

TRADE AND EXCHANGE AMONG FARMERS IN A POST-SOVIET LITHUANIAN VILLAGE

Ida Harboe Knudsen

ABSTRACT

With the break down of the USSR the daily life in the rural areas of Lithuania went through radical changes. The entire system of collective farming was replaced by another system, based on the right to private property. Lithuania's collective farms and land were divided and distributed among the former members and private farms were emerging all over the country. In this article I look at the situation from a farm level. By using material from my fieldwork in a Lithuanian village I shall present how the Small Farmers here cope in spite the lack of resources. In the first place I will offer some background information for the distribution of land which took place in the early 1990s. I argue that the distribution of land left many villagers with so scarce resources that they could only be individual farmers by expanding the resources of the farms through co-operation. In the second place I will look at the co-operative economic system they have employed in order to make ends meet. I will argue that only the people who lack resources within their household employed strategies of reciprocity, whereas people who have sufficient resources by themselves do not engage in this system. Thereby there is a correlation between property rights and property relations. Bourdieu has classified these two kinds of sale as a 'village/market dichotomy'. The article is based on my fieldwork in a Southwest Lithuanian village in 2004.

KEY WORDS: socio-cultural anthropology, trade, exchange, farmers, Post-Soviet Lithuania, private farms, cooperation, individual farms, village/market dichotomy.

ANOTACIJA

Privatizacijos procesas, žlugus Sovietų Sąjungai, suteikė galimybę kaimo gyventojams apsirūpinti žeme ir nuosavybe, kad jie galėtų tapti individualiais ūkininkais. Kadangi pasidaliję nuosavybę žemdirbiai dažnai įgyja mažesnių išteklių, negu jų būtinai reikia, tenka kurti įvairias mainų strategijas ir savitarpio pagalbos sistemas, kurios padeda įveikti sunkumus. Tie ūkininkai, kurie galėjo apsieiti be pašalinės pagalbos, vertėsi savarankiškai. Tai iliustruoja vieno iš mano tirtų ūkių pavyzdys. Šiame ūkyje buvo daug darbingų šeimos narių, jie turėjo žemės ūkio srities išsilavinimą ir gebėjo efektyviai naudoti žemę ir išlaikyti gyvulius. Savo produkciją parduodavo miesto turgavietėje ir iš to gaudavo maksimalią ekonominę naudą. Dar vienas mano tirtas ūkis naudojosi kitokios strategijos privalumais. Jame buvo mažai žmonių, mažai žemės ūkio technikos ir visai nebuvo išsilavinusių žemės ūkio specialistų. Jie nuolat keitėsi darbo jėga ir technika su kitais ūkiais, dalijosi žeme ir produkcija su kitomis kaimo šeimomis ir nuolat dalyvaudavo įvairioje visuomeninėje veikloje, užtikrinančioje reikiamus išteklius. Ūkio produkcija būdavo parduodama mieste per pažįstamų žmonių tinklą. Šie žmonės pavertė rinką socialinių santykių dalimi ir taip sumažino ekonominę riziką. Šiuos du prekybos tipus Bourdieu įvardijo „kaimo/rinkos dichotomija“. Straipsnis parengtas naudojantis mano lauko tyrimų Pietvakarių Lietuvoje 2004 m. medžiaga.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: sociokultūrinė antropologija, ūkininkai, prekyba, mainai, posovietinis kaimas, asmeniniai ūkiai, kooperacija, individualus ūkis, kaimo/rinkos dichotomija.

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With the break down of the USSR the daily life in the rural areas of Lithuania went through radical changes. The entire system of collective farming was replaced by another system, based on the right to private property. Lithuania's collective farms and land were divided and distributed among the former members and private farms were emerging all over the country.

The transition in the countryside, however, did not bring the fast improvements and development along as hoped for and expected among both politicians and the rural population. The "better times" were long in coming. The privatisation had resulted in more than 300.000 small farms in

Lithuania. Many of them are so small that the farmers lack resources in order to run private farms at all.

In this article I will look at the situation from a farm level. By using material from my fieldwork in a Lithuanian village I shall present how the Small Farmers¹ here cope in spite the lack of resources.

In the first place I will offer some background information for the distribution of land which took place in the early 1990s. I will argue that the distribution of land left many villagers with so scarce resources that they could only be *individual* farmers by expanding the resources of the farms through *co-operation*.

