundational logic of 'early intervention' (see above). Early intervention has cross-party consensus in the UK and became more formally institutionalised through the Early Intervention Foundation, established in July 2013, which aims to identify good practice in front line services. Early intervention also features heavily in the newly defined 'core principles' of Children's Centres.

In this section I have outlined how differing arrangements, constructions and values around the 'child' have developed in UK policy. In the next section I shall explore how this approach played out alongside the changing global migration patterns and effects of EU expansion (discussed earlier) in Luton during my fieldwork between January 2013 and March 2014.

Luton

The aim of this section is to provide the context in Luton to understand why these home-level bureaucrats became central to the organisation of daily life for new migrant mothers; and how interactions in the home became recast as a crucial site of state-making. As established above, the governmentalisation of the vulnerable child created a clear mandate for action by state actors into the lives of families. This section assesses the local context in Luton in order to illustrate the restricted ‘room for manoeuvre’ new migrants were placed in and placed themselves in, and why home encounters assumed significance. I illustrate how home encounters were often the only opportunity through which new migrants could learn the bureaucratic spaces that were open to them and the terms on which these spaces could be inhabited. In addition, it was often the only moment they encountered those that could assist them to gain a legal status that would secure their access to social rights.

I interviewed thirty-seven bureaucrats who were employed directly by Luton Borough Council and an additional thirteen bureaucrats who had direct contact with community engagement and cohesion issues.⁵⁵ I asked each individual about changes in Luton and the majority responded with a story about cuts to their budget and the number of previous colleagues who had been made redundant. This reflects the changes that had begun before I began my fieldwork in 2013. Luton Borough Council was required to make wide-ranging changes due to the replacement of the Labour Government with a Coalition of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats in the UK in 2010. The Local Authority cut £72 million from its budget between 2010 and 2013 and was required to cut a further £33 million in the following two years. This was taking place throughout my fieldwork. In addition, the social welfare

⁵⁵ Interviews were conducted in English, audio recorded and transcribed in full.

structure in the UK was undergoing comprehensive shifts, particularly following welfare reforms introduced on 1st April 2013. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to describe all the changes in detail. However, some specific changes and how they were understood by service providers who encountered new migrants shall be explored in Chapter 4.

A distinct perception emerges from interviews with Local Authority workers that they are losing control of the population; that it is growing too rapidly; and that their previous tools such as the decennial census and registration data from primary care physicians, are inadequate to measure the population, creating increasing numbers of ‘invisible’ people. The Director of the Research and Geospatial Unit explained the innovative methods he had developed to pool data sources in order to ‘get to grips’ with the population. This was regarded as pivotal as national government funding to the Local Authority rested on population figures. Previous underestimates of the population had led to funding cuts and reduced public services. This had become a priority for the Local Authority, exemplified by the commissioning of a consultancy firm with funding provided by the Migrant Impact Fund in 2010 to measure ‘new’ populations to the area (Mayhew and Waples 2011).

The concerns regarding ‘invisible’ populations within local government officers are mirrored by bureaucrats. ‘How do staff go about supporting mothers that you don’t know are even out there?’ asks Samantha, the Vice Principle of Wilton Rise Children’s Centre in a formal interview. Samantha describes how she thought about new migrants to the area: ‘Like with Romanians I saw it on the news. Now I am already thinking about Syrians.’ Samantha’s position was created in the last year as ‘a strategic post’ to ensure the Children’s Centre is achieving its targets and applying for the correct funding. As mentioned above, a key target for all Children’s Centres is to register mothers in their catchment area who are considered

‘vulnerable’ by Ofsted categories.⁵⁶ ‘Invisible’ populations therefore cause distinct problems for the Local Authority in light of budget cuts. Front line workers are given targets to find and register such purportedly allusive people. This is also dependent on the micro-context in different Luton wards. For example, Wilton Rise is seen as a target area because it was recorded as the most deprived area in Luton (on the index of multiple deprivation), has the highest population churn, and has a young and rapidly growing population. It is also the location for the cheapest private rented accommodation. In contrast other areas such as Elswood, Cantorford or Beacon Hill have a more affluent and purportedly less mobile population (Chapter 4).

The general aims of Luton Borough Council can be inferred from the establishment of their ‘flagship’ programme ‘Luton Excellence’ in 2009. The aim of this initiative is described as ‘to develop the council’s ‘lean change’ capability’. It describes its activities as ‘helping departments cut waste and duplication, raise productivity and deliver genuine efficiencies through smarter working’. To achieve this it states that more than a thousand staff had been trained in customer-focused, ‘lean’ techniques. It is envisaged that the concept of ‘lean

⁵⁶ Ofsted refers to vulnerable children and families as target groups with additional needs. The definition, published by Ofsted in “The framework for children’s centre inspections from April 2013”, identified target groups as ‘families the Children’s Centre identifies as having needs or circumstances that require particularly perceptive intervention and/or additional support. The following list is not exhaustive and does not imply that young children or families in any of these categories require additional support. The target groups will vary according to the centre’s identification of its community and their needs but in any particular centre may include: lone parents, teenage mothers and pregnant teenagers; children from low income backgrounds; children living with domestic abuse, adult mental health issues and substance abuse; children ‘in need’ or with a child protection plan; children of offenders and/or those in custody; fathers, particularly those with any other identified need, for example, teenage fathers and those in custody; those with protected characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010; children who are in the care of the Local Authority (looked after children); children who are being cared for by members of their extended family such as a grandparent, aunt or older sibling; families identified by the Local Authority as ‘troubled families’ who have children under five; families who move into and out of the area relatively quickly (transient families), such as asylum seekers, armed forces personnel and those who move into the area seeking employment or taking up seasonal work; any other vulnerable groups or individual families including those young children and families identified as at risk of harm by other services – such as adult social care, schools, police, and health services. Children and families with protected characteristics may include: those for whom English is an additional language; those from minority ethnic groups; those from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families; those from lesbian, gay and transgender families.

working' should be the main driving principle behind employees working for the Local Authority.⁵⁷ Outsourcing services and mixing public and private services are also policy objectives for the Local Authority, due to the removal of funds from Central Government. The Luton Excellence policy states: 'We must explore other means of service delivery, including selling services, partnership working, sharing back office services with other bodies, or even outsourcing' (Transforming Luton 2012: 3).

Outsourced services included interpreting and translation, which has particular repercussions for new migrants and potentially limits the spaces where new migrants can explain their circumstance clearly and gain access to different forms of assistance. The significance of these sites can be garnered from the moments where appropriate interpreting is provided. For example, a Romanian nurse provides informal advice regarding schools and potential places for advice to mothers; but she leaves in April 2013 leaving no means of communication between doctors and patients. Similarly, there is one Romanian teaching assistant in one school. She informs the Family Liaison Officer when Christina confides in her that she has rats in the house and can't pay for school lunches. This highlights how the role of interpreters can be crucial in opening further spaces of encounter, although they also bring their own understandings and perceptions (Grill 2012).

Interpreters are not used at doctor's surgeries. With two exceptions all families addressed here visit one doctor's surgery on the edge of Wilton Rise. The receptionist at this surgery says to me on one occasion that interpreters can only be booked for registered patients; however, it is impossible for some to communicate to gain an appointment in order register without an interpreter. This means that individuals are either unable to access a doctor or are dependent on others. In January 2013, one registration nurse was stationed in the doctor

⁵⁷ Luton Excellence: LBC's in-house approach to meeting the budget challenge http://www.luton.gov.uk/Council_government_and_democracy/Councils/Council_policies_and_plans/LutonExcellence/Pages/Lutons%20in-house%20approach%20to%20meeting%20the%20budget%20challenge.aspx

surgery every day. By the end of fieldwork in March 2014 this registration nurse has responsibility for three different surgeries in different parts of the town. It becomes more difficult to make an appointment and receptionists advise unregistered patients to attend the drop-in service in the centre of the town rather than offer a registration appointment. This means that increasing numbers of families were not registered with a doctor, which affected their visibility in Local Authority data collection (which utilised doctor registration data in order to apportion services, particularly translation and interpretation).⁵⁸

Interpreters are not used for visits with health visitors, midwives or when housing officers visit a home. I am also a birthing partner for one young mother and an interpreter is not mentioned throughout the birth or her subsequent three days in hospital. This causes rumours to develop within the family due to the extra tests they were performing on the baby without explanation. Some front line workers have access to a ‘language line’, a special telephone used to provide instantaneous interpreting. However, this is very expensive and Paula, equality and diversity education officer (see Chapter 4), often mentions that she has to justify its continued use to her line manager. A recurring theme emerges from conversations with front line service providers regarding the creative ways they interact with clients who don’t speak English with varying degrees of perceived success.

Interpreters are used for cases involving social services. However, the role of social services was also changing, precipitated by two processes. It has been argued that the death of baby Peter in 2008 was the catalyst for social workers to shift away from the promotion of welfare to the narrower priority of child protection (Parton 2011). At the same time, cuts in Local Authority budgets had a greater impact on poorer urban areas (Hastings et al. 2013), leading to a more acute need to prioritise certain services over others. It was described to me by

⁵⁸ This became a particularly acute problem for women who wanted contraception as this was not a topic that could be discussed widely within the family. Some women told me that it was ‘*lashav*’ (bringing shame or embarrassment) to discuss these issues with others, particularly male members of the family.

Paula, Lisa and Emma (see Chapter 4) that social services only dealt with the ‘thick end of the wedge’ and therefore previous activities had been formally or informally shifted to other service providers (including education and health visiting). In addition, some services are only accessible if referred by social services, for example housing support. Samantha comments at one multi-agency meeting in Wilton Rise Children’s Centre, ‘those who are not referred by social services get left behind which means that everyone gets to crisis point before they are given priority’. This helps to explain why social workers are absent from almost all home encounters, closing a potential site of state involvement to new migrant families.

In addition to the outsourcing of translation services and the increasingly restrictive role of social workers, the third sector continues to change dramatically throughout the course of my fieldwork. The largest change is the way in which the Local Authority funds the third sector to provide front line services for those identified as ‘vulnerable’, ‘socially excluded’ or ‘hard to reach’. The main avenue of funding is called Supporting People established in 2003 with a £1.8 billion ring-fenced budget. In 2009, the ring fence was removed. At this time Luton Borough Council was funding fourteen different third sector organisations to provide different specialist services. However, in 2009 the council undertook a review of these services which resulted in the commissioning of a new floating service which aimed to ‘reduce homelessness and help people live independently in their own homes’. Rather than providing support for 14 different external support service providers the council decided to fund just one organisation to provide all services. Pathways, an organisation which had been working in Luton for forty years won the contract which began on 1st July 2012. Many of the thirteen other organisations ceased to function or reduced their operations. Twenty five of the individuals who had been working in the thirteen other organisations were employed in the new floating service newly called ‘Pathways Alliance’. One of these was Lisa (see Chapter

4), who had previously been working with people she termed, 'street girls'. She became the floating support officer for Gypsies, Roma and Travellers.

Moreover, in 2011 the Supporting People Programme ceased to be separately identified in Local Authorities' funding formula. This prompted Luton Borough Council to argue that although in 2013 they had their allocation of Supporting People funding boosted by almost 20 percent (£1.2million) this did not translate to an increase in their revenue support grant⁵⁹ as Luton's overall budget decreased by £5 million. Luton Borough Council had received support through the Migration Impacts Fund but this ceased in 2011.⁶⁰ Between 2009 and 2011 Luton Borough Council received £589,500 for projects designed to reduce the short term pressure of migration on local public services. This had included the funding of a support worker, Naida, a refugee from Bosnia, found a job as a receptionist in a Community Centre after the fund expired. She told me:

Naida: 'I didn't have a budget. I just went around the streets talking to people and finding people to help them get into mainstream services and projects.'

Rachel: 'Who was that?'

⁵⁹ The revenue support grant is the money received by the council from the UK National Treasury. Local Authorities in England are funded in two main ways, through central government grants and council tax. Central government grants for local councils are assessed and set each financial year (the 'Local Government Finance Settlement'). The assessment takes the previous year as its starting point, so grant levels result from the build-up of different decisions over many years. Currently, Local Authorities receive three types of central government revenue grants. Specific grants pay for individual services. This money is ring-fenced and must be used in the way specified. Area-based grants pay for services deemed by a council to be local priorities. Formula grants are calculated using mathematical formulae based on, among other things, the local council tax base and how many people rely on local services. Between 2010 and 2015, grants have been cut by 37% across England. Luton's strategic management team reported a £54 million spending reduction between 2011/12 and 2013/14. By 2015/16, they estimate a further £32 million will be taken out of the council's budget, with a further cut of £27 million likely by 2017/18. Luton Borough Council (2013) Office of National Statistics, Population Statistics Report

https://www.luton.gov.uk/Council_government_and_democracy/Lists/LutonDocuments/PDF/Transformationreport.pdf

⁶⁰ House of Commons Parliamentary business, Migration Impact Fund, 2nd March 2010 : Column 1146W <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200910/cmhansrd/cm100302/text/100302w0034.htm>

Naida: 'Polish, Slovakian, Eastern European migrants basically that came after Europe... you know. But I also worked with the established communities to promote new migrants.'

Rachel: 'Where was this?'

Naida: 'Around the streets. I was based in Wilton Rise at that time.'

She goes on to describe the limited range of services that she can now provide when compared to her role as a 'migrant development officer'. 'If they organise themselves then I can help them, you know. I can give them things like free tea and coffee. We can work with them to develop a project and maybe get funding'. This indicates the changing nature of the avenues of support available to new migrants. Previously, Naida conducted outreach to find new migrants on the street, in cafes, religious buildings and in the local shops. She was available to provide information in these public spaces regarding access to services or to explain legal regulations. However, this has shifted to providing support for those who are already organised into 'groups' and have enough knowledge and resources to be able to access funding for their own identified activities.

These changes illustrate the restricted space and changing nature of the avenues that are open to new migrant families to gain information and learn the bureaucratic spaces and identities that they might occupy. This is exacerbated by their changing legal status. Families who moved to the UK before 2007 and were granted refugee status had often experienced bureaucratic support through the Red Cross or local Refugee Centre. These services had provided intensively bureaucratic support as they had identified them as refugees and this was their most salient characteristic in terms of their relationship to the state. Support workers and bureaucrats from the third sector and the Local Authority had experience in

‘processing people’ who were claiming asylum (Dubois 2010). However, this was not the case with A2 migrants.

The uncertainty surrounding this category is illustrated by the various organisations and networks in Luton that might have included these families within their remit. I attend a new migrant forum in one organisation. However, it is concerned solely with asylum seekers; refugees; increasing cases of individuals given ‘No Recourse to Public Funds’; and ‘Third Country Nationals’ in the local area. This seems to be dictated by historical or staff expertise within organisations, or by constraints placed on funding, such as European Integration Fund requirements to address ‘Third Country Nationals’. Although there is an awareness of increasing numbers of EU nationals, they are perceived as not subject to immigration controls and therefore are not considered within the remit and expertise of the individuals or organisations represented (Summerson Carr 2011).

A Poverty Action group meet at the local Law Centre. However, due to legal aid cuts and the reduction in employees within the Local Authority and affiliated non-governmental organisations this group becomes less well attended.⁶¹ In addition, the issues addressed in this group are targeted at those receiving social assistance and the ways service providers could mitigate the hardships caused by cuts in social benefits. Similar to the New Migrant Forum, although those attending are sympathetic and aware of new EU migrants, they are not deemed to be within the remit of the group because they aren’t receiving social assistance. Both groups consider the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) as the most appropriate organisation. However, the CAB also suffered large budget cuts as it was no longer given funding through Supporting People. It does not have the capacity to provide support to new migrants and new migrant families are unaware of its existence or the role it might play in

⁶¹ Areas of Social Welfare Law advice were taken out of scope by Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012. In 2013, the LSC was replaced by the Legal Aid Agency (LAA) which is part of the Ministry of Justice (and thus not an independent body).

their relationship with state actors. Luton Rights is a further organisation that provides avenues of support for new migrants. However, they also had large cuts to their services which were exacerbated by the end of the Legal Services Commission which ended in March 2013. Both organisations cannot conduct outreach or offer translation, meaning that the new migrants addressed here were unaware of or unable to access these services.

One avenue through which the families do become visible is through the services developed for ‘Gypsy, Roma, Traveller’ groups. In Luton, this developed through two areas of action. First, the Irish Forum which is an independently funded advocacy and support organisation that had previously administered and provided funding and resources for a Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Forum in Luton. It was initially set up to address emerging issues surrounding Irish Travellers in the area but extended this more recently as migrants from Eastern Europe were identified as Roma and discussed by front line workers in the Forum. This Forum is attended sporadically by a range of third sector organisations and front line workers in the Local Authority including probation services, youth offending teams, and education services. The Forum gains support from the Local Authority Social Justice Department, and I attend two Forum meetings in Luton Town Hall. However, the Forum stops meeting in September 2013 due to an inability to find funding or resources needed for Local Authority staff to administer the meeting, and the group ceases to function. Nonetheless, the discussions within the two meetings held at Luton Town Hall solidify the term ‘Gypsy, Roma, Traveller’ and fuse the term ‘Romanian Roma’ to the previous discourses linked to ‘Gypsies’ and ‘Travellers’.

Education services are the other main area through which ‘Gypsy, Roma, Traveller’ support is explicit. The Children’s Services Department has an Equality and Diversity team. Paula, a member of this team, explains to me that prior to 2010 there were ten support workers but by January 2013 this decreased to two front line support workers and a manager. As one of the front line support workers, her role is to register new migrant children for school places (see

Chapter 4). Mary, the second support worker, is designated to assist Gypsy, Roma and Traveller education. Paula explains that the first Roma family in Luton was Cosmin and his family who were refugees and therefore she had registered their children in school. Cosmin told her about other family members when they moved to Luton and, as Paula continued to register and identify children as Roma, she became the educational support worker for this 'group'. Paula and Mary are also instrumental in the genesis of Lisa's role in Pathways Alliance. Lisa describes how Paula and Mary were consulted when the new service was planned and when Lisa's role was created to focus on 'Gypsy, Roma, Traveller' people.

This section has explored the limitations new migrant families experience to access different advice or support services in Luton. The lack of other avenues of support illustrates why encounters in the home take on such significance. They are the only site where new migrants encounter those that can assist them to gain a legal status that could secure their access to social rights. The interpretation of rules governing A2 migrants shifted at many different levels before the formal labour regulations changed in January 2014, intersecting with austerity measures and restructuring of welfare services. National Insurance Numbers are increasingly refused on the grounds of 'insufficient proof of genuine self-employed work', operating to exclude those in precarious and low paid working conditions. In addition, 'right to reside' and 'habitual residence' tests create a further boundary for new migrants to access social protections.

Bureaucratic options for Romanians are also increasingly restricted throughout the year prior to the lifting of formal regulations. Precariousness of waged employment means that these families do not 'fit' into a category where front line services have prior experience or funding. These new migrant families also do not organise themselves in a manner that suits

the structures of ‘community development’ as funding is bestowed on specific groups.⁶² In addition, welfare reforms and budget cuts spurred the movement of increasing numbers of services onto internet based ‘portholes’, complicating and dehumanising the system thus technically disenfranchising migrants without literacy. New systems increase the need for professional, in-person assistance precisely at the time when there is decreased provision of it.

One space where migrants can gain access to assistance is through the religion. One organisation in Luton concerned with these new migrant families is a church based in an affluent area of Luton called Cantorford. The relationship that develops between the members of the church and new migrant families is based on the actions of the Cantorford pastor, Simon. Before turning to address home-level bureaucrats and new migrant families in the following chapter, the remainder of this chapter is dedicated to illustrating the role of this church and its members and how individuals move into the gaps opened by welfare restructuring in mediating new migrant families’ access to the state. It also illustrates how this is based on certain conceptions of gender, mothers and children which converge and conflict with home-level bureaucrats and migrant mothers at different moments, acting to shape the terms on which different relationships could be upheld.

Simon, who refers to himself as a Church of England pastor in the Diocese of St Albans, came to Luton in late 2008. He is pastor (in his own words) of a church which had been built five years previously in Cantorford. The website of the church describes him as their vicar. In

⁶² For example, through what Naida called ‘organising themselves’. This was also mentioned in an interview with other community development officers. Alexy, a Community Development Officer, provided the ‘Turkish community’ as an example of a new migrant community which had ‘established’ itself in the previous two years in Luton. The group had been granted funding to expand community social activities to provide welfare advice and support.

his previous job he was involved in visiting Travellers who lived on a Traveller site and in homes around the village. He describes the work and conversations with Travellers very fondly and says that they changed his ‘perspective on life’, writing and publishing a book about his experiences with them. Cantorford has a mixed congregation including residents from an adjacent nursing home, those who live within walking distance of the church in the new houses that were also built in the last five years, and those who drive to come to the church meetings.

When I first visit Cantorford Church (*englezi khangheri*), I am surprised to see a guitarist and a singer next to the raised altar. Simon tells me proudly that underneath the altar is a baptism pool. The church also has audio-visual equipment with speakers and a projector which is used for the words of the hymns. The church also encourages people who feel the Holy Spirit to stand up and talk to the whole congregation at a specific point in the service. The service lasts for around one hour between 10:30am and 11:30am on Sunday morning. Following the service, tea and biscuits are prepared and it seems as though around half the congregation stay for tea but most leave by 11:45am. After the first service I attend, Simon’s wife asks me if I enjoyed it. I reply that I found some parts surprising, such as the guitar music and those who seemed to spontaneously stand up and talk. She describes the church as part of the ‘New Wine’ movement, a charismatic movement within the Church of England, and directs me to magazines next to one of the entrances. She tells me that the New Wine movement is rapidly growing in the UK. I ask what makes a church a ‘New Wine’ church and she responds that the movement encourages people to be Christians throughout their whole life, not just on Sunday morning. I have many conversations with Simon who often speaks of his commitment to those who he feels Jesus would be among today, particularly those who are in some way rejected by the rest of society, justifying his work with Travellers and Roma in Luton.

Simon became involved with those identified as Roma in Luton through a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) called Liam. Liam was previously the PCSO for Cantorford before a large downsizing of the team. Following this he moved from Cantorford (which is not seen as a ‘priority area’) to Parlton ward, which includes the area of Wilton Rise. Liam explains that women were picked up from the centre of town for begging and taken to a house in his new ward of Parlton. They are identified by the police as ‘Gypsies’. Due to Simon’s previous work with Travellers, Liam told Simon about these incidents and gave him the address of this house; and subsequently Simon visited them. Following this first encounter, Simon’s relationship with many of the families addressed here developed. Therefore it was the actions of these women, whose ethnicity was identified through their economic strategy which caught the attention of service providers, that began the process of making this group of families visible.⁶³

A particularly salient relationship developed between Simon and Violeta, a new migrant mother, which began the process of forming a church service in *Romanës*, later described as the *khangheri*. I shall briefly explain how this developed and the structure of the church to provide the context for the following chapter. Simon describes how he couldn’t communicate with those living in the house who had been seen by the police begging in the centre of town. He spoke to them mainly in French. He tells me that Ramona, her husband, their teenage son and daughter had spent some years in Brussels before moving to the UK. He began to learn the ‘Romani Language’ and was introduced to others in the family living in different houses

⁶³ Women experienced racialisation in very different ways to men. Women were often denied entry to shops in Wilton Rise because of rumours that they stole goods and hid them in their long skirts (one seventeen year old girl I was shopping with was told that she could enter a shop only if she took her skirt off). However, later this extended to women in a different family group who did not wear long skirts but shorter, pencil skirts that just covered their knees. They were also stopped from entering the local supermarket by the security guard. When one woman returned with her husband she explained to me that she was then allowed to enter the shop and that there was no problem. I asked her whether it was the same security guard but she didn’t know. She also didn’t know why he hadn’t let her into the shop and simply stated *o del genel* ‘God knows’. See the conclusion for further details on racialisation and citizenship.

in the area. At this point he tells me he was referred to as a ‘priest’ (*rashai*). However, later he became known as a ‘pastor’ (*pastoro*) which he preferred as he learned the negative connotation attached to the Romanian Orthodox Church by some new migrant families. He was also given the official title by the Diocese of St Albans of ‘Chaplain for Gypsies, Travellers and the Roma’, one of only two diocese in the UK to have such a post.

Simon also read some families’ letters, helped to register children in the school, and listened to the stories of the families while he learned the language. Violeta was one such new migrant who Simon visited at this time. She sold roses with her older fourteen year old daughter outside the large cinema in the centre of Luton. Violeta has six children but her oldest daughter is married. She lives with her remaining five children who range from fourteen to five in a small terraced house in Wilton Rise. Violeta tells me she refused to beg (*me chi zhav te mangav*) and sells roses instead to provide for her children. Her husband died in Italy two years previously. Violeta made ‘a promise’ with God following the recovery of her eldest son from meningitis. She promised to stop smoking and live a ‘straight life for Jesus’.

Simon began to visit Violeta frequently during this time although the frequency of his visits and the help he provided often alters in Violeta’s narratives to me. Simon invited Violeta and her children to the Cantorford Church on Sunday morning and picked her up in his car and took her home. Simon also relates how at times Violeta became angry when he spent time with other families. She expresses this to me, stating that families with many male members don’t need Simon’s help asserting: ‘I am alone’ (*me som korkorro*). Violeta often repeats her commitment to God saying ‘I don’t have a boss [husband], my boss is above’ (*nai man bosso, murre bosso si opre*). Violeta began to invite families (women and children) to her house to talk about the role Jesus had played in her life. The numbers of people at these meetings grew as increasing numbers of relatives moved to Luton, and the meetings become a social event

for mothers (men did not attend from these families). At this time, Simon met a Methodist Minister, Leslie, conducting outreach work in Wilton Rise. The population in Wilton Rise had become predominantly Muslim, and the two churches located in the area had dwindling congregations. Simon's suggestion to begin a service in the 'Romani language' was agreed and services began on Wednesday evenings. Simon also organised to hire a minibus from the Luton Irish Forum to pick up those who want to attend. Women do not drive and although many men can drive and have cars, they very rarely attend and do not drive their relatives to the church.

As mentioned above, Violeta also attends the *englezi khangheri* (English Church⁶⁴) in an area of Luton called Cantorford on Sunday morning. As well as attending the service she makes tea and washes and cleans the kitchen after the service. Therefore, through the relationship between Simon and Violeta, the link between the Cantorford Church (*englezi khangheri*) and the Roma Church (*khangheri*) in Wilton Rise developed. Initially, Simon conducted the services in *Romanës*, but in November 2012 Grigore arrived in Luton. He had travelled directly from his small rural village in north-east Romania to join his brother Dan, who moved one year earlier. Increasingly Simon gave time and responsibility to Grigore and other members of his family who subsequently moved to Luton. So while the Roma Church (*khangheri*) is within the structure of the Diocese of Albans, the context and structure of services is highly contested and fluid. Some of those who attend also state that they are 'Pentacostalo'. How individuals from the Cantorford Church encounter new migrant families, and how this affected the way new migrants encountered the state, are the subject of the following chapter.

⁶⁴ This is a direct translation of *englezi khangheri*. However, the only church that is referred to in this way is the Cantorford Church. Henceforth I shall translate *englezi khangheri* as Cantorford Church.

Conclusion

This chapter argues that the home is the significant site of negotiating place-making for new migrants due to several processes which foreground the figure of the racialised Roma child. To make this argument the chapter has presented different levels which explain the mobilisation of different duties towards these children. These fields include changing global migration patterns; eastern expansion of the European Union; the social and political underpinnings of the UK 'Every Child Matters' agenda; austerity and welfare restructuring; and the increasing influence of religious organisations in filling the gaps opened by decreasing Local Authority services. Thus the processes that converge on the mother-child relationship can be divided into those in the migration and legal framework, and those that stem from the care of children.

By moving through different levels of policy and unpicking the logics driving policy and legal processes I have illustrated the tensions that will be developed in following chapters. In particular these include the increasing focus on behaviours rather than tackling structural inequalities; the safeguarding agenda and significance of 'early intervention'; and the development of the label 'Romanian Roma'. Crucially, this chapter has shown how potential avenues of advice and support are closed to these new migrants apart from the church and the voluntary activities begun by the pastor, Simon. The lack of support services makes the home space the key site for negotiation and access, predicated on the visibility and governmentalisation of vulnerable children. This emerges under particular conditions that guide how actors become known to each other, how relationships are entered into and the expectations and perceptions that emerge. In other words, the terms on which values could be exchanged. The following chapter will examine the ways in which new migrant families

become visible to different service providers and how their relationships develop in light of the different logics described above.

Chapter 4. Encountering the home

Introduction

The previous chapter traced the contours of European and UK national regulations and policies to explain why the presence of children becomes a determining factor in new migrant place-making. This is caused by first, ambiguous and shifting regulations for A2 migrants in the UK; and second, the particular construction of the child in UK policy. I argued in the previous chapter that these processes curtailed new migrants' access to spaces that might enable them to negotiate their access to the state on different terms. This chapter builds on this to illustrate how the expectations and perceptions held by different actors, shaped by their role and background, affects home encounters. I explore the key actors, their biographies and trajectories to trace how they come to engage in home encounters and how this forms their gaze on the relationships that take place within the domestic space.

The first two sections of this chapter explore the different meanings and perceptions that develop around the label 'Romanian Roma' and how these are affected by the personal and structural positions of individual bureaucrats. Second I elaborate on home-level bureaucrats' own status within their respective agencies. The development of their roles shapes their expectations and perceptions, and explains the emergence and crystallisation of conflicting and overlapping understandings of the term 'Romanian Roma'. In addition, how home-level bureaucrats come to encounter families is crucial to how they perceive their role, actions and duty; how tensions between their aims and practices emerge; and how decisions are justified. I argue that home-level bureaucrats have different 'optics' through which they view the home

space, which they draw on when making assessments of performances. These optics are crucial to the following chapters where the details of encounters are examined. Finally, the chapter introduces the role of volunteer and church actors and how they are entwined with home-level bureaucrats. I present sets ('constellations') of relationships between mothers, bureaucrats and church volunteers to argue that the development of relationships place different constraints and expectations on new migrants' performances through the increasing significance of the home encounter.

New migrants becoming 'Romanian Roma'

This section draws on the problematisation of 'Roma' as a category and label in UK policy making as discussed in Chapter 1. While coming from diverse migration trajectories, personal histories and being subject to different legal statuses, the new migrants I live with all become known to state actors through the category 'Romanian Roma'. This categorisation goes some way to explaining why new migrant mothers emerge as visible in particular ways, become the 'remit' of particular bureaucrats, and how these processes converge to re-inscribe particular expectations, perceptions and justifications for discretionary decisions. These decisions have far reaching consequences on how new migrant families *make place* in Luton.

The new migrants who are the subject of this thesis have many different legal statuses between and within families across generations, indicative of geo-political shifts in Europe and beyond over the last twenty-five years (see Chapter 3). Previous scholarly research has shown that labour migration was a key strategy for many Romanians before and during state socialism (Jonuz 2009 quoted in Benedik 2010: 72). Before 2007 Romanian nationals could

also claim asylum and potentially gain refugee status. Some individuals gained refugee status in a different European country and subsequently moved to the UK. It should also be noted that families have complicated migration trajectories and although grandparents and some parents were born in Romania, children and young adults had been born and gained rights of residence in a wide range of different European countries as well as Canada, Brazil and Argentina.

