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Kaliningrad as a Bazaar and Cross-border Trade —the Results of 2012 Research

Abstract: The City of Kaliningrad is an example of a “market area,” thanks to which we discover the methods of cross-border trades that developed before and after the implementation of a local border traffic agreement between Poland and Russia. It applies not only to the Central Market in Kaliningrad but also to the whole urban space that serves in everyday life as a large marketplace away from the officially designated market areas. The article deals with the urban space of Kaliningrad and its most important markets: The Central Market, The Flea Market, the market for agricultural and other forms of trade that can be observed in public space. We can put an equals sign between Kaliningrad and bazaar, City of Kaliningrad and its space is a grand bazaar.

Keywords: Kaliningrad, city, town, bazaar, market, trade.

Introduction

In September 2012, as a member of the Scientific Circle of the Centre for East European and Central Asian Studies, I conducted a research project entitled “Local Border Traffic Between Poland and Kaliningrad Oblast (Russian Federation): the Example of the Bazaar in Kaliningrad Oblast and Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship.” The project was financed by the Consultative Council of the University of Warsaw.

The choice of the topic was inspired by the book *The Grand Warsaw Bazaars*, written by Jacek Kurczewski, Mariusz Cichomski, and Krzysztof Wiliński, which gives both theoretical and practical perspectives of the bazaar phenomenon (2010). The research of the bazaars in the Kaliningrad region was carried out mainly in Kaliningrad and towns at the Polish-Russian border, such as Mamonovo, Bagrationovsk, Gusev, Braniewo, Bartoszyce, Gołdap. Due to the page limit, this paper will present only the results of research on Kaliningrad, the Central Market in particular, as it contains the common elements present in different bazaars of the Kaliningrad Oblast. Region of Central Europe is the border area of the EU in contact with Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia, where the regular passports checks take place. Research of the local border traffic which was introduced in 2012 between the Polish and the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation is special for several reasons. First of all, for the Agreement of 14 December 2011 to be signed, “Regulation (EC) No 1931/2006 of The European Parliament and of The Council of 20 December 2006, laying down rules on local border traffic at the external land borders of the Member States and

amending the provisions of the Schengen Convention,” had to be amended (EUR-lex, 2006). As a result of the change, the Kaliningrad region and the corresponding area on the Polish side were considered the border area. In other cases the border area extends no more than 30 km from the border, sometimes it can also be a local administrative districts lying between 30 and 50 km from the border line (EUR-lex, 2006: art. 3). The research was carried out in the enclave of the European Union (Russian exclave), which after 1991 began to “open up” to the neighboring countries despite the militarized character of the region. The simplification of visa procedures resulted in an increase in the passenger traffic on the Polish-Russian border, the same could result in increased trade of certain goods or services. The collected data can serve as a reference point for borderland areas, may be useful to members of the European Union as well as post-Soviet countries. Before my trip to this part of Russia I read an essay written by Bronisław Malinowski and Julio de la Fuente (2004) “The economics of a Mexican market system.” In the study the authors describe the functioning of a Mexican bazaar and show its complicated structure and the relationship of dependence between the market and the outside world. This paper proved to be very instructive and provided me with the methodology valuable for my research of the markets. Since the research of bazaar—an organism vibrant with life—was not an easy task to perform, a number of methods was used in the project, including observations, interviews, photo-documentation and newspaper articles.

The research gave some image of the functioning of the local border traffic and most of formal and informal practices that developed after the introduction of local border traffic or are associated with crossing the border at all. The purpose of this study was to see whether the “Agreement between the Government of the Polish Republic and the Government of the Russian Federation on principles of local border traffic” was respected by people using local border traffic when they were crossing the Polish-Russian border, and therefore whether there was any difference between the normative model and reality This topic requires empirical research, as we find in the literature mainly journalistic articles newsletters and reports (issued by the Central Statistical Office, Customs Service, The Border Guard, etc.) associated with the local border traffic subject.

Local Border Traffic and Bazaars

On 27th July 2012, the agreement on local border traffic came into force, allowing people from Kaliningrad Oblast and Polish border areas, comprising part of the Warmian-Masurian and Pomeranian Voivodeship, to travel across the border without a visa. Thanks to this, the residents of Kaliningrad Oblast received another document that gives them the right to re-cross the border and thus enter Poland. The issue of local border traffic in the context of illegal trade with Polish products (mostly groceries) seemed to be an interesting topic for research, especially after the publication of an article entitled: “No to sausage entrepreneurs!” in *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Radziwinowicz 2012), After reading the article and spending three weeks in Kaliningrad Oblast

I came to the conclusion that Polish sausage (Russian: *польская сосиска*) has become a symbol of the Kaliningrad Oblast inhabitants travelling to Poland. Another reason for picking this research topic was the association that a bazaar was a place with any kind of illegal goods or goods impossible to find anywhere else but at the market. It has always been possible to buy a weapon, to get documents, to rent professional racketeers, to find a prostitute, to buy smuggled alcohol and cigarettes at the market. The market in the twenty-first century seems to be an element of the past, unnecessary, since we live in the era of modern shopping malls and the Internet, but does it really fall into oblivion? It seems that the phenomenon of marketplace has the unique elements impossible to find in the shopping malls. At the same time, bazaar can be seen as an international phenomenon, where similar and different elements of trading in different environments evolved separately.