In the second place I will look at the co-operative economical system they have employed in order to make ends meet. I will argue that only the people who lack resources within their household employed strategies of reciprocity, whereas people who have sufficient resources by themselves do not engage in this system. Thereby there is a correlation between property rights and property relations. In other words, a correlation between *what* people own and *how* they own it. I will use the exchange of agricultural machinery and work force to illustrate this.

Finally I will introduce two households from the village in order to provide some further examples of economy and exchange.

The article is based on my fieldwork in a Southwest Lithuanian village in 2004.

Agricultural Privatisation

As Lithuania regained her independence in 1991 the Lithuanian government, within a short time span, had to make important decisions for the further development of the agricultural sector. The situation in Lithuania, as well as in other Post-Soviet countries, was without any historical precedents, a reason why the government could not draw on any experiences from other countries. The goal in itself was clear: to privatise the agricultural sector. But *how* it should be privatised was far from clear.

During the time of the Soviet Union there had been approximately 1200 collective farms of 1000 hectares and 200 state farms of 4000 hectares. This land, together with animals and machines from the farms was to be distributed among the rural population².

In 1991 the government made two reforms for distribution of land, the one following closely after the other. In order to avoid the image of a central power, as known from the Soviet times, the implementation of the reforms were put out to the municipalities. How well the reforms were carried out was therefore dependent on the competency of the staff in the different municipalities.

The first land reform carried out was based on affiliation with the former collective farm. Everyone, who had been working on a collective farm during the Soviet times, was entitled to receive three hectares of the land. The intention with the reform was to prevent social problems by giving

¹ I have made the following categories for farmers: "Peasants" who produce for themselves only, and normally own from 3-7 hectares. "Small Farmers" who produce partly for self-consumption and partly for sale on the market, and own from 7-20 hectares. 20-50 hectares are the "Middle-size Farmers, who have a small production to sell on the market. 50-120 hectares (last number set after the biggest farm in the village) "Big Farmers" who realise production on the market. The categories are made after my own estimation, referring to sizes of farms in the village, where I conducted my fieldwork. I have written my definitions with capital letters in order to underline the reference to the specific category.

² Information from an interview at the Lithuanian Agricultural Ministry, October 2003.

the people land to sustain their lives (Klimašauskas & Kasnauskienė). The three hectares were often divided into smaller landplots situated far away from each other. Some of them were so small that they only could be cultivated by using a horse, even if agricultural machinery was available.

The second land reform was based on family ties. Earlier property rights should be restituted. If you could prove that your grandfather, taken as an example, has had 20 hectares of land before World War II, you had the right to get the same amount of land back (Klimašauskas & Kasnauskienė). I write “the same amount” due to the fact that it far from always was possible to get the exact same land back. Often parts of your grandfathers plot was given away to others, who had the right to them according the first reform. Another issue was that the landscape had changed. Roads had been built and cities had expanded. Often it was not possible to get the same land plot back as it no longer existed. Together the two reforms divided the agricultural land in Lithuania into innumerable plots and pieces. Or, as one of my informants said it: “It was a land-murder”.

The 1400 collective farms and state farms were turned into more than 300.000 private farms, whereas less than 5% had an actual possibility of surviving on the new market³. Small farms are still dominating in Lithuania. According agricultural census data from 2003 the average size of a farm is 9,1 hectare (Daugalienė 2004).

The machinery and the animals from the collective farms were also distributed among the members.

This took place according to a system of “green vouchers” (*investiciniai čekiai*) which gave every member a right to a part of it. It was not always as equally shared, as intended. It often turned out that people with good connections during the time of the collective farms got more machinery than others.

By way of the land reforms the government had aimed at a rapid destruction of the old system rather than the building up of new structures. This created difficult conditions for the further development within the agricultural area.

Economical systems

As I went to the Lithuanian countryside in January 2004, my main interest was to look at the Small Farmers household economies. I understand “economy” as a term, which entails all sorts of transactions and resources within the household. Thereby not only what money is spent, and what money is earned, but also the workforce within the household, machinery and exchange, reciprocity between households (“friendly favours”) and in the end how all resources together make ends meet. I arrived about thirteen years after the independence and had therefore an opportunity to see what kind of economical pattern had been established.

