

EXPANSION OF FUNCTIONS OF URBAN AREAS TO RURAL AREAS: THE CASE OF KALWARIA ZEBRZYDOWSKA

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Abstract

The town of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, located ca. 40 km from Cracow is a constantly developing center of the furniture industry established in the 19th century. It is a formal capital of the Kalwaria Zebrzydowska municipality, whose administrative borders include 11 villages. However, practically speaking, the area along the main east-west road (national route no. 52), from the access road in Brody, may be considered as one big urban area. It is an example of an area in which borders between towns and adjacent villages are indicated only by name plaques, often indistinguishable from advertising boards. Buildings typical for, and originating from, urban areas, expand beyond the town's borders in a free and uncontrolled manner. The town grows chaotically, its structure changes, i.a. through creation of new functional areas, also expanding beyond formal borders, decreasing the significance of the town center and introducing changes to the communication structure. Moreover, urbanized rural areas change as well, becoming a suburb, or, as in the case of this town of 4.5 thousand inhabitants, a quasi-suburban area. The process seems inevitable, if not natural. How does Kalwaria Zebrzydowska function today? Where are the borders of its constantly changing structure? What will be the fate of such „expanding” towns?

Introduction

The town of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, the administrative center of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska municipality, has 4,500 inhabitants. As it is situated not far from Cracow or Bielsko-Biała, it has direct access to important supra-local routes, facilitating its development in many fields, i.a. as a furniture industry center, tourist and pilgrimage destination, or as a residential infrastructure for bigger neighboring cities. It is well-known for the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Angels that is located there; it is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List and visited by many tourists from all

over the world. The other – and equally important – area of development is the local, time-honored furniture industry. It is the most influential factor in terms of spatial transformations, in the town as well as beyond its administrative borders. It is a part of a larger, traditional region, encompassing also parts of the adjacent municipality, Lanckorona (e.g. the village of Izdebnik), stretching out from the east, along the national route no. 52. Therefore, the part of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska municipality that seems to be most affected by those transformations is the village of Brody, located along the eastern border. Its location – along an important, supra-local communication route – influences the formation of an urbanized „road” landscape, consisting of a combination of production, service-provision, and residential development along with the necessary infrastructure, creating an atmosphere that resembles more the adjacent town than a village. Although transformations are visible along the entire border of Kalwaria, the problem is the most notable – and the most interesting in terms of this analysis – in the village of Brody; therefore, I shall focus mainly on this area.

The aim of this study is to answer the questions concerning transformations of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska's urban area. Where is the border between the urban and the rural part, if urban development goes beyond the borders, creating more and more „satellites” that continue to appropriate the open rural area? How do we refer to the transforming space – is it an expanding town, a transforming village, or maybe a new entity altogether? What will be the fate of such an area?

In order to answer those difficult questions, an analysis of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska itself, its neighboring villages, as well as the definition of the term of „town/city”, is necessary. It will constitute a basis for further study of existing problems as well as allow to draw conclusions bringing us ever nearer to answers to questions mentioned in the introduction.

Kalwaria Zebrzydowska – a handful of facts concerning the analyzed area

Before I start to analyze Kalwaria Zebrzydowska as a town, it is worth to mention some hard data concerning its geography, demography, etc. The development scheme for Kalwaria Zebrzydowska and neighboring areas is presented in Figure 1.