In the given study I intentionally avoid using street names or pointing the exact locations of trading (in cases when the merchants trade illegally), so as to keep the principle of anonymity of respondents.

The City of Kaliningrad

The urban space of Kaliningrad, a post-Soviet city—which can be seen during the walk around it—is far from any categories of beauty. Gray buildings and blocks a dozen meters long stand next to Prussian brick buildings. The City of Kaliningrad, from the point of view of an external observer, begins to transform, change, a so-called fishermen village—the row of buildings made in the Prussian (German) style—was built on the river Pregel. “The City of Kalinin” was once called Königsberg and used to be a part of the Prussian world built during the German rule, inhabited by the Germans; the Prussian spirit can still be felt in the air. Currently in the city different elements of tangible links with Russia can be found, including such holidays as *maslenitsa*—the feast of farewell to winter and welcome to summer, International Women’s Day—a pompously celebrated day off work, Victory Day or other events that make the Baltic exclave maintain ties with its motherland. The last thing to add to the introduction would be to cite a historical description of the Prussian Bazaar dating back to the beginning of the 20th century:

The East Prussian countryside pressed against the city boundaries and farmers wives, dressed in voluminous long skirts, aprons and shawls came in every day with baskets of blueberries, eggs and hand-made cheese and butter to the seven market squares in the town. Each market had its own specialities. At the Rossgärter market farmers sold live rabbits, chickens, pigeons, geese and ducks, and sellers called out to passers-by in the local *Plattdeutsch* dialect. One of the best sellers was tripe (known as *Kuddeln* in the local dialect) which was the main ingredient of a dish called *Fleck*. Men loved to eat this local speciality, often sold at the bars by the dockside—the so-called *Fleklökalen*—but their wives were not so keen. [...] Country women from Lithuania came to sell vegetables at the Kohlmarkt on the south side of the river and fishwives sold freshwater and sea fish, all locally caught, from water-filled barrels at the Upper and Lower Fish Markets by the Pregel. [...] As in many other German cities, the Königsberg Christmas markets were a winter highlight. They were held in the Altstadt Market, the Rossgärter Market, the indoor market and on the Paradeplatz. The two biggest marzipan makers in Königsberg, Schwermer and Gelhaar, tempted shoppers with their beautifully wrapped marzipan sweets in the form of fruit, flowers and vegetables. There was a speciality

called *Randmarzipan* packed in heart-shaped boxes, and marzipan models of the Castle decorated with candied fruit (Denny 2007: 33–34).

Today the castle is gone, left only as marzipan memories of his imagination. Let's take a closer look at what is currently the biggest bazaar in the Russian Kaliningrad.

Central Market in Kaliningrad

On Wednesday 5th September, before 8am, I left for the so-called terrain. I bought a 12 ruble ticket from the lady conductor on the number 24 bus. I got off at the stop "Prospekt Lenina." The first thing that caught my attention was the statue of Mother Motherland (*Родина-мать*), a monumental memorial of the previous state regime. Then I got to Victory Square, passed the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, walked down the Baranov Street to the crossroads with the Gorky Street, and saw a big yellow sign on a brown background: "Центральный Рынок" (the Central Market).

To go inside the market is like to start an adventure—says Jacek Kurczewski.—A while ago, in front of the Stadium, I filmed a young woman making weird moves. On the tape she looks like a warlike Amazon preparing for the battle: she straightened her jacket, pulled up her trousers, checked if her money and cell phone were properly hidden, looked around carefully and moved. That was a preparational movement. The beginning of an adventure (Kurczewski et al. 2010: 49).

I walked quickly to the other side of the road and crossed the gate of the market. Central Market is located in the centre of Kaliningrad at Chernyakhovska Street, 15. The name that appears on official documents is: ООО "Центральный продовольственный рынок" (Limited Liability Company "Food Market"). In the summer time the market is open from 8 am to 8 pm, in winter from 8 am to 7 pm, the last Monday of the month is called sanitary day and the market is closed then. However, the opening hours regime does not specify the operating hours of the pavilions or booths that can be opened at other times. For example, the dairy department is always open from 8 am to 7 pm, regardless of the season. The market is located on a rectangular plan, while the exterior walls of the bazaar are made up of post German buildings linked together into a single string with shops inside. There are three direct entrances to the market: one from Gorky Street, the other from the opposite side of the market, which leads to the stalls with clothes, which are not part of the market, and the third entrance, located at the crossroads of Gorky Street and Baranova Street. One can go inside the market by car through the so called "Gateway," located on Baranova Street. Additionally there are ten more entrances to the market area, to use them you have to go inside one of the pavilions on Chernyakhovska or Baranova Street, and then go out through the other door leading to the market square.