Through interviews and my daily participant observation I started to see the coherence between property rights and property relations⁴. The Small Farmers often lack resources in order to be private farmers. How they overcome this is by expanding the resources of the household with resources from other households, and letting their household become a resource for others. You could say that the Small Farmers depend on the social community in order to be private at all. In the next section I will use the exchange of agricultural machinery and work force as an example of this. I

³ Information from an interview in the Lithuanian Agricultural Ministry, October 2003.

⁴ Terms used according Hann 2003.

will state that even though the exchange has an important economical function for the farmers, it is not understood in terms of economy, but in terms of mutual help and social obligations.

Exchange of machinery

Agricultural machinery has a high priority for all farmers in the village. There are still people who use horses, or even oxen when harvesting, but the majority prefers to use machinery for the work. But, to re-establish the property rights according to a model where few own much, and many little, means, that most people in the village lack machinery. To be able to borrow from those, who own machinery is of great importance to the Small Farmers. This creates the basis of an ongoing exchange. It does not take place among all farmers, though, but among the Small and Middle-size Farmers. The Big Farmers tend not to participate.

One of the Big Farmers in the village, Mr. Žebrauskas⁵, explains in an interview the reason why:

I do not rent my machinery out. It doesn't work here. It is not organised in a system. Those who come from abroad might think differently.

He looks directly at me, and continues:

You think, that we rent out for money. But if you "rent" your machinery out here, you only get "Thanks." The equipment you lend to others gets worn out, or it breaks down. And for this "Thank You" you have to repair it by yourself.

Žebrauskas concludes in the quotation that there is no organised system for the exchange. What he does not see, is, that there *is* a well-functioning system. He does not recognise it as such because there seemingly are no strict "rules" for it, and there is no money involved. The system is based on "Thanks." And the words "Thank You" both have an important and functional meaning for the people involved.

Razauskas is another farmer in the village. He belongs to my category of Middle-size Farmers, even though he classifies himself as being a Small Farmer. He tells me that he often lends his machinery to others, and he often borrows from others as well. I ask him, if I am to understand this as a co-operation. He answered:

We help each other, of course, but we do it as neighbour to neighbour, or friend to friend. You could call it an un-official co-operation.

He makes a small pause and continues:

For example, there was a man who lent me his machine for sowing, because I do not have such a machine, while I helped him to collect stones from his fields[...] But we do not go into details so if you help me one day, then I have to help you the next day. There will come a time, when a favour is returned with another favour.

With Žebrauskas in mind, I ask him if the machinery did not get worn down. Razauskas answers:

⁵ Name changed. All following names will also be pseudonyms.

You can't avoid loss, but there exists a human factor. This can't be calculated in money.

Another Middle-size farmer, Papartis, is equally engaged in the exchange of machinery and mutual favours. He owns most of the machinery himself, but from time to time he exchanges with Razauskas. As Papartis is the only one working on the farm, he needs, however, extra help in the summer season. This help he gets from Vylius, a son from another family in the village (I will offer a closer description of this family later hereby).

Papartis explains:

Vylius often borrows agricultural machinery from me, but he also helps me a lot. I can not imagine, how money could be a part of it.

Vylius agrees. I once happened to ask him, if he was working at Papartis' farm. He answered me with a strict voice:

I do not work for him. I help him!

Razauskas, Papartis and Vylius are three examples of a common practice in the village: the unofficial co-operation. Contrast to the Big Farmer Žebrauskas, the ongoing exchange of machinery and favours are of great value to them, as they lack the needed equipment themselves, or need extra help at the farm. Hereby they establish a system on its own terms, which compensates for the lack of resources.

They do not recognise the exchange as having an economical function. However, I will state that there is an economical rationalisation in the system.

Economy and exchange

Pierre Bourdieu argues in his book: "Outline of a Theory of Practice" that economy as a term has been reduced to the area, which Marx classified as "naked self-interest." Thereby the strictly economical has been separated from our social sphere. Bourdieu argues that economy is not limited to a cost-benefit calculation within the market, but is a part of all human interactions. He introduces the term "misrecognition." Hereby he understands transactions, which appear as selfless and thereby are denied "the true soil of their lives." (Bourdieu 1972:171). Thereby they are understood through a discourse of "favours" and social obligations, and not in terms of their economical value.

By stretching the transactions in time, they remain separated from each other, which maintains the fiction of selfless favours. The separation of time furthermore contributes to the establishment of long lasting reciprocal networks (Bourdieu 1972:171).