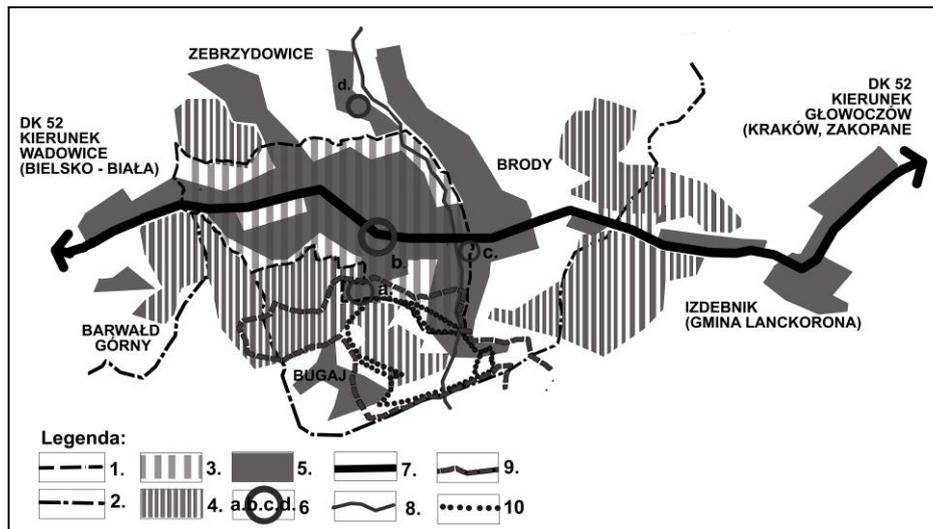
The town of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska is located in south-eastern Małopolska region, and it is located in the vicinity of important urban centers (35 km to Cracow, 14 km to Wadowice, 50 km to Bielsko-Biała). It is the seat of municipality authorities, consisting of the town of Kalwaria and 11 villages. It has 4,500 inhabitants¹ – constituting 23% of inhabitants of the entire municipality (19 615²).

The region's history reaches back to 1601, when Mikołaj Zebrzydowski built a chapel on the top of the Żarek mountain. The chapel gave rise to a large monastic complex (including today the villages of Bugaj and Brody) and Kalwaria's Stations of the Cross, based on the Calvary of Jerusalem's layout. It was supposed to be a park intended for prayer, with chapels presenting the life and death of Jesus and Virgin Mary. Kalwaria quickly became an important destination for pilgrims from Poland and other countries. What was unique, even back then, was the scale of the complex, and its exceptional character.

¹ Source of the data: Kalwaria Zebrzydowska Municipality Office

² Ibid.

Figure 1. Development scheme of the analyzed area



1 –Kalwaria Zebrzydowska's town border, 2 –Kalwaria Zebrzydowska's municipality border, 3- the town's administrative area, 4 – forests, 5 – urban areas, 6 – main service areas: a. Sanctuary, b. town center (market square), c. Brody village center, d. Zebrzydowice village center – Convent of the Brothers of Saint John and the parish church, 7 – national route no. 52, 8 –Cedron river, 9 –UNESCO-protected area border, 10 – Kalwaria's Stations of the Cross.

Source: Author, on the basis of SUIKZ (spatial development conditions and directions) of the Kalwaria Zebrzydowska town and municipality

A large area, designed in detail and embedded in the terrain, taking into account not only its nearest surroundings, but also the entire landscape (Mitkowska, 2003). As the interest of pilgrims continued to grow, the village of Zebrzydów was established in 1617, at the foot of the mountain, near the route to the Monastery. It was supposed to serve as accommodation for tourists (Jackowski, 1995). For more than 150 years Kalwaria (named thus after it was joined to the Austrian Partition) was a small town, famous mostly of the Monastery and local industry whose significant part was, even back then, furniture production. A breakthrough came in the period of 1786-1790, opening the region to the world: central-Galician route, an important route of the Austrian Partition, from Lvov to Biała (today – Bielsko-Biała), was built. Not only did it allow the pilgrims to access the Sanctuary, but strongly influenced the development of the town itself – reinforcing its role of an industrial center (Chadam, 1984).

Today, furniture industry continues to be the dominant branch of local industry. Furniture is produced in many different forms throughout the whole town, e.g. in big production and service factories, smaller, detached buildings and in residential buildings. The national route 52, crossing the market square, is also very important. This historical route's significance is not only commercial and communicational – it is an axis of the common furniture production area (in the Kalwaria and Lanckorona region).