In addition, these new migrants have widely varying migration trajectories, transnational family ties and concomitant experiences with different nation-state bureaucracies. These backgrounds mean different families are able to draw on different resources. For example, some families drive directly to the UK from a small rural village in Moldova, while others maintain wide and diverse transnational family networks across Europe, Canada and South America, often living in large cities. Different family members speak many different languages including constellations of Bulgarian, French, German, Hungarian, Hindi, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian and Turkish. Education ranges from no formal years of schooling to ten years, with most tending towards the former. Most are not able to read or write in any language. The importance placed on the transfer of information through words and speech and not through reading and writing is fully explored within its significance for accessing the state in Chapter 7. Despite the widely differing backgrounds, experiences and subsequent rights and entitlements that might be accorded to different individuals, the ‘bureaucratic gaze’ situates them all as ‘Romanian Roma’.

The way in which bureaucrats become aware of families feeds into the development of ‘Romanian Roma’ as a category, and the meanings that are inscribed onto this label. Three issues can be delineated that infuse this category with meaning. First, the term ‘Roma’ is linked to Gypsy and Traveller in European and national discourses that feed into organisational practice in Luton; second, the expiration of transitional controls in January

2014 created a media panic; and third, the deservingness discourse around welfare claimants, leads to increasing conditionality being imposed on those who require social support (O'Brien 2013; Dwyer and Wright 2014; Hogget et al. 2013).

These three issues emerge in different ways and act to close spaces of interaction, while the ambiguity and confusion around their legal statuses and entitlements creates a high level of discretion in the services and informal support that state and other actors choose to offer them. For this reason it is vital to understand the situated position of these actors and how that affects their discretionary decision making, their understanding of the label 'Romanian Roma' and how the increased focus on the home encounter therefore shapes the negotiations that can take place. I shall now turn to explore the contexts, circumstances and statuses of some of the key home-level bureaucrats involved in home encounters.

How home-level bureaucrats come to define 'Romanian Roma'

This section explores the confusion around the term 'Roma' and how it plays out through examining the specific situations of five different home-level bureaucrats in Luton: Lisa, a floating support worker from a Local Authority funded charity called Pathways; Samantha, Vice Principal of Wilton Rise Children's Centre; Paula, an equality and diversity education officer; Sharon, a health and safety officer; and Emma, a health visitor for 'hard to reach' groups.

I begin with Lisa, a floating support worker who is employed by a charity called 'Pathways' which gained funding from the Local Authority in July 2012.⁶⁵ Lisa describes her role as 'for

⁶⁵ The Local Authority decided to consolidate all smaller grants bestowed on many different charities to one organisation that could provide a 'holistic' service.

the GRT's' (Gypsy, Roma and Travellers). She describes this role as emerging from a stakeholder meeting when the new Pathways service was being developed. She believes that Mary and Paula (equality and diversity education officers directly employed by the Local Authority's Children's Services Department) were pivotal to the formation of her post as they were consulted when Pathways received the contract to provide services for the area. She expresses confusion regarding the definition of different groups and believes that Paula has a more authoritative grasp of the distinction: 'Paula speaks about the Traveller Romanis or Romanis. I haven't grasped who is Traveller and who isn't. I just think they are all Travellers, there are just different classes. It is the same as the Travellers and the Asians, you get all the different surnames, don't you? They have told me that those families are like this, those are like that.'

She previously worked with 'street girls' and people with mental health issues, but not migrants, and she describes how she is 'learning on my feet about no recourse to public funds, habitual residence tests and right to reside forms'. Lisa's role is explicitly for those identified as 'Gypsy, Roma or Traveller'. However, clients are also referred to her who are from Romania and Hungary. This is due firstly to some confusion regarding new migrant families who are not self-identifying as Roma but are perceived to be Roma by front line services. From my experience this assessment is based on them having similar problems to those identified as Roma families, primarily stemming from poverty. Second, there is a paucity of support in general. Thus referrals of 'non-Roma' clients to Lisa illustrate how front line service providers utilise their personal relationships and discretion to provide support for mothers whether or not the family adheres to identity criteria.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ I acknowledge that Lipsky's focus on and definition of 'street-level' bureaucracy was describing the individual within public service organizations. I argue that Lisa should be included within the definition of street-level (and also home-level) bureaucracy through the thick descriptions of her everyday work that illustrate she is subject to the same conditions as street-level bureaucrats. She undertakes front line service provision; her

Lisa is mentioned to me by Simon and by Paula (both discussed later) as a support worker for Gypsy, Traveller and Roma families and I am introduced to her by a new migrant mother who is also one of her clients. I have a preliminary interview with her at her office which is not tape-recorded. We are in contact via emails, phone calls and texts. I am also present in homes when she visits and I also refer clients to her for support when they ask me to contact her. I also attend two 'Pathways Open Days', and several meetings in her office. I also interview Lisa at the end of the research, which is tape-recorded.

Pathways operate a strict time-managed case load due to their funding targets underpinned by their contract with the Local Authority. Lisa explains, 'if I haven't had contact with a client for two weeks then my manager wants to know why'. The service is designed for intensive support for short periods of time to help people to become 'self-supporting', rather than as a long-term service. However, many of Lisa's clients cannot read and therefore rely on Lisa to pay bills and respond to schools, health appointments or any other form of written communication. In addition, administrative structures delay support. She explains that due to the increasing waiting times for National Insurance Number interviews or decisions for social assistance she often doesn't have contact with clients for months until they receive a decision. She also explains that she doesn't have the time to open a new file for every time she makes a phone call or reads a letter. This means she often does not account for a large majority of the work that she undertakes for new migrant families. She explains that it is 'easier' to do things this way; however it also means that this work is not recorded or acknowledged.

organisation is solely funded by the Local Authority; and client data is made available to the Local Authority. She operates under resource constraints and has both dilemmas and discretion inherent within the structure of her role. Although her managers operate in a quasi-market environment she should be included within the definition of street- and also home-level bureaucracy (see Evans and Harris 2006).

Lisa tells me about the problems she feels families face, which are primarily based on their 'newness' as migrants but also infused with discrimination attributed to being identified as 'Roma', informed by media portrayals:

'It is the same as when black people came – we weren't allowed in the same pubs as the white. They have got bad stigma for themselves. All communities have got stigma but they are new to the UK. You can see why people see them in this. I only saw in the paper the other day, a Romanian selling his daughter as a slave – as a working girl for him. Then you are seeing them in the streets begging. As someone who has never been alongside them – they are not getting to know them... Before (January 2014) it was self-employed, selling the Big Issue, but that was with their culture. It was cleaning cars but that was with their culture. Now they can go out into the factories. These other cultures will see these Romanian people, as the people they are, not as the stigma. You will see a lady working in Wilkos. That is how these barriers start coming down – it's just getting the bosses to give them a break, you know? They are up against a brick wall. As long as people have these views about Roma people they are going to find it really difficult to get jobs – really difficult. I sent her (Maria) down to the job centre to get a list of employment agencies and we sat there and we rang them all for her and they asked what nationality. 'Oh they are Roma'. It's got to take a few bosses to start employing them.'

Lisa oscillates when placing culpability for discrimination, shifting from 'their fault' through their own economic practices, acknowledging that they are unlikely to get jobs due to the stereotype that has proliferated and the structural conditions that dictate their working opportunities. Lisa draws on the idea of 'Romanian Roma' as one 'group' in terms of her personal knowledge and experience of growing up in Luton as a visible minority herself. She fuses Romanian and Roma in her narrative illustrating, the way in which the two have been

confused in daily practice and everyday discourse. Importantly, she notes how social relationships are intimately connected to spatialised practice. It is through being present in certain spaces, such as the workplace, that people will be able to ‘get to know them’. She also comments that they are ‘a private group, they are quite to themselves’ and later she mentions that ‘the Roma keep themselves together – they don’t go outside their culture’. This emerges in a different form later in the interview when she comments that ‘if I’m told there is a ‘white lady’ in the house then I know it’s Paula. If they say there has been a black lady in the house then you’ll know it’s me’. There is an underlying idea that those families who are seen as Romanian and Roma keep within their family group, do not engage in visible public spaces, and do not open their ‘private’ spaces inside their homes to others.

Lisa’s view that ‘they stick with their own’ is echoed throughout the narratives with different bureaucrats, despite this idea being linked to the structural constraints that are placed on families due to transitional controls and the racism that they experience in the job market. The idea that ‘Romanian Roma’ only want to be within their own family is mirrored by Samantha, the Deputy Head of the Children’s Centre in Wilton Rise. The spatial metaphors used to describe ‘Romanian Roma’ as one ‘group’ that exclude themselves from the other ‘groups’ in the area is prevalent. Samantha explains in a conversation regarding ‘Romanian Roma’ in the area:

‘We have to be mindful of what we are able to do. What are the Government’s expectations of us? What does that mean for the community? What will the community look like and feel like? But you can’t be one group and not participate – that is a disaster for that community. In the past it was predominantly South Asian but that is changing. We expect our workers and services to be equal to all different nationalities and we expect the people accessing the services to do the same.’

The idea that ‘Romanian Roma’ ‘stick with their own’ also emerges through this narrative which she terms a ‘disaster for that community’. Not only are mothers seen as spatially deviant, they are also seen as deviant in the way they organise their time and are characterised as having ‘chaotic lives’. As will be shown in Chapter 6, this perception shifts bureaucratic practice towards those identified as ‘Romanian Roma’. Bureaucrats ‘pop over’ to see mothers due to the illegible rhythms of the mothers’ daily lives. This practice is exacerbated by an idea that mothers are difficult to contact, don’t have or don’t answer mobile phones, and can’t read or respond to written communication.

In addition, the bureaucrats’ narratives express an idea that those characterised as ‘Romanian Roma’ take up too much of their time, or not enough. This acts to increase the focus on home visits and shapes the time of day that home visits take place. Bureaucrats move their interactions with new migrant families to the end of the day on their way home from their office to ensure that they don’t become late for the rest of the day if a meeting takes much longer than they expect (see Chapter 6). This concern is heightened due to cuts in resources and the increasing importance of accounting for time linked to results.

One discourse that emerges to shape the meaning attached to ‘Romanian Roma’ is the sense of ‘entitlement’. Paula states that ‘because it feels as though they are doing us a favour by sending their kids to school they feel as though they can ask us for everything’. This evokes previous scholarly work regarding notions of deservingness and performing the right kind of need. When placed within the wider context, this feeling of ‘entitlement’ can also be seen as a consequence of a lack of information, illiteracy and relationships between family members (see Chapter 7). As reiterated throughout this thesis, mothers often only have contact with one or two home-level bureaucrats and do not know where else to gain advice and information. The confusion about regulations that seem to change around them may also lead to the idea that they are ‘asking for everything’ as a strategy to ensure they are gaining as

much information as possible from the limited numbers of opportunities for interaction with home-level bureaucrats.

A further disjuncture emerges through these narratives, which bureaucrats called ‘disguised compliance’ in multi-agency meetings. In contrast to ‘entitlement’, this describes an encounter that occurs too quickly. The idea of ‘disguised compliance’ acts to make bureaucrats question the validity of information provided. This can be illustrated by one example of a health and safety front line worker called Sharon, who visits a house that is registered as a scrap metal store by Sebastian (the scrap metal dealer). One afternoon with me, Sebastian pulls out Sharon’s business card. Sebastian and his family tell me they don’t know who Sharon is. Sebastian had put her business card in his pocket but can’t read it. I subsequently ask Sharon about this and she explains that she visited the house to tell the family they are required to keep all their receipts and paperwork regarding their scrap metal business. Sharon describes how everyone agreed and so she left the house quickly, feeling dissatisfied with the encounter and as though they just wanted to get rid of her. However, Sebastian is not keeping all of his receipts, particularly as he can’t read them. Also, the receipts do not match his income as he shares the money between those who work with him. This creates difficulty as only one receipt is issued which cannot be shared between different numbers of men working in one scrap metal van. None of the men can read and write and they don’t keep separate and individual records of their income. These difficulties are not disclosed to Sharon but rather the family agree with her.⁶⁷ However, when I explain Sharon’s job, Sebastian in fact seems hopeful that she might return so he can discuss with her the problems he is having with the scrap metal buyers, who he feels are cheating him out of a fair

⁶⁷ I accompany Sharon while she was conducting site visits. She expresses the awareness that many of those who collect scrap metal are illiterate and that this was a large problem. However, the Health and Safety Team in Luton Borough Council have been cut to two officers. Previously through the Migrants Impact Fund she had produced a video about health and safety for hand car washers. However, she admits that they no longer have capacity for these kinds of activities. Sharon resigns from her post at the council during my fieldwork.

price. In this way, disguised compliance can be a consequence of real misunderstanding or a strategy to disarm bureaucrats when they are occupying the space of the home, or as exemplified above, a mixture of both even if the bureaucrats' services are valued. The effects of disguised compliance infuse into an idea that the words of 'Romanian Roma' can't be trusted (see Chapter 7).

The most common phrase employed to describe new migrant families is 'hard to reach', which has also become institutionalised in the job title of one bureaucrat called Emma, a health visitor for babies and young children under two years old. Emma describes how she moved between different teams in health visiting: 'I was in the drug team. Then I came to safeguarding. We all got together and we thought what shall we call our team and we chose Hard to Reach – it just means that we don't miss out on anybody.' She also describes confusion regarding how she receives her clients: 'we have to make it clear to Allocation. When the referrals come in they tell us where to go. But it is confusing for them so sometimes they give me the wrong people so I have to ping it back and say 'not for me!' Her role previously focused on Gypsies and Travellers, but increasingly she describes how Romanian nationals, who are identified as Roma are referred to her.

Emma explains how she previously assisted mothers with social support but found the increasing legislation too complicated. She concludes, 'in the past I have done other things, now I just focus on the Healthy Child Programme, it is just health, I am not here to judge people or check people's passports'. She highlights that 'I haven't even gone there with the changing law... I am better concentrating on the things I am good at. I have done it before and it takes ages. It is pointless for me'. She utilises her discretion to stop herself from becoming a mediator between new migrant families and social rights, defining the boundaries of her role. She holds a particular position because she is employed through the National Health Service and therefore the information she needs to fulfil her role regarding mothers,

new babies and their personal situations is provided from the 'Allocation team'. Therefore, due to the structure of her employment and her focus on health, she is able to develop a different kind of relationship with mothers and families in an endeavour to remove herself from both a sanctioning and supporting role.

In contrast to Emma, the equality and diversity education officer Paula extends the boundaries of her role for some families. Paula is employed by the Local Authority in the Children's Services Department. She is a member of the Equality and Diversity team. Paula describes her role as being responsible for all new migrants who reside in the area from five to nineteen years old. During the course of the fieldwork her job title extends to include children below the age of five, mirroring the drive for 'early intervention' and the extension of surveillance and control into an area previously considered to be a 'private' family matter (see Chapter 3).⁶⁸ This added work places growing pressure on Paula to ensure that she is also registering all babies and pre-school children as well as those who are of statutory school age.

Paula gains a reputation in the Local Authority for possessing expertise which extends through various levels and departments. This becomes clear to me as she is the first person mentioned by bureaucrats I interview when I introduce my research project. Paula is also asked by the Director of Children's Services to write a report about the impact on school places following the lifting of transitional controls, which focuses on the number of 'Romanian' migrants in Luton. I meet Paula in a number of different situations. Firstly, as mentioned, when I contact the Directors' of Services to explain my research; secondly,

⁶⁸ Paula explained to me that this is due to the concern that the 'most vulnerable children' are not applying for school places within the required deadlines (or not applying for school at all). Schools in the most populated areas, which are also the places where the majority of new migrants reside such as Wilton Rise, are consistently oversubscribed and therefore the families with the least resources are often allocated school places furthest away from where they lived.

almost all bureaucrats I interview recommend I speak to her throughout the course of my fieldwork; finally new migrant families also mention her (see Chapter 6).⁶⁹

Paula tells me she often works all night, for example writing letters of support for unaccompanied asylum seekers or filling in forms and paperwork from the visits and meetings she conducts during the day. I often receive text messages and emails from Paula in the early hours of the morning. Paula also visits families in the evening. On one occasion she helps a single mother from Jamaica move house because she is being evicted from her temporary accommodation to a hostel. Paula and her husband also drive families to London to visit embassies or attend immigration court hearings. Paula invites me to her house for Sunday lunch and our conversations oscillate between the actions she undertakes through her waged employment, and actions that might be considered to be ‘volunteering’.

Due to Paula’s many years of experience, other professionals do not question the boundaries of her role. The belief in her ability means she is often asked to fulfil tasks for which she does not have the formal training. It also means that her use of certain terms, such as ‘Romanian Roma’, holds weight with others. She tells me she registered the first Roma family in Luton. They had moved from London where they gained indefinite leave to remain because their claim for asylum had not been resolved when Romania acceded to the EU in January 2007. Therefore she had been aware of their ‘Roma’ status by virtue of their asylum claim. Due to the trajectory of these families to Luton as refugees, they emerge under Paula’s remit for ‘new to the UK’. Similar to other bureaucrats Paula has an impression that the families she identifies as Roma do not want to form social relationships outside their own extended family. When we embark on home visits together she finds it unusual to find non-family

⁶⁹ On the one occasion I am not referred to Paula from an employee of the council she is very surprised and disgruntled that the particular individual in the Local Authority does not know about her work.

members in the house who are not front line service providers that she already knows or those from the church (see Chapter 6).

Many bureaucrats define themselves in contrast to Paula due to the length of time she has been working; the structure of her role which provides her with a wide-ranging perspective of Luton residents; and her reputation for working closely with families. Lisa describes how Paula is ‘the perfect person for the job’ and Emma comments that Paula ‘has exactly the right attitude’. These perspectives become increasingly salient when bureaucrats come together in multi-agency meetings.

This section has reviewed the different contexts, circumstances and statuses of five home-level bureaucrats, identifying how their different situated positions and roles contribute to their understanding of the term ‘Romanian Roma’ and how this label begins to have implications for the types of encounters and negotiations available to these new migrants. Recurring perceptions include that ‘Roma’ ‘stick with their own’, are ‘hard to reach’, have a sense of ‘entitlement’ and ‘can’t be trusted’. These perceptions are all vital to understanding how new migrants’ room for manoeuvre is limited and why these bureaucrats exercised discretion to enter the home (as will be explored in more detail in Chapters 5 to 7).

The next section will explore how new migrants become visible to state and other actors and how these processes act to shape home encounters.

Becoming visible: trajectories of initial encounters

This section explores how different new migrants came to be visible to state actors within the category of ‘Romanian Roma’, and how the process of becoming visible itself shapes the

terms for subsequent encounters and negotiations. As will become clear, as a result of different individual trajectories and wider welfare state cuts and restructuring, the role of church and voluntary actors alongside home-level bureaucrats becomes vital.

In September 2013, formal meetings are established to discuss families identified by front line staff as ‘Romanian Roma’ at Wilton Rise Children’s Centre. The meetings become significant for guiding interactions and also serve to solidify practices, interpretations and discourses around families (particularly in light of the perceived rapid shifts in Luton’s population and the changing legal and administrative regulations). The agreed purpose of meetings is to ensure that work isn’t being duplicated for the same family and to share information and resources. The meetings also operate as a space where home-level bureaucrats can gain advice and support. Invitations to the meetings are offered through personal connections and thus meetings are shaped by the dynamics of the relationships between different people and their perceived amount of experience and expertise. Some bureaucrats have known each other for a long time and converse before or after the formal meeting time. Those who are seen as having more experience (such as Paula) are the main focus of the meeting, setting the tone and frame of discussion and making decisions about which families to discuss. The Children’s Centres become crucial sites where meanings are created and shared. There are also discussions about interpretations of regulations.

The meetings are initiated when Samantha, the Vice Principle of the Children’s Centre in Wilton Rise contacts Simon (the pastor). I first encounter Samantha in a Luton Poverty Action meeting (see Chapter 3). She introduces her role as ensuring that the Children’s Centre registers the most vulnerable families in their geographical area, which is an Ofsted target. She describes the statutory requirements that guide her work. She also explains that the Centre is reliant on working with other organisations: ‘You can’t support families as a single agency. You take each individual case, identify the need, agree with them what you are

going to do and then build in the review process.’ Samantha contacts Simon due to a press report in the local newspaper about an event he organised in a Wilton Rise church to address the situation of Roma in the UK. Samantha arranges a meeting with Simon and the Head of Wilton Rise’s Children’s Centre, Clare.

Clare previously worked as a head teacher in a nursery. In an interview with Clare she describes how her current role is not what she expected: ‘People don’t work in the way you want them to work – that was a big learning curve for me, I thought that I would come in and parents would act in the way that I wanted them to act and of course that didn’t happen and I learned very quickly.’ Crucially, she also explains how the complexity of migration and residency requirements are leading front line workers to become more involved in the intimate lives of their clients. She states ‘it’s very complex for every organisation. You need to know where they have come from, who they are married to or not, whether children are in school, whether there is domestic abuse. You have to ask the right questions, and give the right information, because if you have a lack of understanding about what the legalities are you could easily be responsible for someone being deported’. The increasing complexity of welfare and migration legislation has combined with increasing numbers of migrants who are subject to different constellations of regulations.

Simon invites me to attend his first meeting with Clare. Due to the perceived invisibility of ‘Roma’ families and the uncertainty regarding their legal and residency status, Clare agrees to have a formal ‘catch-up’ meeting with Simon every month. Simon tells me after this meeting that he is very excited about this partnership as he feels like he has been working alone for two years and now he has support from others. Clare and Simon also agree that a family worker will be dedicated to registering ‘new Roma families’ in the area. Clare assigns a Polish outreach worker, Kassia, to do this job. She explains her decision stating that Kassia

has the most knowledge about new European migrants to Luton and the legislation governing access to welfare benefits.

I first meet Kassia when I accompany her and Simon on their home visits around Wilton Rise to register mothers with children under five years old. Kassia lives in Bedford, a town 20 miles north of Luton. She has lived in the UK for three years. She previously worked on a maternity cover contract for one year in Luton Rights as a support worker for European migrants. She is also engaged in intensive training to become a qualified family worker at the Children's Centre and is assisting at a support centre for Polish migrants in Bedford on Saturdays. Kassia openly states to me while we are walking around Wilton Rise that she doesn't have previous knowledge or experience working with Romanians or Roma. She tells me she is in contact with a friend in Norway who is learning 'the Roma language' and she would like to try to learn but she is too busy with all of her exams. Her contract is only for one year as the Children's Centre only has funds for twelve months, which would be renewable if they meet their targets. Therefore Kassia is required to document all of her time to justify her role, while also undertaking exams in order to potentially gain a more secure position. Kassia's situation resonates with the notion of 'advanced marginalisation' (Cohen 1999: 26). She exemplifies how, in a diverse urban area with many new migrant groups, she is seen as the 'closest' and therefore the best person to support these new migrants. However, she doesn't share a language and doesn't have privileged knowledge or experience of the legal situation for Romanians as it differs considerably from the Polish experience. This has implications for how relationships can be built, information exchanged and meanings made.

Simon and Kassia's trip to register mothers at the Children's Centre is one way families become 'visible' to state bureaucracy. The families are selected by Simon in consultation with the Children's Centre, in a process designed to identify target families in need of specialised services. Thus, the processes that lead to bureaucrats entering the home mean that

the target mothers are already placed in the category of ‘vulnerable families’. In addition, the assumptions about particular mothers, and therefore the type of questioning that is employed, also lead to the mothers being termed ‘vulnerable’.

Simon is a crucial figure in other ways. On some occasions, Simon knows about a family before they arrive in the UK. A case in point is Dan and his nephew Gigi. Dan tells Simon that Gigi and his family are coming to the UK several weeks before they arrive. Simon picks them up from Luton Airport in his car. Gigi later tells me that he ‘knew’ (*genau*) Simon when he met him. This word in Romanian is different from ‘recognise’ (*prinjerau*), which is the usual way of describing someone that you have met before. When I ask Gigi to explain, he says that as soon as they arrived at Dan’s house (where Gigi and his family are staying) Simon pulled out a small black notebook and wrote down the names and dates of birth of everyone in the family. It is this action that made Gigi to say that he ‘knew’ Simon, meaning that Gigi had an idea of his motivations and his social role rather than commenting that he had seen or met him before.

Additionally, when new migrants first arrive in Luton they often stay with someone they have a connection to, through family or a previous place of residence. As described in the previous chapter, mothers are picked up by a mini bus from their homes to be taken to church. Therefore new arrivals who are staying with family members often attend the *khangheri*. At the church Simon conducts a similar process of writing down a new family in his book. He asks more questions of the family and visits the house to record the details of the family members in more detail. He has a page in his book for each family and notes the name, date of birth, relationship to other families already in his book, and any other relevant facts that they mention. Simon is able to keep in contact with a number of families because he provides this mini bus service to take them to and from the *khangheri*. In order to be provided with transport to the church, mothers tell Simon where they live. They also ask him for advice on a

number of issues regarding work, housing, schools and social welfare benefits. Simon also encourages two families to move to Luton from Manchester because they are good musicians and he believes this would draw more people to the church to listen to the music.

Simon is also a crucial link in drawing attention to families through his connection to Paula, the equality and diversity education officer. He contacts Paula when school age children arrive and require school places. However, this is not a formalised process and Simon does not refer every new child that arrives in Luton to Paula immediately, allowing them to 'get settled'. At times this seems to cause tensions in their relationship. Simon also often accompanies mothers to school meetings as a mediator and translator and therefore gains information about many mothers and children, some of which he shares with Paula. Through my continuing conversations with them both, they seem to be regularly in contact by phone and email.

Contingent constellations of relationships: volunteers and home-level bureaucrats

As the previous section argued, different routes to visibility are important for setting the terms on which new migrant mothers enter encounters. Many of these relationships are mediated by Simon, exemplifying the role of non-state actors in this process. To understand how these processes play out it is important not just to situate the individual actors but to understand how the roles of home-level bureaucrats, non-state actors and new migrants can create complex constellations of relationships. I now explore two such constellations one

centring on new migrant couple Christina and Dan; and the other on church volunteer Christian and a range of other actors.

The first constellation is centred on new migrants Christina and Dan and involves the Elswood Children's Centre (not Wilton Rise) based in Elswood Baptist Church where a woman called Louise works. I first meet Louise in February 2013 in Christina and Dan's house where I am staying at this time. I explain the research to her when she enters the house and I meet her on subsequent occasions in the house alongside some email and phone contact. I also interview her at the end of the research which is tape recorded. Louise's experience with Dan and Christina illustrates the importance of the trajectory through which families become 'visible' to certain service providers. Additionally, although Louise also works in a Children's Centre, her role differs widely from those in Wilton Rise Children's Centre. This contrast illustrates the significance of perceived micro-local demographics to the structures and governance that are operationalised and brought to bear on different families. The contrast also illustrates the significance of the avenues through which different families make social relationships with different faces of the state.

Their different approaches can best be encapsulated through comparing their understanding of the role and development of Children's Centres. Samantha from Wilton Rise explains that '[Children's Centres] used to be tea, cake and sympathy and all the time in the world. But now you have to justify what you are doing all the time – the review and evaluation – what benefit you are bringing to that family and that child. If you are not impacting on anything then what are doing there? You are just intruding on someone's life.' Contrastingly, Louise who manages the Children's Centre in the affluent area of Elswood states 'parents get in a "tizzy whizz" and I tell them to come to the centre for a cup of coffee and a tissue. They just want someone to talk to'. Although Children's Centres may have the same overall targets in

terms of registering mothers in their local area, the location of the centre and funding structure shapes understandings, perceptions and available resources.

Louise describes the structure of her organisation as very complicated: 'We are a commissioned site. The Hub Children's Centre gets the funding from the Council. Then the Hub Children's Centre gives the funding to run Elswood Baptist Church, so they are our managers. But it's like I have two bosses, the Hub Children's Centre and Elswood. The Hub Centre is really good because they just let us get on with it and the church just say: 'yeah that's fine'. So we are almost self-sufficient.' Louise doesn't have strict funding targets and comments she photocopies her diary to justify her work because she doesn't have time to fill in the bureaucratic forms. Elswood is a leafy and suburban area located outside the centre of Luton. She lives with her husband, a policeman, and has a nineteen year old daughter who is finding it difficult to gain employment. Louise describes why she took on the role of running the Children's Centre: 'Before this, I was working as a nursery head teacher in Newton. I like trouble shooting anyway. It wasn't that much of a change. When I did my degree I sort of thought I liked the idea of a family worker. It seemed up my street so when the job came up I went for it.' Louise has a particular understanding of her role as a Children's Centre support worker, saying 'it's like a funny kind of friendship... I feel very privileged to have this position and I don't want to abuse it – especially as I am allowed into people's homes. It just feels really weird'. Despite her narrative which displaces the power that is held within this position through invoking the notion of a 'friend', she highlights her awareness through her description of the transgressive nature of her presence in, what she perceives as the intimate, private space of a family in their home.

Louise comes to know Christina and Dan through Kay, a member of Simon's Cantorford Church (*englezi khangheri*). I meet Kay on many occasions when she is visiting Christina, in church on Sunday morning or in the shopping mall in the centre of Luton. She describes how

she felt ‘called’ to help Christina when she first saw her, commenting that Christina is seven months pregnant. Kay is a retired nurse who lives near Elswood. However, she states she didn’t go to Elswood Baptist church because of the ‘atmosphere’. She later tells me she thinks the people there are pretentious, ‘they think they are better than everybody else’. She therefore attends Simon’s Cantorford Church. Kay has a grown-up son who moved to Australia and therefore she is living by herself. Her son has a daughter who also lives in the south of England, and she expresses sadness that her son is not more involved in the life of his daughter. Through conversations with Kay she seems to place high values on bringing up children in a two parent family. On one visit to Christina’s house, Kay brings photographs to give to Christina which show her visiting Christina in hospital when she gave birth. There are also more photos of Christina and Dan when they first moved to the house with their children. Kay also takes Christina and the children to the Elswood Children’s Centre clinic and this is where they meet Louise.

Louise also describes Christina as ‘standing out’ when she first meets them due to the contrast between Dan and Christina. Christina is twenty-one, very slim, has blue eyes and very long blonde hair which she wears in a single plait that reaches her waist. Dan is thirty-five, with black hair and darker skin. He has been a boxer and subsequently worked in construction and has starkly contrasting frame to Christina. She notes that when she first met them she ‘didn’t have a clue what to do’. Christina and Dan are in a very different position to families that Louise encounters in Elswood which is dominated by large detached houses and where women often have paid maternity leave or don’t engage in paid employment. Louise therefore considers Christina and Dan to be the most ‘needy’ family she knows. Whenever the Children’s Centre has money left in their budget for food, clothes, toys or child equipment it is delivered to them. However, this is qualified by a specific assessment of their situation and aspirations: ‘Dan wants to get a job. He wants to be out and about, he doesn’t

want to sit at home. He is like “give me job and let me do something”. I feel really sorry for them. I think they’re great. They have struggled so much. It seems so unfair. They deserve to be [pause] they really want to work. Christina, I have never met anybody like her. She is like the most humble person you could ever meet... The house is always spotless. I am like, you should come to clean my house! They would love to be self-sufficient.’ She continues, ‘they are the only family that we have such intense work with’. It seems Louise does not realise when she meets the family that they are not eligible for public funds. She brings various leaflets for Christina including an application for ‘Healthy Start’ vouchers which would entitle her to free milk and vitamins for the children. However, Christina cannot access these vouchers because she doesn’t receive Child Benefit. On one occasion Louise tells me she has never encountered a family like Christina and Dan before and that she shouldn’t really be helping them because they are outside her designated geographical area, ‘they should really be at Parkham Lane’. However she wants them ‘on my books’. Louise provides crucial informal support to Christina and Dan, using her church budget, as she sees Dan and Christina through the optics of deservingness underpinned by their converging religious beliefs (see Chapter 6).