Bazaar space can be classified as the one in which a person should be in permanent state of vigilance, so as not to become a victim of robbery or fraud. However, it is the specific trait not only of the market but of any crowded place, though the first time at the market fascinates with its diversity and colourfulness, making one look around constantly. The stands attract with unknown fruits, vegetables, and colourful spices.

Literally in front of you the woman spills the bloody water into a manhole, then returns to the meat pavilion. Bazaar is definitely a social phenomenon, “a mass gathering, in which mostly strangers in each others’ presence make individual consumer choices among the wares offered by sellers ... The market is a public assembly on a private territory” (*Ibidem*: 29). At the bazaar, unusual interaction can take place between its participants, it is a city in a city, you can survive there without leaving it.

From Baranova street we can enter pavilions with fish, meat and dairy products, one can buy industrial products located in three different buildings; there is an electrician and luggage storage. From Chernyakhovska street we can enter the butcher’s pavilion, pharmacy, pawnshop, the shop with items that guarantee daily comfort; this long list can be supplemented with the buildings of market administration, security, toilets, shops with watches, groceries and many more. This part of the market is arranged into buildings with four walls and a roof. The internal bazaar space is divided into three sectors (A, B, C) and one stand row, giving a total of five lanes to allow moving along the stands—44 in total, though it is worth mentioning that on some stands there are more than one seller. In total, there are more than 100 market places. One alley spreads for about 200 m. They are located under a covered carport without walls, which is a practical option, especially if we take into account Kaliningrad’s rainy weather.

Mariusz Cichomski among the participants of the market community distinguished: merchants, wandering sellers shouting out the names of their goods, customers, bazaar service, bazaar enthusiasts, the margin of the bazaar. This classification seems to be pertinent and depleted, and can be applied to Kaliningrad’s Central Market. A topic which particularly interested me was the sale of the so-called illegal goods, the smuggled or illegally resold products. Cichomski describes the phenomenon of the border and the profits made by buying items on one side of the border and selling them at another one, or even the third side of the border.

There are also tights, including the most popular kind, pattern tights. Black and white dominate. Selling tights is one of the most profitable things at the market—in GDR one pair costs 10 Marks i.e. 600 zlotys, here it costs between 1800 and 2500 zlotys. The price depends on demand... and customs officers. The real cost of one pair of tights is not 600 zlotys since Marks come from the sale of goods bought in Poland, normally at the Różycki market. Here is an example of such a sale in a moderate variant: 10 sunglasses with an “Italy” sign on them cost 3500 zlotys. The sunglasses can be sold in GDR for 250 Marks, for which you can get 25 pairs of tights. The tights can be sold at the Polish market for 45,000 zlotys. After deducting the costs of buying, transport, possible losses at the border and the sale a good rate is coming out—for 1 invested zlotys you get 30 zlotys of profit. This phenomenon would surely puzzle our economists (*Kurczewski et al. 2010*).

We are dealing with a similar phenomenon in Kaliningrad Oblast: in *Gazeta Wyborcza*’s article “No to frankfurter entrepreneurs!” (*Radziwinowicz 2012*) heroine Natasha sells 110 litres of oil to a Polish farmer, and for the profit of 220 PLN she buys Polish products to resell with a profit in Kaliningrad. However, there are more interesting trading schemes. A curious example was told to me by a resident of Bartoszyce. People arriving from Kaliningrad Oblast to Poland exchange cigarettes and fuel for Polish groceries, for example, a packet of cigarettes for a packet of frankfurters. In Poland, 700 grams of frankfurters cost about 8 zlotys (about 2\$), a packet of cigarettes

in Russia, depending on the brand, costs approximately 6 zlotys (about 1,5\$, for more expensive cigarettes) after conversion. For Russians it is sometimes not profitable to exchange the ruble into Polish zloty, because they lose on the currency conversion—human ingenuity brings us back to one of the original forms of trade—barter. This example contradicts the thesis expressed by Roch Sulima, according to which the concept of barter was out of date: “‘Bought’ or ‘sold’ at the fayre, market or bazaar can also mean that the exchange with ‘gifts’ took place. It was more possible in the era of ell and quart than in the era of precise weights and prices” (Sulima 2000: 149).

Currently, according to Russian law on the territory of the Russian Federation, one can bring no more than 5 kg of products of animal origin, packed in special factory packaging. It is worth mentioning that groceries are not cheap not only in Kaliningrad, but all over Russia, where the quality is much lower than in Poland when it comes to products from stores. However, in the Central Market we will not find large amounts of Polish groceries. You can find “Indykpol” frankfurters, “JBB” sausage and “Yano” brawn; there are frankfurters and hams of other manufacturers; Polish dairy products such as yoghurts, cheese, and cottage cheese are very popular and are even more noticeable than meat products. But the component that connects these goods is the lack of the export label, as well as of translation from Polish into Russian on the packaging. However, the “produced for Biedronka” emblem is very common; I also happened to come across the products that can be bought in supermarket chain “Lidl” in Poland. But the scale of selling the illegal goods in the Central Market during the period of the study was very small and the selection of products was very poor compared to other markets in Kaliningrad, or on the periphery of the Oblast.