Production sites grow dynamically, in town as well as in neighboring villages. As there are no common policies for the area's development, it is carried out in a chaotic manner, e.g. in terms of location or form of development, which influences the shape and quality of the space and limits the growth of other industries (including tourism and agriculture), in spite of favorable

natural and landscape conditions. An important step towards solving that problem was adopting of the „Town and Municipality Spatial Development Conditions and Directions” document³ by the local authorities in 2015, providing guidelines for development of areas comprised in Local Spatial Development Plans (currently in progress). However, it should be admitted that the policy provided for in the Conditions and Directions shall not resolve the existing problem of excessive urban development of the area.

The municipality whose center is Kalwaria Zebrzydowska can boast a rich natural and cultural landscape. It is topographically diverse, richly wooded (especially in the southern part), and the local fauna and flora is subject to different forms of nature conservation (such as Natura 2000 on the river Cedron). Its attractiveness as a tourist destination is enhanced by valuable monuments and complexes of monuments. The most important is the Sanctuary and the Stations of the Cross, visited annually by 1.2 million pilgrims⁴ and subject to special protection resulting from its presence at the UNESCO World Heritage List. Apart from the Sanctuary, the Convent of Brothers of Saint John in Zebrzydowice and numerous historical residential and religious buildings as well as farm buildings can be found there.

The center of the municipality is surrounded on each side by rural areas, remaining in close relation to them in many ways. On the eastern side it shares borders with Brody and the Lanckorona municipality (Fig. 2 and 3). The municipality border in Brody starts along the edge of the forest; from there, along the national route 52, the number of buildings increases; it is dominated by production sites and service facilities, as well as several residential buildings. The center of the village, where commercial services prevail, blends with the town’s spatial structure, whereas the residential part of the village, where smaller production facilities operate, develops mainly along roads running north and south.

To the west, it shares borders with villages of Barwałd Górny and Barwałd Średni, and further on – the municipality of Wadowice. In this region, an important part of the space is the abovementioned route, generating service and production areas; the main part of the village’s structure is organized along this road, going north and south. However, the scale and prevalence (in terms of quantity) of services and industry in the village’s general structure is considerably lower. It is more varied (not dominated by furniture industry) and more focused on the local community.

On the northern side it adjoins the village of Zebrzydowice. The border between the town and the village is thin, but, contrary to places mentioned above, it seems the most natural. It is dominated by structures similar to most of the town’s (apart from the center; mostly detached houses with small backyard service and production premises), being its natural continuation. Elements that distinguish Zebrzydowice from other villages (and the town) is a higher percentage of green areas and, strongly influencing the landscape, the historical buildings of the complex of the Brothers of Saint John. Its towers, as well as the church, constitute local dominants, surrounded by overmature stand and thick riverside greenery near the Cedron river.

³ Resolution no. VI/44/2015 of the Town Council of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska of 23 April 2015 amending the Spatial Development Conditions and Directions of the Kalwaria Zebrzydowska Town and Municipality

⁴ Source of the data – Centrum Kultury, Rekreacji i Sportu w Kalwarii Zebrzydowskiej (Culture, Recreation and Sports Center in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska)

From the south, it adjoins the village of Bugaj and forested land surrounding the Sanctuary. It is the least developed peripheral area of the town. Its significant part are the Stations of the Cross, starting at the Sanctuary and passing through the neighboring forests. Due to its location and integration with religious paths (many of which lead straight across the residential area), it is the least built-up and inhabited village. Its landscape consists of many old houses and farms surrounded by green areas. The lack of extensive spatial development stems from restrictions required by the strict preservation regulations imposed i.a. by UNESCO.

Figure 2. Access route to the built-up area of the village of Brody.

Development dominated by service and production facilities.



Source: the Author

The conclusion that can be drawn from the abovementioned facts is the following: the growth of the town area, as well as of neighboring areas, is extensive. Its result are changes in the structure of the center itself, as well as adjacent areas. The border between the town and villages changes, becomes blurred. It gives rise to the following questions: how can we define a “city” or “town”? Where are its borders? Do they change, or maybe it is the city/town that transforms? Or perhaps a new entity is created? In order to define problems, determine principles of functioning and consider possible future solutions, I shall try to refer to theory and find existing, or define new, theoretical patterns. The first step of this process shall be an attempt at finding a definition of “city/town”.

