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The issue of limitatio in early Silesian urban planning

Abstract

The economic and legal changes taking place in Silesia during the times of *melioratio terrae* undoubtedly brought a revolution in the cultural landscape. The concept of a border in the non-urbanized space of the early Middle Ages had a completely different dimension than its foundation counterpart. The rapidly progressing colonization campaign and the development of large monastic land ownership resulted in a significant density of the settlement network, as well as a change in the ownership structure of the land itself, which was increasingly equipped with immunity. The borders – previously of a blurry, strip-like nature – increasingly took on a linear, precisely defined course. The culmination of this process was the marking of the boundaries of the chartered city (*fossata*), soon consolidated by city fortifications.

Our study is an attempt to outline the issues of more recent research on the matter of the boundaries of a medieval city, which are the result of the progressive stratification of the settlement space in Silesia. The presented case study was intended to draw attention to new, surprising discoveries showing the evolutionary transition from the strip-like, highly conventional nature of early medieval borders to linear delimitations typical of the late and declining Middle Ages. The presented sketch is based on the results of more recent archaeological and architectural research conducted in Silesian cities, as well as analyzes of historical and iconographic sources. It is the first part of a series devoted to the stratification of urban space in the Middle Ages.

The fortifications of individual elements of the early medieval Wrocław agglomeration, which had different owners, are still an open research problem, although their existence cannot be questioned today. In turn, marking the boundaries of the chartered city in the form of a rampart and moat had primarily legal and administrative significance and, in this sense, separated the area endowed with immunity from the space covered by princely law and its burdens. In the case of Wrocław, however, the flood protection and later defensive nature of the newly built structures were at least as important.

Key words: Silesia, Wrocław, Middle Ages, archaeology, architecture, town planning, town boundary

The problem of city boundaries

According to the traditional Etruscan ritual of founding a city, *limitatio* occupies a high second position in the order of acts, just behind *inauguratio*, at the same time being ahead of *orientatio* and *consecratio* [1]. In this respect, the medieval way of founding the city seems to be similar. Since the first stage of creating a settlement center – the act of the ruler’s will – basically escapes archaeological examination, a researcher of a medieval city must focus his/her activities on examining the boundaries of the center and the principles of its intentional layout, taking

into account, of course, the earlier phases of its development, which do not show “features of geometric correctness”, and also – through its “evolutionary development” – indicating the temporariness and changeability of the legal conditions governing its functioning. In the case of Silesian cities, the *orientatio* stage, understood here as marking out the main urban axes of the city, the derivative of which was ideally a checkerboard-block structure, usually became the main object of interest of researchers, and the explorations themselves usually provided spectacular results. In turn, the elusive stage of *limitatio* was usually recognized as a result of accidental discoveries, which were also usually questioned.

The economic and legal changes taking place in Silesia during the times of *melioratio terrae* undoubtedly brought a revolution in the cultural landscape. The concept of a border in the non-urbanized space of the early Middle Ages had a completely different dimension than its found-

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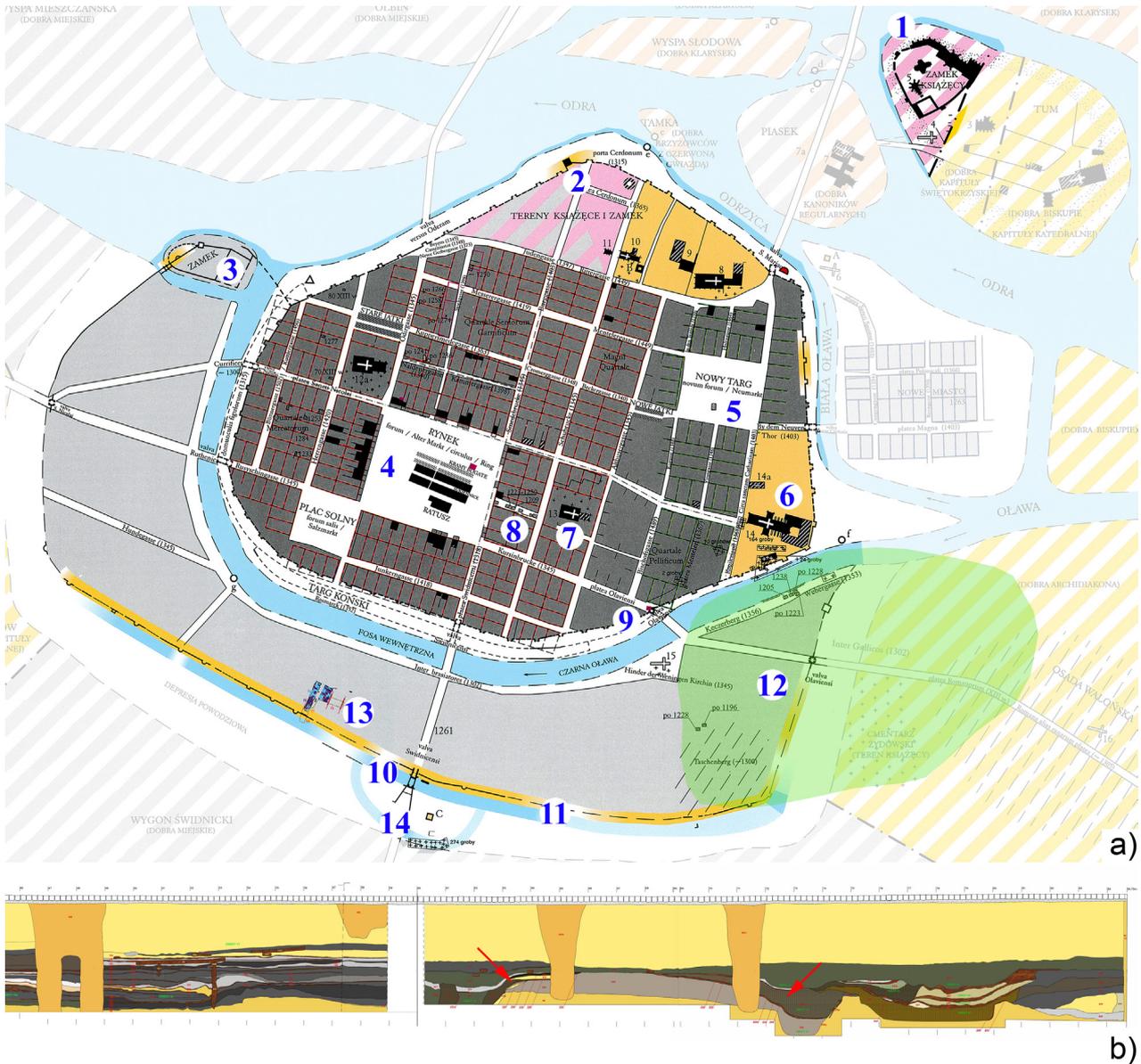