I compared the prices of the 12 cheapest groceries in two Russian supermarket chains (Seven Continents and Victoria) with the Polish supermarket chain Biedronka. The product choice is always decided by the price and not the brand of goods.¹ The basket includes such products as: sliced bread (500 g), 10 eggs, 5 frankfurters; butter/margarine (500 g), milk (1 l at 3.2%), rice (4 bags of 100 g each); buckwheat (4 bags of 100 g each); sugar (1 kg); flour (1 kg); still water (1.5 l); frying oil (1 l), tomatoes (1 kg). The total price of products after conversion into Polish zloty according to the exchange rate of 07.09.2012 was as follows: in Seven Continents—47,55 zlotys, Victoria—51,92 zlotys and Biedronka—33,75 zlotys; the difference is 13,80 zlotys and 18,17 zlotys respectively. The price difference between the Polish and Russian baskets is not big, from 14 to 18 zlotys, however, it makes up about 30–35% of the total price of the basket. If one does shopping more often and in larger amounts it is possible to save quite a sum of money. If we analyse the prices of products within the list we notice that five frankfurters in Poland cost 3,5 zlotys while in Russia the same product will cost 6 zlotys, which is almost twice as much. Certainly the consumer coming to Poland for shopping creates its own unique basket of products, which is profitable for him. The possibility of shopping in Poland gives a wider selection of goods and European quality standard of groceries.

The uniqueness of the bazaar space is the activation of all human senses.

¹ The price for Russian supermarket products given in accordance with prices on 08.09.2012; for “Biedronka” chain on 09.09.2012.

... bazaar (market, fayre) is an occasion to make a physical contact with the goods. Not only through touch but also through sight, taste [K.K. the sense of smell, sound], and movement of our body comes into direct contact with goods, physical contact which can be prolonged by making a purchase—again, through physical contact with the seller (Kurczewski et al., 2010: 47).

Human senses are used to “capturing adverts” used by merchants. There is no better advertising than attracting a hungry customer with the smell of food, potato dumplings, tripe. The market is a blend of scents: fish, meat, citrus. The way a sweater feels, its softness and fluffiness persuade us to try it on, and then maybe buy it. The sight is impressed by the rich palette of colours, the ears are catching the shouts and rhymed slogans, easy to remember, persuading the passer-by to buy the goods. In the “Central Market” in Kaliningrad, as well as in Różycki bazaar, sales pitches can be heard. As a modern element, the pitches are being played over a speaker, or rather, are being pre-recorded and played over and over. Humorous, grotesque, and funny verses are slowly sinking into oblivion.

At the market, we can meet a lady pushing a trolley with two Thermoses and hot food, selling tea and coffee. A similar phenomenon occurred in Warsaw at the “Europe Bazaar.”² I remember seeing a small Vietnamese woman pushing a trolley that seemed to be bigger than her or maybe I just was lower, being a child. At the territory of the market you can buy popular *czeburaki*, sweet buns, and other food from Asian food booths, in Poland popularly known as “Chinamen.” Kurczewski writes that on crossing the gate of bazaar we are dealing with remarkable phenomenon. “In this case we have a clearly defined border, which is followed, as usual, by the phenomenon of pre-border territories and border crossing” (Ibidem: 240). Borderline and border are phenomenal notions if we look at the interactions that occur between individuals from different sides of the border. Not only goods but even culture become subject of exchange. “Secondly, market always has its borderline. ... The example is Różycki market, surrounded by the walls. However, there are markets, the border of which is invisible, yet defined by accumulation of stalls or trolleys with goods” (Ibidem: 240). According to Kurczewski, vitality of bazaar binds to “exceptional cultural character of social phenomenon of the market” (Ibidem: 240). The case of the Central Market is similar to situation of Warsaw’s Różycki market: the trading space is fenced, the walls of buildings define a boundary line. But at the eastern gate of the market we can find a big sign: “Shopping Complex FASHION WORLD,” where you can buy shirts, ties, shoes, rucksacks and other goods connected with fashion and clothes. Bazaar “poured” into Baranova street, where you can go shopping in the so-called *baracholka* (flea market), looking for opportunity to acquire an artifact from the past.