This approach is relevant in order to understand the ongoing exchange of machinery and workforce in the village. Even though the exchange has a vital economical function, it is not recognised as such. It is "misrecognised" and understood in terms of help or friendly favours. Vylius does not work at Papartis' farm, because the word "work" is associated with money. Likewise a favour has not to be returned immediately. If two favours are too close to each other in time, the fiction of unselfishness can not be maintained. They are, as Bourdieu argues, separated in time. In this way the word "Thanks" gets another meaning than Žebrauskas gave it, because it is not the final stage of the transaction. "Thanks" means, that sooner or later something will come back to you. Thereby Razauskas, Papartis, Vylius and other villagers can maintain their reciprocal networks for years,

maybe for a lifetime. Thereby the economy, without being understood as economy, becomes a part of the personal and social relations, and obliges all people involved.

However, not everyone becomes a part of the reciprocal network. Only family and close friends. Razauskas told me that he once experienced to get a broken machine back. The man, who had borrowed it said nothing, and Razauskas only found out about it, the day he needed the machine himself. Razauskas used this as an example to explain that if you do not know people well, the risk is too high. By limiting your circle of reciprocity to people close to you, you reduce such a risk to a minimum.

For Big Farmers like Žebrauskas it is hard to recognise this as a “system” because you have to be within a circle of people close to you in order to make it function. And money is not a part of it. To engage in this system would not have any function for Žebrauskas, as he did not need anything from other villagers. I never heard any negative comments about the fact that you could not borrow from the Big Farmers. On the contrary many people explained me in a matter-of-fact manner, that the Big Farmers did not need it.

I have used the example with exchange of machinery to prove how the reforms for privatisation influence the social relations. With the restitution of property rights the majority has received a bit on the low side of what they need in order to be individual farmers. The problem with the lack of resources they solve by making private property social. *What* people own, and *how much* people own is in direct correlation with *how* people own.

Resources within the households

In the following sections I will continue to look at property rights and property relations. I will make a comparative analysis of two households in the village, in order to describe the matter more closely. The two households run their farms following two different models. These models are closely related to the resources within the single family and how the resources are used.

I will argue that if the household, as in the first case, has many internal resources, the surrounding society loses its value as a contribution to the farm economy, whereas the logic is the opposite if the household has few internal resources, as in the second case. In the latter case it means, that the surrounding society becomes a part of the household through a range of favours and exchanges.

The Razaitis family

The Razaitis family lives in a nice house in the outskirts of the village. 15 hectares belong to the farm. Three of them were given to the family according the first reform, eight of them according the second reform, and four of them are rented. The family has one pig, three piglings, two cows, a bull and a number of chickens. The family has all the machinery it needs, except for a baler, which collects the dried hay in the field and press it into bales. This machine is rented from another family in the village.

Three generations live in the house. The farmer, and his wife (both in their mid-sixties), their son (19) their youngest daughter (33), her husband (30), and their five year old child. The oldest daughter (35) lives with her family in the nearest town. However, she comes to visit with her children nearly every day and helps with the work at the farm.

The farmer is in charge of the farm and makes the decisions. He is an agronomist by education and worked as such in the former collective farm.

The mother takes care of the work within the house and in the kitchen garden, where she cultivates vegetables and fruit for the family's self-consumption. She also cultivates flowers for sale.

The two daughters, the son and the son-in-law help with the farm work. Together with the farmer they cultivate grains, cabbages and carrots to sell on the market. They also cultivate beets for the animals. Another important income is the youngest daughter's weekly sale of *grietinė* (milk sour cream) and white cheese at the local market in town. The family has registered their farm in the official Farmer's Farm Register (*Ūkininkų Ūkio Registras*).

The family lives off the farm, but has on top of that two additional incomes. The farmer's monthly pension, and the youngest daughter's salary. She works half time as a teacher at the local school.

Because they are many working at the farm, they are, as a main rule, not dependent on other people's help. There is only one relation out of the house, which is of importance: the rent of the baler, as earlier mentioned. As they do not wish to be dependent on other families, they rent the machine for money, even though the farmer they rent it from is a friend of the house.

Work at the farm

The first time I met the family Razaitis was in the beginning of February 2004. The season of agriculture had already started and the family was busy. The cabbage shoots were to be planted. At first I did not understand why they started with the cabbage as early as February. However, the work with the cabbage became the "key" for my understanding of their way of farming as such.