City/town – what is it? Definition

The question concerning the definition of the city (or town) is not easy to answer. However, it is relevant and helpful in terms of determination of its properties and processes specific for its theoretical borders, and in consequence, identification of changes that give birth to phenomena mentioned above.

This problem was tackled i.a. by Anna Agata Kantarek (Kantarek 2013), Marek Kowicki (Kowicki, 2014), Eugeniusz Rydz (Rydz, 2006), Krystian Heffner and Arkadiusz Halama (Heffner, Halama, 2012), as well as Agnieszka Wojtowicz-Wróbel (Wojtowicz-Wróbel 2013). Encyclopedic as well as literary sources are also worth mentioning.

According to the Polish version of the Encyclopedia (Encyklopedia, 1998), a city or a town is: „a settlement unit created historically as a result of settling of people intending to pursue non-agricultural professions; it is distinguished by extensive development, infrastructure – e.g.

transport system, water and energy management system, and production of goods and services, also for non-local recipients"

How does the definition work in the context of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska? No doubt it:

- *is a settlement unit created historically as a result of settling of people intending to pursue non-agricultural professions(...)* A settlement established near the Sanctuary, serving as accommodations for pilgrims, gave rise to the town (Chadam 1984).
- *It is distinguished by extensive development (...)*. In the discussed area, there is an extensive development of residential buildings – detached houses, residential complexes, along with numerous service and production facilities, extending beyond the town's administrative borders.
- *It is distinguished by (...) infrastructure – e.g. transport system (...)*. The town is the communication center of the municipality – the main intersection, organizing the circulation in the whole region, is located in the market square area.
- *It is distinguished by (...) production of goods and services, also for non-local recipients.* Today, Kalwaria Zebrzydowska is an intensively operating furniture industry center, delivering furniture to non-local buyers in the country and abroad. It is also the seat of the municipality's authorities and the center of other public services and local offices.

Another relevant definition is the one from the Encyclopedia of Architecture (Pevsner, Fleming, Honour, 1992), describing „*a settlement with a high population density, mostly non-agricultural, characterized by extensive development concentrated along communicational routes (streets, squares, boulevards) and around squares (agora, forum, marketplace), divided into districts, blocks, and parcels*”. Kalwaria Zebrzydowska is built around a market square, from which streets forming blocks and parcels radiate. The abovementioned definition does not mention services, meanwhile emphasizing the spatial shape.

For now, instead of spatial and geographical approach, let us focus on the city/town concept in terms of community, as suggested by the classic of literature, William Shakespeare, in his *Coriolanus*: „What is the city but the people?”⁵ (Shakespeare, 2003). According to him, it is the people – the community – that determine the „urban” character of a place.

The town of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska – what is it? where is it?