Internet portal “klops.ru” in the article “Central Market in Kaliningrad will turn into modern shopping center,” (Tsentral’nyy rynek, 2012, [my translation]) published on 25th July 2012, reported that the area of the Central Market is to be transformed into a shopping center; there were five projects for reconstruction and roofing of the market. The work was to start at the beginning of January 2013, however nothing happened. From the article “The Director of Central Market: trade under the awnings

² One of the biggest bazaars in Europe, with over 5000 traders, established in 1989 and closed in 2007. Read more at: Kudzia P., Pawelczyk G. (2001).

will stay” (*Direktor Tsentral’nogo, 2013*, [my translation]) we learn that the federal law from 1st January 2013 introducing (in short) compulsory moving of all trade into buildings, did not include the groceries stalls. The Director of Central Market Sergei Zvanok reminded that trade under shelters took only 30% of the entire territory of the market, and the rest was used for other facilities, buildings, shops. Briefly speaking, Central Market will function under the current formula, which does not change the fact that it was under “attack.” The decision to rebuild the market, which is certainly the landmark of the city, into something resembling a shopping mall aroused controversy among the locals. “Domestication” of this place could reduce its attractiveness and lead to reconstruction of the “urban fabric.” It is important to remember that market is an organism pulsing with life, all of its branches are connected and interdependent. Degradation of any branch as well as disappearance of any product from the market could lead to low popularity of bazaar and, as a result, death of another sphere.

Baracholka on Baranova Street

Between Gorky Street and Proletarian Street, on a section of 400 meters on Professor Baranov Street, is a flea market. People put their goods on the sidewalk on the opposite side to the entrance to the Central Market. What distinguishes the so-called Baracholka from the traditional market is the seeming lack of structure and plan for “stands.” However, in this disarray, we find logic. Walking down the sidewalk along the above-mentioned side of the street we can see that the pavement is “divided” into three parts: two extreme ones are taken for trade purposes and the aisle is left for pedestrians. After walking several meters the extreme left part of the sidewalk is cleaned and the goods are moved to a piece of land located between the fence and the sidewalk. It should be noted that in some cases the retail space is also a roadway when the goods are laid out on a car, previously covered with an old sheet. People moving on this route section use the sidewalk and even if they do not intend to buy anything, they can always “glance” at the objects, stop, look and then buy them. The narrow passage forces passers-by to squeeze between people or walk “in single file” behind the others, which slows down the mobility and gives extra time for looking at the goods or listening to conversations around.

Street markets are very popular not only among tourists but also among locals. At such markets you can find literally everything, because everyone sells the possessions he does not need but which can be useful to someone else. You can buy historical books, forks, knives, Soviet insignia badges, coins, stamps, watches, moose antlers, drill bits, saws, vices, caliper, spirit level, various hydraulic and electrical parts, bicycle parts, computer games, and finally shoes and clothing—you can enumerate endlessly.

If we look carefully at each stand we can see that they differ from one another, not just in goods, but also in the size of the occupied space, “stand design,” etc. The most common type of “stand” is an ordinary cardboard box covered with offered goods. People also use plastic boxes, made of plywood, cardboard, sometimes the product is

inside it to make it easier to lie out from the car onto the sidewalk. Sometimes the goods are laid out on foil or even on the ground. One can get cardboard boxes free of charge from green grocers at the central market located across the street. However, in order to get attention traders use the space around them as an additional “stand” area and a form of advertising. There are pants and a sweater hanging on the fence, to the net are attached blue work overalls, a bicycle wheel, on the low wall there is a radiator grille to an unknown car, on one of the border posts designed to ensure that no one drove a car onto the sidewalk there is a soviet cap while on another one are hanging lacy bras in different colors. The size of a “stand” depends on the number of goods, from what we sell, whether it is lightweight clothes or heavy hydraulic beadings, oration, or other similar things. Finally, a lot can be learnt about the seller when it is known how he got to the market. Whether the goods were brought in a bag, or on a bus, a bike, or a car, that gives information about the social status of the people and allows us to determine whether the sellers trade in order to survive, earn some extra money, or just because they like doing it. We may encounter a small stand with three plates, some cutlery, two crystal items, a pair of men’s shoes, an electric iron, a meat grinder and three pairs of trousers, or an elderly man’s stand who came to the “market” on a bike resembling my grandfather’s sprawling old “Romet.” There is case with some items on the bicycle carrier, a bag with goods on the frame, and more stuff on the ground: a meat hammer, a padlock, a hydraulic battery, a mason spatula, an extension cord, a toilet brush and a few other things. Such small, modest, if not poor “stands” can be contrasted with larger ones a few meters long. For example, on one of the richer “stands” I counted about 50 boxes placed side by side. Sometimes in one box the trader has more goods than another one in the whole stand.

What makes a flea market a flea market? Is it only the presence of objects from the past? It seems that the essence of this “organism” is the people who came to trade. The items put out for sale give us additional information about these people: what they did in the past and what their current situation is. People selling on Baranova Street are mostly elderly people, both men and women, although men seem to dominate. Trade at the flea market—basically along the street—is not their permanent activity or occupation; normally these traders want to earn extra money. This distinguishes all of these people from the “real” (“professional”) sellers, a box with metal walls and a roof. In such places the offers are “rich,” the items are of higher value; you can even buy a Polish border sign with a white eagle on a red background—but without a crown. When traders do not sell, they read a newspaper, talk to another seller or pedestrian and try to pass the time in any way possible. Some of them are crouching, some sit on fruit boxes, others are leaning against cars or just walk around looking at what the neighbors have to offer.