The location of Christina’s house therefore becomes highly significant for how she experiences bureaucratic interactions. Christina lives in Beacon Hill in a house that was found for her family by Simon. The landlord lowered the rent for the family as a favour to Simon and because it is in poor state of repair and therefore he could not be able to find another tenant before he renovated the building. The house is located on a main road that links the centre of Luton to Elswood and therefore the house is perceived as a convenient place to visit for volunteers and those with cars. Louise is able to ‘pop over’ without any problems on her way to and from the centre of town (Chapter 6). The house is also located in a different area from Dan’s family, who live in Wilton Rise. By remaining continuously in

one house particularly in an area outside Wilton Rise, Dan and Christina are able to access a wider range of different people providing different resources. One volunteer from the church doesn't like going to Wilton Rise because she considers it to be too dangerous, but will visit Christina's house in Beacon Hill. When I walk this distance with mothers and children it takes us around fifty minutes and requires navigating a steep hill. The women in Dan's family do not visit Christina in her house often. On one hand this isolates Christina from the emotional and practical support of her sisters-in-law. I am often asked when I visit their house or meet them in Wilton Rise's main shopping street if Christina and the babies are sleeping and eating okay. On the other hand it releases Christina from some of the gossip that surrounds keeping the house straight and the resources required to provide visitors with food and drinks. It also allows her to control the space of the house more easily than some of her family members; however, this requires constant negotiation (Chapter 6).

The gifts that Louise brings to the house are rationalised by the family as 'from God' and therefore they don't hesitate to accept the deliveries. Furthermore, Louise begins to organise multi-agency meetings, bringing together different people who are 'supporting the family'. This includes Lisa and Simon. However, in contrast to the meetings at Wilton Rise which don't include target families, these meetings also include Christina and Dan, with Simon translating so they can be involved and ask questions. Additionally, the whole meeting is arranged for one family and therefore they don't rely on a particular individual raising an issue or problem. Therefore although both are 'multi-agency' meetings in Children's Centres, how they are formed and played out results in different consequences due to the connection between Kay and Christina from the Cantorford Church.

I now turn to the second constellation of relationships, which highlights how relationships initiated and developed through the *khangheri* are extended to include volunteers, home-level bureaucrats and a variety of 'clients'. This network is presented through the perspective of

Christian, a non-migrant volunteer from the Cantorford Church. Christian moved to Luton following his divorce in 2010. He has a son who joined the army just before I start my fieldwork in 2013, and a daughter who completes her A-levels in 2013 and is working in a high street coffee shop. His daughter lives with his ex-wife in St Albans, a town eleven miles south of Luton. Christian recounts how he never enjoyed his previous accountancy job and when he quit he became an oven cleaner. He moved to Luton because the area did not already have an oven cleaning business. On moving to Luton he took up salsa dancing and through a relationship (which subsequently broke down) he began attending Cantorford Church. He became very involved in the Church and developed an interest in missionary work. In 2011 his mother died and bestowed Christian her inheritance. Christian closed his struggling oven cleaning business and decided to undertake missionary work full time, funded by his mother's inheritance. He tells me he expressed interest in moving to a different country but Simon suggested conducting missionary work in Luton with 'the Roma'. When he agreed Simon introduced him to Violeta and her five children. Christian describes how he feels Violeta is a good choice because she is a widow with children and the Bible expressly tells followers of Jesus to help individuals in this situation.

Christian describes how at this time he often takes Violeta and her eldest daughter shopping for food in Asda and occasionally gives her money from his mother's inheritance to pay her electricity and water bills. He tells me he justifies this because he thinks his mother would be happy that he is using her money to help Violeta. Simon and Christian also take Violeta's two eldest sons camping. Christian also drives Violeta to her cleaning job at a night club. Simon subsequently finds Violeta a cleaning job in a Christian education charity in the centre of Luton. This allows her to stop selling flowers outside the cinema. Also she no longer has to work in the early hours of the morning cleaning the night club and therefore doesn't leave her children at home alone. Christian, utilising his accountancy experience, fills in Violeta's tax

return and ensures that she is not being overcharged on her gas, water and electricity bills, as Violeta cannot read.

In addition to his relationship with Violeta Christian drives the mini bus to collect women and children to take them to Roma Church (*khangheri*) on Wednesday evening (see Chapter 3). Following one year of missionary work and spurred by his dwindling finances, Christian begins working as an adult carer. He limits his missionary work to Wednesdays and occasionally gives lifts on Sunday mornings to Cantorford Church. In addition to visiting Violeta, Christian also begins to visit Sanda, a mother of three who attends the Roma Church (*khangheri*) on Wednesday. Sanda's husband, Miron, was the nephew of Violeta's deceased husband (Miron's father is his brother). Sanda finds a small amount of domestic cleaning work and therefore Christian, who is keen to ensure that she is working 'legally', buys her an invoice book, organises her cleaning product receipts as expenses and keeps her accounts, as Sanda also can't read or write. Miron buys and sells second hand cars and is often out of the house when Christian comes to visit. Christian does not mention the possibility of registering Miron's business and helping him to gain self-employed status. This highlights the focus on mothers from volunteers as well as state actors.

When I visit Sanda's house with Christian it seems as though they have a routine. Christian arrives at around midday on Wednesday and sits on the couch in the small front room. Sanda makes him coffee, hands him a pile of papers and envelopes, and sets about preparing lunch in the adjacent kitchen. Christian reads the letters and either throws them away, files them in a large ring binder that he bought for Sanda, or sets them aside for further action. Sanda then serves food to both Christian and me. She piles Christian's plate high with pasta, cheese sauce and ham without eating herself. She offers him second portions before she serves herself food. He playfully recites one phrase he learnt from Sanda, '*tu san ch'xalo?*' (are you not eating / are you full?). He tells me he remembers this through thinking about a cello,

accompanied by a hand motion across the stomach as if bowing a cello. This was a particularly effective mnemonic device as Sanda and some other mothers often asked this question accompanied by this hand gesture that was made to signify being full and eating enough food. Following the meal Christian begins addressing Sanda's bureaucratic concerns.

Through visits to Sanda's house Christian also meets Georgeta who arrives from Romania in April 2013. Georgeta is married to Rosvan, who is Miron's uncle (Rosvan's brother is Miron's father). Christian develops his relationship with Georgeta through concern for her seven year old son Emil who has visibly severe eczema. The first time I meet Georgeta is when Christian is registering Emil at the doctor's surgery (with the help of Sanda's eldest child, Mironitso, who is eleven years old and is often taken out of school to translate for the family). Through Emil's skin condition, and the frequent trips to the doctor with Georgeta, Christian begins to teach the family English. He also becomes the first person the family calls for help with bureaucratic documents.

There are a number of occasions when Christian acts as a gatekeeper to different bureaucratic spaces. Due to this, Christian's help also becomes a marker of status among the families addressed here and his actions are subject to rumours and contention between families (see Chapter 7). Christian also has a strong relationship with Maria (Maria's paternal grandmother is Violeta's maternal aunt). Maria was married in her home town in Romania and lived in Cardiff selling the Big Issue from 2007. She often narrates this time in her life as the happiest time when she had 'no stress in the life' and when she had given birth to her daughter. However, when her daughter was four years old her husband went to live in Spain, taking their daughter with him. I heard many different stories regarding how and why Maria's husband left. The first time she tells me she had been in France when he left and the next time she tells me they had been in Brussels. I also hear from Paula that Paula heard that Maria's husband had asked her to come with him but she refused. Despite the contrasting narratives,

she consistently describes the loss of her daughter as a turning point which precipitated her move to Luton to live with her brother, Sergui, and her mother, Patricia (or *phurri*, meaning old woman). She often describes to me that she has ‘too many problems in my life here’ (*but problema ando murre viatsa ate*) and it seems as though living in Luton is a period of uncertainty and turmoil.

Maria is one of ten siblings and three of her sisters also live in Luton. One of her sisters gained refugee status in Toronto and then came to live in Luton with her husband and three children. Her younger sister gained refugee status in Croydon and moved to Luton when her brother arrived from Brussels three years previously. Her youngest sister married into a family with few resources. Her husband is in prison and she also has spent various short periods of time in prison convicted of stealing and aggressively begging. I often meet her begging with her mother (Patricia) on the main high street in Wilton Rise. Throughout my fieldwork she always seems to be wearing a ‘*chasura*’ or bracelet on her ankle, a surveillance device to ensure she upholds her probation conditions.

Maria gained a National Insurance Number by selling the Big Issue in Cardiff and therefore may have been able to gain access to social protections in a number of ways. However, she experiences very different mechanisms due to being a single woman. Through attending the Roma Church (*khangheri*) she met Christian and he began to complete her tax returns and read her letters as she was illiterate. Christian, when requested by Maria, drives her to the Cantorford Church (*englezi khangheri*) on Sunday morning. Christian visits Maria at her house and knows her family very well. As he is alone at Christmas, Maria invites him to spend the day with her family in her brother’s house. Christian is also invited to birthday parties and as far as I could perceive, is always welcomed into the house when he visits.

Maria also befriends support worker Lisa (previously mentioned), as Lisa helped Alexandra (married to Violeta's brother, whose maternal aunt is the sister of Maria's paternal grandmother). Maria comments on how both she and Lisa have gold teeth and like to dance: 'she is big like me – BOOM!' (*si bari sar mange* – BOOM!). Lisa becomes aware of Christian through Maria and also asks me to put them in touch with each other. She subsequently begins to ask him questions about how to manage the self-employed status for Romanians as he has seemingly been completing tax returns very successfully. As mentioned above, Lisa has only previously worked with people who have full entitlements to public funds and no immigration issues and therefore is unsure about eligibility surrounding habitual residence tests and the right to reside.

Christian and Lisa have very different ways of approaching their bridging role between individuals and their engagement with the state. Lisa tells me, 'I will help them apply but I can never guarantee them anything'. She says it isn't her job to decide whether someone can apply or not for certain benefits, or for certain jobs. She views her role as helping facilitate the process before someone else decides (although as shown in the following chapter this is not always the case). However, Christian actively refuses to assist some individuals. He makes assessments based on the intimate knowledge that he gains from building relationships with families over a long period of time. He then uses this knowledge to decide whether or not help (see Chapter 7). Relationships between Christian and those he helps illustrate how new migrants' intimate lives are implicated in their negotiations regarding access. The details of relationships and the way parameters of performances are negotiated between new migrant mothers and volunteers are further elaborated in the chapters that follow.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how different actors' biographies and trajectories inform the 'optics' they mobilise to make assessments and decisions about new migrant families. I have further elaborated on my use of the term home-level bureaucrat by remaining attentive to the situated and embedded nature of bureaucrats' role and the work they undertake. This chapter has also argued that although bureaucrats and others come to use and develop the same label for these families, 'Romanian Roma', they all bring different ideas and experiences which are shared through formal meetings and informal conversations. These ideas are then brought to bear to shape discretionary decisions.

In addition, this chapter outlines two crucial developments in front line work. First, those who undertake these roles are increasingly diverse and also less directly accountable to the Local Authority through subcontracts (such as Pathways and the complicated funding arrangements for Children's Centres) and the role of volunteering. Second, the duties that are bestowed on these roles are increasingly pivotal to the abilities of new migrants to *make place*. The seemingly small discretionary decisions undertaken by home-level bureaucrats have wide ranging consequences which interact with the decisions of voluntary actors.

The complexity and confusion around the term 'Romanian Roma' contributes to home-level bureaucrats feeling that their clients are less predictable or more difficult to fit into preconceived bureaucratic categories. This exacerbates feelings of uncertainty and confusion regarding their role and how to fulfil it. Dubois argues that uncertainty and individualisation that has opened such wide spaces for discretion does not 'signal disaggregation of the state...' but instead signifies a consistent mode of state governance in which the state exerts power over its citizens by affording street-level bureaucrats discretion and leeway' (Dubois 2014:

40). I argue that this ‘mode of state governance’ is also acting to increase the outsourcing of services through formal agreements, such as Pathways, and informal relationships such as those with volunteers who are conducting missionary work. Therefore, home-level bureaucrats have increased discretion and due to the diffusing of services to many actors, this authority has also been dispersed. State effects are not only ‘deterritorialised’, but where and how they emerge is becoming more slippery and difficult to pinpoint.

This chapter also shows how the restructuring of the welfare state affects the development of the category of ‘Romanian Roma’. Changes within particular services, targets and strategies all act to inform and shape the way in which these families become visible and are perceived. This chapter has illustrated the complex webs of relationships that individuals maintain and how this shapes their actions and thoughts about others.

The following chapter presents mothers’ negotiations of performances as they traverse between the different individuals who come to offer ‘help’ in their home. Families are required to perform the right kind of ‘need’ which can be constantly shifting (Howe 1990; Tyler 2013). Therefore the following chapters argue that the material (Chapter 5) and social space (Chapter 6) of the encounter is pivotal to the relationships that can be made; and provides the ethnographic data to show how meanings drawn from the space of the interaction are based on assessments of performances that (re)inscribe the values associated with categories.

Chapter 5. Materiality and assessments of good mothering

Introduction

This chapter argues that the space of the encounter defines the parameters through which the encounter can take place. The site of interactions with state actors is therefore fundamental to how new migrants are able to *make place*. In addition, it argues that due to interactions occurring in the home space with home-level bureaucrats who are operating under certain conditions, negotiations of membership are highly contingent and require intensive work by both home-level bureaucrats and new migrants. Chapter 1 presented the notion of the home encounter as a site of value-exchange (Skeggs 2004) where different conceptions of values are contested. Crucially, Chapter 1 argued that these negotiations can be conceived as ‘state acts’ (Thelen 2014; Dubois 2014).

This chapter builds on the theoretical discussion of how the contours between public and private space were drawn in the development of the modern nation-state and Nancy Munn’s intervention regarding how understandings and perceptions of space infuse social relationships and (re)production of space (1996: 450). Chapter 1 described the symbolic linking of the home, mother and child based on white middle-class values as ideal notions on which to base assessments of good mothering. As highlighted in the previous chapter, those entering new migrant homes have a range of different backgrounds and experiences, but all have training on safeguarding particularly for children. Similar tensions and negotiations emerge through the perceptions and expectations surrounding toys, child development and the value of different objects. The ways in which different notions of the public and private

space are mobilised in the bureaucratic gaze has repercussions for fixing families, denoting their deservingness and making decisions about the form and manner of formal or informal support and resources they offered. Due to the fusing of immigration control and welfare requirements (Chapter 3), these seemingly small decisions have large consequences regarding a families' access to the state and the terms on which they are able to *make place* in the UK.

This chapter identifies two processes through which the inscription of different values on different subjectivities manifests in encounters. Although I have analytically separated these two strands, they emerge concurrently and overlap. First, I argue that assessments of mothering can be identified in how objects in this space *take* meaning using Cederberg's, (2005), Hacking's (2004) and Sigona's (2009) advances on labelling and engagement with state actors. The chapter moves to examine three ways different new migrant mothers respond to what they perceive as the 'bureaucratic gaze': first, how they present and enact their kinship relations; second, how they manage the space within and outside their home; and third, how they use the material aspects of their home to manage the relationship with others. Through detailing the encounters, the chapter draws out the intensive work undertaken to negotiate different viewpoints and how these are shaped by the space of the encounters. These negotiations reveal how mothers' material circumstances are implicated in assessments of mothering and create additional constraints on their ability to adhere to these expectations.

Second, I argue that material in the house is used discursively to *make* meanings from the interaction (Darling 2014: 490; Squire 2015: 18). I trace the different perceptions of state actors, remaining attentive to the length of time they have been in their current role; how their relationships with new migrants and others have developed; their professional background and training; and their personal experiences and characteristics, such as migration background and gender. Toys (and the reverse 'inappropriate playthings') and how they are (or are not) used in the 'appropriate' manner are argued to be the marker of the public

relationship in the private space. In this way, toys become the ‘cultural stuff’ linked to the judgement of the relationship between mother and child and the capacity of the new migrant mother to shape the child in order to prepare them for appropriate behaviour in the public space or to fulfil the requirements of the ‘good citizen’. These ideas, as will be shown below, infuse many conversations with home-level bureaucrats and also emerge as a site of contention between bureaucrats when reflecting on tensions and difficulties in building relationships with migrant mothers. It is not just the case that ‘motherhood’ gets implicated in the use of toys; rather toys become mobilised to codify meanings of good motherhood.

The chapter is structured as follows. First, I draw on the theoretical framework from Chapter 1 and develop the notion of ‘appropriate’ and ‘good mothering’ to analyse the perceptions of home-level bureaucrats in the space of the home. I combine this theoretical approach with the argument made in Chapter 4, to argue that home-level bureaucrats’ uncertainty regarding home visits and their expertise, training and experience of place shape their understandings and evaluations of value.

Second, I place this within the context of encounters to show how material resources and the space of the house *take* meaning. I use the ethnographic data to show that manifold and conflicting meanings are taken from the assessments of the presence, absence, appropriate use and inappropriate use of objects related to children in the home.

Third, I argue that material resources, and managing the space of interaction with bureaucrats, act to *make* meaning by shaping relations. This highlights the contingent and shifting nature of relationships between bureaucrats and new migrant mothers, and the fragility through which value around mothering is constructed and negotiated. I illustrate how some mothers are perceived as ‘successful’ through gaining a specific understanding of the right kind of disorder in the house and through managing the space outside the house.

Mothers who are able to build relationships with home-level bureaucrats use their understandings of notions of 'Roma' or 'Gypsy' identity in different ways to manage relationships in the home space.

Finally, I highlight how the different ways material objects are used can illustrate the effects of changing bureaucratic structures on the bureaucratic relationships that are able to be made. This final section illustrates the contingent nature of relationships between new migrant mothers and others in the home space when volunteers assume the face of the state.

On the uncertainty of the encounter: understanding home visits

This section addresses the perceptions of the home visit, the uncertainty of encounters and how expertise, training and experience of place all shape understandings and evaluations of value and act as different optics regarding the home space. Before detailing the encounters themselves it is salient to explore the converging and contrasting views of the act of the home visit. Louise, the Children's Centre family worker in the affluent ward of Elswood, commented: 'it feels a bit weird... you have to respect people. I have been given this job and it is a kind of privilege.' Louise's perspective and the structure of her role leads her to conduct home encounters in a particular manner. She 'pops over' to see Christina informally, enabled by Christina's geographical location, the nature of gifts from the Church and Christina's identification as a 'Romanian Roma' mother (Chapter 4).

In contrast, Clare the Head of the Wilton Rose Children's Centre manages more than ten staff members and volunteers. As detailed in Chapter 2, Wilton Rise is characterised by centuries of migration, the cheapest private rental accommodation in Luton and a young but rapidly

changing population. Clare states: ‘it [home visiting] is supposed to be low level work. They [family support workers] go in and do home visits. But it often doesn’t work out that way. Once you are in a house then it turns out that it might be a big piece of work.’ This indicates the uncertainty of their work, the inability to plan, and also the idea that home visits reveal more problems than the justification for enacting the home visit in the first instance. In addition, home visits are not routine or conducted for all families. Home visits are an exception in daily practice and reserved for those who are considered to be target families or, in Ofsted’s terms, ‘vulnerable’. On one hand the home visit is discussed in terms of an intrusion due to the notion that the home is a private space. On the other hand, it is seen as a privilege for those being visited, particularly for those who are considered ‘underserving’, due to the extra resources required. However, the trajectory through which a new migrant mother is encountered is salient. In Wilton Rise, the notion of the home visit places mothers in the category of ‘vulnerability’ through the identification of being ‘Roma’, which leads to increasing resources directed at them. This feeds into the idea that ‘Romanian Roma’ are ‘difficult clients’.

It is also important to reiterate at this juncture that those who work in child welfare are often the only faces of the state available to families and particularly mothers (Chapter 3). Thus these encounters assume primary significance for mothers to learn the bureaucratic identities that they might inhabit. However, for home-level bureaucrats, they do not consider explaining and assessing immigration regulations to be part of their role. The disjuncture between bureaucrats’ ideas of their role and the mothers’ ideas of the bureaucrats role means that home visits assume a specific set of meanings linked to unruly behaviour and time-wasting. In addition, notions of the public-private distinction are reproduced through these discourses. The extra resources required in home visits are linked to the notion that this is a private space and the recognition that home visits often create more ‘work’. Therefore, the

home visit has a distinct set of meanings which emerge differently through the discourses of Children's Centre managers, underpinned by the dichotomy between public and private space.

Toys, childhood and appropriateness

This section draws on perceptions of the home visits and moves to explore the context of encounters. I argue in this section that material objects within the space of the house *take* meanings from the interaction between 'subjects-objects-environments' (Squire 2015: 11) and are crucial to the negotiations that take place. This mechanism is illustrated through assessments of the presence or absence, and appropriate or inappropriate use, of objects related to children in the home. The importance of these objects can be traced to the duties bestowed on home-level bureaucrats who enter the home through the licence gained from 'safeguarding' (see Chapters 3 and 4). They have had training in child development and the 'appropriate' mother-child relationship. It becomes clear through conversations with Children Centre workers and other home-level bureaucrats such as Emma (health visitor for hard to reach groups) and Paula (equality and diversity education officer) that child development is their priority and 'playing' is central to this. Home-level bureaucrats draw on mothers' choices of playthings in narratives to describe relationships and attribute value to different behaviours.⁷⁰ Toys and the material markers of the presence of children become the signals through which understandings regarding good mothering and safety are perceived. These objects take meaning from the space and the perceptions of home-level bureaucrats.

⁷⁰ Historically, toys have signalled specific norms and values: for example, at the turn of the last century toys were seen as a 'crime of the age' and 'a sin against our own children' (Burroughs 1906: 1424, quoted in Best 1998).

In addition, discussions around toys and parents providing ‘appropriate stimuli’ for children convey constellations of meanings among bureaucrats at multi-agency meetings. Therefore some behaviours are perceived and imagined as sources of concern and ‘in need of corrective measures that lead to the systemisation and codification of feelings that become constitutive of formal and systematic beliefs’ (Fortier 2000: 107). Toys and playthings are put to work in different ways to mobilise meanings from these interactions.

Children’s play and toys have long been the focus of research.⁷¹ However, I am not concerned with how children play with toys; how this dictates their educational or learning practices; or how child’s play can be seen as a lens on identity, personhood and society. Rather, I use the discourse around toys and notions of children’s safety or security to argue that perceptions of family structures and use of material objects infuse the bureaucratic gaze, acting to (re)produce certain perceptions of migrant mothers, leading to negative ascriptions of value.

The statutory duty placed on bureaucrats to engage with families is the safeguarding agenda, enshrined in the Children Act 2004. Chapter 3 isolated the importance of the safeguarding agenda and how the governmentalisation of vulnerable children, coupled with the notion of early intervention provided home-level bureaucrats with the discretionary duty to become involved in the everyday lives of families. Home visits are conducted through this perspective and therefore children’s safety is at the forefront of shaping home-level bureaucrats interactions. The material aspects of the home linked to child safety and ‘development’ emerge as a key feature of the bureaucratic gaze. However, as explained in Chapter 4, Children’s Centre support staff and educational family workers are often the only service providers who interact with new migrant mothers. It is often stated to me that their role is not

⁷¹ Sutton-Smith (1986) outlined a theory of toys within the development of modern society, overviewing the intrinsic role that toys play in creating consumer citizens.

what they expect. They often comment that they ‘never get round to’ what they really consider their job should be (such as conducting parenting classes) and are ‘firefighting’ with immigration and benefit issues. They feel as though they are not qualified for this work and are constantly faced with issues that aren’t part of ‘their job’. However, as the sole form of contact between new mothers and state actors, home-level bureaucrats are often the only avenue for new migrant mothers to gain information regarding bureaucratic processes. Bureaucrats are asked about, and often take on the role of assisting mothers with, a wide range of issues including appealing deportations, creating and guiding the bureaucratic identity of mothers, and channelling them through formal paths in the sequential order of bureaucratic logic.⁷² However, this is always justified through supporting the child within the family and thus this relationship is the focal point through which mothers negotiate their position and potential access.

Through many conversations with home-level bureaucrats and observing home encounters, I identify toys and relationships around toys and playing as epitomising the relationship between the mother and child. In my experience of the homes visited there are often soft toys decorating areas such as fireplaces or on shelves. However, these are not viewed as the right kinds of toys, nor are they being used in the correct way, and are absent from bureaucratic accounts. Through discussing the lack of toys and material objects that are linked to young children the home-level bureaucrat employs a particular type of gaze on the household. They utilise the idea of the toy to portray an explanation of difference both in materiality and in the relationships within the home. It is not only the absence of toys but an aspect of a relationship, a type of behaviour and a difference in the way of viewing childhood that is

⁷² Families easily fall into in a bureaucratic limbo due to simultaneous national and local level processes that require original identity documents. This is exacerbated by complex overlapping of bureaucratic procedures that all take varying amounts of time. For example, one new migrant family applies for child benefit before enrolling their children in school. The Department for Education will not release their identity documents until they provide proof the children are attending school. However, the school will not enroll the children without their original identity documents.

under examination when discussing the toys and the alternative term ‘appropriate stimuli’. The appropriate use of toys reveals certain kinds of evaluation through the bureaucratic gaze.

Louise, Clare, Samantha, Paula, Emma and Kassia all mention the importance of playing however they are frustrated that this is not part of their job. In particular, family support workers, Louise and Kassia, express irritation and dissatisfaction that they are engaged in the time consuming process of deciphering families’ immigration status and entitlements. They explain that they have no training for this work and it is not part of their targets or benchmarks for funding. They feel as though they should be conducting parenting classes for mothers. However, there is resignation as Kassia states: ‘we can’t offer a parenting programme if the children don’t have anything to eat or the children are going to be on the street. A lot of the issues here are around parenting – that’s the big thing that I need to be working on. But I am working more on child protection.’

Children’s Centre workers perceive themselves as educators and not social workers, although acceptance of this kind of work has been built into their narratives and justified through the dynamics within this particular geographical area. Clare comments, ‘If we could be running parenting programmes and upskilling we would be so much better. It is just so transient here. You never see the results of what you are doing here’. Louise also states, ‘A lot of people come in and want help with things but we have not got the professional labour’. Thus the role of playing with toys becomes salient because of the way services are structured in the area and the training and priorities of bureaucrats who take on these roles.

Conversations are often based around play and interaction with children and this is also used to inform decisions about removing children away from their families. Therefore, the stakes relating to toys and playing are high. Rumours proliferate about children being taken away from families. These rumours grow and change over time as they are passed through families

(see Chapter 7). Families addressed here are seen to exhibit all the characteristics that strain Children's Centres resources in this area. Mothers often present themselves as single mothers, are uncertain about their migration status; are intra-EU family migrants (which is becoming an increasingly complicated area with regard to different entitlements); are illiterate; are perceived to have large families (although this was not usual); are perceived to be low skilled; and are new to the area. In addition, there is the expectation that mothers do not possess the correct parenting skills and this emerges in narratives expressing the idea that they don't know how to play with children or set boundaries within the home. On one occasion Louise mentions to me that she wanted to run parenting classes with Emma (the health visitor for Hard to Reach groups) to show those identified as Roma mothers how to use toys to play with their children:

‘Sometimes it is so different – like we have given them toys but you don't often see the toys out. It's very difficult. I was chatting to Emma about it – we wanted to do something over the holidays but it didn't come off in the end... We wanted to do a ‘Stay and Play’ for cultures where there isn't a tradition of playing with your child – it was to teach them to play. For some reason it didn't happen. In other Indian cultures – I don't know what they do with the children – I think it is a case of seen and not heard.’

She is frustrated that this hasn't happened particularly as this is her main area of expertise and the reason she embarked on this career. She sees benefit and immigration status concerns as drawing her away from what her role should be. Ensuring child development is not a priority where emergency solutions have to be found to ensure that families have shelter, food and clothes. This part of home-level bureaucrats' role seems to be increasingly pivotal as formal social support becomes fragmented and difficult to access. As reviewed in Chapter 3, in order to accurately evaluate whether mothers are eligible for social assistance home-level

bureaucrats need detailed information about mothers' migration trajectory, financial situation, income and legal status. They also require knowledge of rapidly shifting UK immigration, welfare and case law; and they have to make a discretionary decision regarding their own legal duty to the child and family in light of increasing demand for services and reduced personnel, time and funding.

In addition, mothers often change their stories depending on rumours and gossip concerning other family members (Chapter 7). This is often based on incomplete information from experiences of other family members who have different circumstances and reside in different geographical locations. Uncertainty about this information serves to increase the importance that bureaucrats give to the material aspects of the house. In many encounters there seems to be a presumption that mothers are withholding the truth of their situation and their relationships with others within the private space (Chapter 6). In this context the material aspects of the mother-child relationship are fixed upon by the bureaucratic gaze. The material is something that can be seen and the relationship and meaning attached to a material object is thought to be self-evident. Importantly, it is something tangible that can be proved and drawn on in subsequent conversations, meetings and encounters with other service providers, line managers or social services. Family and living arrangements often cause uncertainty for home-level bureaucrats and therefore they focus on the material aspects of the house to make sense of relationships. The bureaucratic gaze more readily fixes on the material when there is a lack of verbal interaction which increases throughout the course of 2013 due to budget cuts and the decreasing use of interpreters. Bureaucrats are also under increasing pressure to be able to justify their involvement and to evaluate their own performance (Chapter 3). The tangible material aspects of the house, such as having healthy food and toys to play with, take on meanings because bureaucrats use them to make sense of relationships and justify their evaluations of the family and the household.

Toys are also used to draw comparisons and construct hierarchies. When discussing the development of children in a family characterised as Roma, Paula noted in contrast that ‘my children knew how to play with blocks when they were about 4 or 5 months old’. This holds implicit judgements, not regarding the inability of the child but the failure of the mothers to provide the right kind of parenting and education. Paula primarily makes this comment to express the worry she feels for these children being ‘left behind’ when they reach school. In her view, it may already be ‘too late’ for these children when they reach statutory school age because they don’t have the requisite skills to behave and learn in the same way as their peers. Thus, Paula reproduces the idea of distinct phases of childhood that correspond to particular markers of ‘development’. Through this comment she also alludes to the idea of early intervention where intervening in a child’s life at an early stage will mitigate against problems in the future.

Toys encapsulate many of the underlying values that are being played out, and they act as a way of pinpointing and making a notion of difference legible and explainable. Toys and playing encompass how bureaucrats vocalise their concern about a child and the home. They are imbued with this meaning from their shared knowledge and training about child development. The use of toys and the way this fixes the bureaucratic gaze on the material aspects of the home in order to evaluate notions of deservingness, respectability and value can be seen through Paula’s explanation of her dilemma when explaining a particular family situation to the Local Authorities’ Safeguarding Board:

‘Social services just don’t understand some issues and the assessment they made of the boy staying with his grandparents – I could have said that would be the case in any Roma house – basically – any Roma house could be said to be neglecting the children – no stimulus, no toys for them, no boundaries in place in the home. They think that they have real emotional issues because they don’t like being alone in a

room – all Roma are like this – they hate being alone. I tried to explain but they said there is no negotiation. They think I am making excuses but I am just trying to understand where they are coming from. The cultural issues are very difficult – I try to translate cultures and try to understand.’