In February the shoots were planted in the green houses. The green houses were constellations of wood covered with plastic. Each one contained an oven in order to be able to keep the temperature high. They burned day and night. At night the family woke up in shifts, and went out to put more wood on the fire. In April, as the weather grew better, the cabbage was bedded out. And already in May the first cabbage was ready to be sold on the market. The family's cabbage was among the first. Due to this it could take a high price for it. They sold for 1,80 litas per kilo. From now on more and more cabbage would be at the market, so it was a matter of harvesting and selling as fast as possible. The more cabbage - the lower price. Razaitis family managed to get their cabbage sold, while the price still was 1,60 litas per kilo. Later on the price fell to 1,20 litas per kilo.

After the cabbage was sold the green houses were cleaned, and it was time to start cultivating flowers. These would be sold in the late October for All Saints Day.

The family optimises its resources to a maximum. In the season for agriculture it always has a new crop to sell at the market. After the cabbages are sold, the carrots are ready to be harvested. The women take the extra time to clean the carrots, cut the end off and arrange them in neat bundles. It is many hours of extra work but in this way they can take a higher price for them. After the carrots follows the grain. And the year ends with the sale of flowers. The whole year the youngest daughter goes to the market to sell *grietinė* and white cheese. She is well known at the market for the good quality of her products.

Razaitis has a good reputation in the village. He is not a Big Farmer, but due to the rationalisation of the production, the family lives better than most other people in the village. As there are many resources within the household, the work is kept within the family. Thereby the family members do not engage in an exchange of machinery and help, as many of the other Small Farmers do.

The baler

As showed in the former section this household is based on kinship. The family members can rely on the close family as work force, because of the many adults. The rationality in the family is that relations out of the house are unreliable in comparison to the reliability and hard work you can expect from your kin. I witnessed an episode, which confirmed this. It was the day when the hay was to get pressed into bales and get indoor. The man the family paid for the doing the work with his machine was two hours late that day. While we were waiting for him, the excitement rose in the family. Razaitienė called his wife several times in frustration. The wife could only tell that he was still working at another farm with the machine and not yet had returned. He did not arrive until seven p.m. The two hours he was delayed was of great importance. The hay had to be collected while it still was dry, that means before evening dew fell. And it had to be this evening, as rain was expected the next day. Even though everybody worked hard, the delay meant, that only two thirds of the hay was collected in bales and safely indoor, when the dew fell. This episode meant that the farmer decided to put money aside in order to buy a baler. In this way he would avoid the risk of leaving an important part of the work in the hands of someone outside the family.

When the baler is bought the most important work-relation out of the house comes to an end. This increases the strategy of the household: to keep the work within the family.

When it comes to the sale of products the same logic is followed. All crops and products are sold at the market, separated from the family members social relations. By keeping the social and economical spheres distinct from one another, they can maximise production, as they have no “social” considerations to take into account. By use of the internal resources in the household: work force, machines, and especially the knowledge which the farmer possesses as an educated agronomist, the family can rely on the strategy of the household as a closed unit.

The Kazlauskas family

In the next sections I will give a description of the Kazlauskas family and show how a family with only few internal resources has responded to the privatisation.

The Kazlauskas family lives in a house in the centre of the village. The family has an old car, which is in such a bad condition that it only is used for driving to and from the cow stable in the winter. The family has only one tractor. To the household belongs 10,5 hectares. Three of these belong to the family itself. These were given to Rūta, the mother in the family, according the first land reform. The 7,5 hectares are rented. Furthermore the family helps Rūta’s sister to cultivate her land, another 7,5 hectares. The output from this is shared between the two households. The family has 10 cows, seven pigs and a large number of chickens.

Two generations live in the household. Rūta, her husband and their youngest son Vylius⁶ (aged 32). In addition to the income from the farm, the family furthermore has Rūta’s pension to rely on. The husband has not yet reached the age of retirement. He is unemployed, and does not contribute to the work at the farm, as he is in bad health due to a lifetime of heavy drinking. Vylius is like wise unemployed, and even though he likes to have his drink as well, he normally sees to his work tasks. Rūta is the one who takes the decisions concerning the farm.

⁶ I have mentioned him before. The same man who helps Papartis at his farm.