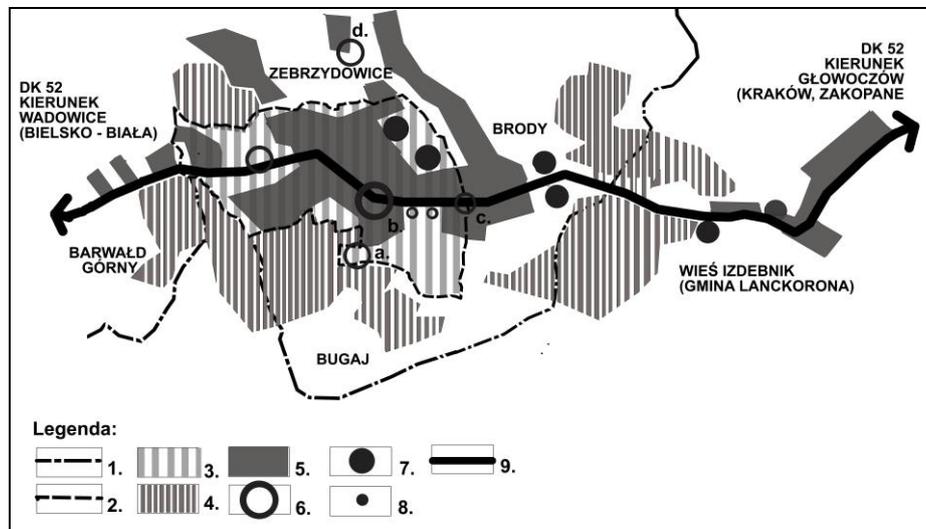
Having presented an overview of facts on Kalwaria Zebrzydowska and the theoretical background of a city, we shall now move on to identifying elements of the abovementioned definition within the town, and through it – to attempt to define its borders. The question still remains – which borders? Of the town, of the village, or maybe something in between the two? According to the definition from the Encyclopedia (Encyklopedia, 1998) referred to above, Kalwaria is a settlement unit, whose spatial structure is highly developed; it has a road and technical network infrastructure and it produces goods and provides services to non-local recipients.

The layout of service points along the national route is shown on Figure 4.

⁵ “What is the city but the people? Citizens. True, The people are the city.” (Szekspir, 2006)

Figure 4. Location of service and production facilities within the analyzed area

1 Kalwaria Zebrzydowska's municipality border, – 2 –Kalwaria Zebrzydowska's town border, 3- the town's administrative area, 4 – forests, 5 – areas with production, service and residential buildings with predominance of furniture production, 6 – main service centers, 7 – areas with majority of furniture production facilities, 8 – significant service areas, not directly related to the local furniture industry, a. Sanctuary, b. town center (market square), c. Brody village center, d. Zebrzydowice village center – Convent of the Brothers of Saint John and the parish church, 9 – national route 52.

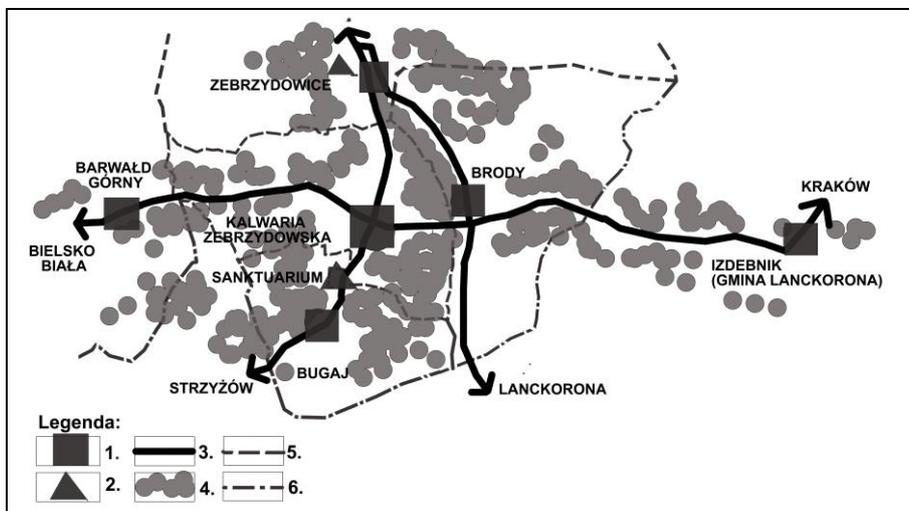


Source: Author, on the basis of SUIKZ (spatial development conditions and directions) of the Kalwaria Zebrzydowska town and municipality