A flea market, in this case located at the sidewalk and its surroundings, seems to be a simple social phenomenon. However, if we look closely, we can see interesting things, invisible at first sight. While at first not much difference can be found between the sellers, in reality it is important what they are selling, what area they use for their stands, how they get to the place of work; all of this defines their social status and sets them on two different class categories of a flea market.

The Market of Agricultural Production in Kaliningrad

Every Saturday on the Central Square, at the foot of the House of Soviets, is a so-called agricultural (*sielskokhazaistvennyi*) market. Merchants who want to trade should pay a fee for their trading space—a small sum of 100 rubles (about 10 zlotys). The bazaar is divided into four alleys: in the first one we buy mostly fruits and vegetables: apples, potatoes, courgettes, beets, radish, sunflowers, onions, corn, grapes, water melons, etc. On the second aisle we can buy things for gardening: thuja, trees, bushes, raspberries, seeds, etc. In the next alley we will find honey straight from the farm, poured into plastic containers using a ladle from a 20-liter milk barrel, cookies, candies, including Polish “Michaszki with nuts” for 200 rubles per kilogram (about 20 zlotys/kg; 6\$). People line up to get bread from the local bakery. There are some clothes as well, though the selection is very poor. The last alley has butcher stands with various meat products, including popular *salo*, a back fat marinated in spices and herbs. At another stall in the large aluminum crock you can buy meat cut into pieces, lying in a marinade, ready for pumping on skewers and grilling (the so-called Caucasian shashliks). It happens that the meat lies directly on the stand covered by oilcloth and the scales date back to Soviet times. I listen to a conversation of a saleswoman with her client: [Saleswoman:] Are you buying this? [K. K. Points to the ham] And this is for the soul, how much? [K. K. Points with a knife to bacon to show the size of the piece] Yes? [K. K. The customer nods affirmative. She cuts a piece and hands him the ham and bacon]. We can say that she ‘fished’ him—that is the way to trade if you want to earn.

For stands, merchants sometimes use their cars, big trucks with ads on the side. Some trade directly from the car, for example, with meat; others—such as green grocers—put boxes with vegetables and fruit in front of the car. A popular solution for a stand is the use of plastic garden tables with removable legs. These tables are easy to carry and do not take up much space in the van, and they are big enough for laying out goods. Products are also laid out on other types of tables, wooden pallets or simply on the stone cube. There are also permanent stands used by traders. It should be noted that the market, at 10:30 am, experienced a massive siege of people, and it was hard to walk along the stalls—as it should be at the real market.

The City as One Big Bazaar

Urban space in Kaliningrad seems to be similar to that which can be seen in other cities. There are a lot of residential buildings, squares, monuments, streets designating a certain rhythm of life; there are green areas, the river, shopping malls, stores, markets, churches etc. The city and its space can be treated in various categories. For example, Ulf Hannerz suggests dealing with the city in terms of network and so-called chains of happiness (2006: 193), while Erving Goffman chooses a different approach and compares the town to the theater (*Ibidem* 2006: 235). Hannerz in his book *Exploring the City. Inquires Towards an Urban Anthropology* (2006) gives more

examples—taken from different authors and his own research—of how the city can be seen in various categories. If we compare the structure of the bazaar with one of the city, we will see that just as well as the former, the latter has streets (alleys), signs (signage, signboards), the administration of the city (the bazaar), and a border, crossed on entering the city (the bazaar); the list of similarities is extensive. In this study we treat the urban space, the city in terms of a bazaar, where we can distinguish between merchants and consumers. The former struggle for urban space so that their stand is in a better location: for example at the crossroads with many pedestrians and, therefore, potential buyers. The latter are eternal city wanderers, walking between the official shops, marketplaces, places of legal trade and informal and illegal trade points scattered throughout the city, with varying density of distribution. In that sense, the city is a certain lifestyle, associated with the lifestyle of consumers and merchants who struggle for survival, and in which competition is the foundation of coexistence. Urban space represents an example of an exchange of goods and services, though it does not always lead to transaction. The aforementioned comparison of the city to a big bazaar is associated mainly with the phenomenon of street trade on a uniquely large scale and the possibility of participation in the city's bazaar. The "city bazaar" provides the possibility of trading, setting up a "stand" practically everywhere. Walking along the streets of Kaliningrad, on every step you meet people selling different things. They put their goods out on street corners, at pedestrian crossings, at bus stops. These are mostly people who trade alone or form small groups. This practice is an informal sales technique, if not illegal. It seems that this way of trading is socially acceptable, during my visit in Kaliningrad I have never witnessed an old woman being caught for trading with her five tomatoes, four garlic bulbs and six onions by police. Willingness of Russians to participate in the trading of "city bazaar" may result from their Soviet mentality. The roots of the economic mentality of a Soviet man can lie in the period of War Communism (1918–1921) (Marples 2011: 83–84) and New Economic Policy (1921–1929) (Marples 2011: 98–102). It is the interwar period which triggered the mechanism for economic resourcefulness. At the time of variable and unpredictable economic policies of the state one had to figure a way of getting even the most basic products in order to survive. People raised in the shortage economy learned to self-organize and put up for sale what they possessed or exchange it for other products (Humphrey 2010). The situation changed after the collapse of the USSR, though only partially. The issue of border trade expansion in the early 90s is being studied in Caroline Humphrey's book entitled *The Unmaking of Soviet Life: Everyday Economies after Socialism*. The author placed the motivation of Russians travelling to neighboring countries (in our case for shopping to Poland) in the category of "quasi free trade" (Humphrey 2010: 113–114), because the citizens of the former USSR were allowed to move and cross the border freely—in other words, the trade control was decentralized. The current situation in Kaliningrad region looks much better than in the 90s or in the Soviet period, the stores are full of all sorts of products. If we compare contemporary Russian capitalism with the Soviet tradition in regard to food products, the so-called "sausage problem," namely its absence, seems to be the most accurate. Russian author Alexander Shubin questions the positive development in