Paula reflects on how the material aspects do not fully portray the relationships within the house; however, she elides ‘no toys... no stimuli... no boundaries’. The relationship to the material is extrapolated to inform the relationship between child and grandmother, and is then related to boundaries that reflect how the child will echo in public space what they learn in private space. In this case the use of toys informs social services. It also illustrates how the bureaucratic gaze fixes onto and uses the material within the house. Toys are drawn on to make sense of relationships. These relationships, the deservingness linked to them, and the concomitant value that is being ascribed, have consequences for the types of support offered and the avenues which home-level bureaucrats lay open for different migrant families.

Throwing out toys and unruly mothering

Both volunteers and home-level bureaucrats mention instances where the presence or absence of objects in the home is detrimental and liable to break or shift a relationship. Drawing on Douglas’ notion of matter ‘out of place’ where the presence of such objects disturbs the social and spatial order of things (1966: 36), the difference between mothers’ and bureaucrats’ notions of good mothering can be brought to the fore. For bureaucrats the absence of such objects disturbs the perception of social and spatial order with the private

space as a place for children's development. This then infuses encounters with certain value judgements regarding the mother-child relationship.

For the new migrant mothers here, the presence of toys all around the house does not correspond to their ideas of a 'straight' (*vorta*) house that should be clean and with no objects on the floor or the surfaces. The idea that objects are left on the floor and surfaces around the house provokes the potential for gossip and rumours from family members who come to visit, and would be seen as *lazzhav* (shameful). Children's toys are not exempt from this evaluation. Cleaning the house is sometimes undertaken quickly and by different women or girls who reside in the house. On many occasions Maria, who lives with eight others, complains that letters go missing. It is difficult for her to keep track of letters because many different women clean the house and, as none of the women can read and write, they often throw away pieces of paper. On one occasion I am talking to Maria in the back garden of the terraced house in Wilton Rise where she stays with her brother's family and various others who work for her brother. She is sorting through a large pile of different objects that have been swept and cleaned from the house. She extracts socks and a cardboard packet that contains moisturiser and she checks cigarette packets to ensure that there are no remaining cigarettes, before throwing the remaining items in the bin. It is unclear who has done the sweeping but it is evident that it is not Maria and she is annoyed particularly because someone has placed her new moisturising cream in the pile to be thrown away. This short example illustrates how illiteracy and family organisation combine to create a different values and behaviours related to material objects.

For the bureaucrats, throwing away material items, infused with values linked to the child-mother relationship evokes the idea that children's needs aren't prioritised and therefore the children might be 'at risk'. This includes throwing away school jumpers, toys, books and letters from school. This is also linked to an idea that these families live such 'chaotic lives'

that they are unable to hold onto such things. When school uniform goes missing, this is also infused with ideas about Roma families not valuing education. On one occasion, Paula is very frustrated when one mother requests a second school jumper. It emerges that her older daughter was visiting and tidied the house, placing a lot of different objects in the rubbish bin, including the jumper. These feelings of frustration are heightened when budget cuts mean that Paula can no longer provide uniform vouchers for European migrants without recourse to public funds.⁷³

The inappropriate use of objects is also evident in descriptions of the mother-child relationship. Service providers note that children are seen playing with computer games that are the same as their grown-up cousins and uncles and therefore are 'not appropriate'. Paula and Kassia also note that children are often just 'stuck in front of the TV all day'. There are no separate games for children. These computer games are often put on when a service provider is in the house to try to ensure the children are sitting quietly rather than running around. Mothers believe that by making the child quiet they are adhering to the service providers' perceptions whereas this serves to worry family workers that the children are given inappropriate games to play with, there are no stimuli in the house and the children are not being cared for in the 'appropriate' way.

This section has argued that home-level bureaucrats have a particular perspective on the mother-child relationship which privileged child development, playing and the appropriate use of objects in relation to children. First this section laid out why toys and playing become crucial to the bureaucratic gaze, drawing on home-level bureaucrats situated perspectives. Second this section illustrated how uses of objects *take* meaning to create hierarchies of

⁷³ Paula does provide school uniform vouchers to non-EU families with No Recourse to Public Funds and to those with no right to work. However, due to her limited budget she feels she cannot justify giving uniform vouchers to families who have a right to work in the UK but weren't doing so. She acknowledged that many Roma families could not find work, due to the transitional controls and their stigmatised Roma status.

deservingness. Third, I argued that toys encapsulate many underlying values regarding family organisation and are used as a way of *making* meaning through pinpointing and making a notion of difference legible and explainable. Finally, this section explored different ideas regarding the value of material objects. The different perspectives regarding the presence or absence of objects and the way objects are utilised infuse bureaucratic understandings of families, serving to heighten negative ascriptions of values on those identified as ‘Romanian Roma’.

Negotiations of values on fragile ground

This section presents three vignettes of encounters between home-level bureaucrats and new migrant mothers. I argue that converging and contrasting understandings of material objects in the home space flow and shape the interactions, leading to negotiations of values to maintain fragile relationships. The first vignette details how space and material objects *take* different meanings and are also used to *make* different meanings. It depicts the negotiations one mother enacts to balance contradictory norms and relationships between her family, probation, social services and education support workers to try to secure her spatial location in her house in Wilton Rise and her social role as a mother of three children.

When I return from Romania in October 2013, Paula calls me and tells me not to move back to the house where I was previously staying. Before I moved into this house she warned me that there were many issues regarding unpaid council tax and that the police had been around to the house many times. She tells me that Claudia has moved back into the house and that Georgeta wouldn’t move out. Paula also offers her own house as a place for me to stay rather

than going back and staying in this house. She is worried because there are school age children living there and the house is now very overcrowded. There are seven adults and five children staying there. When I return to visit Georgeta, many changes have occurred in the material and physical aspects of the house. Claudia has placed photographs of her sons balanced inside the picture frames that Georgeta has put up on the walls. The picture frames had been given to Georgeta for cleaning domestic houses rather than being paid money. Georgeta tells me that Claudia, who lived in the house before she went to prison, moved back when she was released and subsequently told her and her family to move out. This dispute regarding the terms on which Georgeta and her family had moved into the house is ongoing. Georgeta at this point is working for as a cleaning lady. She began to write this work in an invoice book and with the help of Christian we called to make her an appointment at the Job Centre for a National Insurance Number. The prospect of moving out of the house means Georgeta gaining a National Insurance Number will be increasingly difficult as she will not have a permanent address. Also, all her clients live close by and would no longer be able to knock on her door when they have work for her. In addition, Georgeta's youngest son is attending school five minutes away by walking and she doesn't want to move him. Therefore moving out of the house represents a loss of potential to move into a more secure legal and residential status.

During the dispute about the house, Paula calls to tell me that she has visited Claudia. She tells me Claudia took her upstairs to the bedroom and showed her a baby book, which was not brought down to the communal space where others were having coffee and chatting. Paula narrates to me that she considered this to be an indication of a bond between herself and Claudia because all her other encounters with Claudia had taken place in the front room of the house. Paula describes how they both talked for a long time about the foot prints and hand prints in the book that Claudia had filled in with the help of prison officers. They also

took photographs and stuck them into the pages of the book. At this point Claudia told Paula that she did not want to live with so many people in the house and that she wanted a place only for her and her family. Paula has known Claudia for two years and is convinced that she wants to be a 'good mother' to her two boys and the new baby. However, when Paula suggested that they carry on filling in the baby book Claudia was not interested. This confused and annoyed Paula as she thinks Claudia should be grateful that she is offering to come in the evenings and help her fill in the baby book. The comments about how Claudia wants to live in the house just with her family is interpreted by Paula to mean that she wants to live in a way that also resonates with Paula's own ideas regarding how she relates to her own children. This illustrates the different meanings condensed into one object. As Paula narrates this story she makes reference to the length of time she has known Claudia and says that Claudia is very 'different to other Roma mothers'. One of the characteristics that Paula mentions is Claudia's recent planned pregnancy. Contraception is also used as a marker that makes her different to other 'Roma' mothers. Therefore the rebuttal of her offer to help fill in the baby book marks a distinction in their relationship which Paula finds difficult to reconcile with her previous evaluations of Claudia.

To recap and simplify, Claudia provides Paula with the material object which signifies the relationship between mother and child. Paula, through her bureaucratic gaze but also through a willingness to build a relationship with Claudia, offers to help her to fill in the book. Claudia does not put value on marking the life stages of her daughter in a book through growing handprints in the way that Paula believes constitutes a form of good motherhood. This response does not map easily onto her previous perceptions of Claudia, particularly as she describes her as 'different' to other mothers she identifies as Roma, and therefore causes a disjuncture in their relationship. For Paula, this is made more confusing due to the place

where this encounter takes place. The bedroom is viewed by Paula as distinctly more private than the living room and this serves to heighten the incongruence of Claudia's rebuttal.

Paula describes the movement into the bedroom as a marker of a closer (and perhaps less bureaucratic) relationship. The rebuttal of her offer changes the nature of the help; the willingness, disappointment and possible withdrawal of previous forms and help; and consequently shows how this very moralised expectation can turn sour in a relationship between a home-level bureaucrat and a mother. This causes tension for Claudia who requires Paula's help to gain the resources needed to perform appropriate mothering. Claudia is visible to social services due to her probation conditions and therefore is designated as a vulnerable mother. She is subject to home visits by a number of different agencies including probation and social services, and needs to perform that she is appropriately caring for her new baby. This encounter with Paula shows how she tries to gain resources that would help her to achieve this but the disjuncture in understanding causes a 'failed' interaction through the different meanings crystallised through the use of the baby book. The details of the encounter illustrate the contingent nature of the relationships between mother and home-level bureaucrat as they both try to understand the other and also gain their own objectives from the interaction.

The importance of different perceptions of the material space in the house is highlighted by two further vignettes which illustrate different kinds of leveraging and negotiating values. Both these vignettes take place in gardens. Two mothers, Violeta and Christina, engage in gardening primarily as a place for their children to play. Violeta and Christina are also keen to show and explain their garden to me, to volunteers, and to home-level bureaucrats. They also represent the two families most intricately involved in the Cantorford Church (*englezi khangheri*) and they have houses that are far from Wilton Rise and are not visited often by other family members. Christina is described to me by mothers in the Roma Church

(*khangheri*) as a '*gadji*' (non-Roma) and learned *Romanës* when she met her husband Dan. Violeta is a widow and many members of her family have broken contact with her, which she explains to me is due to her conversion to Pentecostalism (*pentecostalo*). Through the informal support she gains from missionary volunteer Christian, pastor Simon, and a primary school teacher who teaches her youngest son, she has gained temporary accommodation from Luton Borough Council. Hers is the only family I know who gained this type of accommodation as A2 migrants (as opposed to gaining refugee status). The house is located near to Beacon Hill and Elswood and a great distance from Wilton Rise. Importantly, she also has a driveway (though not a car) and therefore volunteers can easily visit her. The location of the house and the type of house take on significance through the different opportunities provided for new migrant mothers' room for manoeuvre in the negotiations of values within the interaction.

For example, Pathways floating support worker Lisa, arrives at Christina's house one summer afternoon. Christina offers her a 'cuppa tea' (she tells me that she learnt this phrase from the nurses in the hospital when she gave birth) and asks Lisa to come into the garden. (Christina is interested in plants and often asks me for the English name of plants, flowers and herbs. She knows the Romanian words for flowers and when we are together in the house and the children are asleep she regales me with stories about going to her grandmother's house near the Carpathian Mountains and learning about flowers with her.) Christina goes out into the garden with Lisa and they look at the grass that Dan laid when he had some turf left over from a gardening job a month earlier. Christina discusses the noisy dog from next door and then some of the problems she has been having with Dan getting a National Insurance Number. The discussion in the garden while looking at the grass provides the space for shared values between Christina and Lisa. Lisa understands Christina's complaints about the noisy dog and they laugh about how he might be stopped. Christina seems proud of the patch

of grass and Lisa congratulates her on keeping the garden so well when she has five young children to look after. Recalling Foucault (1986: 24), the home garden represents a symbolic order that counterbalances the disorder and imperfection of the surrounding physical and social world. Unruly gardens can come to symbolise unruly or uncivilised subjects, becoming a representation of local disorder. Thus, gardens convey important cultural ideas about the relationship between individuals and the surrounding world. This converging of values in the garden illustrates how new migrant mothers manage their relationships with others, drawing on many different symbolic and material resources.

Turning to the last vignette, Violeta similarly understands the importance of the garden as a space where she might be assessed or where she can leverage values. She tries to pre-empt any negative assessment of her garden and explains that the outside is not straight due to her ‘Gypsy children’. ‘They are Gyps boys – what can I do?’ In this way she leverages what she perceives as her visitors’ ideas about ‘Gypsies’ and explains her ‘matter out of place’ in terms she hopes her visitors will understand and also empathise with. By drawing on racialised perceptions and apologising for her children she indicates to her visitors that she shares their common values regarding the outside space around the house and draws on her understanding of others’ perceptions of ‘Gypsy’ boys as unmanageable subjects. Through this performance and understanding of space she hopes to invoke empathy for her ‘unruly’ boys and her position as a single mother rather, than being placed in a stigmatised category herself.

With these examples this section has shown how converging and contrasting understandings of material objects and management of space shapes these home encounters, leading to negotiations of values that can maintain or disrupt fragile relationships. Relationships are highly contingent and mothers’ room for manoeuvre is constrained by the perceptions and expectations outlined in the previous section. These expectations have taken on added salience in light of shifting budget cuts, serving to place the material aspects of the house in

the foreground of home-level bureaucrats' assessments. The following section builds on the previous two sections to show how, through the shifting nature of bureaucratic roles and increasing reliance on volunteers, the contrasting values between new mothers and others can be exacerbated, leading to the breakdown of relationships. This leads to further limitations on the spaces of interaction where mothers might negotiate their place-making, realising their entitlements, and gain a form of access.

The role of toys in shifting bureaucracy

This section argues that the meanings made around material objects in the home become increasingly crucial when support to families is transferred from home-level bureaucrats solely onto volunteers. Through interviews and observations with eight different volunteers, it emerges that they also assess the material objects in the home to produce and fix certain perspectives. Volunteers who are linked either to the church or to primary schools often justify their involvement with families in terms of helping children (see Chapter 4). In contrast to home-level bureaucrats, volunteers do not have a duty to act and cannot access funds to assist their interactions with families apart from their own personal resources. They also identify and assess different kinds of worth depending on their own judgements (which are continuously shifting and changing) and are therefore explicitly guided by their own convictions rather than discursively placing their decisions in terms of their statutory duties or professional roles.

Although volunteers do not have the same duty or licence as front line workers, they often provide access to the state through managing migrant mothers' bureaucratic identity. In some

cases, mothers request this kind of assistance from volunteers who may be very unwilling to undertake such roles. However, by becoming involved in new migrant mothers' bureaucratic entanglements, their actions and perspectives become pivotal to forms of membership in order to gain access to entitlements. However, volunteers are far from neutral or requiring less of a 'performance' to illustrate deservingness. For some mothers, learning the values of volunteers is a more difficult task than performing for home-level bureaucrats. For example, one migrant mother almost loses the support of Christian when she mentions she is having an abortion in order for her gall stones to be removed. Christian's strong belief in the sacredness of unborn children means that he feels unable to stay in this space and is about to break connections with the family when her daughter-in-law intercedes. She confirms to Christian that her mother-in-law will not have an abortion and that she will wait to have the baby before she has the operation, securing his continuing support.

Rosemary, similarly to Christian, is an English volunteer at the Roma Church (*khangheri*). She becomes involved in teaching the children of one family from Bucharest who are waiting to be enrolled in school. Previously she was a missionary in Bangladesh and also taught English to children of recently arrived migrants for two decades. She lives close by to Wilton Rise because she wants to be 'close to this mix of people'. She places her understanding of the family within her previous experience of families from Sylhet, in Bangladesh.

This vignette involves the new migrant family of Cezar and Ecaterina, both identified as 'Romanian Roma', who had previously lived in Blackburn and Tottenham. The father of the children, Cezar, gained a National Insurance Number from his scrap metal business. They had moved to a small terraced house in Wilton Rise with another family with three children. There are also many different single men who stay in the house for varying amounts of time, ranging from a couple of days to a few months. Cezar can speak and write English but Ecaterina, his wife, can do neither. As Cezar is often absent for long periods of time working

with cousins in London, Ecaterina cannot understand or act on any letters or documents sent to the house. Ecaterina asks Rosemary the church volunteer, to look at these documents when she visits. Rosemary, who feels as though this would help her gain a better relationship with the family and would ultimately help the children, begins to take on more of these tasks. She therefore begins to act similarly to a Children's Centre family support worker.

On one occasion, Rosemary and I are drinking tea in the Debenhams café on the top floor of Luton's shopping centre and talking about her experiences when she relates that the family reminds her of the Bangladeshi families she used to teach. These resonances are placed in terms of the material aspects of the house which she uses to evaluate the relationships between Ecaterina and her children: 'If I took around pencil and paper then they would be on the top shelf out of the way – the children would not be able to reach them.' She explains fondly that there was one boy from Sylhet who she began teaching at seven years old. His parents were illiterate and the school asked for Rosemary to 'take charge of this child'. She explains that she worked with him for a long time and now he is a family worker in a school. 'He is married and has a one year old. I went round to his house and there were books and toys all over the place. I almost said – this is like a normal house!' She continues, 'it probably won't work with the women but I can put in the time with the children and this is what will pay off, if they are going to stay here'. A certain constellation of understandings of childhood and value is played out through Rosemary's narrative. Rosemary justifies her volunteering and investment of time through the parenting of the next generation of children. Her comment 'this is like a normal house' confirms that her efforts created a value she acknowledges. She invested in the future of the child and feels as though she was reciprocated by how her former student acts as a parent towards his own children.

Her narrative also highlights a feature that is considered to be a 'Roma' trait, foregrounding the figure of the racialised migrant mother. She explains that she thinks the family won't stay

in Luton and therefore her efforts will not be reciprocated in the same way. Her assessment can be attributed to an essentialised view of 'Roma-ness' based on nomadic roots and seemingly confirmed by the nature of this household with many different men coming and going. The men move through the house as they find work in different factories or construction sites. In fact from my experience, they move quickly due to the irregularity and informal nature of this type of work, rather than through a perceived desire to live a peripatetic lifestyle.

Similar essentialised views emerge in another aspect of the way that Rosemary tries to consolidate and make sense of her experience with this family and her previous experience of teaching English. In one instance, she becomes dismayed by Ecaterina and can't understand her behaviour. This is infused with certain views regarding the correct behaviour of children and parenting. She explains:

'I went round and took colouring and two balls. Horia took the ball and then refused to give it back. The parents have no desire to help them behave differently. Ecaterina just let him do it – did not help to educate him. I keep reminding myself that they are coming from a completely different culture and that is why they are like this. They want to keep everything but they don't keep it. I spend a long time making and laminating things but then we only use them for two seconds and then they nab them and put them in their pocket and then I never see them again. It is like living in a wagon isn't it? If your whole family is living in one room then you don't keep things do you?'

Rosemary becomes particularly annoyed that Ecaterina is in the kitchen cooking and playing loud music when she is trying to teach the children. The behaviour of Ecaterina and her perceived disregard of the materials that Rosemary creates to teach the children makes

Rosemary feel as though she isn't valued. Rosemary also rationalises the family's behaviour as being linked with mobility and movement: 'I wouldn't be surprised if they suddenly disappear'. However, ideas linked to itinerant lifestyles is the way in which she can understand the act of throwing out material things on which she has placed time, effort and value. Rosemary finds it increasingly difficult to understand Ecaterina's behaviour and eventually stops going to her house. Ideas surrounding throwing out toys are linked with misplaced value that derailed the relationship. She also stops filling in the bureaucratic forms and helping manage their bureaucratic identity. Cezar and Ecaterina do not claim any social assistance as, although he has a National Insurance Number, he is refused child benefit due to not having a 'right to reside'. Without the assistance from Rosemary, who had been compiling the documents to appeal this decision, the family withdrew from all bureaucratic processes. They therefore become 'invisible' to the state and take the path of avoidance towards all state interactions.

This section has shown that shifting bureaucratic roles and increased reliance on volunteers act to increase the focus on the material aspects of the home, and also contributes in the fragility of relationships between new migrants and those (such as volunteers) who assume the faces of the state in their domestic spaces. The increasing reliance on the voluntary sector can act to further limit the spaces where new migrants are able to learn about the bureaucratic avenues that might be open to them and the terms on which they might negotiate their membership.

Conclusion

This chapter argues that the site of interactions with state actors fundamentally shapes how new migrants are able to negotiate to *make place*. The chapter has built on the theoretical framework that state forms are embedded in social relationships to argue that, as the space of the encounter shapes the relationships that can take place, state forms will shift when taking place in the domestic space. I have drawn on Munn's conception of 'field of action' (1996: 451) to argue that understandings and perceptions of space infuse social relationships. Inspired by this theoretical intervention, this chapter has shown how material objects *take* meaning from the space and material objects are used to *make* meaning from the space. Remaining attentive to this observation, this chapter has presented three arguments that illustrate how the materiality of the home space shapes how new migrant mothers are able to negotiate values in home encounters.

First, I developed the notion of 'appropriate' and 'good mothering' to address the perceptions of home-level bureaucrats; the uncertainty of encounters in the home; and how new migrant mothers identified as 'Roma' have limited room for manoeuvre as their actions are framed in ways that ascribe them with negative values. Second, I built on this to argue that within the context of encounters, material resources are pivotal to the negotiations that take place through the presence, absence, appropriate use and inappropriate use of objects (principally toys) related to children in the home. The chapter then moved to illustrate how material resources and managing the space of the interaction with bureaucrats act to shape relations, highlighting the contingent and shifting nature of relationships between bureaucrats and new migrant mothers and the fragility through which value around mothering is constructed and negotiated. I illustrated how some mothers leverage their understandings of others' notions of

‘Roma’ or ‘Gypsy’ identity in different ways to manage relationships in the home space. Finally, I argued that shifting bureaucratic structures, with volunteers increasingly assuming faces of the state, foregrounds the material objects in the home. This final section illustrates how the contingent nature of relationships between new migrant mothers and others in the home space can further limit the spaces where new migrants interact with state actors (with both bureaucrats and volunteers as state actors).

The ethnographic detail in this chapter has elaborated how toys and the discussion of the material aspects of the house linked to the care of children come into view as salient markers of the values underpinning the assessment of relationships. Toys emerge in various ways to illustrate the disjuncture in underlying norms and perceptions between home-level bureaucrats and new migrants, acting to place mothers on hierarchies of deservingness. This chapter has also drawn out the salience of being identified as ‘Roma’ in this evaluation. I have shown how two mothers were able to draw on this knowledge in a manner that resonated with bureaucrats. Christina and Violeta are effective in leveraging their perceived ‘Roma’ identity, drawing a contrast between themselves and ‘others’. However, through invoking this distinction they also act to solidify and reinforce stigmatised notions of ‘Roma-ness’. Mothers can leverage material resources in the house or manage the space (in constrained ways) but this relies on knowledge and convergences of values, particularly around mothering and, by extension, the private space. The assessment of values is crucial to understanding how relationships develop and identities are negotiated between mothers and others in the domestic space with effects for how access to resources and membership is assessed and decided.

This chapter’s main conclusion is that the space of interaction with state actors is fundamental to new migrants’ negotiations of place-making. The chapter draws on the notion of stratified reproduction to argue that the meanings made from different values define the

parameters through which mothers can be seen as performing appropriate and safe motherhood in the home. Shifting bureaucratic structures are exacerbating the focus of the material aspects of the home as volunteers assume the faces of the state, and in some cases further limit new migrants' spaces of encounter. The following chapter builds on these conclusions to argue that perceptions of relationships also shape the social space of the home, leading to the uneven production of meanings.

Chapter 6. Home encounters and excluded spaces

Introduction

The previous chapter argued that the material space of the encounter shapes the parameters through which the encounter takes place. The main argument of this chapter is that the social space is also fundamental to the home encounter. The perceptions of different bodies in the domestic space and the relationships between them (re)define the social space and result in uneven production of meanings. I draw extensively on Munn's conceptualisation of excluded spaces by 'considering the symbolic nexus of relations produced out of interactions between bodily actors and terrestrial spaces' (Munn 1996: 449). Using this framework, the chapter explores how 'social space' cannot be abstracted from 'concrete space' and how presence or absence in a space may be entirely dependent on the presence or absence of others.

My focus is to draw out how understandings of relationships act as a mode of boundary making, creating spatial prohibitions inside the home space. This chapter conceives the home not simply as a set of determinate 'places' that have set meanings but in relation to the other objects and people as 'complex kinds of relative space-time' (Munn 1996:450). This chapter argues that the understanding of the body in relation to others in the space, acts to (re)create the space in many shifting and complex ways, unveiling the home as a site of highly uneven production of meanings. In this formulation, tracing excluded spaces provides a lens through which to identify how different notions of public and private shape relationships with home-level bureaucrats.

The details of the encounters enable the analysis to go beyond the general and limited boundary of inside and outside or public and private, instead understanding the nuances of those boundaries along with the varieties in their thickness. The varieties of encounters also reveals the conditionality entailed by gaining a form of membership; the limits to that inclusion; and how exclusion may be operationalised through forms of inclusion (De Genova 2015: 5). The first part of this chapter focuses on how encounters are entered into and how relationships create an understanding of space. I provide ethnographic data to show how these understandings shape negotiations regarding the information and resources exchanged through the encounter. The negotiations are analysed through two different uses of silence. The first depicts a new migrant family being silenced. The second depicts a new migrant mother who has a different understanding of space and the concomitant relationships, and who uses silence to increase her room for manoeuvre. Through these vignettes I examine the potential for resolution as a sense of clarity or ‘success’; and how different actors come to different understandings of the situation as it unfolds. These vignettes illustrate how the ‘field of action’, as a material and symbolic space, shapes and is shaped by actors’ ‘basis of action’, or the meanings drawn from and directed towards the space (Munn 1996:450).

The second part of this chapter shifts attention to boundaries and explores who is notably absent or present, and who absents or presents themselves. This follows Munn’s notion of the mobile social field ‘understood as a culturally defined, corporeal-sensual field of significant distances stretching out from the body in a particular stance or action at a given locale or as it moves through locales’ (1996: 451). Crucially, where and when actors make themselves absent from a space is part of their interaction with it. I elaborate what this might mean for understandings of public and private space and the potential for converging or conflicting values in home encounters. I compare the practices of different families, drawing out two cleavages which affect the relations produced from interaction between bodily actors and

terrestrial spaces. Legal status and close connections with the *englezi khangheri* (Cantorford Church) alter this interaction. Behaviour becomes a resource that can be leveraged; and places can be avoided or entered to different effect at certain times. The main argument of this chapter is that the understanding of the social space of the encounter can be seen to define the relationships that take place there through envisaging the body as a mobile social field (1996: 451). Home encounters become recast as state acts where the values associated with public space are created within the home space, blurring the boundaries between public and private; civil and domestic. This will be drawn on further in the following chapter to examine the role of rumours and ‘true speech’ in the development of strategies to engage (or not) with different home-level bureaucrats in order to keep control over family life; and how negotiations of identity interact with place-making and vice versa.

The chapter is structured as follows. First, I illustrate how encounters are delineated through one vignette which describes the interaction between two social workers, an educational support worker, a new migrant family and me, in the home of the new migrant family. This describes how encounters are entered into and how relationships create an understanding of the space which, in turn, shapes negotiations regarding the information and resources exchanged during and at the close of the encounter. Here the new migrant family is silenced and their legal status and their abilities to *make place* are constructed around them. The relationships between bureaucrats are also influenced by the home space, with different types of knowledge and ‘authority’ negotiated from a state perspective. The second vignette illustrates a similar interaction, where bureaucrats are engaged in defining the limits of legal status and where Christina, a new migrant mother, is silent. However, I argue that she chooses this course of action through an understanding of the relationships and in an effort to make a certain kind of space within the home. This leads to an analysis of absence and

presence. The third vignette shows how understandings of relationships can create exclusionary public space inside the home.

Developing the idea of exclusionary spaces within the home, the forth vignette describes how different understandings of relationships interact with ideas about public and private space. Incommensurate values can be identified which unsettle actors and create disjuncture in relationships. I argue that this leads to negative values being ascribed to different bodies due to different behaviours. Finally, I review how negative ascriptions act to change the time and time management of home encounters, which in turn lead to the crystalisation of perceptions and expectations linked to negative values such as the wrong type of need or deservingness. Finally, I draw the chapter to a close by reviewing the dual nature of the home for migrant mother, as a site of both opportunity and also a site of judgement. I conclude with a review of the argument that public and private space is blurred in the site of the home encounter.

Delineating the encounter: silencing and homemade legal status

This section introduces a vignette that illustrates how different understandings of bodies in relation to the space of interaction lead to a multiplicity of meanings. The following vignette involves Paula, the equality and diversity education officer, and two social workers who meet in a new migrant family home. This encounter serves to categorise the family and negotiations about different understandings of legal status. It illustrates the way ‘truths’ about a family’s situation and the bureaucratic processes that are available to that family are created in the home, drawn from understandings of the space and the relationships of different actors involved. The family are drawn into the exchange of information by providing bureaucratic

documents which are readily supplied by the mother, Catalina, as she has a particular understanding of the purpose of the encounter. She believes the social workers are coming to her house to help her gain access to social welfare. This is because her brother gained refugee status in Croydon before 2007 and she confuses the word 'social worker' with '*socialo*', the word given to welfare benefits. In addition, she is able to provide different documents because the social workers are in her house and she can rush to different cupboards and drawers to retrieve them. The conversation between service providers acts to categorise the family in a particular way, despite family members' own differing identity claims, placing them within certain bureaucratic pathways (A2 migrant) but barring them from others (asylum seeking).

This vignette also exemplifies how certain authoritative voices emerge within service provider practice that do not map on to the level of bureaucratic authority or the ostensible degree of decision-making power. The site of the interaction therefore shifts relationships between bureaucrats. For example, in this encounter the social workers have more tools available that would alter the situation, the most extreme being to start the process to take the children into social care. However, various cleavages emerge. One of the social workers, Rodney, has only been qualified for one week; whereas Paula, the equality and diversity education officer (as described in Chapter 4) has been working with families who are 'new to the UK' in Luton for around four decades. Similarly, although Sarah has been a social worker for many years and has met many families with 'No Recourse To Public Funds', she has no knowledge of the rules and regulations facing Romanians. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Paula has been in contact with those she identifies as Romanian Roma families for four years. The space of the home provides a different kind of environment for the exchange of information between the social workers and the educational support worker. Paula's experience with

families and her presence in the home means that her voice is given weight and delineates the terms of interaction.

As we approach Greenward Road, Paula parks her car in a small car park that is not far from the house we are visiting.⁷⁴ As we walk up to the house the youngest daughter Sorina, who had been sitting outside on one of the concrete steps that leads up to the front door, gets up and walks towards us. Her round face is smiling at me and she asks in her customary gentle voice, ‘who is this lady?’ (*kon si chuvli?*). I tell her this is the lady her mum asked for to make the school applications. She seems happy about the prospect of going to school and stands back so that we can go up the stairs first to enter the house through the open front door.

Paula goes through the front door first and through the front room which is filled with a double bed and TV. The smell of cigarettes fills the room and the window is hung with thick net curtains. Although it is June, the room is dull and still. We walk past a steep staircase that runs up to the two small bedrooms upstairs, through a small doorway and into the back room. The late afternoon sun fills the small room through a back window even though a large TV is placed precariously on the window sill. There are two non-family members sitting on one of the couches. They ask whether I am a translator but immediately Paula answers and explains I am a researcher, to which I add a brief description of my research. Paula tells me later that she thought that they were from the Church. It emerges that they are social workers and are visiting because there are noise complaints from the neighbours, the children are not attending school and there is a report that Radu, the father, was seen hitting his wife and his eldest son.