According to the entry in the Encyclopedia, the analyzed urban area goes beyond administrative borders that, on the eastern side, i.e. in Brody, seem to extend beyond the compact residential and service structure. It is therefore necessary to mention – again – the national route, an extension of the historical „central-Galician route”. Figures 5 and 6 demonstrate schemes of probable development of the area, as a consequence of the abovementioned change. It may be considered as a turning point for the structure of the entire area. It was an impulse for transformation, moving the center of the town's life (first of all, in terms of economy, leading to displacement of other domains) to places with a better communicational access – ensuring better contact with external areas, and as a result, e.g. free movement of people and goods, etc. Of course, it was mostly beneficial to closest areas that successively grew, „claiming” the space, at the cost of smaller units. Thus, today, Kalwaria is „absorbing” the center of Brody, expanding the industry to new areas. Thanks to its location, the center of the village has become an extensively developed „suburb”, i.e. an extension of the town, blending with it along the national route, filled with service points whose location was generated by an easy access. Rural functions of this area have long since disappeared, giving way to production and services. Residential buildings are dispersed; there are no animal pens. Many houses fulfill two roles: that of a residential building and of a small service point. The road generates circulation, from which also other service facilities benefit, in open green areas or parcels with an agricultural potential, located along the route. As their creation is a chaotic process, service points tend to blend, forming a uniform entity. Due to their attractive, exposed location, they are surrounded by many advertising billboards, complementing this peculiar landscape.

Figure 5. Situation before the „central-Galician route” (today national route 52) was built – possible development plan

1. Centers of local settlements, 2- Important points generating circulation – Sanctuary in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska and the Convent of Brothers of St. John in Zebrzydowice, 3 – main routes, 4 – greenery – open areas, outside building clusters, 5 – current border of the town of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, 6 - current border of the town of the municipality of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska.

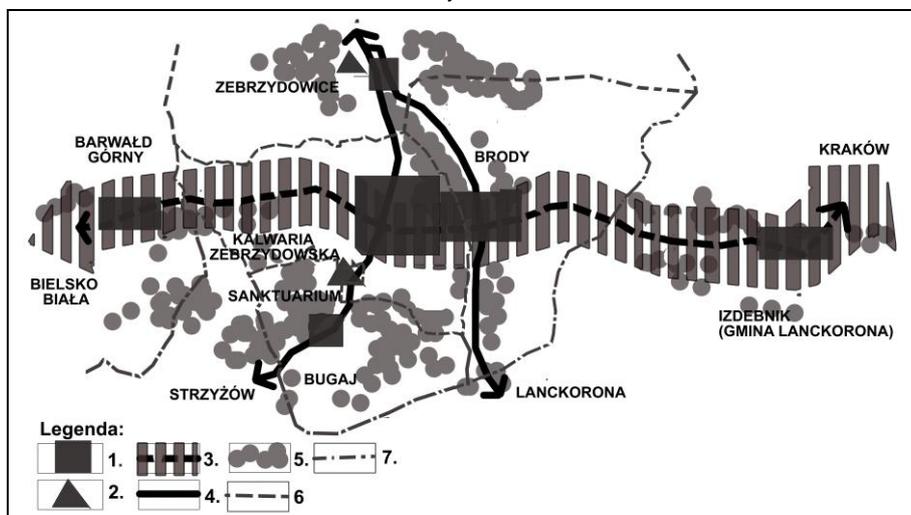


Source: Author, on the basis of SUIKZ (spatial development conditions and directions) of the Kalwaria Zebrzydowska town and municipality and archives of the Provincial Art Restorer in Kraków.

Figure 6. Current situation -

i.e. after the „central-Galician route” (today national route 52) was implemented.

1. Expanded settlement centers along the route 52, 2 - Important points generating circulation – Sanctuary in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska and the Convent of Brothers of St. John in Zebrzydowice, 3 – National route 52 and the adjacent service and residential area, 4 – remaining roads, 5 – greenery (incl. forests) – open areas, outside clusters of buildings, 6 – current border of the town of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, 7 – current border of the town of the municipality of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska.