Rūta has a kitchen garden where she cultivates vegetables for the family's own consumption. The family is basically self-sufficient with food.

All other land is used for production of fodder for the animals - grains and beets. The only "crop" sold at the market is strawberries. Rūta and her sister share a field where they grow strawberries. The year I was in the village this did not give a big outcome. Partly, because they did not weed the berries in time, partly because they did not cover the berries when it was cold. The berries, which did ripen, were attacked by crows. The final harvest was therefore small.

Rūta also sells milk to the local dairy at the price of 30 cents pr litre⁷. In addition to this Rūta sells milk to other villagers. She also sells eggs, home-made cheese and *grietinė* in the village. The family's economical security is based on the animals. In case of need the family sells a cow or a pig for slaughtering. Sometimes a pig is also slaughtered as a result of an accident in the stable. The stable is old and there are holes in the floor. It is only irregularly mocked out, and the floor is therefore covered with faeces. Sometimes a pig slips in the stable and breaks a leg. If it does not seem to recover within a couple of weeks, it is slaughtered.

The Kazlauskas family does not use the resources as systematically and efficient as the Razaitis family. Including the sister's land and the rented land, the family has more hectares than Razaitis. The Kazlauskas family has also more animals. However, the amount of machinery is limited to a single tractor and only Rūta and her son are working at the farm. The family does not possess the same level of education and experience with farming as Razaitis. All in all the resources are used much more extensively and with greater loss. However, Rūta is capable of compensating for this through her local knowledge and cultural competencies. She extends the resources of the farm by making other households a part of them.

Sale of products

Nearly every time I came to visit Rūta, I met new people. Her house was a place where people "dropped by" to drink coffee and talk. Even after two months I could still meet people I had not seen before.

The neighbours are of great importance to the family. The hedge, which separates Rūta's and her neighbour's house is most of all in the way. The son crosses it several times a day in order to help the neighbours with this and that. Even though officials do not control Rūta's products, many people tend to buy her articles. Her large network is a key to the sale. Every afternoon Rūta collects a basket of cheese, eggs, *grietinė* and milk and walks through the village. Sometimes people have called her beforehand and asked to come, but just as often she simply shows up, because she estimates it is about time. When Rūta comes to a house, the wife in the family will make coffee and put biscuits on the table. Now it is time to talk, and often for more than an hour. Everything, which has happened in the village since her last visit, is subject for discussion. Not until they have finished talking does Rūta place her articles on the table. The wife will then take a knife and cut a small piece of a cheese to see if it is bitter. It seems to be for the sake of appearances. Even though the cheeses sometimes are bitter, the wife will buy them.

⁷ The price for milk differs in Lithuania. The price is set according to how much milk is delivered, and whether the farm is registered in the Farmer's Farm Register (*Ūkininkų Ūkio Registras*). The Kazlauskas family's farm is not registered, a reason why it gets the lowest price. One of the Big Farmers in the village, as an example, delivers large amounts of milk and has registered his farm. He gets 60 cents per litre.

Afterwards the journey continues to the next house, and the same scenario takes place. Coffee is made, biscuits on the table and a long conversation. At the houses of elderly and single people Rūta furthermore help with some smaller work tasks. She does the dishes, for example, or hang up the laundry or heat some food for them. In this way several social aspects are incorporated in Rūta's sale. In one afternoon Rūta has time for maximum three houses.

Village and market

If you compare with the daughter from the Razaitis family, who also sells cheese and *grietinė*, she can sell more in three minutes at the market place, than Rūta is capable of selling in an entire afternoon. The difference is that the Razaitis family has put their products at the market in town, separated from their social relations, whereas Rūta's market is a part of her social relations.

Bourdieu has set out "the market place" as separated from the social sphere. Here economical transactions do not overlap with personal relationships. The trade can be maximally economised. The Razaitis family can do this because their products are officially approved. Here it is seen as a disadvantage to mix trade and social relations. The Kazlauskas family, whose products are not approved by any controlling instance, can only sell through the network. Bourdieu has classified these two kinds of sale as a "village/market dichotomy." (Bourdieu 1972:186)

Whereas the Razaitis family minimise the social risks by keeping the spheres separated from each other, the Kazlauskas family minimise the economical risks by making the sale a part of the social relations. Only after the social relationship has been confirmed through conversations and drinking of coffee, the transaction of goods and money takes place. The social relation is realised before the economical. This kind of trade is based on mutual trust and good faith. People normally pay Rūta at once, but there are debtors in the village. Rūta remembers every single one of them, and how much she or he owns. The day they get their salary/pension/social benefits (and Rūta knows when), she shows up and claim her money. She can give credit, because she through the relation and local knowledge can claim the money later on. It would not be an option with a stranger, who simply would "disappear."