⁷⁴ This vignette is an extended description of the vignette that began this thesis (see introduction).

This conversation takes about two minutes as all four of us try to work out who the others are and what brings us to be sitting in a small back room of this house. We are occupying all of the couches so that only two boys have seats on the couch next to me. Radu, Catalina's husband, is sitting down in his usual armchair which has a clear view of the TV, the kitchen and the back door. He has half a bottle of white wine next to him and is smoking a cigarette. His wife, Catalina, is in the kitchen and when she sees us she washes out small glasses decorated with gold patterns that have worn away slightly and brings them on a metal tray with a large bottle of coke. She pours coke out for us before anyone can protest and then she takes her place on a low stool by the kitchen, her long skirt trailing on the floor in front of her. She takes a cigarette out of the pocket beneath her overskirt and lights it with a match in a swift movement.

The four youngest children's Argentinean passports and Catalina's and Radu's Argentinean identity cards are on the low glass table next to the glasses of coke. Sarah, the female social worker, asks me whether we are safe and whether Radu is likely to 'lash out'. I tell her he has never lashed out at me, in fact quite the opposite. She asks Paula what translator they need and she answers that Romanian would be best. Rodney notes that the passports are from Argentina and is confused as to why they would need a Romanian translator. Although Radu cannot understand English he clearly recognises the use of the word Romanian and interrupts saying 'no Romania' and pointing to the passports and dropping his cigarette. At this point Catalina speaks to him roughly in Romanëş saying that he was 'very stupid' (*mai dilliamos*) and then picking up his cigarette, re-lighting it and passing it back to him. Rodney asks how they can 'support themselves'. Paula suggests the 'Big Issue' to Catalina who recognises this and is quick to get up and bring her Big Issue badge and jacket. She explains to me (in Romanëş) that her brother in Croydon arranged it for her. Rodney comments in English 'it is not very much to support themselves', to which Paula responds, 'it is more than some people

have got and they manage’. Paula reiterates in English that Catalina and Radu are not here illegally and have a right to reside because they are Romanian.

Radu and Catalina do not understand these conversations apart from a few words that they recognise such as Argentina, Romania and Big Issue. Radu rails against being called Romanian and tries to assert, through pointing to their Argentinean documents, that they are all from Argentina. However, Paula makes the assertion that they are Romanian in order to explain that they are not ‘illegal’. Her previous experience of visiting those she identifies as ‘Romanian Roma’ has led her to categorise this family in the same way. However, her recommendation of a Romanian translator causes difficulties for the following meeting as the children, who have grown up in Argentina, only speak Spanish and Romanian, not Romanian.

Social worker Sarah, following on from Paula’s explanation regarding the families’ Romanian A2 status, questions Paula about free school meals and uniform vouchers, placing the questions within Paula’s area of education and access to schools. Paula expands her explanation away from the narrow focus on schools and asserts that Romanians don’t have recourse to public funds, that ‘we keep hitting brick walls, firstly with the national insurance numbers and then everything else’. Sarah seems uneasy and confused and asks Paula ‘how they can be here, how can they live here without access to anything?’ Paula insists that they are not illegal: ‘you know they are legally here due to their Romanian nationality.’ Catalina and Radu are unable to speak or understand what is being said about them. The two daughters walk backwards and forwards through the room to get to the bathroom or the kitchen to get something to eat and then move out of the way very quickly, which is difficult due to the amount of people and bags that are cluttering the small space.

Once Sarah and Rodney have satisfied their questions with Paula they decide that there is nothing further for them to do and end the encounter. It is now past six o’clock in the

evening. They arrange for a Romanian translator to accompany them the next day and decide that it is best for them to leave. Sarah says that she believes that they might be imposing on the family; however, she only makes this comment when they feel they have concluded their questions and want to leave. Catalina and Radu do not have any resolution to this encounter. All of their documents are laid untouched and unrecognised on the low table next to the untouched glasses of coke that Catalina provides.

Paula and I remain in the back room and Paula mimes accordion playing to Daniela, Catalina and Radu's fourteen year old daughter, as she has seen her in the centre of town playing while her mother walks around collecting money from passers-by. Daniela happily goes to the front room to retrieve her accordion and begins to play. She then shows Paula her favourite Manele song on You Tube. Paula tells her she went to see Copilul de Aur, a famous Manele singer, in London with Cosmin and his family. At the mention of Cosmin, Radu again gets upset, stating loudly 'xoxaven' (they are liars/cheaters). I translate and Paula laughs joking that 'every other Roma family are not good?!' Paula does not consider Radu's exclamation as an indictment on any other family but uses humour to negate what he says. Radu's words are not considered to hold any weight for Paula, in contrast to Violeta (described in Chapter 5).

Catalina returns to the back room after she has shown Sarah and Rodney out of the house. Paula begins speaking in French but when Catalina doesn't understand she tries to speak to her in German and they communicate in broken German. Catalina can still remember the address where she lived in Stuttgart more than fifteen years ago and some German phrases. Catalina makes coffee and pours the strong thick dark liquid into chipped tea cups and adds lots of sugar. We sit and drink the coffee and watch more Manele music on the large TV. Paula puts away her school forms, telling me she will fill them in at home. After we have stayed drinking coffee for around ten minutes Paula gets up to leave, telling them that she

will be back in the morning with the social workers, switching between English and German to try to make herself understood to Catalina. As we leave, Radu is still trying to assert that he is Argentinean.

Looking back on the encounter, Catalina tries to follow what is going on without fully understanding why these two people have come to her house. The space of the home is crucial in facilitating information sharing, not only due to the material documents that are close to hand but through her understanding that the home visit means access to social support. It is through the reading of the people in the space that Catalina makes an assessment about the purpose of the encounter. However, Catalina does not control which documents are regarded as useful or the meaning that is drawn from them. Although the Argentinean passports are on the table (and later Catalina asserts that she is a refugee), Paula's assertion that they are Romanian, with the subsequent explanation regarding other 'Romanian Roma families', is the dominant story in the encounter and the one that shapes future interactions.

Paula might be considered to have less authority from her job title as an education officer not a social worker. However, in practice she defines the interaction through the languages spoken and by prompting Catalina, from her own experience of families she sees as similar, about the Big Issue. She has conducted visits to many different homes throughout her career over four decades. She stays for a longer time in the space and makes different connections with Daniela and Catalina, dissociating herself from the social workers. She has an understanding of the regulations guiding this interaction from her previous experiences with home visits and therefore she can make particular strategic moves. Catalina and Radu, although they are within their own domestic space, have less control over the interaction. They are called on only to produce documents and are silenced when they tried to counter the narrative that is being created.

Active silence and the presence of absence

The space of the home creates different understandings of relationships, which in turn recreates the home space as a site where different boundaries are being redrawn. This can be illustrated by the disjuncture around shared understanding of the experience of the encounter and different perspectives on time management. The social workers have control over the beginnings and endings of the encounters. In the previous vignette, they mention that they are ‘imposing’ but only when they feel they have concluded their questioning. However, Catalina provides coffee when Paula and I stay in the space and is keen to ask questions in order to gain more information. For her, the encounter does not provide information and neither does it come to a successful resolution for anyone in the family. Thus various understandings are played out in this encounter. This vignette illustrates how the presence of the social workers in the home creates meanings on both sides of the encounter and shapes the parameters through which it can progress. The social workers gain access to all the families’ bureaucratic information, control the duration of the encounter and decide when to re-visit the home. The encounter is a state act which (re)creates the space of the home through the highly uneven relational production of meanings.

The different understandings of an encounter and different actors’ room for manoeuvre is highlighted by the following vignette, detailing Christina’s interaction between Simon, the pastor of both Cantorford Church (*englezi khangheri*) and the Roma Church (*khangheri*). Similarly to the previous example with Catalina, this vignette reveals the dual nature of encounters in the home both as a site of judgement and opportunity for access. However, through interactions with the Cantorford Church and intense identity work with church

volunteer Kay and support worker Louise, Christina has room for manoeuvre based on shared understandings. Christina's domestic life is laid bare by others who utilise the space as a way to share experiences and make sense of the confusions they face in the shared actions they undertake. Where Catalina has no potential for shared experience, in contrast Christina gains more understanding of the nature of the encounter. She uses this knowledge to remain silent in this encounter, creating a particular type of space for this interaction.

I argue that in this encounter the home-level bureaucrat, Lisa, and the pastor, Simon, control the types of information that are exchanged and that this has effects on the relationships formed in this space. This is guided by Christina and her silence. Unlike Catalina, whose silence is based on an understanding that the bureaucrats in her home are to provide her with social assistance, (and thus a misreading of the relationship in the home space), Christina's silence is based on the understanding of the relationships between the actors in her domestic space where silence ascribes her with positive values. She is exercising different performances as she maintains differing relationships with Simon and Lisa that both serve different ends. Through exploring the detail of the encounter, I argue her choices are tightly entwined with the notion of danger and judgement. However, in this encounter various levels of 'visibility' depending on different social cleavages are evident, illustrating how excluded spaces are created in the home, and revealing the blurred boundary between public and private space.

As I reviewed in Chapter 3, during my fieldwork there is ongoing fragmentation of services and rapid changes to rules and regulations regarding different policies and practices. Encounters among service providers and new migrant mothers provide the space to share ideas and stories about others engaged in this process, and to test rumours and understandings about different situations. The home is a space where these practices can be shared between front line workers in a different context. They are not at a meeting or a place where they are

expected to be an expert on 'Romanian Roma'. The home space therefore allows service providers to voice confusions, test understandings and acknowledge frustrations and uncertainties. This adds to the sense of a successful encounter for the home-level bureaucrat, but requires particular understandings from migrant mothers who may have different evaluations of what a successful encounter means. Having established this framework, I now turn to the vignette itself.

Simon is driving me to Christina's house, where I am living at this time, following a meeting at the Children's Centre in Wilton Rise. Simon is feeling upbeat about the meeting, and so am I. It is the first time he meets with the Children's Centre and finds out about what they do to 'support families' in Wilton Rise. He comments that he suddenly doesn't feel so alone in his work with Roma families and is very positive about what the future might hold if he works together with them. When we arrive, Lisa is already there and is sitting on the couch on her mobile phone. She is talking to Luton Borough Council to try to rearrange Christina's Council Tax, which she can't pay. Christina goes to the kitchen to boil the kettle. She knows that Simon and I both like to drink tea. She often teases me '*tu kames chaios Elena?*' (you want a small tea, Elena?) as soon as I walk through the door. In her eyes, I am constantly drinking tea. *Chaios* is a diminutive form of *chai* which she usually reserves for her three year old daughter Lucia. She also started calling me *Elena* because she finds it difficult to pronounce Rachel (see Chapter 2). I make the tea so Christina can carry on sitting on the couch next to Lisa during the phone call. Simon places himself at the wooden and slightly wobbly table next to the kitchen door and the couch where Lisa and Christina are sitting.

It is between five thirty and six o'clock in the evening. It is the middle of summer so it is still light in the house. However, there is only one bulb to light the downstairs and we move it around depending on where we are sitting. I notice Christina has moved it to the centre of the room where we are currently sitting, though it is not switched on. It seems that this is the end

of the day for Lisa. She is slightly more relaxed and is not looking at her watch in order to get to her next appointment. She begins to tell Simon about a mother from Romania who has been refused a National Insurance Number. She is disgruntled about the interview as she feels that the mother wasn't treated well. Lisa elaborates that she explained to the Job Centre interviewer that the mother was selling the Big Issue. The interviewer subsequently asked, 'why does she want a National Insurance Number? She can't be employed and if she is employed that she is illegal'. Lisa responded, 'we are trying to get everything sorted out for January when she can be employed', to which the response was: 'well, it is very unlikely with things the way they are at the moment.'

Simon quizzes her about this comment: 'the way things are at the moment?' Lisa replies:

'the problem is that the Big Issue now is not seen as enough to make a living on. That is how they are redefining it. You can't get benefits because you aren't making enough to live on through the Big Issue. This is the new way they are working it now which means that all those ladies who are selling the Big Issue aren't going to get any help because you can only get a right to reside if you are working enough to live on and the Big Issue won't give you that.'

This conversation is taking place at a time when many Romanian nationals are being refused National Insurance Numbers. Lisa and Simon have taken different individuals to the Job Centre in Bedford for National Insurance Number interviews and both note that the tone of the interviews, and the results, have shifted in the past months. Through this exchange both Lisa and Simon settle on a shared narrative that they then relate to others. This narrative also provides meaning regarding the process at the Job Centre and how the interpretation of 'genuine self-employed work' is being applied in practice. This adds to the process of

producing certain types of knowledge and also acts to bring Simon and Lisa together to acknowledge this shared understanding.

Home-level bureaucrats have become entangled in the process of National Insurance Number interviews. This shift towards a more confrontational interview, and the restricted definition of a 'self-employed worker' that is only granted when an individual can prove they earn enough money to be considered 'self-sufficient', changes the practice of some home-level bureaucrats. Paula and Kassia stop assisting new migrants applying for National Insurance Numbers. This experience also changes the way that Simon approaches the process: while not dissuading individuals from making claims, he is very careful not to 'generate hope'. Lisa maintains that she would not dissuade someone from applying for a National Insurance Number, and tells families she is unable to provide services to new clients if they don't yet have a National Insurance Number. Meeting in homes of new migrant mothers and sharing knowledge is crucial to forming narratives and interpretations of regulations that subsequently guide practice. Lisa and Simon are conversing in the house where Christina and her family live but are not acknowledging her in this conversation, focusing on the latest developments in Job Centre requirements.

Christina does not seem to be part of this process. However, her use of silence actively shapes the space and thus enables Lisa and Simon to strengthen their relationship through sharing information. Christina's careful management of the space is further exemplified through the absence of her children and Dinni, her husband's half-sister who is upstairs looking after the children. Thus Simon's and Lisa's presence in the downstairs of the house pushes Dinni and the children upstairs, creating a space of prohibition downstairs. Dinni only emerges when everyone has left and goes straight to the kitchen to make food for the babies. This is the case for every interaction between a service provider and Christina in the house that I observe. Dinni disappears and does not re-emerge until the home-level bureaucrat leaves. This

highlights the layers of experience and understanding within one space depending on different social cleavages and the relationships and meanings that emerge. This also acts to highlight the contested nature of the home space for different actors. Dinni is being employed as a live-in nanny and was brought over from Romania by Dan Christina's husband. Dinni has a very different understanding and experience of this space. It is her place of work. She excludes herself from the downstairs space when there are visitors, but at night this is where she sleeps. She has no space of her own within the house. Dan has also brought the telephone downstairs so that she can speak to her sons in the front room while watching the babies. While this means that she has more time to speak to her children, it also unveils a previous layer of privacy as everyone can hear her conversations. Her husband is an alcoholic and is also very ill and she needs to send money back to help him pay for his hospital treatment. She tells me she also has eight grandchildren who need her to send money to them for school and clothes.

The lack of her own space within the home is illustrated by one event that occurred between Dan and Dinni's son. One evening her son calls Dan to ask whether he can pay for Dinni to come back to their village in Romania because they have problems at home. While this conversation is taking place Dinni goes into the garden. She doesn't want to be part of the conversation but has no space to inhabit where she can be at ease by herself. The back garden seems to be a space where she can stay undisturbed. This illustrates her ambiguous position in the family as she physically removes herself from the space of the house. It also illustrates the layers within domestic space that do not create the feelings that are often associated with 'home'.

Dinni's absence from interactions with bureaucrats and self-confinement upstairs or outside is also important for Christina's relationship to Lisa. Christina performs a particular type of domestic life for Lisa, creating the perception that it is just her, Dan and her children living in

the house. This encounter also illustrates a separate perspective. Christina is confronted with particular choices through her role as a mother and her bureaucratic identity. As outlined in Chapter 4, Christina's home is in a different area to many other families which opens possibilities of gaining access to membership but also heightens tensions and particular performances due to lack of resources (such as not being able to pay council tax). The home itself is also crucial, providing hope that the family may gain welfare support in the future, the children can be registered for school, church volunteers and support workers can visit, and Christina can provide shelter for other families. However, it is also a source of conflict and tension.

Both Dan and Christina acknowledge at different times that the house is always filthy (*melalo* as opposed to *marime* which implies impurity linked to shame) due to its poor condition such as holes in the roof, rats, damp, ripped lino, ill-fitting kitchen and bathroom and very old doors and windows that allow water and cold drafts into the house. However, it is Christina who is responsible for trying to make it as clean and tidy as possible and hiding these parts of the house when visitors arrive. Although the house is a resource for Christina as the location through which she learns a bureaucratic identity that might secure the position of her family, it is also how she is judged. Christina is responsible for trying to make the house as clean as possible for visitors, because she thinks a dirty house would be reason to take her kids away from her; for Dan, who would sometimes complain that 'you slept all day' (*sutan sórró ges*) if the house was very untidy; and to friends and family members, who she believes might gossip about her for making her house 'not straight' (*nai vorta*). While all of these actors expect a straight and tidy house, they also impose different expectations of mothering on Christina.

The space of the house for Lisa in this home visit has a very different meaning. It is the middle ground between her working day at the office and her own home. She uses this

opportunity to talk to Simon about the current tensions in her role. She has all of Christina's papers in front of her. These papers have been sorted and filed by Simon and he has given Dan, Christina's husband, a big black bag for the paperwork that is placed in the top of their wardrobe in the downstairs room. This black bag represents Christina's bureaucratic identity and the mechanism through which she situates her aspirations to access a form of membership and secure residential status. Lisa and Simon control the interaction, the information to be exchanged and the rhythm of the encounter. Christina does not interject by asking her own questions or search for her own knowledge in their interaction. This is part of her own performance and the role that she has established for herself in interactions, particularly with Simon and others she associates with the church. However, I argue that she has chosen this course of action through an understanding of the relationships and in an effort to make a certain kind of space within the home. Christina has an understanding of their values of private space and therefore she can perform 'appropriately'. Simon and Lisa feel comfortable when they visit. They consider her to be a good mother and therefore give her more weighted discretionary decisions.

The two vignettes indicate the nature of power relations between new migrant mothers and home-level bureaucrats in the house. Crucially, they illustrate how the domestic space is used by home-level bureaucrats to make sense of the shifting entitlements and case law for EU nationals (see Chapter 3). They also illustrate contrasting understandings of the interaction which shape the differing strategies that are deployed and thus the meanings being made. Christina, who is often visited by members of the Cantorford Church (*englezi khangheri*), is silent and manages the space allowing interaction without interrupting or disturbing the exchange. In contrast, Catalina, who has recently arrived from Argentina and has gained her knowledge of the UK from her brother and his experience of the refugee system, has a different orientation towards the actors in her home. She is silenced by the actors in her

domestic space and the children run around and Radu sits drinking and smoking cigarettes in his usual chair. Both interactions take place after five o'clock in the afternoon as service providers are on their way home or it is their last 'piece of work' for the day.

Before I elaborate on the relationship between time and the possibility for certain types of interactions, I turn to explore the way in which these interactions are shaped by new migrant mothers' understanding of the expectations and perceptions of bureaucrats in the private space. The following two vignettes analyse absence and presence to argue how understandings of relationships blur and unsettle notions of the boundary between public and private space. The first illustrates how one new migrant mother performs appropriate private space. The second argues that when the ideals bureaucrats associate with the domestic home space are not upheld, signalling a potential reading of the home-level bureaucrat as a representation of 'public' and 'state', relationships break down leading to ascriptions of negative values.

Performing 'appropriate' private space

This next vignette returns to the house where Christina lives and her management of space and relationships. It also illustrates how different meanings of the space interact with the ideas held by home-level bureaucrats. The details of this house, the different ways the space is used, and the perspectives of private home space illustrate the multiple meanings that are negotiated. By exploring these many different understandings, Christina's performances in relation to home-level bureaucrats can be understood as managing the incursion of the public into the private. As mentioned above, Christina uses silence and absences through her

understandings of how the home space changes when bureaucrats are present, intersecting with the configuration of relationships in the house. Christina is able to perform particular roles of host and deserving mother as Dinni silently looks after the children upstairs. The different uses of space and the way they are carefully managed by Christina at particular moments become clear from my first week living with Christina and Dan. At this time, Dan is working for a construction company and leaves the house at seven o'clock in the morning. There is also a family of four staying with Christina and Dan and their five children. The parents of this family, Dragos and Viorica, sold their house in Constanța and travelled to Luton with their grown-up, unmarried son Emilian and their daughter Teodora. Dragos and Viorica sell the Big Issue in Luton town centre during the day. Emilian and Teodora try to get to Bedford to sell their copies of the Big Issue but they often don't make enough money for the bus fare. They leave the house at around seven thirty dressed in what seems to be almost all of their clothes over their slim bodies to protect them for a day standing still in the biting mid-February wind.

Usually, Christina gets dressed to take her son Adrian to school at eight thirty and I stay in the house looking after the babies until she returns. However, the first Tuesday is very different. The babies are being washed and dressed in trousers and t-shirts and jumpers at eight o'clock, whereas they are usually not dressed in different clothes between the night and the day. Christina re-plaits her long blond hair and dresses in a long flowery skirt and blouse which she has been given by a member of the Cantorford Church. The babies are left upstairs while Christina frantically sweeps the floor and tries to wash and clear away all of the coffee cups and pieces of bread that have been eaten in the morning before everyone left the house. Lucia, her three year old daughter, wakes up and tries to get her mother's attention by clinging on to her leg and then by throwing all of the cushions off the sofa.

We bring the three babies (Adam, Georgia and Emilia) downstairs and Christina puts them in their car seats and places them on the couch. They wriggle and cry until she makes up their formula milk, giving it first to Adam, then Georgia, and then Emilia. Then we make their breakfast of yogurt with mashed up bread. We hold tea towels as we try to stop the yogurt from staining their jumpers as they twist their heads around as soon as the spoon comes close to their mouths.

At around eleven o'clock in the morning Children's Centre worker Louise arrives with church volunteer Kay. Louise sits on the couch and takes one of the babies in her arms. Christina makes tea and they begin to ask her questions about how she is coping and how the children are getting on. She sits quietly, smiles and nods, in stark contrast to the frantic activity of the morning. Christina actively manages the perceptions of others and their view of her and her family and she works hard to promote what she understands to be a positive image. In a tape-recorded interview with Louise (previously mentioned) at the end of my fieldwork she discusses her thoughts on Christina, Dan and their family home: 'I feel really sorry for them. They have struggled so much – it seems so unfair. They deserve to be [pause]. They really want to work. They would love to be self-sufficient... The house is always spotless – I am like, you should come to clean my house!' Constellations of gendered deservingness are evident as Dan is characterised as a hard worker and Christina the ideal housekeeper. Kay similarly upholds these values, bemoaning her own son's divorce, movement to Australia, lack of involvement with his daughter and her own difficult relationship with her granddaughter (see Chapter 4).

However, on one occasion, after Louise leaves the house, Christina sits on the couch with one of her babies. She is almost in tears: 'it is coming too many problems sometimes... why God give me five?' She hides this from Louise and promotes her 'saintly' demeanour, which has become something of a talking point among the Cantorford Church members. (Simon

comments that he thinks Christina has a ‘saintly detachment’ from her financial situation and praises her for it: ‘I saw her selling carrot peelers in Wilton Rise and thought – wow – this is a survivor!’) Christina’s exasperation and exhaustion highlights the work that she does to maintain different performances.

This vignette illustrates how home visits, while providing opportunities, require constant identity work in order to maintain relationships despite constrained room for manoeuvre. For example, Louise provides informal help to Christina using money left in her Children’s Centre budget to ‘fill up her cupboards’. When Louise asks Christina what type of food she wants she declines to say anything and just smiles, thanking her for anything. The food is aimed to be ‘nutritious and healthy’ for the children, however much of it sits in the cupboard because she doesn’t know how to cook it (porridge oats) or she doesn’t think it is good for the children (tinned soup which she thinks is ‘too sweet’ (*mai guglo*) and not as healthy as *supă*, a clear soup, or *ciorbă* that is usually sour (*chuklo*)). However, despite not eating the food, the expectation of feeding the children ‘healthy food’ causes another source of tension for Christina. Families who don’t have accommodation or have been evicted frequently stay in the house. Seeing others in the house upsets Kay and Louise as they think the food they buy is not being eaten by the children. They do not want to support others who they do not know and therefore may not make such favourable discretionary decisions.

An example of this occurs one Tuesday, when Dragos and Viorica return from selling the Big Issue in the middle of the day. Dragos enters the room where Louise is sitting, sees her and immediately turns round to leave. Louise is confused and slightly concerned. She has mentioned to me previously that she is ‘despairing’ because there are lots of people staying in the house and eating the food that the church has given the family. I feel very embarrassed as I think she is referring to me and tell her I am buying food for the family. At this point she laughs and tells me that she isn’t worried about me, but the other people staying with

Christina and Dan. Christina is aware of the perceptions of others identified as ‘Roma’ and has very clearly told Louise that this is a good family, that Dragos sings in the church and they are ‘*Pentacostalo*’. Kay also feels the need to support Christina and mentions that the family are ‘quiet people’. Even so, this does not seem to change Louise’s opinion and concern about the number of other people living in the house and the possibility that Christina and Dan might be giving them food that she has collected from the church.

This concern affects the way Christina tries to control Louise’s perceptions of others in the house. The space of the home fulfils multiple functions which do not map neatly onto front line workers’ conceptions of home, such as privacy, intimacy and domesticity. These conflicting expectations are exemplified through the negotiation that takes place in one unplanned visit by Louise and Kay when Mihai and Ilinca, who sometimes work with Dan collecting scrap metal, are sitting at the kitchen table. Mihai and Ilinca are not from the same family as Dan and Christina. Mihai calls himself ‘Gabor’ and is from Oradea in Transylvania near to the Romanian and Hungarian border. Mihai and Ilinca, in contrast to Dragos, do not get up and leave the interaction but remain seated. Christina introduces them to Kay as ‘Pentecostal’. Kay exclaims ‘Hallelujah! Praise the lord!’ When Christina goes on to explain that ‘they are good people, a different type of Gypsy, not here for stealing, they are here for job’, Louise remarks ‘Hooray!’ Christina continues to refer to religion explaining ‘these are not the stealing Gypsies, they read the Bible’.

This encounter serves to highlight how Christina negotiates her position. She endeavours to control Louise’s perceptions of her relationships and family life. However, due to the encounter occurring in her home she cannot plan and manage the space to suit the circumscriptions of every relationship and interaction. The house is a place where Dan meets others to arrange work and maintain social connections. Therefore Christina can’t (and doesn’t want to) restrict others from visiting as they are also crucial to maintaining her

family's daily life. However, she is also aware of the inferences that some people make about other people's presence in the house and how they interact with her identity as a Roma mother. In this encounter she uses Pentecostalism to reaffirm her commitment to a certain type of behaviour and invokes a common set of values between Kay, Louise, Mihai, Ilinca and herself. In the process she acts to perpetuate, legitimise and reproduce certain other perceptions and categorisations of the 'stealing Gypsy' in her efforts to move into the particular spaces that are open to her to maintain her relationship with Kay and Louise to secure her family's position.

Christina therefore tries to carefully plan the management of the home space when visitors from the church arrive. The babies are washed (which takes a very long time as there is no hot water) and are dressed in different clothes. Christina also wears different clothes, often things that she had been given by the church. She also cleans the house downstairs and the pathway to the toilet upstairs. She changes the bin where all the nappies are kept which is often difficult when the rats get into the plastic bag and they are then strewn across the floor. When I am in the house we fold clothes away together, or I feed the babies while she is cleaning the house before Louise arrives.

Christina has many different performances to manage the conditions in the house depending on her relationship and the context. When water comes through the roof, she puts a bucket underneath it and uses the drops like the sound of drum to dance with Lucia. When Louise and Kay ask what they could buy her, Christina never suggests anything and tells them she is okay and everything is fine. By using silence she gains an understanding of what they think she might need, providing more information to uphold their perceptions that she is a 'good mother'. For example, Kay suggests buying a new toilet seat, at which point Christina graciously agrees and thanks her. However, at other times particularly in front of Dan she often lists the terrible things wrong with the house. This is also relayed to Simon when he is

negotiating their rent with their letting agency and the landlord, but is not brought up around the bureaucrats for fear of giving an impression of disorder.

In these vignettes the space of the home is used in many different ways with different performances marking different experiences and meanings drawn from the same space. This section has analysed home encounters through attention to uses of silence, absence and presence. This perspective reveals the constraining nature of home visits and the intensive work undertaken by home-level bureaucrats, and especially by mothers.

I shall now turn to illustrate how incommensurate understandings of public and private create tensions in relationships. I argue that the negotiations that take place represent the boundaries of membership being redrawn within this contested site.

Performing ‘inappropriate’ private space

In contrast to those who absented themselves from spaces when a home-level bureaucrat was present in order to uphold bureaucratic values, absence from the space is also used to generate the opposite effect. This indicates the complex layering of differing understandings of public and private space and the different intentions and motivations of different people drawn from these understandings. An example between Paula, equality and diversity education officer and a new migrant family is a case in point. It is past six o’clock on a dark and cold February evening. I receive a call from Paula. She is visiting a mother who has been identified by Simon as ‘Romanian Roma’ with children who aren’t registered for school. Paula calls me because she is at the house but Mirela, the mother she needs to interview, and her children are not there. Another family (Florina, Sebastian and their children) who live

with Mirela are present, but Mirela and her children are absent). Paula asks if I know where Mirela is. I am sitting with Maria, Mirela's second cousin, who wants to know what the conversation is about. Maria decides that we should go there. I arrive at the small, terraced Victorian house in Wilton Rise with Maria. Florina and Sebastian are sitting on the couch opposite Paula and five children are running in and out of the room. The conversation is focused on Sebastian's scrap metal business. Paula explains to me that she is going to get Sebastian a letter from the council to enable him to register as a scrap metal dealer. She also comments directly to me that since she arrived the door that leads to the rest of the house has been firmly shut 'you have to laugh, don't you?' When the children come in and out of the room the door is closed tightly behind them.

Paula asks again about Mirela and her two children. Florina and Sebastian shrug and tell her they don't know who she is talking about. Sebastian keeps talking to Paula about scrap metal and what he has to do to get an insurance number. He asks why another new migrant, Grigore, has a National Insurance Number. Paula explains that she is just there to talk about the children and school. Paula tries to bring the conversation back to Mirela. The conversation flows back and forth in this manner for around ten minutes when four men arrive. Two of these men walk straight through the front room to the interior of the house, do not engage in any way with anyone, and shut the door closely behind them. The other two remain in the room watching the interaction unfold. The first two men come back out and begin talking to the other men. At some points the men watch the interaction unfold, and at other times they begin having a conversation with each other. Florina, Sebastian and Maria do not interact with the men or acknowledge that they are there. However, Paula is clearly distracted by their presence particularly when some of their conversations become loud. It is a very small space, filled with a couch, a bed and a small table in the gap between. There is a large TV on one wall and shelves fill the alcoves to either side of the TV. The shelves are full

of papers and plastic bags filled with boxes, a telephone and various piles of envelopes and papers. The air is thick with a mixture of cigarette smoke and sweet cleaning products. I have visited the house on previous occasions and these men had told me that they stay there. They describe themselves as cousins, but it later emerges that three are brothers. They also work with Sebastian, his brother and his father collecting scrap metal. Following a further few minutes, two of the men leave the house by the front door.