the deficit-free contemporary Russia: “But why are there so few happy faces in the shops?” (Šubin 2012: 37). The author concludes that the way “of getting” products has certainly changed, but the deficit of goods was replaced by the deficit of money. Even if we save money we do not have freedom of choice, because the quality of the product is often worse than that purchased in Soviet times and not within our budget. Polish products are in demand according to observation and statistics showing that the amount of Russians crossing the Polish-Russian border is growing. The reasons for this are lower prices of Polish products, their better quality, and in some cases the possibility of VAT refund at the border, so the extra savings. Russians drive to Poland to get the shopping for their private purposes and set up their stands in Kaliningrad to sell products deficit in Russia or those of similar kind but better quality.

Quite often the merchants at city markets are elderly people trying to earn some extra money to add to their pensions. I spoke with an elderly woman (age 65–70 years) who was selling three boxes of raspberries: a smaller one cost 50 rubles (about 5 zlotys; 1,5\$) a bigger one 100 rubles (about 10 zlotys; 3\$). Her pension is about 530 zlotys, and she was asking me how she was supposed to survive for this? She stood alone, just off the main gate of the market. Sometimes such people can be seen at the central market, for example, an elderly man sitting on a little fishing stool selling apples (15 rub/kg; 1.5 zlotys/kg), parsley leaves, tomatoes and other agricultural products. Near the place where I lived every day I encountered two or three women, sitting at the bus stop with raspberries and other vegetables for sale. Certainly, for some people the “trading” is not a goal itself, but is used as an excuse to meet with the neighbor, to talk and maybe earn a penny or two. Practically on every corner, street, intersection in Kaliningrad we may encounter people trading “under a cloud” awaiting customers. It seems a reasonable hypothesis that if so many people sell individual fruits and vegetables, someone has to buy them. In the public perception, and even at the level of the human impulse, it is better to give 5–10 zlotys (about 1,5–3\$) to an elderly woman and perhaps help her in this way than to spend the money at the supermarket. Leon Petrażycki, an eminent sociologist of law, philosopher, and lawyer, writes about legal emotion, which he thinks may be of an imperative-attributive nature, i.e. it both obliges and confers. Walking down the street, we feel obliged to buy carrots from an old lady and, therefore, accept her right to demand a purchase from us. Individually and in a subjective way we feel that we act in an improper way, morally reprehensible if we buy the carrots in the supermarket and not from her. On the other hand, another person may not feel such a moral obligation with respect to that elderly lady. They know that those professional beggars in Warsaw who do not beg “with an empty hand” but “sell” garlic or something else for the proverbial “if you would be so generous,” and the generosity of people can be different.

The second group of traders at the “city bazaar” are people selling goods directly off the boot of their cars. They sell Polish food and chemicals illegally. The method of such sales is very well thought out, because to be arrested for a crime you have to be caught red-handed, which is not an easy thing to do. Besides, you can always close the boot of the car and quickly leave. It happened to me in Bagrationovsk when the driver of such a “store” ran away from me after seeing someone with a camera

approaching his van. The situation was quite hilarious, though I think that the person driving the delivery van was not amused. In Kaliningrad I encountered three people trading like this. It should be noted that this is part of the solitary sale model, because the traders cross the borders on their own, get groceries from Poland and then try to sell them for a profit; they don't run a permanent store or stand, though a car can easily be transformed into a stall. Into this category we can include "shop cars," that are designed to sell meat, fish and dairy products, have a refrigerator, and sometimes are even cars from butcher's firms. They sell legal products, but do they pay the fee for the spot?