Networking

The network is not only of importance for the sale of milk and cheese. A substantial part of the household economy relies on it. Fodder for the chickens, comes from Rūta's brother, strawberries are cultivated with the sister, and Rūta sells extra eggs in another village through a connection there. If something needs to be repaired in the house, Rūta gets hold of the neighbour who lives opposite her; he is a carpenter. Vylius also plays an important role. As well as working the family's land he also works Rūta's sister's land. Furthermore he often helps Papartis at his farm, as mentioned in the section about exchange of favours and machinery. Thereby the family gets the equipment they lack at the farm. Rūta and Vylius expand their resources by making other farms a part of them, as well as they become a resource for others. Their social positions in the village make them capable of running the farm, in spite of scarce machinery, scarce "workforce" and no professional knowledge about agriculture.

Concluding remarks

In this article I have aimed to show, how people in the village cope with lack of resources after the independence. I have argued that property, such as agricultural machinery, influence social rela-

tions in the village. The amount of property, and the functional value of it, creates a basis for exchange among the villagers. The use of resources also plays a role for these property relations. If resources are used intensively, as in the case of the Razaitis family, it is possible to make ends meet without these exchanges. However, it implies that there are enough family members to do the work, and sufficient knowledge to be able to maximise the production to this extent.

If resources lack within the household, such as “hands” to do the work, machinery and agricultural education, other knowledge becomes relevant: the social and local knowledge which incorporates the surrounding society as an additional resource. Here a co-operative infra-structure is employed, which functions on its own terms within a limited circle a friends and family. Despite the economical function of these property relations, it is misrecognised as the social network functions as a basis.

According to the strategy of the farm, the trade can be separated from or included in social relations.

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ŪKININKŲ PREKYBA IR MAINAI POSOVIETINIAME LIETUVOS KAIME

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Santrauka

Subyrėjus Sovietų Sąjungai kasdienis gyvenimas Lietuvos kaimo vietovėse patyrė radikalias permainas. Kolūkinę sistemą pakeitė kita, besiremianti privačios nuosavybės teise. Lietuvos kolūkių nuosavybę ir žemę išsidalijo buvę kolūkiečiai, ir visoje šalyje pradėjo kurtis asmeniniai ūkiai.

Sovietų Sąjungos gyvavimo laikotarpiu Lietuvoje buvo maždaug 1200 kolūkių su 1000 ha žemės ir 200 tarybinių ūkių su 4000 ha žemės. Žemę kartu su gyvuliais ir žemės ūkio mašinomis turėjo išsidalyti buvusieji šių ūkių nariai. 1991 metais Lietuvos Vyriausybė paskelbė dvi žemės ūkio perdalijimo reformas. Pirmoji reforma rėmėsi priklausymu buvusiam kolūkiui: visi, dirbę kolūkiuose Sovietų Sąjungos gyvavimo metais, turėjo teisę gauti 3 ha buvusios kolūkinės žemės. Antroji įvykdyta reforma rėmėsi šeimos ryšiais. Turėjo būti atkurtos buvusios šeimos nuosavybės teisės. Abi reformos kartu padalijo žemės ūkio paskirties plotus į daugybę didesnių ar mažesnių sklypų. 1400 kolūkių ir tarybinių ūkių virto daugiau kaip trimis šimtais tūkstančių asmeninių ūkių.

Žemės ūkio mašinos ir gyvuliai buvo išsidalyti pagal investicinių čekių sistemą, kuri suteikė kiekvienam žmogui teisę į tam tikrą dalį buvusio bendro turto. Dažnai atsitikdavo taip, kad žmonės, sovietiniu laikotarpiu užėmę aukštesnius postus, gaudavo didesniąją turto dalį.

Žemės reformomis Vyriausybė veikiau siekė sparčiai sunaikinti senąją ūkininkavimo sistemą, negu sukurti naujos sistemos struktūras.