While this is taking place Maria, ignoring the men, begins talking to Paula about her daughter who was taken to Spain by her estranged husband. Paula once again tries to bring the conversation back to Mirela and her children who are not yet registered in school. At some moments she is met with silence and shrugging and at others Maria and Florina change the subject to their own children. At one point Mirela's son joins the throng in the front room from behind the door and starts punching Sebastian and then does a mixture of a dance and boxing moves in the small amount of floor space between the couch, the wall and the door. Paula asks directly who this boy is and whether he is Mirela's son. Florina's four children are also coming in and out of the room and balancing themselves on the top of the couch behind their parents or climbing over them. They know Paula and at some points she engages directly with them, asking questions about their school and their form teacher and whether they like school. Following a further few minutes of questions, Mirela emerges and stands next to one of the men who, it emerges later, is her husband. Paula asks her directly if she has children and Mirela shouts to her son to get the papers from her handbag upstairs. Paula is shocked that she has been told directly by Florina and Sebastian that Mirela is not there, they have denied knowledge of Mirela and have not answered a direct question regarding Mirela's son. However, subsequently Paula gains the information from Mirela and begins the process of enrolling the children in school. The men leave and the children continue to run in and out of the room, the door now ajar.

In contrast to Christina's house and the reactions of Dragos and Dinni, rather than leaving the room and sustaining a particular space for the interaction, these families show no consideration of the space which Paula is trying to create and control in order for her to collect the information to fulfil her role. Her direct questions are met with denial or, perhaps more frustratingly for her, silence, with the conversation shifting towards gaining a National Insurance Number or the other children. The men who enter the house do not openly acknowledge the interaction and do not absent themselves from the space. From my experience of this household, it is usual for men to be working (*keren butchi*) well into the night, particularly if they are buying or selling cars or other merchandise. On many occasions at different times of day (especially in the evening) when I am sitting talking and drinking coffee in someone's house when a family member arrives and gathers up some men if there is a deal to be done, if they are going out driving or all going to the internet café to look at cars being sold on the internet. This also means men can be found sitting at home during the day socialising with each other and 'taking' coffee and cigarettes. These behaviours do not conform to home-level bureaucrats' perspectives of the appropriate use of the home space, which is not only highly gendered and spatialised, but linked to distinct rhythms and timings.

The home space therefore does not neatly map onto bureaucrats' conception of it being private, domestic and a refuge from 'work'. As historian Philip Aries succinctly states, it is only recently that the notion of privacy has been linked with home, as 'in preindustrial society the family conducted its work and public affairs inside the household' (1977: 230).⁷⁵ Similarly, time is not separated into distinct divisions for work and leisure and therefore the home doesn't map onto Paula's ideas of the rhythms of intimacy and domesticity. Unlike Christina who carefully manages the space and the people within the house, this family does

⁷⁵ I do not understand Aries as positing that the idea of childhood did not exist, rather that the behaviour or treatment of children did not produce legal responses. It can be argued that the treatment of children was seen as a family or 'private' matter, not requiring intervention by state actors (Dingwall 1984: 208).

not. The men are still ‘working’ even though they are within the domestic space and it is the evening. However, for Paula, the presence of these men adds to her confusion about the relationships between everyone in the room compounded by the soft rebuttals and silences to her direct questions. One of the men does emerge to be Mirela’s husband but he does not identify himself. He watches as his brother asks questions regarding gaining an Insurance Number. The other men, after watching for a short time and having a conversation, leave by the front door without interacting with Paula or anyone involved in the interaction with her.

In this instance, the men do not seem to think that they have an effect on the interaction; they are sharing the space but, from their perspective, they are not involved in the encounter. However, from Paula’s perspective they infuse the space with a meaning that makes her feel uncomfortable. The men’s conversations become loud and they add to the sense that she does not know who anybody is or their relationship to the children she is trying to find. It is in stark contrast to the reaction in the earlier vignette from Dragos and Dinni, who immediately vacate the space and exclude themselves from any interaction with those outside the family. Thus the different perceptions individuals hold about encounters in the home affect the understandings that are gained and the ascriptions of different values to different behaviours.

In understanding these encounters, different cleavages between families are salient for their interactions with home-level bureaucrats and their subsequent reactions. Dragos sells the Big Issue and has some knowledge regarding the system for becoming self-employed in the UK. He also attends the *khangheri* where men meet, share ideas and discuss issues such as National Insurance Numbers. He is from East Romania and migrated directly to Luton. His family are not maintaining ties with family members across Europe, nor does he have a complicated migration trajectory. Dragos is more able to understand the performance expected of him. In contrast, the men who did not exclude themselves from the interaction with Paula have a very different set of characteristics. Florina’s children were born in Brazil

and they have a complex migration trajectory with many family members throughout Europe. Although Florina and Mirela attend the *khangheri* in Luton, the men from this family do not and very rarely interact with the families from east Romania or Bucharest. This family told me they were from western-central Romania and their weddings and funerals took place there; some family members, particularly older women, also spent some of the summer months in Romania if they could afford to return.

There are also very different notions of private space being acted out through these encounters. For the group of men, Paula's presence in the house doesn't change their relationship to the space. They carry on with their conversations and intermittently observe the action as one might observe an interesting interaction between a stranger and a friend on the street. However, Dragos performs a very different conception of the understanding of this space. By removing himself he acknowledges that there is meaning attached to him being seen there. He is aware that the home-level bureaucrat would implicate him in what is taking place if he is seen to be 'at home' in this space. In contrast, the group of men that enter Florina's house (her name was on the rental agreement) when Paula is there don't perceive their presence is affecting the action that is unfolding. Alternatively, if they do perceive that their presence is affecting the action, they do not place importance on that assessment of their presence or place importance on Paula in this space. Therefore from their perspective, they have no reason to leave, to keep their voices down or to try not to disturb the interaction between Paula and Sebastien. For Paula, the men's relationship to the space does not conform to her manner of conducting interactions. Many different people are entering and leaving the encounter in ways that are not controlled by Paula, and neither does she decide on the topics of information to be exchanged. In these ways, the use of the home space shapes interactions.

These examples also reflect a further element of 'encounters'. Encounters are not isolated events but open up a previous history, just as the present shapes future interactions (Chapter

7). It is situations such as these that lead Paula to comment that ‘Romanian Roma take up all of my time. They are the hardest people I have had to work with’. She particularly references the direct lies she is told regarding the location of children and their parents.

This section has argued that exclusionary spaces can be created within the home by the presence of bureaucrats. However, different understandings of relationships interact with wide ranging notions regarding public and private space to different effect. Incommensurate values about the home space can be identified which unsettle actors and create disjuncture in relationships. This reveals the blurring of boundaries between public and private space where state acts occur inside the home, and acts to further constrain mothers’ room for manoeuvre as they try to negotiate membership from within the domestic space.

‘Popping over’ and management of time in home encounters

The different notions of public and private space and the way they contribute to disjuncture or ‘mis-mappings’ between new migrants and home-level bureaucrats can be illustrated through the idea of ‘popping over’. Bureaucrats ‘popping over’ to new migrant homes becomes the primary mode of interaction for a number of reasons and is linked to the migrants being identified as ‘Roma’. First, due to a lack of English language skills and as many mothers can’t read or write, home-level bureaucrats express the idea that it is better to ‘pop over’ and see them rather than try to arrange a formal meeting in advance. Second, many mothers do not have telephones in their homes (or used them only for speaking to relatives in other countries and therefore did not give their numbers to service providers), do not have a mobile phone, or do not want to give service providers their mobile phone number.

It is most common for men to have mobile phones and not women. I give Georgeta an old mobile phone in order for her to receive calls for her domestic cleaning business. However, when her eldest son's phone breaks (he drops it accidentally down the toilet) she gives him her mobile phone because, from her perspective, it is more important for him to maintain social and business contacts. Limited phone access again makes it harder to pre-arrange meetings. Third, as mentioned above, those identified as 'Romanian Roma' mothers are not invited to offices because they are considered to lead 'chaotic lives' (see Chapter 1). It is often stated to me that Roma never manage to attend appointments (although this is sometimes the case, missing appointments is often due to not being able to read the letter, being dependent on another to give directions, or because newcomers do not want to visit bureaucratic offices alone). These perspectives on the part of bureaucrats mean they chose informal means of 'popping over' as their most common strategy for interacting with mothers. In turn, created a corresponding practice where mothers become expectant that home visits are the best way to negotiate with home-level bureaucrats and therefore ask them to come to their house.

There is a constant negotiation regarding when, where and how each encounter takes place. Those identified as 'Roma' mothers are frequently seen by bureaucrats as either taking up too much time or using time in the wrong way. Mirroring the unarranged time that home-level bureaucrats 'pop over', mothers would sometimes call (at time using other people's mobile phones) to ask home-level bureaucrats to come to their house without delay. Lisa, Pathways floating support officer, explains 'They phone me up and say "letter – you come read"'. Lisa and Paula tell me that they are often called many times by the same person asking them to come round to the house to read a letter or to solve a variety of different problems. In some instances home-level bureaucrats give the impression they feel hounded by the number of times a mother might call in quick succession. I also witness this on many occasions. On one

occasion, a mother calls Paula six times within one hour to ask her whether she is coming to visit the house.

Not only does this add to the sense that those identified as ‘Roma’ mothers are ‘difficult’, but when home-level bureaucrats visit the home they tell me that mothers are not there or can’t be contacted. When a mother is not at home, certain assumptions are made regarding where she might be, which are drawn from notions of the way ‘Roma’ migrant mothers use public space. These assumptions are linked with seeing those identified as Roma women, begging in the centre of town or walking around the streets looking for scrap metal or recycling to sell. Also, if a mother is in prison an aunt or mother-in-law will often look after the children. In one instance where I am accompanying Paula on home visits, Paula asks another family about the whereabouts of one mother she hasn’t seen for a long time. The answer is, ‘she is shopping’. Paula tells me later that if this response is given a number of times she assumes the mother is in prison. It is unusual for the family to openly discuss when someone is in prison (*shingaly*) or locked up (*pandardo*) and it is often mentioned to me as a joke and as something that I shouldn’t really know. If a mother is not present and there is no clear explanation, home-level bureaucrats feel as though they have wasted time and resources and adds to ideas that they are being deceived or can’t make sense of the activities and relationships within a household. This solidifies ideas that the mothers lead chaotic lives and have a sense of ‘entitlement’ as they don’t seem to acknowledge or recognise the home-level bureaucrats’ perceptions of time.

However, it is interesting to also note that home-level bureaucrats seem to express a sense of pride about being contacted by mothers identified as ‘Roma’ as they have a privileged relationship with those considered to be the ‘hardest to reach’. Therefore the management of time, and the power relations infused into the way that waiting is imposed on and by mothers and bureaucrats, affects the values that are ascribed to different individuals.

The mothers' behaviour and management of encounters stem from a number of different understandings. First, one new migrant Gigi explains to me that he felt an innate need to get things done and not wait. I also experience this with mothers, once they find out about a certain course of action, want to follow that course of action to a conclusion without delay. Second, when it comes to discussing reasons for absences they are aware of the connotations of being in prison and therefore do not openly disclose this to home-level bureaucrats. This adds to the bureaucrats' impressions of secrecy, deception and obscurity that feed into their notions about 'Romanian Roma'. In addition, as mentioned above, due to their economic activities the home space is not separated into a time for work and a time for rest. Home-level bureaucrats often pop over in the evening, on their way home from the office. The house at this time does not match with their ideas of domesticity, intimacy and sanctuary from work. The house is read as chaotic, due to the illegible rhythms and relationships that are playing out which are at odds with the understanding and values of bureaucrats.

The change in the character of the encounter between different times, particularly those that are arranged and those that constitute 'popping over', is clear from an instance between Elswood Children's Centre worker, Louise and migrant mother Christina. It is not the usual Tuesday morning meeting and when someone knocks on the door Christina is shocked and surprised that it is Louise. Not only that, but she has also brought another support worker from the Children's Centre. She explains that she has money in her budget and they want to get her food. Christina is surprised and doesn't want Louise to see the house as she hasn't swept or cleaned it in the usual way and the babies aren't dressed. She is embarrassed and slightly annoyed about the unannounced visit. This reaction is a surprise for Louise who expected Christina to be happy because they are offering to go to ASDA and buy Christina food that would last a week. The indication is that Christina has to be ready to receive visitors at almost any time. This highlights the constant negotiations that inflect the encounter in

terms of whether it is enjoyable, or reaches a resolution; how information is exchanged; how the encounter is understood; and how it guides and shapes future interactions, behaviours and decisions with those who are seen as ‘like’ or ‘unlike’ others.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that perceptions of different bodies and the relationships between them in the home (re)define the social space the space in shifting, manifold, and complex ways. The vignettes have built on the previous chapter regarding the significance of the site of interaction for shaping relationships, to illustrate the highly uneven production of meanings drawn from and directed towards the home encounter as a material, discursive and symbolic space. The details of encounters reveal how different understandings of relationships within the home encounter shape the perceptions of space; how the contestations over whose meanings of the space apply becomes salient when shaping the outcome of interactions; and how different notions of public and private space lead to values being ascribed on bodies and through performances of new migrants. I argued that identifying how excluded spaces are (or are not) created provides a lens through which to identify how different notions of the public and the private shape relationships. Crucially, this chapter has explored the possibilities for managing these interactions through intensive identity work that shifts the differing understandings of relationships in space.

In addition, this chapter is attentive to the spatiotemporal dimension of encounters through analysis of ‘popping over’. This notion illustrates how previous preconceptions regarding certain groups are reaffirmed, crystallising categories which further act to shape certain types

of behaviour. The home is the primary site where those identified as Roma mothers interact with bureaucrats. Interactions become self-fulfilling as the variations in types of behaviour and different contexts and situations are perceived within the same frame, reinforcing and reproducing ideas about those identified as ‘Romanian Roma’ mothers. Recalling the dual nature of the home encounter, not only are bureaucrats entering the ‘private’ space, but in doing so they act to block entry to the other ‘public’ spaces outside the home for those they identify as ‘Romanian Roma’ mothers. This strengthens the conception of spatial metaphors of exclusion which emerge when describing these families as ‘hard to reach’ or ‘they don’t come out’ (Chapter 4).

The next chapter builds on this through tracing the implications of new migrant mothers’ illiteracy for learning bureaucratic performances, including the role of rumours and different strategies to find ‘true speech’. The histories that are created around encounters including what is drawn from them, what is remembered and forgotten, and what is passed on and to whom, further illustrates the way the intimate lives of new migrants become implicated in accessing the state.

Chapter 7. Boundaries of home encounters and boundaries of the state

Introduction

The previous two chapters argued that the site of encounter is crucial, analysing the effect of material objects (Chapter 5) and understandings and perceptions of bodies in the domestic space (Chapter 6). These two chapters show that concrete space cannot be separated from social space and that assessments of performances are based on the values that underpin the dichotomy between public and private space. In addition, the previous chapter argued that encounters are seen and interpreted by others in the home (such as family members, other migrants and church volunteers). Thus the space shapes interactions creating multiple and often conflicting meanings. This chapter focuses on how the meanings made from encounters are negotiated and inform the decision making strategies of all those involved in home encounters. In particular, this chapter argues that different recognitions and performances of ‘truth’ shaped what and why information was disclosed and on what terms. The different role of written words, the weight placed on speech and the assessment of performances all contribute to perceptions of ‘truth’, leading to diverging perspectives of bureaucratic processes. This is exacerbated by the uncertain and rapidly shifting policy regulations and practices A2 migrants were subject to.

This chapter argues that different understandings are based on previous ‘histories of encounters’ and the perceived possibilities for action in subsequent encounters. The authority to speak ‘the truth’ is shifting and highly contingent as both bureaucrats and new migrants have different ‘systems’ for recognising and acknowledging the words that people say as ‘true’, and the extent to which they shape their own decision making and actions or different people’s speech. Thus, this chapter charts how different discourses become recognised as

‘true’, how truths are (re)produced and the terms on which truths are exchanged. This chapter analyses what makes a ‘straight’ (*vorta*) or ‘true’ (*cheches*) performance or an ‘appropriate’ and ‘safe’ home. This includes examining which performances are seen to hold value for migrants and bureaucrats and how this converges and conflicts. I trace the flows of information about access to the state between and among migrants and bureaucrats and elucidate what the flow of rumours and information exchange indicates about these relationships. This chapter argues that boundaries are redrawn through discourses that are produced within, or informed by, home encounters and the embedded and shifting basis of decisions (Chapter 1).

In addition, by examining the details of agents’ decision making (both bureaucrats and new migrants), intentions emerge as multi-layered and potentially contradictory. Consequences of actions relate to intentions in complicated ways, and perceptions infuse relationship building and information exchange. The main argument of this chapter is that through this lens of representation the state can be seen as relationally produced in the home as the boundary between public and private space, drawing new lines of inside and outside the state.

The chapter is structured as follows. First the previous scholarly literature regarding rumours and gossip are reviewed. I use this literature to argue that the different perceptions of bureaucratic systems between new migrants and home-level bureaucrats emerge through uses of humour. I explore the shifting weights placed on different individuals’ speech, moving to address how these can overlap and reinforce each other through two vignettes of experiences of new migrant mothers Ramona and Maria. These different systems of ‘truth’ shape the parameters through which encounters play out.

I then turn to address how information is exchanged between families and how this affects interactions in home encounters. I illustrate this through the ways that ‘*shurance*’ (National

Insurance Numbers) and '*batcho*' (The Big Issue Magazine) are discussed within families, and explore how this shapes the parameters through which encounters can take place. I use this discussion to argue that the nature of these parameters intersects with bureaucrats' perceptions and routines to create situations where mothers are perceived as lying and deceitful. I argue that one consequence of the perception that Roma mothers lie about their family circumstances is an increase in home visits in order for home-level bureaucrats to 'see' the home and therefore grasp the 'real' situation. The intensification of home visits occurs at the same time as the proliferation of rumours between migrant mothers regarding child protection. This section details how rumours assume a kind of truth and, combined with fear of a child being removed, infuse decision making. This process leads to one mother's perceived choice between her role as a mother and her location in Luton. This section argues that embedded relations, and the production of meanings that occur through the history of encounters (infused with processes of labelling) between bureaucrats and mothers, create an incursion of the nation-state border into the home, further unsettling the dichotomy between public and private space.

The chapter then argues that the role of 'truth' and 'rumour' in encounters affects identity-making, shifting new migrants' strategies of place-making. I analyse the meanings made from 'failed encounters' and argue that different expectations change narratives which in turn further decrease trust. This infuses new migrants' perceptions regarding being identified as 'Roma'. New migrants believe they are gaining a negative reputation in Luton and I argue that this also leads families to restrict information exchange with newcomers and family members. The perceived lack of clear information creates a desire for authoritative voices, leading some new migrants to turn to the *khangheri* (Roma Church) to find the 'straight' (*vorta*) path. However, I show how negotiations with church volunteers, who became the face of the state for some new migrants, involve different but equally insurmountable boundaries

and demand a variety of different performances in home encounters. The last section of this chapter argues that negotiating ‘public’ identities in the ‘private’ space, with different actors who have shifting roles, exposes complex life histories to judgement. Intensive identity work is required not only to maintain relations with ‘faces of the state’ but also within families. I argue that in home encounters state forms are not only shaped by the relationships between home-level bureaucrats and new migrants, but also by the interaction of intersecting subjectivities and diverse forms of knowledge which are brought from other contexts.

The chapter concludes by reviewing the argument that state forms are locatable and developed through multiple embedded social relations. I argue that in home encounters boundaries are redrawn within these relationships through negotiations of values, unsettling notions of public and private space with consequences for how place-making shapes identities and vice versa.

Rumour as meaning making

Rumours among and between migrants and bureaucrats include a wide range of topics. Here I limit the focus to conversations about engagement with state services and thus explore the rumours and gossip concerning the relationship between new migrants and state actors. There is no clear cross-cultural category of rumour (Gluckman 1963; Brenneis 1984; Besnier 2009). Also, the division between rumours, gossip, statements and conversation are often wafer thin when analysing conversations in practice, highlighting the contingent basis on which understandings and meanings are made.⁷⁶ The difference is also contingent on the prior

⁷⁶ Linguistic anthropology has problematised the link between spoken language and meaning-making (Besnier 2009: 8-12).

knowledge and relationship of those exchanging information, and on who can be believed and on what grounds. As De Certeau expresses:

“‘believing’ designates a relation to the other that precedes me and is constantly occurring. Citation appears to be the ultimate weapon for making people believe. Because it plays on what the other is assumed to believe, it is the means by which the ‘real’ is instituted. To cite the other on their behalf is hence to make credible the simulacra produced in a particular place... to cite is thus to give reality to the simulacrum produced by a power, by making people believe that others believe in it, but without providing any believable object’ (1984: 188-189).

The power of citations gain increased salience in rumours. Rumours are secretive and therefore hold both pleasure and danger through acts of sharing information (Besnier 2009). An important part of the exchange of this information is the ‘show’ or performance of knowledge that others may not hold, usually without explaining how one came to ‘have’ this knowledge. This is a key element in exchanges for both families and home-level bureaucrats. For home-level bureaucrats who have a long-standing and close relationship, this is a method through which to uphold different confidentiality arrangements, but still share information in enough detail for the information to be understood. Thus client confidentiality means that often a general situation is discussed ‘without names’ but the performance of information exchange still takes place. (However, the teller can negotiate this depending on the amount of information they know or perceive that the receiver already possesses: the closer the relationship, the more effective the exchange of information.)

For new migrant families, information about their dealings with authorities is shared in specific circumstances. In my observations, this rarely includes the exact details of the exchange or the processes involved, but more frequently includes the outcomes, particularly

if they are successful (I will discuss instances where this is not the case below). There is a negotiation based on the balance between status, secrecy and position which predicates what family members ‘show’ (both the information and the performance) regarding their personal situation. This also indicates the different qualities of family relationships which can be discerned depending on what information is shared, in what context and with whom.

One mechanism through which to conduct this negotiation is through humour and making jokes. For example, new migrants Serban and his wife Anca move to Luton in December 2013. Serban was born in Brussels where his father gained refugee status. He applies for a National Insurance Number interview by calling HM Revenue and Customs over the telephone, quoting his Belgian passport number, and is given an interview in one week. His wife, an A2 migrant who lived in Ireland for five years, has a Romanian passport. She is given a National Insurance Number interview in three weeks, which falls in January, meaning her interview comes after A2 migrant labour regulations are lifted. Serban is convinced that Romanians are being discriminated against and teases his wife about her Romanian papers. He jokes holding his passport aloft: ‘See! My face is Romania, the papers are Belge!’ (*dikh! Murre fatsa si Romania, murre lila si belge!*). This story is also told to his cousins as he teases them that his Belgian papers are better than their Romanian ones. He also calls his father who is living in Toronto to tell him the story. However, the amount of information he discloses is carefully crafted so as not to reveal too much. The distinction between his face and his ‘papers’ (*lila*) causes his family to laugh as he is considered ‘black’ (*kalo*) whereas his wife is ‘white’ (*parni*). Therefore, it may be assumed his wife would have ‘more luck’ (*mai baxt*) with authorities. This adds to the humour and exchange value of the information as it highlights an unusual particularity in the ‘English system’ (*englezi systemos*). This example also serves to highlight how these performances of speech reveal the perceptions of

bureaucratic systems based on previous experiences and assumptions of being dark skinned and identified as ‘Gypsy’ or ‘Roma’.

This example also shows that information exchange is inherently ambiguous. The information that is not exchanged and left unspoken may carry equal, if not more, meaning than what is voiced (as shown in Chapter 5 regarding the use of silence). For new migrants and home-level bureaucrats, the legitimacy of who holds the correct information, the authority to speak the truth and therefore the forms of truth that take shape are in constant flux. As Butler argues, what conditions the success of performative acts is the extent to which ‘that action echoes prior actions, and *accumulates the force of authority through the repetition or citation of a prior and authoritative set of practices*. It is not simply that the speech takes place *within* a practice, but that the act is itself a ritualised practice’ (1997: 51, emphasis in original). For new migrants, the ritualised practice of speech takes on particular forms due to the majority of individuals being unable to read or write. Information is exchanged solely through oral transmission and memory. This includes discussions within families who live in Luton and the national and transnational connections families maintain. It is also infused by those who speak in the Roma Church (*khangheri*), Romanian televised news and, to a lesser extent, local and national news media in Luton and the UK. Previous negative experiences of evictions in other European countries also feed into rumours, gaining particular salience towards the end of 2013 when different rumours circulate about the significance of the imminent lifting of labour restrictions.

In similar ways for new migrants, for home-level bureaucrats rumours provide a space through which to make sense of contrasting and shifting information. However, the type of information exchanged is dependent on the space of the exchange (see Chapter 4 and 6). Rapidly shifting interpretations of rules and changing duties in front line roles is experienced in differing ways by both new migrants and bureaucrats. This acts to create and exacerbate

confusion and suspicions regarding the validity of information exchanged in the encounter.⁷⁷ However, this perception is highly contingent and changes over time. For new migrants, the words spoken by different bureaucrats hold different weight, which shifts in relation to other information they gain and their assessment of whether different bureaucrats speak ‘true words’.

The weight of words: disclosure, social position and creating common ‘truths’

This section firstly reviews how home-level bureaucrats decide on the interpretation of shifting regulations and then moves to address how this process plays out within new migrant families. I argue these interpretations can overlap and reinforce each other and explore this process through the story of two new migrant mothers Ramona and Maria. Through two vignettes, I illustrate how home-level bureaucrats make meaning from performances and their own ideas regarding the right way to carry out their role. Similarly, new migrant families have different performances that they consider to be more ‘straight’ and ‘true’, which in turn affect their assessments of who is ‘speaking the truth’. This section further argues that these different systems of recognising truth shape the parameters through which encounters play out.

The shifting interpretations of regulations can be grasped by the way service providers discuss what they think is going to happen in January 2014 and the way in which this

⁷⁷ As a useful comparison, Gilliom has argued that welfare mothers in America live in a world that is marked by fear, dependency and by poor access to information. He argues that there is an institutionally constructed and pervasive lack of information and knowledge about the rules and procedures of the welfare system. He explores three aspects: ignorance, fear and need (2001: 86 - 92). These three areas resonate with the experience of mothers identified as ‘Romanian Roma’ and exacerbate the lack of trust between new migrant families and others.

understanding seeps into their daily activities and infuses the decisions and presentations of mothers identified as 'Roma'. Paula expresses the view that those who are working long hours in low-wage jobs and not applying for National Insurance Numbers are 'doing the right thing' by waiting until labour restrictions are lifted. However, it emerges through conversations in a meeting in Wilton Rise Children's Centre at the end of November 2013 that Romanians may not experience the same kind of treatment as previous European accession migrants. Simon firstly brings up the issue of work and asks whether it is going to change in January 2014. Lisa comments that 'they are going to put another obstacle in their way. They are not going to make it easy. They will say something like you have to have an offer of a job before you can have a National Insurance Number or something like that. They are not giving them unless they can show that they are self-supporting. This didn't used to be the case. But they don't just want to see a bit of income they want to see that you can really support yourself otherwise you don't get anything'. Paula comments that 'they can go down to Hall's Bananas but the main problem is going to be that they can't read any of the health and safety'. Simon suggests care work is an option for the women but others note that because many have a criminal record, this option would be closed. Paula acknowledges that 'they' (Roma) might not ever be able to get 'good jobs', saying, 'at the moment lots are doing car wash for cash-in-hand but the Albanians don't want to give them a contract – they will just find somebody else'. Through these conversations, expectations are created that are originally based on rumours and then re-inscribed between home-level bureaucrats.

Bureaucrats' narratives can be reinforced and lead to converging or common truths through interactions with new migrants. For example, Ramona, a new migrant mother from Romania, gained a National Insurance Number in 2007 due to her earnings selling the Big Issue. She has claimed Child Benefit for two years which then stops. Lisa helps Ramona reapply for Child Benefit but also explains to her: 'you have to get a job otherwise the benefits will stop'.

This view is also explained to Ramona by her brother-in-law, Vasili. On a visit to Luton from Croydon, Vasili tries to explain how the system has changed between his family arriving as refugees fifteen years earlier and Ramona, Sergui and their family migrating to the UK in 2007. Vasili gained refugee status and was refused the right to work during the time he was claiming asylum. However, Maria and Sergui are A2 migrants. Vasili explains that now it is all about ‘the job’ (*butchi*) and emphatically exclaims ‘*chechimos*’ (truthfully). At this point he looks towards me to verify what he said. The value of this information is seen as more valid coming from him as a head of a family (*‘baro rom’*) or from my position as a person who speaks English and therefore is seen (despite my many protestations) to hold privileged knowledge of the regulations.

Within this family and their relations, conversations (whether about bureaucratic systems or not) are often interspersed with words or phrases to express their credibility such as ‘*cheches*’ (truly), ‘*marel m’ dad*’ (on my father’s life) and ‘*me chi xoxavav*’ (I am not lying/cheating). Speaking the truth and being clever with speech are key markers of who should or should not be believed. This is strongly infused with being able to speak *Romanës* properly which would give rise to the comment ‘*rom checho*’ (a true (Roma) man) who could ‘*del duma Romanës*’ (give speech like a Rom), linked to social status and recognised performances. Ramona has not fully disregarded Lisa’s advice as she is seen as having a ‘big heart’ (*baro yillo*) and Ramona comments that she believes (*patchav*) that Lisa wants to help her family (*kamel adjutil murre familyia*), but the information held by Vasili adds to Lisa’s information and acts to change how she presents her situation. Rather than claiming that she doesn’t have anything and is destitute ‘no food, no money, no nothing’ (*nai xabe, nai love, nai khanche*), she intensifies the need to present employment rather than need so begins to tell Lisa that she has a small job cleaning and a small amount of income.

The ways in which this information circulates and by whom it is spoken has significance for the ways mothers present themselves. For example, I visit the Job Centre with new migrant mother Maria at the beginning of January 2013. Maria explains her situation to the receptionist, by telling her she (Maria) has nothing and needs help. However, when we later visit the Job Centre in July 2013 she changes her narrative, explaining that she has a ‘little job cleaning houses’. Her circumstances have not changed in the intervening months. Throughout my fieldwork Maria works cleaning domestic houses, delivering leaflets and occasionally begging outside the mosque. The work is very intermittent and she relies on her family to provide her with food and housing. However, she is present in various conversations regarding Ramona’s situation with both Lisa and Vasili. Through different conversations that come to have the authority of ‘truth’, Maria decides to present herself differently at the Job Centre. Changing regulations are thus understood in specific ways. Both bureaucrats and new migrants rely on a mixture of different sources of information and discussions which create certain perceptions leading to different performances.

The vignettes above illustrate how different types of speech are recognised in different ways with different affects and how the ambiguity and shifting nature of the legal requirements created uncertainty. Bureaucrats and mothers answer questions in different ways depending on the information they hear from different people and thus perceptions of truth shape parameters of action. This can be further illustrated by the way that National Insurance Numbers and the Big Issue are discussed.

‘Shurance’ and ‘Batcho’ (National Insurance Numbers and The Big Issue)

As shifting information circulates regarding access and entitlements, certain words and actions take on significance and become detached from their previous meaning. Particular symbols gain prevalence within conversations about the state or engaging with service providers. ‘*Shurance*’, referring to National Insurance Numbers (NINOs) and often more specifically the card or piece of paper that the number is written on, gains significance. The hopes and aspirations placed on gaining *shurance* can be highlighted by one mother Violeta’s joy that her son’s *shurance* comes in the post when he turns sixteen. She happily recounts that he didn’t have an ‘interview’ (*intervivo*) and therefore it is a true (*checho*) one.