Source: Author, on the basis of SUIKZ (spatial development conditions and directions) of the Kalwaria Zebrzydowska town and municipality

The hypothesis that it is a town with expanding development is proven by the second definition referred to in the preceding subchapter – the entry from the Encyclopedia of Architecture (Pevsner, Fleming, Honour, 1992). It sustains the spatial value of the place, as the key factor, pointing out a structure with a center, and a fixed, hierarchical layout of streets, blocks, parcels, etc. All those elements can be found in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, whose center is the market square, joining the main routes. Although today, because of its development, it is no longer the center of local life (that moved to side streets and the square), its central position remains crucial. It can safely be ascertained that with appropriate spatial modifications (firstly, removal of transit traffic and the accompanying infrastructure), it is still possible to restore its original function of the town's life center. The abovementioned definition suggests that a city or town exists to the extent that the space is developed. After analysis of the plan of Kalwaria, it is safe to say that adjacent rural areas are in fact urban areas, i.e. related to the town's spatial system. However, if we define the urban area as a developed area, how do we classify the areas located at its administrative borders, with functions that definitely are not agricultural: service and production facilities? They are a direct continuation of elements of compact urban development, its big „satellites” – pioneers of transformation of space that, until recently, was rural; those facilities are followed by numerous new projects. Separated from compact building clusters, they constitute a structure that is hard to define: it is no longer rural, but still not urban. According to the foregoing, we have drawn closer to answering the question of where to look for borders in an urban space, still different from administrative borders. The answer remains ambiguous. The aforementioned spatial definitions should therefore be complemented with a sociological perspective, indicating, as Shakespeare suggested (Shakespeare 2003), that it is the city's inhabitants that define the city. *They are the city.* If definitions fail to fix the spatial borders, we should focus more on the inhabitants, on local communities, and to try to determine where are the borders of areas used by them, and subsequently – how to define the area beyond those borders, that they do not need and do not use, a supra-local area.

Craftsmen are an important part of the population of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska: small as well as big companies, producing furniture or providing furniture-related services. Many of them continue the family tradition for generations, in backyard workshops or bigger establishments. Considering that community remains in the heart of this analysis, a community that changes the town, shapes and inhabits it through development of various undertakings, it is safe to say that it is the entrepreneurs who contribute the most to the town's growth. They build their workplaces and homes for their families, and through their lives and work, they stimulate the life of the town. Therefore, the town borders can be drawn at the limits of its inhabitants' activity. In the light of the above, it is necessary to mention the areas described above, situated within formal borders of villages, in which, in between the dispersed buildings, production and service facilities begin to appear (mainly along the national route) and which have been classified as urban structures. This leads to yet another issue. As the inhabitants of those areas have always lived beyond the town's borders, they do not consider themselves as part of the urban structure. The development does not indicate that the parcels in which they live and work are rural (or non-urban), as their function is related to services, not agriculture. There are also big production facilities, constituting separate „entities” outside the town, used by owners and employees who

stay there only temporarily. In the discussed „social” context, they do not „belong” to any of the spaces: neither rural nor urban. Their role is not to serve the town, but rather non-local clients. Their location outside the town is determined, apart from good accessibility in terms of logistics, by the size of the facility, that needs a lot of space to be built. They do not belong to the city, because they do not influence its structure or activity in any way. Neither do they belong to the village within the borders of which they are situated.

Conclusions

Kalwaria Zebrzydowska is an example of a town *expanding* beyond its administrative borders. In the ongoing process, three types of highly active areas are created, whose borders change continuously.

The first area is the town, successively absorbing adjacent structures, inhabited by people actively participating in shaping the life of the town.

The second is a formally rural area, as it is located outside the town, and the intensity of development as well as agricultural functions still classify it as a village (areas north and south from the town).

The third (mainly the village of Brody, sharing the eastern border with Kalwaria) is the most difficult to define – a „public” and service area, housing mostly service establishments, successively becoming a typically urban area.

It seems that in the case of medium-sized towns, such as Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, the town's borders are difficult to define and the *expansion* process is troublesome to analyze. It is only possible to control the process and continue it in a more deliberate manner, i.e. modify its direction in order to avoid changing the borders of the village and reinforce the new entity in problem areas. An adverse effect could be the loss of the nature of the urban center and transformation towards a shapeless structure, slowly becoming a remote suburb of Krakow.

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