Ūkininkų padėtis iki šiol tebėra nelengva. Dauguma turi nedaug žemės ir dar mažiau žemės ūkio mašinų (arba visiškai jų neturi). Dažnai jiems sunku išgyventi naujomis sąlygomis, kadangi trūksta

išteklų. Sunkumus jie bando įveikti pasitelkdami kitų ūkių išteklius ir skolindami jiems savuosius. Galima teigti, kad tik bendruomenės pagalba daugeliui leidžia išlaikyti asmeninį ūkį. Smulkieji ūkininkai nuolat dalijasi žemės ūkio mašinomis ir darbo jėga. Šeimos, turinčios mažai žemės ūkio technikos ar visai jos neturinčios, talkina draugams ar giminaičiams, turintiems mašinų, ir mainais skolinasi iš jų reikalingą techniką. Savo ruožtu tie, kurie turi daugiau technikos, gali stokoti darbo jėgos. Taigi tokie mainai naudingi abiem šalims. Tačiau šie mainai, nepaisant jų reikšmingos ekonominės funkcijos, yra suvokiami ne kaip ekonominis veiksmas, bet greičiau kaip abipusė ar draugiška pagalba. Tačiau tai yra klaidinga nuomonė (Bourdieu 1972:171). Kadangi šias tarpusavio paslaugas skiria laiko tarpas, kiekviena iš jų atrodo kaip nesavanaudiška pagalba. Toks savitarpio pagalbos tinklas leidžia suvokti ūkį ne tiek kaip ekonomikos, bet veikiau kaip socialinių santykių dalį, ir uždeda įpareigojimus visiems sistemos nariams.

Vieno ūkio ištekliai ir jų naudojimo būdas reikšmingi formuojant ūkio ekonomiką: tai iliustruoja vieno iš mano tirtų ūkių pavyzdys. Šiame ūkyje buvo daug darbingų šeimos narių, jie turėjo žemės ūkio srities išsilavinimą ir gebėjo efektyviai naudoti žemę ir išlaikyti gyvulius. Jiems nereikėjo minėtos mainų sistemos. Atvirkščiai, jie aiškiai skyrė ekonominio ir socialinio bendravimo sritis. Savo produkciją parduodavo miesto turgavietėje, o tai taip pat rodo minėtų sričių skyrimą. Taigi taip jie gaudavo maksimalią ekonominę naudą, nes neprivalėjo atsižvelgti į „socialinį“ aspektą.

Kitas mano tirtas ūkis naudojosi kitokios strategijos privalumais. Jame buvo mažai žmonių, mažai žemės ūkio technikos ir visai nebuvo išsilavinusių žemės ūkio specialistų. Tai šeimai buvo svarbūs vietiniai ryšiai ir savitarpio pagalbos tinklas. Jie nuolat keitėsi darbo jėga ir technika su kitais ūkiais, dalijosi žeme ir produkcija su kitomis kaimo šeimomis ir nuolat dalyvaudavo įvairioje visuomeninėje veikloje, užtikrinančioje reikalingus išteklius. Taip jie kompensuodavo nuosavų išteklių stoką. Ūkio produkcija nebuvo parduodama miesto prekyvietėse, nes neatitiko higienos ir kokybės reikalavimų: ji būdavo parduodama mieste per pažįstamų žmonių tinklą. Šie žmonės pavertė rinką socialinių santykių dalimi ir taip sumažino ekonominę riziką.

Šiuos du prekybos tipus Bourdieu įvardijo kaip „kaimo/rinkos dichotomiją“.

Privatizacijos procesas, vykęs žlugus Sovietų Sąjungai, aprūpino kaimo gyventojus žeme ir nuosavybe, kad jie galėtų tapti individualiais ūkininkais. Kadangi pasidalijus nuosavybę žemdirbiai dažnai įgyja mažesnius išteklius negu būtina, tenka kurti įvairias mainų strategijas ir savitarpio pagalbos sistemas, su kurių pagalba įveikiami sunkumai. Tie, kurie galėjo apsieiti be pašalinės pagalbos, vertėsi savarankiškai. Ūkininkavimo forma priklausė nuo to, kiek nuosavybės buvo ūkyje, kokia tai buvo nuosavybė ir kaip ji buvo valdoma: kitaip tariant, egzistavo ryšys tarp nuosavybės teisių ir nuosavybės santykių (Hann 2003).

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