The importance placed on the NINO can also be seen through the actions of Drago, a twenty-four year old father of three. He asks the pastor Simon, about *shurance* many times at church meetings. When he has credit on his mobile phone he calls Simon up to twenty times a day. Drago is living with several other families and single men in a small terraced house in the middle of Wilton Rise. Drago knows that one of the families has ‘*shurance*’ but does not know the process for obtaining one or the regulations surrounding self-employed work. Simon is sympathetic and repeats to Drago that he needs to purchase an invoice book and write down all of his self-employed work. However, Simon comments on one day when Drago has called him many times that he is ‘like a stuck record’ and ‘he can’t think of anything else’. In many cases new migrants who gain a National Insurance Number but are nonetheless not more engaged with state actors or able to access welfare benefits. Gaining a NINO does not provide a greater understanding of entitlements or the processes involved that lead towards gaining them. However, these individuals do not often talk about their National Insurance Number so this fact is hidden. Therefore the rumours surrounding ‘*shurance*’

remain linked to status and gaining welfare support regardless of how helpful it is in practice. Although many individuals who gain a NINo still do not have any access to entitlements, these experiences are not included in other people's perception of the value of '*shurance*'.

The intensity of the desire for NINos during 2013 is heightened by the view that England will be 'closed' (*pandardo*) after January 2014. This is also evident through the desire for the Big Issue or '*batcho*'. Maria and Ramona sold the Big Issue between 2007 and 2009 in Swansea and were able to gain NINos. Subsequently their family settled in Luton. However, by the end of my fieldwork the Big Issue is no longer considered 'genuine proof of self-employed work' and is not recognised in NINo interviews. Despite this, when I meet women on the street begging they all describe how they want the '*batcho*' due to the status the previous women who sold the Big Issue have gained.

The particular understandings surrounding symbols such as '*shurance*' and '*batcho*' are based on a lack of clear information among those who have gained these resources, often fuelled by illiteracy, and by secrecy among and between families regarding the types of entitlement they receive. In addition, when someone does receive social welfare benefits the mechanisms through which this is achieved are not discussed. It is often described as luck (*baxt*), speaking well (*boreas mishto*), cleverness (*charo*), or because God knew your heart (*o' del genel tirro yillo*). This aversion to sharing financial details and processes of engagement with bureaucracy is not recognised by home-level bureaucrats, who have the (false) impression that families don't keep secrets from each other. Home-level bureaucrats therefore find it harder to understand what information is available to, or needed by, the individual families.

This section has argued that new migrants' do not openly share information regarding their own personal circumstances. This leads to misrepresentation of bureaucratic processes and

unclear understandings of perceptions and expectations of home-level bureaucrats. This shapes the parameters through which encounters can be entered into, the information exchange that takes place and the meanings that are made.

Increasing home visits and the potency of rumours

Bureaucrats' suspicion about the validity of information presented to them is particularly infused by encounters where mothers change their story. As illustrated in Chapter 6, Paula is not only shocked that mothers seem to lie to her, but also that they are not embarrassed and/or do not acknowledge that they have done so. Dubois noted in his ethnography of welfare services in France that welfare claimants 'arouse suspicion not only because of their possible lies or illegal practices but also because their unstable, complex, or ambiguous situations are a bad fit... By definition bureaucratic criteria poorly account for the unstable and confused reality of social and economic precariousness' (Dubois 2014: 138). This is evident in the narratives of home-level bureaucrats. For example, Lisa commented 'I get an inkling they are hiding something but I can only go on what they say'. This is also infused with the assumption that those characterised as 'Roma' mothers are allusive and difficult to 'track down'. The confluence of these attributions to 'Roma' mothers is the idea that the best way to understand their circumstances is by being physically present in their homes. This is exemplified by the rumour that emerges between bureaucrats that when mothers are described as being out of the house 'shopping', they are actually in prison. Assumptions regarding the credibility of information provided by family members proliferates through the conversations of home-level bureaucrats (whilst some mothers also think that bureaucrats lie

to them or have ‘different faces’ as will be discussed below when analysing ‘failed encounters’).

Home-level bureaucrats express a need to be in the house due to this failing trust in ‘Roma’ mothers’ speech. They conclude that being present in the home is the only mechanism available to grasp the ‘real’ situation. However, for new migrant mothers, the power of speech and the potency of rumours regarding the care of children emerge as a defining factor in their relationships with home-level bureaucrats. These rumours ‘stick’ and are often repeated, albeit with different consequences. The reputation of different bureaucrats’ changes within the networks of different families and this is often contingent on aspects beyond the control of the bureaucrats themselves.

One such rumour is prolific throughout my fieldwork and is related in many different ways. The following narrative is explained at the Children’s Centre meeting and Simon expands on it in a later conversation with me. There is a new migrant household of two parents and eight children. The father collects scrap metal and has lived Luton for around six months in a privately rented house. The father is charged with stealing and receives a short prison sentence. The mother remains in the house with the children. Neighbours notice the smaller children running around outside the house without clothes on and report this to the council. There are also reports that the mother is looking in bins for food. A school in Wilton Rise becomes involved and the children are enrolled and begin attending. It is noted by the Children’s Centre that the headmistress of the school does everything she can for the children, organising lifts to take them to and from school and providing them with school uniform and lunch. Social services then become involved and begin proceedings to put the children into social care. As there are eight children this is at great financial expense to the

council and the story becomes widely known throughout local service providers as well as mothers.⁷⁸

Stories such as this are spoken, understood and drawn on in many different ways. For Rodica, one new migrant mother, the potency of the rumours regarding children is the impetus for her to leave the country. Rodica's husband, Toma, moved to the UK to live close-by to his mother and brother who have indefinite leave to remain, as their asylum applications were in process when Romania acceded to the UK in 2007. However, Toma arrived in 2011 and therefore is subject to transitional controls as an A2 migrant. He married his fourth wife, seventeen-year old Rodica in 2012 and when I meet them in June 2013, they have a five month old baby girl, Ionela. Neither Toma nor Rodica can read or write but Toma can speak English well. Toma collects scrap metal with his brother but has never applied for a NINo. He has also been previously convicted for small crimes of theft and spent time in prison. When I meet them, Toma is on probation with a curfew and they are living with two other new migrants, Mihai and Ilinca, in a small two bedroom terraced house in Wilton Rise.

The house is in a very poor condition with broken doors and a boarded-up broken window at the rear of the house. There is very little furniture apart from one small table, two chairs, a large TV and an electric heater which Toma complains Rodica keeps turned on all day, making the room too hot. Their baby Ionela has a push-chair where she sleeps and when awake she is held by either her mother or father. There are no other material markers in the house that indicate a baby is being cared for in this space. Mihai and Ilinca who they live with are not relatives but previously lived with Toma's uncle. They all speak *Romanës* to each other in the house. Mihai and Ilinca work in a hand car wash when they are needed. If they aren't called in the morning to go to the car wash, they try to find work with others

⁷⁸ In my interviews with different local council employees, this story is often the first topic of conversation that bureaucrats referred to when I mention Romanian new migrants.

collecting scrap metal as they don't have a vehicle of their own. Some of this scrap metal is stored in the back garden.

In August 2013, Toma breaks his probation conditions and is sent back to prison. Rodica tells me the nurse who 'comes for the baby' has sent different people to come and see her. She relates that she didn't know who they were but they asked her lots of questions (*mai pushimata*). She is aware of the rumours regarding other mothers who have had their children taken away and in particular she tells me about a relative of Toma who recently had eight children taken into care. In addition, the increased visits from front line workers seem to be straining Rodica's relationship with Mihai and Ilinca and they are not talking to each other. Rodica does not have a qualifying status or 'right to reside' and therefore does not have access to social support, such as child benefit. She cannot speak English and does not have close family members to help translate for her. In addition, as an EU national she is denied support provided to migrants with children at risk of destitution, under Section 17 Children Act 1989 and Section 21 National Assistance Act 1948.

Rodica is faced with a decision. She believes her baby will be taken into care if she stays in the UK because of the potency of the rumours about other families who have had children removed. She thinks the alternative is for her to leave the country. The ways bureaucratic processes for the care of children are perceived instigate a 'border effect' due to her particular migrant status. The rumours take on a form of 'truth' leading her to think that she cannot stay in the national territory and keep her baby with her. The weight of rumours is exacerbated because front line workers have no formal means to grant her social assistance, heightening her anxiety about the baby being removed. Due to the processes linked with the appropriate care of children, infused with ideas surrounding Roma migrant mothers, complex legal entitlements and her own situated experience, the border is effectively activated for Rodica through her belief that her child will be taken away from her. When I return to the house in

late August, Ilinca tells me Rodica has moved to join her parents who were living in Italy with her baby. The border is activated by the gap that has opened for EU citizens who are destitute with children and the way this is interpreted through rumours and given meaning for different mothers. This vignette illustrates what mothers perceive to be at stake when they enter into encounters.

Some rumours also lead families to choose to remain ‘invisible’ to bureaucratic gazes creating boundaries to interactions. Not only are these rumours contingent on who is speaking them, but they also depend on the personal characteristics of different mothers. For example, another new migrant called Clara grew up in Brussels as a refugee. She moved to Luton when she was sixteen to marry her cousin, Sergui (the son of her father’s brother). She gave birth to her son, Serguitso, in Belgium and when returning to her husband’s family in Luton, her father tells her to not engage with any state services in the UK and to ensure that all her papers are ‘*Belge*’. She is registered with the doctor and the dentist but is supported by her husband’s family. Unlike other young, new migrant mothers who are visited on many occasions by Children’s Centre support workers, health visitors and NGO workers, Clara has no contact with these front line workers. She doesn’t know that there is a Children’s Centre and on one occasion when I try to explain she asks ‘is it like the shopping centre?’ referring to the child care facility in Luton’s Shopping Mall. She is reticent to be registered with the Children’s Centre due to the rumours she has heard about children being removed from parents and her father’s advice regarding her Belgian status.

Therefore rumours migrate across national boundaries through different family networks and also flow through individuals. Distrust regarding institutions is also coloured by previous experiences of evictions or surveillance in different countries. As there are no clear answers to their questions, families use rumours drawing on partial knowledge gained from other families and what they interpret from Romanian news media reporting on the European and

UK representations of Romanians. For example, when Dan is refused a street trading licence, he believes this is because he was convicted of stealing in France ten years ago (he maintains that his friend set him up and that he didn't steal). Similarly Sebastian is certain that his wife Florina's name is written down 'inside the council' (*ando autoritate*), because bills are sent to their house even when they have moved. He doesn't realise that this is her council tax bill. He has no understanding of council tax, what it is for and why he has to pay it. In addition, Margerita, who was previously evicted from her trailer in Montpellier, believes that the changing regulations in the UK mean that 'they are going to close the door' (*pando o' wudar*) and avoids all contact with anyone who seems as though they are linked to state processes. A fear of surveillance and intrusion infuses many conversations, exacerbated by conflicting, and lack of, information.

This section argued that rumours and the perceptions of truth shape the parameters through which home encounters can take place and thus the meaning made and actions taken. In some circumstances this leads to incredulity of spoken words (such as when home-level bureaucrats do not believe words spoken by 'Roma' mothers), in others this heightens their potency. These understandings create boundaries for engaging in home encounters and lead to changing narratives, avoidance and evasion.

Contested information, 'failed encounters' and the search for true speech

The previous section illustrated how rumours, particularly those linked to children, take on salience for new migrant mothers and bureaucrats and how this creates boundaries in interactions. This section argues that distrust both between home-level bureaucrats and new

migrant mothers and distrust among new migrant families increases the role of rumours. New migrants change their presentations of themselves, their performances and their speech in response to rumours and contested information, often leading to ‘failed’ encounters and missed opportunities.

Home-level bureaucrats are faced with complex life histories, shifting regulations, decreasing resources and, often, seemingly incessant questions regarding National Insurance Numbers. The questions posed by new migrants’ stem from a lack of information which leads to frustration sometimes verging on despair. This also manifests new migrants’ desire for an authoritative voice or ‘true words’. When this is not evident, their frustration creates a perception that bureaucrats ‘do not like Romania’. For example, on one occasion when I am walking with Maria she mentions, ‘I want to go to put my papers inside. I want to tell them the truth and see whether they can help me. I want them to say yes or no. That’s it. Yes or no. This is the best way’. She expresses the impossibility of gaining an understandable answer to her situation which is intensified when she feels she is not being believed. In a similar way, on another occasion in the Job Centre Maria points at a woman behind a desk and tells me, ‘I want to speak to that woman, I want to tell her my life and see if she can help me’. However she is subsequently turned away by the receptionist. This search for a clear and understandable answer is echoed by Grigore when he is waiting in the bank to open a bank account. His brother has been able to open a bank account but when Grigore asks at the same bank they tell him he needs a yellow (accession workers) card to be able to open a bank account, which was not previously the case. The bank tells him the changes come from the Home Office and it is now a requirement for Romanians and Bulgarians to have an accession workers card before they can open a bank account. Grigore tries to find where he can gain an accession workers card. He says ‘the system is crazy. They don’t say yes or no they say I don’t know, go here and ask. They send you this place and that place. They should just say

yes or no.’ He feels he is receiving this treatment because he is Romanian. Rumours regarding these interactions infuse new migrants’ feeling that their engagements with state services are getting more difficult. They also apply this to all those they perceive as ‘from the council’. These perceptions are not linked to staff shortages or Local Authority funding cuts, but to an increasing notion that Romanians are gaining a bad reputation in Luton.

The perception that Romanians are gaining a bad reputation in Luton is exacerbated by the actions of home-level bureaucrats. When asked about National Insurance Numbers (NINOs), many home-level bureaucrats make an assessment of their perceived likelihood of success. The types of decisions home-level bureaucrats make ranged from addressing all the wider issues within the family in order to position them to apply for a NINO to presenting the changing regulations in January 2014 as a path through which to disengage from the encounter. Home-level bureaucrats therefore often tell new migrants that it is best to wait until January 2014. However, if an individual does apply and gains a NINO, others become annoyed and feel they had been given misinformation. Recalling Butler, when prior utterances do not carry any supposed legitimacy the performative act is open to failure, as ‘the speaker assumes responsibility through the citational character of the speech’ (Butler 1997: 40).⁷⁹ Where the repetition of speech does not hold the same meaning, all actors change narratives, shift performances and search for alternative sources of information. This behaviour increases distrust of the validity of the information provided by all those entwined in encounters. Thus disengagements are perceived in terms of a ‘failed’ encounter by new migrant families and result in confusion, disappointment and mistrust as they doubt the validity of the information that is provided by different faces of the state.

⁷⁹ Butler draws on Felman’s notion of the ‘speaking body’ arguing that ‘the body acts in excess of what is said, but also acts in and through what is said’ (Butler 1997: 11).

This can be shown through new migrant mother Georgeta's experience of a 'failed encounter' with Lisa, Pathways floating support worker. Lisa believes there is very little she can do for those who don't already have a NINo, as the interviews are becoming very strict and she feels increasingly uncomfortable during the interview process. Therefore she stops taking people NINo interviews, effectively acting as a boundary to access. From her perspective she feels she would be wasting a lot of time and creating hope for nothing, and would not get any results and thus would not be able to close her cases (see Chapter 4 for the structure of Pathways that was designed to be a short-term service to help clients become self-sufficient). Georgeta believes that she has 'gone straight' by getting an invoice book, cleaning jobs, business cards and a mobile phone. This is what she has been told by other mothers in the *khangheri* (Roma Church) and therefore Georgeta feels felt as though she has prepared herself sufficiently. Her expectations of Lisa have been gained through her reputation within some families for being having a 'big heart' (*baro yillo*). However when Lisa comes to Georgeta's house she finds Georgeta has no NINo and no other documents or receipts. She is working as a cleaner but is often paid in furniture or food rather than in money. She also is not aware that she needs to keep receipts or have business liability insurance. Lisa also tells her that her housing contract is not 'valid' because she is renting from an unscrupulous landlord who will not provide her with receipts or a legal rental agreement.

Lisa sits on the couch in the front room and sifts through the documents, bills and other papers including solicitor letters regarding a car accident that involved Georgeta's husband. Lisa cannot find an order to the papers. Georgeta can read and write in Romanian and she proudly tells me on many occasions that she attended school for ten years. She also tells me that she only spoke Romanian in her family and learned Romanës when she married Rosvan. However, she cannot read or write in English. Her husband Rosvan cannot read or write in Romanian or English. Therefore all letters they receive are put inside a compartment in their

couch. I sit on this couch while Georgeta sits next to Lisa on chairs around the table where we eat our meals. At some points Georgeta jumps up and asks me to move so she can lift the top of the couch to try to find more papers for Lisa to read. Rosvan looks on from the other side of the dining room table but does not say anything. Lisa tells her that she can't do anything until Georgeta has a NINo. She tells her to write down all of her work in her invoice book.

When Lisa leaves the house the family is confused and frustrated. Rosvan exclaims that his son's wife gave birth in this country and therefore his granddaughter is English (*'englezoika'*) and therefore 'they must help us' (*'trebul ajutil amen'*). This encounter plunges the family into a sense of confusion, unsure about what course of action to take next or where to seek advice. This illustrates the decisions that lead to disengagements from home-level bureaucrats who are trying to fulfil their role under resource constraints and shifting bureaucratic structures. However, from the perspective of new migrants who feel they are unable to gain clear information and thus base their decision making on rumours of entitlements, this disengagement leads to despair. At this time I am living with this family and Georgeta begins to increasingly call Christian, a volunteer who (as previously mentioned) attends the Cantorford Church and who comes to the house to teach her and her youngest son English. However, her relationship with Christian requires different performances and implicates wider negotiations of relationships as will be explored below. Thus disengagements from home-level bureaucrats lead to perceptions of distrust and confusion.

The distrust of service providers is exacerbated by the way new migrant families do not discuss their economic arrangements, and by their indignity about being (mis)represented by others. This provides one indication of why these families do not gain the support of the Local Authority that might have been available and is being used by other new migrants, such as those who establish a Turkish Community centre in the time I am living Luton.

This mistrust between families is illustrated through the rumours surrounding Violeta. Violeta is often the target of rumours as she is a widow and has become entwined with the Cantorford church (*englezi khangheri*). She was baptised, or as she says ‘went into the water’ (*gelem ando pai*), following the ‘miraculous’ recovery of her son from meningitis. I hear many different stories regarding potential relationships that Violeta is involved in (none of which were ever substantiated) and also rumours based on her isolating herself from others. She wears long handmade skirts, but she cuts them straight rather than flowing in contrast to women of a similar age in her wider family network. The skirts are not brightly coloured or patterned but made from grey material. She does not wear any bright colours. She often goes to religious meetings with Simon to speak about her conversion and her life story. Simon believes that her story could also counter negative images surrounding those identified as ‘Romanian Roma’ in the area and so is inclined to support her.

In July 2013 mothers begin to ask me whether I have seen Simon and Violeta together. It is around this time that Simon begins to arrange meetings with Big Issue organisers to try to negotiate selling the Big Issue in Luton for mothers who attend the *khangheri* (Roma Church). However, the number of people attending the church declines during this time. Maria tells me that Violeta has been meeting with Simon and the ‘*autoritate*’ (local council) to get money to help the children in different families. Florina also tells me that Violeta has been talking about all of their children and is going to take all of the money that the ‘*councilo*’ gives to the Church. Violeta’s perceived actions cause anger amongst the mothers and attendance at the church drops further. Instances such as this, where one person is called on to speak about or represent the ‘Roma problem’, indicates the jealousy and distrust that runs among and between different individuals and families. This distrust is exacerbated when home-level bureaucrats are seen as providing different information to different people and there is no one who is perceived to speak ‘true words’.

This section has argued that there is distrust between families which is also exacerbated by the perceived lack of clear information. These new migrant families do not express any desire to organise to form a ‘group’ that is able to access funding and support from the Local Authority, which might include gaining assistance to realise their rights and entitlements. In addition, when one member of the group begins to talk to bureaucrats about other new migrants, she is berated by her family members. I argue that these rumours and new migrants’ perception that bureaucrats are placing them into the category of ‘Roma’, further acted to decrease the information shared between families. As I will explore in the next section, Hierarchies are created within families based on assessments of those who are considered able to engage with home-level bureaucrats.

Rumours creating boundaries in family relationships

Due to disengagement and distrust proliferating on both sides of the encounters with bureaucrats, families also begin to share less about their bureaucratic circumstances and processes with state actors among other family members. The site of the home gains increased salience in this context. Engaging with bureaucrats in the home and creating a ‘public’ identity solely in the private space means new migrants are dependent on other family members to assist them in their bureaucratic relationships. However, in order to manage their own identity in relation to home-level bureaucrats, some individuals restrict the information they provide to others. This section illustrates how this is highly contingent on social position.

This section argues that those who have the least perceived resources are given the least information by members of their family. These new migrants do not encounter home-level bureaucrats. For example, another new migrant Marian arrives from Romania to stay with Grigore in April 2013. Marian is married to Grigore's sister, comes from the same village as him and has heard from Grigore and Dan that they have houses for their families in Luton. He explains his motivation to bring his family to Luton is for his children to go to school. He stays with Grigore for two months but does not speak any English and does not manage to find a way of supporting himself. During this time, Marian often asks me for help to find a job. After one particularly intense period of questioning for advice and help in Christina's house, Christina tells me that I should not help Marian find a job or a flat: 'He doesn't have anything. He will make us all look bad'. Grigore gives him a place to sleep and he eats with the family, however they do not share information with him regarding jobs or housing. An understanding of Marian's position in the house can be gained by the actions of others towards him. Grigore's wife doesn't make him coffee and Christina also doesn't make him coffee when he visits her house, in contrast to Grigore, Gigi and other male members of the family who are made coffee. Through the workings of the family, Marian is set up to fail through not being involved in information exchange. This highlights the importance of information in forming strategies for place-making. Different family members are trying to maintain their own identity performances to home-level bureaucrats while also managing expectations and relationships with family members.

This is also the case with Grigore's nephew, Victor, who stays with Dan for two weeks. However, when Dan gains a construction job, Victor moves to Grigore's house as Dan told me that it was not good for Victor to be in the house all day with Christina and the babies. Similarly, Victor eats with the family but has no other means of supporting himself and eventually returns to his wife and children in Romania. Flows of information between family

members are highly contingent. In the case of Marian and Victor, as they have very few resources, and thus are seen as potentially damaging, they are not provided with advice or information. This illustrates the argument that hierarchies are created within families based on managing identities and the awareness of the implications of being identified as 'Roma'. Thus boundaries are drawn by different family members depending on their own position and their management of relationships with others in their domestic space, including bureaucrats and family members.

The different types of relationships and how they hold significance for information exchange can be further illustrated by Maria's differing behaviour towards Margerita, a new migrant who lives in the same house as her, and her nephew's wife, Anca. Margerita sleeps in Maria's house but she is not related to anyone in the house. She is in Luton because her boyfriend Tommy worked for Sergui in Romania. Margerita previously lived in Montpellier but was evicted and so decided to come with Tommy to Luton. He decides to spend the summer working in Luton and gains a job in a hand car wash. He is saving money to send home to his wife and three daughters. He is not paid very much and on occasions he only drinks Coca Cola all day without eating anything (the others in the house tease him for this, calling him 'Cola'). Margerita tells me she wants to get a flat so that she can bring her son, who is living with her parents in Romania, to come to live with her. She is sharing a begging spot with Maria's sister, Raluca, and is given the worst parts of the day when it is less busy. She receives between five and ten pounds a day which she spends on food and cigarettes and is not saving any money as she previously hoped. Maria and the family provide Margerita with little support or information. As Margerita does not speak any English, on one occasion Maria does help her make an appointment with the doctor. I am walking with Maria when she tells me it is time for her to go to help Margerita and we return to the house. On entering the house, we are greeted by Ramona and Sergui who have just returned from Romania, bringing

large amounts of food including cured meats, breads and pickles. Maria immediately sits down to eat the food, giving me a plate and forcefully telling me to eat. Margerita looks on and without saying anything and leaves the room. I ask about the doctor for Margerita and Maria tells me it is no problem and that I should eat. Margerita's doctor appointment is not a priority.

In contrast, when Maria's nephew, Serban arrives from Belgium with his wife Anca, Maria spends three weeks seeing them almost every day and often staying in their house. She takes Serban to the council office, the bank, the Job Centre and shows Anca the best places to buy food. She prioritises Anca above meeting others and introduces her to shopkeepers in Wilton Rise, telling them that she is 'my sister'. She also looks after their son so they can attend appointments and she takes her to visit Lisa in her office, similarly introducing her as 'my sister'. Therefore, the perception that there are fewer resources and that a distrust of Romanians is growing, coupled with different values placed on relationships, means that individuals themselves begin to ration who they think has the best chance or who will make them 'look bad'. Through their interpretation of the state services available, the new migrants provide information but only to certain people, effectively acting as a boundary to others to access home-level bureaucrats. This further illustrates the limited spaces through which new migrants can gain information about their rights and entitlements, and the means through which they might be realised. These examples strengthen the argument that state forms are developed through multiple embedded relations as new migrants shift their own performances of identity to manage relationships with home-level bureaucrats whilst also acting as a boundary to others who they perceive will be unsuccessful. Boundaries are being redrawn through discourses produced within, or informed by, home encounters.

In addition, those with more resources and access to information are able to manage their interactions with bureaucrats in different ways, creating and maintaining a distinction

between their public and private space. Those with more resources are able to access more information, and in different ways. For example, Anca is able to avoid home visits by being shown offices by Maria. Maria also speaks for her, drawing on two years of experience with banks, doctors and churches in Luton. Similarly, Gigi is only visited once by Paula. He ensures that he photocopied all of his own documents and gives her everything she needs so she has no concerns or requirements to visit him again. He gains this information from Dan and Grigore regarding the interaction with service providers. He can read and write Romanian and English and therefore is relied upon by Grigore and others who cannot speak such good English. Therefore despite being their young nephew, he is highly regarded within the family. He is not visited by any other service providers and retains the ‘privacy’ of the domestic space that he has created.

Shifting faces of the state

Some mothers who do not interact with home-level bureaucrats either through disengagement, failed encounters or due to boundaries created by family members, instead build relationships with volunteers and often ask them to take on roles that constitute ‘faces of the state’. Members of different church congregations, through Simon’s efforts, become volunteers for the Roma Church (*khangheri*). Volunteers such as Christian and Rosemary often change role from teaching English to reading letters, assisting with applications for benefits or filling in tax returns. They therefore mediate and explain various documents, processes and actions in relation to new migrants’ access to the state. In this way volunteers translate state forms and thus volunteers become the ‘face of the state’ for some new migrant mothers. Christian is intricately entwined with four mothers and keeps all of their

employment records, receipts and bills, and fills in their Home Office Tax Return in order for them to maintain their self-employed businesses.

There are many contestations around the roles of volunteers and what kinds of performances are required to secure support. Christian was known for his ‘big heart’ (*baro yillo*) and that he is ‘close to God / strong with God’ (*zuralli Devleski*). Mothers also mention that Christian and Simon don’t speak about other people. Mothers often ask them about the actions and behaviour of other mothers but they do not answer. Mothers joke and flatter Christian telling him how he ‘knows everything in my life but no speak’. However, maintaining connections with volunteers also requires intensive identity work and opens wider and more intimate relationships that need to be managed. This causes tensions and disjuncture in relationships which changes what information is exchanged, the understanding and meaning that is made from his statements and actions. This section argues that although the faces of the state shift for some new migrant mothers, the encounters in the home require different kinds of identity work and exposes a wider network of relationships and histories to be reconciled. This further illustrates the complexity of identity management when state forms are negotiated in private, domestic space.

A case in point is the relationship between church volunteer Christian, migrant mother Violeta and Violeta’s sister-in-law, Georgeta. Violeta became isolated from her wider family when her husband died and later, when she was baptised. However, this is beginning to change throughout 2013 and she tells me happily that on Christmas Day Georgeta and her brother’s family came to her house to celebrate. She particularly emphasised that it was the first time had not all come to the house as a family, which seemed very meaningful to her as a marker of better relations. Around this time Violeta begins to refuse offers of help from Christian, a church volunteer who had previously provided her with regular support. One afternoon, Christian, Violeta and I are driving and Christian decides that he is going to drop

off something with Georgeta. At this point Violeta becomes agitated and asks to be let out of the car. She does not want Georgeta to know that she has been in the car with Christian. She insists forcefully and Christian lets her out of the car and, following our visit to Georgeta, we pick her up to take her home. Christian is very surprised and he considers this to be unusual behaviour. In addition, Christian also offers to teach Violeta English but she refuses. I am particularly confused as she tells me that she desperately wants to learn English to help her gain more secure employment. For example, she tries to gain work in a care agency but they won't employ her until she has improved her English language skills.

A week or so after the incident in the car, Violeta tells me that she and Georgeta had lived together in Rome but they had a large argument about a local NGO worker. He helped Violeta gain a job in a local primary school as a teaching assistant, but was unable to find a similar position for Georgeta. Violeta also tells me that she had a relationship with this NGO worker and Georgeta was upset because she felt Violeta was receiving preferential treatment. Violeta seems fearful to jeopardise her reconciliation with some of her family members due to being seen with Christian and Georgeta's knowledge about her previous relationship with the NGO worker.

Concurrently, Christian is helping Georgeta but tries to disengage because Georgeta often asks him to help her pay her rent. Georgeta blames Violeta for Christian's reticence to visit the house. Georgeta feels as though Violeta is taking up too much of Christian's time and therefore can't help her, a situation she feels happened before in Rome. Georgeta becomes very jealous of the amount of time that Christian is spending helping Violeta. There are also rumours that Christian and Violeta are engaged in a relationship. This makes Violeta, as a widow, uncomfortable, stating '*o del genel murro yillo*' (God knows my heart). Mindful of this, Violeta rebuffs Christian's offer to teach her English in order to dispel rumours that they are having a relationship and maintain valuable family ties.

In this way, the disjuncture of information exchange can be predicated often on long and complex life histories. Home-level bureaucrats and volunteers are often not aware of these histories but (in conjunction with the power of rumours) they fundamentally alter relationships and shift performances in encounters. For new migrants, engaging volunteers as faces of the state can therefore directly shape their parameters of performances. This vignette also illustrates the way that new migrants create their own boundaries regarding how and when to engage with those who represent faces of the state for a wide variety of reasons, and many of those reasons are not linked to gaining rights and entitlements but rather family histories and social position.

In addition, the knowledge Christian develops enables him to create his own boundaries of access depending on his assessment of an individual based on their religious practices and their ability to gain employment. Christian becomes a source of information and translation of state processes for front line service providers as well as mothers. He has detailed knowledge of bureaucratic processes and documents as he has been working with them for around eighteen months when I begin my fieldwork. From support worker Lisa's perspective, having previous experience with English Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers (see Chapter 4), Christian possesses more knowledge than her and due to his accounting background has the skills and understanding regarding self-employed income and tax returns. In light of this, Lisa asks Christian for help advising her clients on the paths and courses of action they should take.