Another group of people are traders selling "under umbrellas," they have stands on street corners or on the road. I found "sidewalk" stands with Russian products (mainly vegetables and fruit, but also clothes and books) and stands almost entirely dedicated to Polish products. I spoke with a woman working in such a "Polish stall," she was earning extra money to supplement her pension this way. She stands in the same place every day, says that she does not have a visa³ because she cannot afford it, and the products are brought by "khaziain," her boss. I reach the other stand, and basically get a chain of stands with Polish products. It is like gathering mushrooms: sometimes you can find one, and sometimes you can find a lawn full of them. I'm walking down the sidewalk and see women with fruit, berries, vegetables and apples. At the end there are three stands with Polish food, one beside another. While I was waiting in the queue, the woman managed to sell groceries to three people. "Biedronka" Frankfurters (produced by "Culineo") to a man for 120 rubles (about 12 zlotys; 4\$), then "Cracov" sausage to another one for 120 rubles (about 12 zlotys; 4\$), and then another packet of frankfurters. The same products in the Polish shops cost about 50% less and the prices in "regular" Russian shops are more expensive than those encountered on the stands. The ladies reassure their customers that the goods are fresh and cold. They even offer to try the temperature of the products, and show the car behind, saying that there are refrigerators and everything is fresh, because people buy from them non-stop and it is not like in the supermarket where the products can lie for who knows how long.

The last category we can specify is making shopping by ordering. For example, someone without a car and a visa or a local border movement card can ask a neighbor to buy a certain list of products, afterwards paying a certain sum of money for the trouble. According to *Gazeta Wyborcza* in the article mentioned before, we can find special ads marked "I am bringing," so that people can buy Polish products without leaving home.

All listed forms of sales taking place in the structure of the city are being suspended in the informal world, and are mostly socially acceptable. Probably there may be other forms of trading, which are not listed, but this is due to the inexhaustible human ingenuity and skill of inventing.

³ She didn't know that the visa is not needed any more.

Conclusion

Based on the research made in the Kaliningrad region we can distinguish the following methods of the illegal selling of Polish products: 1) From trunk of the car, 2) Laid out stands on the streets or its corner 3) Sales from bazaar stands (“legally in the shack”) 4) Shopping for order, 5) barter exchange for example cigarettes for frankfurters, 6) “Polish shop”—a legal form of illegal sale.

I compare the Kaliningrad urban space to a bazaar, trying to prove that Kaliningrad “equals” bazaar, as indicated by the described forms of trade, which have spread to the urban space from the traditional market in an unprecedented scale for me. The density of urban practice of trade both in legal and illegal forms is incredible: there are traditional markets, temporary ones, there are people selling individually, there are shops, but not always trading legally. There is itinerant trade; there are also other forms of trade mentioned by me in the text. Kaliningrad is a big bazaar, which may lose this function along with improving the material situation of people trading (or at least may reduce the scale of the phenomenon) or change of Russian mentality and consequently can lead to a reduction of the urban bazaar. The high cost of importing Polish products as well as administrative restrictions implemented by Poland and Russia can result in the reduction in the trading of Polish food products.

An example of a phenomenon that reflects the seizure of urban space and a peculiar step in the expansion of bazaar or quasi-bazaar places in the city is *baracholka* on the Baranova street. This street de facto was transformed into a flea market, where anyone can come with their goods and sell them. The majority of traders at the flea-markets seem to sell their property because of their need for money rather than lifestyle. These traders do not pay payroll or tax, there is no bazaar administration, there is a lack of any formality. However, people know about this place, they come and buy. In Kaliningrad places similar to flea markets appear with a focus on groceries as it was in the case of streets of Kaliningrad, where Polish food products were being sold. Local border traffic between Poland and Russia partly contributed to the change in the urban landscape of Kaliningrad, making it look more like a bazaar.

Bazaars are a unique social phenomena, which take us into a magical world, where we can haggle for a better price than a professional diplomat. At the market, in this respect, there is equality. This is a game of coming to and leaving the seller if he does not want to reduce the price of the product. The city of Kaliningrad as a bazaar functions on the border between legality and illegality. Starting with various unstructured forms of trading in the urban space and ending at the offered assortment. Local border traffic is conducive for bilateral relations and informal trade through the opening of the border, which, after the Polish accession to the European Union and the Schengen area was “sealed off.” However, we must not forget that the border trade is always present in the region regardless of the local border traffic and the space market area allows us to resell the products. Bazaars maintain some traditions; they are a part of the culture, a source of history and shopping centers are a waste of time due to the lack of adventure.

Research carried out on the Polish-Russian borderline in project “Local Border Traffic Between Poland and Kaliningrad Oblast (Russian Federation): the Example of the Bazaar in Kaliningrad Oblast and Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship,” is a comprehensive analysis of the bazaars on the basis of which it was made reconnaissance issues of local border traffic. The study identified areas worth further explore, how for example, the phenomenon of illegal trade in Polish food products on the Kaliningrad side and Russian products in Polish side and the method of sale of those goods or legitimate movement of goods (meat, dairy products, etc.) by the Polish-Russian borders in the illegal quantities, which can evidence of its leaks. Query the functioning of the local border traffic on the example of cross-border trade and participant observation revealed interesting mechanisms functioning on the Polish-Russian borderland. Thus, the study showed differences between the normative model of the agreement on local border traffic with the surrounding practice of everyday life. The subject of Polish-Russian local border traffic requires further exploration and systematic study. For this purpose further multi-disciplinary research is needed including sociological, legal, economic and historical approaches.

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