Christian and Lisa have very different values regarding access to entitlements. For example, Maria wants to help her mother apply for a NINo. Lisa is happy to help make the appointment but can't go with her to the Job Centre. She calls Christian as he spends time with Maria and fills in her tax return. Christian refuses to take Maria's mother to the interview as he believes she is not a genuine applicant for a NINo because he thinks she

doesn't have the skills to retain a job. Thus state forms are reproduced through embedded relations among and between new migrants and those who assume faces of the state, all with their own systems for assessing truth and values. These judgements are also based on relationships that have developed within domestic spaces as new migrant mothers try to negotiate their own identities and leverage others to fulfil different roles. Thus they oscillate between different positions but are held by the space of the house which shapes the various relationships and values that can be drawn from an interaction. Christian is placed in a position where he makes decisions regarding the way individuals relate to the state based on understandings that are drawn from his relationship with the family built in their 'private' home over many months. This illustrates how the boundaries between public and private space are reworked through these encounters and the meanings drawn from them and the actions that are informed by them.

Place-making and identities

In light of shifting categories, conflicting stories and previous experiences, the uncertainty in encounters creates many different orientations towards faces of the state as individuals test different paths in order to gain access and stability for their family. This can be illustrated by the many new migrants who are drawn to the *khangheri* (Roma Church) shortly after they arrive in Luton. However, despite Simon and many volunteers providing 'a straight path' (*o' drom vorta*) these interactions are not without disjuncture in meaning-making. This disjuncture illustrates that identities are negotiated to *make place*, and that through making-place identities are also (re)made. When boundaries are drawn in accessing the state, individuals linked to the church are also plunged into turmoil regarding their beliefs and

question their course of action. The different strategies undertaken at different times indicate the contingent nature of ‘true words’ and the complexity of the intertwining relationships that guide decision making.

For example, Dan and Grigore, two brothers from Moldavia, apply for NINOs at the same time. Grigore gains a NINo on his first attempt. He chooses to seek advice from a Romanian solicitor in London before submitting his application and does not ask Simon to accompany him, which is unusual for those who are intimately connected to the *khangheri* (Roma Church). In contrast, Dan is refused four times on the grounds that he cannot prove he is engaged in genuine self-employed work. Dan has been following the advice of Simon, who accompanies him for his NINo interviews at the Job Centre in Bedford. Dan is convinced this is the reason his brother gains a NINo and he does not. He comes to believe that Simon doesn’t know what to do and ‘can’t speak well’ (*chi boriel mishto*).

When Dan receives the news he failed his interview for the fourth time he is conflicted. He lies on the couch with tears in his eyes. He questions his actions, which have been shaped by his religion, and explains that his heart was turning black (*kalo*). He feels as though he needs to pray and wash his heart. He is stressed and angry (*nervosus*), heightened by the poor quality of his house. He is getting into a lot of debt by sustaining the house which he thinks is making his children sick. He compares his situation to that of his brother who is now able to afford a better quality house in the middle of Wilton Rise. He blames Simon and claims he wants move to France to work and send money back to his wife Christina to look after their five children.

This illustrates the trajectory of different sources of ‘true words’ and how Dan makes sense of his situation in light of inconsistent and shifting access to social protections. Different people are considered to have an authoritative voice at different times. As mentioned above,

Dan describes how he is '*nervosos*' and his heart is 'black' when he thinks that Simon is not the right person to trust in his relations with bureaucratic processes. He wavers back and forth in his relations with his brother and Simon. During these periods of '*nervosos*', he often plays loud religious music well into the night and the whole family prays very loudly before going to bed in the evening to 'wash my heart' (*tovav o'yillo*). Dan also begins to rely on another new migrant Andrei, who previously lived in Manchester. When Dan is very upset he immediately calls Andrei for advice. Andrei is seen as possessing the 'straight path' as he organises the music and speaks in the *khangheri* (Roma Church) and also because he is seen as successful. He has seven children in school, a house and social welfare benefits. Andrei's wife is also believed to have a special relationship with God and is the only woman who is allowed to speak in the *khangheri* (not from the altar which is reserved for men, but from her seat). This also adds to Dan's trust in their advice, believing that by following their words he is 'going straight' and is not compromising his own faith and beliefs, therefore stopping his heart turning 'black'. Thus as encounters take place in the home, new migrant's strategies can rely on those within their private relationships to guide them in their orientations towards the state. However, as Dan's and Violeta's vignettes illustrate, these relationships require intensive work and are intimately entwined with personal histories and can unsettle deeply held beliefs. Trust develops in multiple and conflicting ways as new migrants test different avenues and engage in a process of casting and recasting others as faces of the state.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how bureaucrats and new migrants have different systems of meaning making and recognising the 'truth'. For bureaucrats, this encompasses increasing

home visits as they begin to feel that only by seeing will they know the ‘reality’ of what is going on. This is exacerbated by their changing roles (as described in previous chapters) and by the actions of new migrants who are seen as being deceitful and entitled (not showing the correct degree of neediness and deference).

New migrants place a large amount of weight on the speech of men who are considered to have luck and success. They respond to their perceived image and the seemingly unfathomable and shifting system around them by testing different performances and creating boundaries within families regarding interactions with state actors. The weight of words and performances which infuse relationships with others in Luton also spans time and national boundaries, and thus migration trajectories and intersecting life histories become salient. This chapter illustrated the character of rumours and speech and then moved to address how rumours are used and knowledge is leveraged, with consequences for the home encounter. This illustrates the contingent and shifting nature through which access to membership plays out in practice.

This chapter argues that a relational production of meanings is unfolding through encounters and that this represents the development of state forms through embedded social relations. One consequence of state acts occurring in the private space is a negotiation of identities that affects place-making and vice versa.

The chapter has shown how first, ‘truth’ develops in the encounter, especially given the role of illiteracy, creates different understandings of performances. These understandings shape decision making that can lead to a convergence or divergence of meaning between home-level bureaucrats and new migrants. The chapter then turns to argue that rumours gain legitimacy through repetition, citation, and being spoken by those seen as successful (in the UK and elsewhere). Rumours of bureaucratic action can make borders of the state emerge

within the home. Thus not only does access to welfare and immigration controls become increasingly linked in policy and practices, but also in imaginations of membership, where the ability to reside on the national territory is at stake.

The chapter then argues that through meanings made in home encounters, families create their own boundaries to access for others in the family, blocking those considered to be negative and facilitating those who are perceived to be valuable. Due to encounters in the home and state duties bestowed on those who are not bureaucrats (such as church volunteers), aspects of an individuals' history and family circumstances are revealed and further shape how access to the state is negotiated.

As such the nation-state can be perceived as produced unevenly across time and space. Everyday relations, even among those theoretically conceived of as 'outside' of the state, bleed into the dimensions of bureaucratic life. The chapter argues that the state not only influences but is influenced by social contexts and embedded relations in multiple and contrasting ways. Thus not only does the increasing shift to home encounters shape the way new migrants negotiate their identities when they *make place*, but place-making also shapes identities. In addition, detailed analysis of home encounters reveals how state acts are relationally produced and infused with diverse forms of practices and discourses, shaping who is considered to belong within or outside the nation, and blurring the boundary between public and private space.

Chapter 8. Conclusion: Home encounters as state acts

Introduction

This final chapter critically reflects on the material presented in the thesis by summarising my ethnographic findings and then evaluating my contribution to knowledge in light of the theoretical and methodological discussions at the outset.

This thesis is concerned with how new migrants from a numerically small group, with no previous established links or relationships, negotiate their identities to *make place* in an area with a long history of migration and more recent intensified population growth and churn. Through ethnographic study of new migrant families, home encounters with state actors emerge as a defining feature of their place-making and identity formation in the UK. The study focuses on home encounters between different actors and those they identify as ‘Romanian Roma’ new migrants. My main argument is that the home encounter unsettles notions of public and private due to the implication of new migrants’ intimate lives in their ability to access the state. This leads to the negotiation of identities through place-making, and in turn those processes of place-making shaping identities.

First, the home encounter is framed as a ‘state act’ (Bourdieu 2012 in Dubois 2014: 39). State actors have varying amounts of power to define situations, classify people and control access to resources. I argue that state formations are continuously recreated and transformed through embedded relations between state actors and their ‘clients’. The ethnographic data illustrates that home encounters are experienced, perceived and understood by different actors based on different values, creating diverging and overlapping meanings. The different values ascribed to performances are shaped by the underlying logics that form the dichotomy between public and private space. The meanings gained from encounters are drawn on in decision making, acting to (re)produce hierarchies and boundaries, shaping new migrants’ place-making and negotiation of identity. The home becomes the site where these meanings and values, and new migrants’ relationship to the state, is contested and negotiated.

Second, I argue that the material and social space of the encounter (specifically the home) is fundamental to the negotiations that take place. Recasting the home encounter as a site of embedded relations opens the analysis to include the different positions, expectations and perceptions of all actors involved. It also brings the texture of the space and the meanings attached to material objects into the analysis. Because of the particular role of the child, it is principally mothers in new migrant families who engage with state actors, while the state actors themselves are also typically women and often from a minority or migrant background. Situating these state actors within their contexts, circumstances and status in their respective organisations, reveals the advanced marginalisation within their roles, leading to the introduction of the term home-level bureaucrat. In addition, the site of the encounter assumes particular salience in this context as it is often the *only* site where some new migrants encounter state actors. Moreover, the structure of front line service provision is changing, with many services providers far from direct Local Authority control, such as religious volunteers. Welfare duties are also being broadened to include immigration regulations and therefore the intimate lives of new migrants are being revealed not only to make decisions regarding access to material resources but also permission to reside in the national territory.

Third, the detailed descriptions of the negotiations in home encounters illustrate the nuances of assessments made of ‘good mothering’ when different values are attributed to different performances. This approach foregrounds the contingent nature of the unfolding relationship; and ultimately reveals the blurred boundary between public and private space. These negotiations take place within a particular context that has been termed ‘post-welfare’ (Dubois 2013). Welfare policies are based increasingly on behavioural and evaluative criteria, rather than addressing structural inequalities (Jessop 1993; Benington and Taylor 1993; Bruegel 1999). As new migrants’ intimate lives are increasingly implicated, access to social protections is also increasingly based on value assessments of these intimate lives. In

addition, due to cuts in the public sector, various other organisations are co-opted to provide support services. New migrants themselves cast volunteers, who have in-depth knowledge of their lives, into the role of a mediator with state processes. However, these volunteers are then called upon to use this knowledge to make decisions regarding new migrant residency status. Through this lens of representation, the continuous reworking of notions of public and private space is revealed. The incursion of the state into the intimate lives of new migrants both leads to negotiations of identity in order to *make place* and to these processes of place-making shaping identities.

The thesis in review

I shall now review each chapter to trace the progression of this argument.

In Chapter 1, I review the theoretical literature to create the framework for inscribing the changing nature of citizenship and how it has affected the relationship between public and private space. I bring together the concept of differential inclusion and the notion that the state can be located in everyday practices to introduce the term ‘home encounter’ *as a space of negotiation of values where different relations of power and struggle play out* and where state forms are (re)produced. The values negotiated in these encounters are principally focused on the performances of women as mothers and due to the nature of human service work they are often assessed by migrant, minority and ‘ethnic’ women. I introduce and justify my introduction of the term home-level bureaucrat to describe the changing faces of the state and the shifting duties that are bestowed on them.

The methodological aspects connected to my research are justified in Chapter 2. I describe my fourteen months of ethnographic fieldwork and outline my methodological and

epistemological standpoint. This chapter also argues that the ethnography of encounters requires a particular methodology, specifically including attention to situated actors, embedded relations and perceptions of space. To remain attentive to these three factors I use the perspective of the body as a mobile spatial field (Munn 1996: 451).

Chapter 3 argues that the significance of home encounters represents a particular formation of multiple workings of power towards ‘Roma’ migrant mothers, shaping the terms on which they encounter state actors. The chapter elucidates this argument by contextualising the individual negotiations between new migrants and state actors, reconstructing the political, economic and legal frameworks shaping their everyday lives.

Building on this background, Chapter 4 moves to examine the biographies and trajectories of different actors to explain how they come to be present in the home, and the perspectives and expectations they carry with them. I present ethnographic data to argue that front line workers’ duties are shifting as immigration controls become fused with welfare regulations; that those undertaking these roles are increasingly removed from Local Authority control and include volunteers and church actors; and that this is taking place at the same time as these roles become increasingly crucial to new migrants’ place-making.

Chapter 5 argues that the material texture of the home space is significant in two ways. First, objects are leveraged based on different understandings of the encounter. Second, materiality is used to explain disjuncture in values linked to notions of public and private space. Chapter 6 argues that the home space is significant socially as well as materially, due to the meanings that are made by the perception of different bodies in the space. The chapter concludes that space is (re)created in shifting, manifold, and complex ways that allows the unveiling of the home as a site of highly uneven production of meanings.

Chapter 7 builds on the arguments from Chapter 5 and 6 to argue that relational meanings are made from the encounter based on actors' intimate lives. The chapter argues that new migrants' illiteracy shapes relationship building with state actors, and heightens the role of performance resulting in the search for 'true speech'. The chapter illustrates how actors' spoken intentions (both bureaucrats and new migrants) emerge as multi-layered and potentially contradictory, and how consequences of actions articulate with intentions in complicated ways. Finally the chapter argues that state acts are relationally produced and infused with diverse forms of practices and discourses, ultimately shaping who are considered to belong within or outside the nation.

To conclude, this thesis argues that through conducting public state acts in private space, new migrants' intimate everyday lives are brought into the process of establishing whether and how they can gain access to the state. Private space is reworked and intimate details are revealed in negotiations regarding access to membership. These negotiations do not just include the immediate situation of the new migrant in Luton, but are inextricably entwined with their relationships and experiences that span time and space.⁸⁰ This represents a shift in the dichotomy between public and private space and the terms on which membership to the state is based. Moreover, as faces of the state shift to include those who are less accountable to Local Authorities, the personal lives of all actors become salient. In response to this incursion into private space, different boundaries and strategies of interaction and evasion emerge.

⁸⁰ This is not a new observation in research regarding migrant place-making. Previous research has illustrated how home and place-making draw on memories and experiences from various 'elsewheres' (Alexander 2012; Fortier 2000; Law 2001; Puwar 2007). However, the advance I make here is that this also affects access to membership of the state.

Contribution to knowledge

The overall contribution to knowledge of this thesis rests on the argument that the filtering that once occurred at the national border now takes place within the territory. Due to shifting front line roles and duties, coupled with processes of labelling, public and private space is being re-worked with consequences for new migrant place-making and access to the state. To elucidate this argument I detail how the dynamics of filtering and labour market discrimination that once occurred at the national border are now taking place within the space of the national territory. The ethnographic findings of the research illustrate how changing migration controls shift bordering mechanisms from the national territorial boundary to welfare-state controls. In the case of these new migrants, state acts manifest in ‘private’ space through duties related to children. The thesis does not argue that this is a new border process, but rather that the processes that dictated previous filtering have shifted and re-emerged. Crucially, this thesis charts how different resources and values are leveraged, negotiated and exchanged from the perspective of new migrants and state actors as individuals try to make sense of their own and others’ positions. Understanding the role of the home-level bureaucrat and the home encounter are vital both theoretically and methodologically to understanding how these processes take place and affect the lives of new migrants, state actors and volunteers. This argument contributes to three areas of knowledge: the nexus of anthropology of migration and anthropology of bureaucracy; the gap between theories of race and migration studies; and understanding ‘Roma’ as a label with effects for how new migrants’ are able to (re)create the experienced spaces in which they live. I explore these three areas in the following sections.

The nexus of anthropology of migration and anthropology of bureaucracy

This thesis sits at the intersection of the anthropology of migration and the anthropology of bureaucracy, mirroring the fuzzy boundaries between immigration control and welfare requirements that lie at the heart of my argument. A key contribution of this thesis is the analytical framework of the ‘home encounter’, which brings together the perspectives of new migrants, bureaucrats and various others and blurring of public and private space to account for the diffusion of immigration control into welfare requirements. As elucidated in the introduction and expanded in Chapter 2, this is a new approach in the anthropology of bureaucracy. Previous research often creates *a priori* a divide between front line service providers and ‘clients’, and either examines one side of the interaction, or examines the interaction between service provider and client through the lens of one profession. In contrast, this research explores the relational meanings that are made from the perspective of many different actors across professions and perspectives. Moreover the previous literature that addresses the relationship between bureaucrat and client has often focused on micro interactionist discourse analysis, which can mask structural and contextual dynamics. This thesis argues that both the micro level processes (such as the texture of the home space and meanings bestowed on material objects) and structural dynamics are crucial to account for the meanings that are made from interactions. By using an innovative methodology which takes the new migrant body as a mobile spatial field, I trace networks and connections as they are established in space. I follow the flows of power through different actors, without privileging one perspective or ‘group’ of people or professionals. Thus, although I lived with new migrants, I spent a great deal of time with bureaucrats and others to gain understanding of their perspective and justifications for the decisions they make (see Chapters 2 and 4). This understanding is crucial to analyse the differing logics guiding the home encounter with wide

ranging repercussions for the abilities of new migrants to negotiate their identities and *make place*.

In addition, attending to the ethnographic detail of encounters allows the foregrounding of diverse forms of knowledge from various ‘elsewheres’ and how they interact with bureaucratic frameworks in a situated context. This is an advance in the anthropology of migration which has long since shown that transnational relationships are brought to bear in localities in multi-faceted ways (Oliver 2008; Simon-Kumar 2011) but has not applied this perspective to address how they might be implicated in accessing the state in particular places. There is a need to find methodologies and analytical frameworks that can account for ‘intersecting diversities’ and diverse forms of knowledge in a context of rapid urban change, welfare retrenchment and austerity (Berg et al. *forthcoming*). Critiques developed from diversity studies have led research to be attentive to the many different cleavages that emerge in a delineated space (Wessendorf 2014; Neal et al. 2015). However, whereas urban encounters focus on ‘public’, ‘semi-public’ or ‘parochial’ spaces, I am concerned with encounters in purportedly ‘private’ spaces. I draw on the advances made by the ‘diversity turn’, but focus on the home to illustrate how subjectivities within and between family members and others (such as legal status or language ability) shift relationships. The blurring of public and private space as intimate details are implicated in accessing the state is an advance that provides an opportunity to bring together the anthropology of migration and bureaucracy. I have brought the different knowledge that migrants gain from their own experiences and the transnational connections they maintain into the analysis of grounded processes that occur within the home space. I have used an analytical framework that reveals the ‘symbolic nexus of relations produced out of interactions between bodily actors and terrestrial spaces’ (Munn 1996: 450). Social cleavages (subjectivities that are made salient in different vectors of time and space) emerge through being attentive to actors’ ‘field of

action’, as a material and symbolic space, and how this shapes and is shaped by actors’ ‘basis of action’, or the meanings drawn from and directed towards the space (Munn 1996: 450).

This argument is relevant for the field of diversity studies, where it has been argued that the increasing diversity within national societies and the need to accommodate different sets of demands by various cultural groups pose challenging questions regarding the meaning of equality. In particular, this question has been framed in terms of cultural difference, asking whether these differences should be restricted to the private sphere or publicly recognised with a place in political life. This thesis illustrates how assessments of cultural difference in the private sphere have wide ranging implications for material conditions and political (public) life. Through the actions of home-level bureaucrats, various evaluations of cultural difference are diffused into the private sphere. This analytical framework therefore provides the tools to bring together the anthropology of migration and the anthropology of bureaucracy to question what represents the ‘public’ and the terms on which membership to the state can be negotiated.

Interrogating race through migration studies

This thesis also addresses the gap that has been identified between migration studies and theories of race. Migration studies has been critiqued as sidelining race and contributing to a ‘post-race’ agenda (Alexander 2016; Song 2013). Migration studies has sometimes critiqued the use of race as an analytical lens when examining migration controls, on the grounds that race may not always be the primary axis on which discrimination is being practiced (Anderson et al. 2015). The divergence between these two academic approaches can be attributed to their separate historical developments. Race thinking in social science developed

in the context of racial struggle, emancipation, race riots and social movements in opposition to slavery. Race became a subject of investigation at the same time as it was a focus for social and political action (Demir in Humphris 2015). In this context, focusing on ‘race’ does not address difference in itself but, as with other social divisions, privileges the ‘social consequences of the attribution of significance, exclusion and privilege by society to certain patterns of difference’. This approach tends in fact not to problematise race or racial difference but rather racial inequality, since ‘racialised societies are sustained by racialised regimes and not just by racialised individuals’ (Knowles 2010: 31).

Race is therefore a useful concept in social analysis because it provides a critical lens on racism. But because the history of race is inherently linked to political struggle, this has also infused the term with specific meanings and potential limitations when put into practice. For example, anti-racist organisations in the 1970s reduced racism to skin colour and neglected the impact of poverty, gender, sexuality on how racism plays out. With reference to migration, migrants were allotted to the space of blackness (Gilroy 1995). As Gidley notes, ‘the imperial framework for understanding race has often meant that Jews, Irish, Roma, Chinese and others have been invisible in the British sociology of race’ (forthcoming: 11).

These historical connotations came under scrutiny with Barker’s seminal work on ‘new racism’. Barker argued that there was a shift from racism articulated in terms of biological difference to a new racism articulated in terms of ‘customs, traditions, culture and way of life’ (Barker 1981: 23). Gidley uses this argument to interrogate the contingent nature of the category of race through the development of the term ‘migrant’. The term ‘migrant’ became

associated with a ‘problematic intrusion and threat to the body politic’, regardless of purported skin colour (Gidley forthcoming: 2).⁸¹

Foregrounding race in migration studies is a useful analytical approach because it locates the social and political function of categorisation. It helps us to see what and where similar processes are playing out. However, we must address different configurations of racism: the language of the ‘bogus asylum seeker’, differential social rights and entitlements, ‘chav’ discourse (Tyler 2008), and the notion of the undeserving poor. All these elements are vital to how people are placed outside the community of worth (Anderson 2013). This also coincides with the rise of the worker citizen and becomes manifest in ideas around immigration and EU mobility. It is important to use the same lens to look at the ‘chav’ and the migrant; the black-British single mother working in an NGO on a short term contract and the ‘Romanian Roma’ A2 migrant who has been denied a National Insurance Number. By so doing the inherent racism (in its broadest sense) within the liberal project is revealed.

Once we posit that people are denigrated on the basis of many different characteristics (as opposed to just a narrow notion of racial difference) we can open out our understanding of what is going on and trace how stereotypes are appropriated in different situations. Therefore the emergence of new migrants in their social and spatial location does not only have a crucial role in problematising the notion of race in relation to migration studies but also may provide an avenue through which to advance thinking on the wider mechanisms of othering.

⁸¹ As Gidley notes, rather than the widely positive reception to refugees from the war in the former Yugoslavia, from the mid to late 1990s there was an increasing focus in mainstream British media on the presence of refugees as a threat and a problem. These images also widely drew on older Orientalist tropes directed towards those that could be identified as ‘Gypsies’, who were positioned as the quintessential ‘bogus asylum seeker’ (Bhopal & Myers, 2008). In addition, with the eastern enlargement of the European Union in 2004 and 2007, emphasis shifted from refugees in particular to migrants in general. Gidley draws on Sivanandan who has described this as a racism which hides behind xenophobia, coining the phrase ‘xeno-racism’ (2001: 2).

Other axes of difference therefore must be brought into the analysis such as poverty and nationalism. The slippage between nationalism and racism manifests in the idea that the white working class need to be protected from immigration (Rawlinson 2013). There is a hierarchy of difference within the national project. Similarly to race, nationhood singles out biological inheritability. It is genetically carried and ‘in the blood’. The reduction to the body is the key element that links race, gender and nationhood. Understanding this reduction to the body is very helpful as it brings certain vulnerabilities into focus. However, it also produces more complexities, as the body is also socially a way of being in the world, and is therefore infused with wider meanings.

In this theoretical context, this thesis has shown the different ways of being in the world for those categorised as ‘Romanian Roma’ mothers. It details the intensive work they are required to undertake to challenge racialised representations and exclusionary migration regimes in order to present themselves as ‘deserving’ to gain informal assistance, and as ‘appropriate mothers’ to avoid invoking processes of taking children into care. Front line workers’ assistance and discretion is pivotal for mothers to learn the bureaucratic spaces that are open to them and to gain the informal support that enables them to perform the intensive mothering required. These bureaucrats are themselves situated within racialised and gendered hierarchies. This perspective, allows focus on how migrations and racialisations are ‘co-constructed in differentiated, dynamic and complex ways’ following (Erel et al. 2016: 1354). The thesis explains how home encounters restrict mothers’ room for manoeuvre to transform expectations and perceptions and shape how racialised representations of ‘Roma’ are contested, transformed or reproduced. The term ‘Romanian Roma’ can be seen as a relationally (re)produced artefact of racialisation, and this helps to bridge the gap between anthropological migration studies and approaches to race in the wider social sciences.

‘Romanian Roma’, labelling and negative ascriptions of values

The third contribution of this thesis is the analysis of the development of the term ‘Romanian Roma’. As explicitly stated in the introduction, my intention is not to add to debates concerning ‘Roma’ identity or ethnicity. However, my immersion in intimate family life and language learning inevitably means I have added to a body of knowledge regarding migrant lives of those identified as ‘Roma’. This research provides new ethnographic data on the impact of structural frameworks on the everyday lives of these new migrants to the UK. This is timely in the current political climate following the ‘moral panic’ of January 2014 (Clark 2015; Grill 2014; Sigona 2014) and the way new European migration is being used to gain public support for restricting welfare entitlements and renegotiating the UK’s position with regard to the European Union.

Throughout the thesis I identify various processes that infuse the label ‘Romanian Roma’ with negative social value. I shall now review these various strands to illustrate the constrained nature of new migrant families’ room for manoeuvre, by addressing first the perceived identity of ‘Romanian Roma’ and second the consequences for being identified as such in home encounters.

Throughout my fieldwork, it becomes evident that family members (particularly men) avoid each other to prevent conflict. This is clear in streets, shops, events organised for children and between men in the *khangheri*. This avoidance of others, limited communication between different families, and their awareness of historical devaluings of the imposed identification of ‘Gypsy’ or ‘Roma’ (such as being seen as liars, cheaters and criminals) impedes families ability to organise as an identifiable ‘community group’. Moreover, many new migrants have not attended school often attributable to historical processes of racism and prejudice that have

followed many of those identified as ‘Roma’ (Clark 2014). Many adults can’t read letters and rely on spoken words to understand the bureaucratic channels that might be open to them. They understand their bureaucratic identity through limited circles of friends and family and the non-translated words of bureaucrats.

In addition, due to lack of schooling, the families I encountered are not able to use other channels of migration, such as being a student, or a highly skilled worker, or a formal application for the seasonal agricultural workers scheme. New migrant families are therefore subject to transitional controls which devalue their labour. This occurs in three ways: first by the prohibition to gain employment, second through the increasingly strict definition of self-employed work, and third through interpretations of the right to reside test. Many of these new migrants are therefore unable to claim in-work benefits and gain social protection. Even when the transitional controls are lifted, many are unable to gain employment due to stigmatisation of their identity created as a product of these labour restrictions (such as being seen as beggars or criminals).

As new migrant families are not able to gain membership to the state through their labour, mothers become the site of welfare interactions through the care of children. These new migrant mothers are also devalued due to the increasing stigmatisation of welfare claimants, particularly those perceived as stay-at-home mothers. They are also seen as a problematic group due to the discourse surrounding ‘new migrants’ at the national level and in Luton being linked to the fear of ‘invisible populations’. Invisible populations were causing a problem for Luton following the national census in 2011. The Luton Borough Council Research and Geospatial Unit believed there were fewer people filling in the census than were using Local Authority services and therefore were granted less funding from the national government. This was exacerbated by the cuts that were already being imposed on the Local Authority (Chapter 3). The discourse surrounding invisible populations feeds into

an idea that ‘Romanian Roma’ don’t come out, are hard to reach, ‘stick with their own’ and don’t want to engage (Chapter 4).

In addition, because these new migrants lack previous links to the area, the families have very few sources of information. Those who have previously migrated have claimed refugee status; a clear bureaucratic category with the concomitant civil society and Local Authority expertise. Conversely, A2 migration is a new category and falls between different remits around asylum seekers, refugees, third country nationals and previous European migrants subject to different restrictions (namely A8 countries who did not have restricted entry to the labour market) (Chapter 3).

The confusion surrounding the rights and entitlements of A2 migrants is compounded by the way new migrant families identified as ‘Roma’ rarely organise themselves into larger groups (the one exception being older women at church services). First, this adds to their conceptualisation as ‘hard to reach’ and ‘sticking to their own’. Second, the Local Authority focus and value placed on self-organising community groups increases as funding structures change due to austerity, reducing resources of time and personnel. Limited local resources are directed to support groups that are already established and self-organising rather than providing new outreach (Chapter 3). There are no resources to help groups organise themselves if they are not doing so already and, due to the circumstances of new migrant families with many working long hours most families don’t have spare time to spend on community or organisational activities. By appearing invisible as a group, they are not considered at Local Authority level as a population that needs targeted support. Therefore a circle is created where there is no support because there is no visibility, and there is no visibility because there is no support.

These processes of labelling act to constrain new migrant families' room for manoeuvre through the perceived identity of 'Romanian Roma'. I now turn to review the consequences of this for home encounters.

The gendered perspective on nation-state formation (reviewed in Chapter 1), illustrates how home visits have a particular social location and are infused with particular feelings for home-level bureaucrats. Through entering what home-level bureaucrats perceive to be 'private space' they are at the same time reinforcing perceptions of this particular group of new migrant families as 'hard to reach' by pushing mothers out of the spaces they consider represent appropriate performances of mothering, such as Children's Centres and libraries. This thesis charts the effect of labelling through the private space, and how the presence of the bureaucrat in the home is representative of multiple power relations that act to devalue those categorised as 'Romanian Roma'. This identification places mothers in a detrimental position from which to negotiate and transform these negative perceptions, acting to further reinforce these perceptions through home encounters. Behaviours are categorised as 'concerning' and requiring intervention which, in turn, increases the focus on home visits and categorisations as 'troubled' or 'vulnerable' families.

Bureaucrats enter the home through a particular idea of their role, and this acts to re-inscribe the categories and perceptions that bring them to the house in the first instance. As explained in Chapter 4, the processes that encourage bureaucrats to discover more information about their clients also presents them with a wide variety of complex situations that they perceive to be outside their sanctioned role. Thus the drive to understand more about clients in order to signpost them to the correct service increases home-level bureaucrats' discretion. In addition, the numbers of social services are decreasing. When issues are unearthed, there are few other organisations or support services to turn to. Therefore, an additional level of discretion

emerges when home-level bureaucrats are required to decide whether they will take on additional work that is not in their understanding of their role.

Most of these new migrant mothers don't have other sources of information. Once they become visible to bureaucratic processes in the home, their relationship with home-level bureaucrats becomes their only source of information regarding the processes they are subject to. Mothers become categorised as demanding, entitled or exacerbating bureaucrats' scarce resources. Therefore, 'Romanian Roma' identity becomes further infused with understandings that those identified as such are both hard to reach and too demanding; take up too much time and not enough; are invisible but also everywhere.

Ultimately this thesis aims to develop understanding of how these labels develop; how they play out and are relationally reproduced through home encounters; and how these processes act to blur the distinction between public and private space with implications for how new migrants *make place* and how they are able to access some form of membership of the state. Processes of bordering, and filtering membership of the (post-)welfare state, move from the territorial border into the home. This places new demands on both the discretionary decisions of home-level bureaucrats and on the performances of new migrants. In turn, these processes themselves act to (re)shape new migrants' identities in shifting, manifold and complex ways.

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