Fig. 1. Wrocław, Old Town. Layout of 13th century buildings and archaeological discoveries (source: [10]):

- a) Markings on the map: 1 – castle on Ostrów Tumski, 2 – left-bank castle (I), 3 – City Arsenal, left-bank castle (II), 4 – Market Square, 5 – Nowy Targ Square, 6 – church of St. Wojciech, 7 – church of St. Maria Magdalena, 8 – Kurzy Targ Street, 9 – Oławska Gate (I), 10 – Świdnica Gate (II), 11 – remains of an earth-sand-fascine embankment with a 13th century moat, 12 – probable area of Walloon settlement, 13 – field of eighteen rows of negatives from piles with two border ditches of city plots, 14 – Corpus Christi hospital with a cemetery and a chapel, where the Corpus Christi Church was later erected;

- b) longitudinal section through archaeological deposits discovered under Kurzy Targ Street – eastern section with relics of the buildings of a non-existent thirteenth-century bourgeois plot facing Szewska Street. The arrows mark a relic of the embankment – the presumed border of the settlement of German guests at the church of St. Mary Magdalene (source: [9])

II. 1. Wrocław, Stare Miasto. Rozplanowanie trzynastowiecznej zabudowy i odkryć archeologicznych (źródło: [10]):

- a) Oznaczenia na mapie: 1 – zamek na Ostrowie Tumskim, 2 – zamek lewobrzeżny (I), 3 – Arsenał Miejski, zamek lewobrzeżny (II), 4 – Rynek, 5 – plac Nowy Targ, 6 – kościół św. Wojciecha, 7 – kościół św. Marii Magdaleny, 8 – ulica Kurzy Targ, 9 – brama Oławska (I), 10 – brama Świdnicka (II), 11 – pozostałości wału ziemno-piaszczysto-faszynowego z fosą trzynastowieczną, 12 – prawdopodobny teren osadnictwa walońskiego, 13 – pole osiemnastu rzędów negatywów po palach z dwoma rowami granicznymi parceli miejskich, 14 – szpital Bożego Ciała z cmentarzem i kaplicą, gdzie powstał później kościół pw. Bożego Ciała;
- b) przekrój podłużny przez nawarstwienia archeologiczne odkryte pod ulicą Kurzy Targ – odcinek wschodni z relikami zabudowy nieistniejącej trzynastowiecznej parceli mieszczańskiej zwróconej frontem do ulicy Szewskiej. Strzałkami zaznaczono reliknt nasypu – domniemanej granicy osady gości niemieckich przy kościele św. Marii Magdaleny (źródło: [9])

dation counterpart. The rapidly progressing colonization campaign and the development of large monastic land ownership resulted in a significant density of the settlement network, as well as a change in the ownership structure of the land itself, which was increasingly equipped with immunity. The borders – previously of a blurry, strip-

like nature – increasingly took on a linear, precisely defined course. In the early Middle Ages, the boundaries of estates were established as a result of *ujazd* (tours around the area of a future settlement) made personally by the rulers, or less often by high state officials acting on their behalf [2]. From Silesia, we know the Dzirzykraj *ujazd*

in Słup, mentioned in 1177, one of the oldest knight's estates confirmed by sources [3], [4]. If not in 1148, then certainly in 1193 there was *Ślęza Ujazd*, belonging to the monastery of Canons Regular of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Piasek in Wrocław. In 1209, the monastic and princely estates in *Ślęza* were re-demarcated [5]. A fascinating study of the reconstruction of the border marked at that time, along with a symbolic interpretation of the way it was marked, was presented by Andrzej Mierzwiński [6].

The prestigious importance of city borders, emphasized by fortified circuits giving the townspeople defensive independence, and their understanding by contemporaries is evidenced by the entry of the Duke of Świdnica-Jawor, Bolko I the Strict, into rebellious Wrocław in 1297, not through the city gate, but through an extensive, hastily made breach in the defensive wall, fortunately located with high probability by archaeologists.

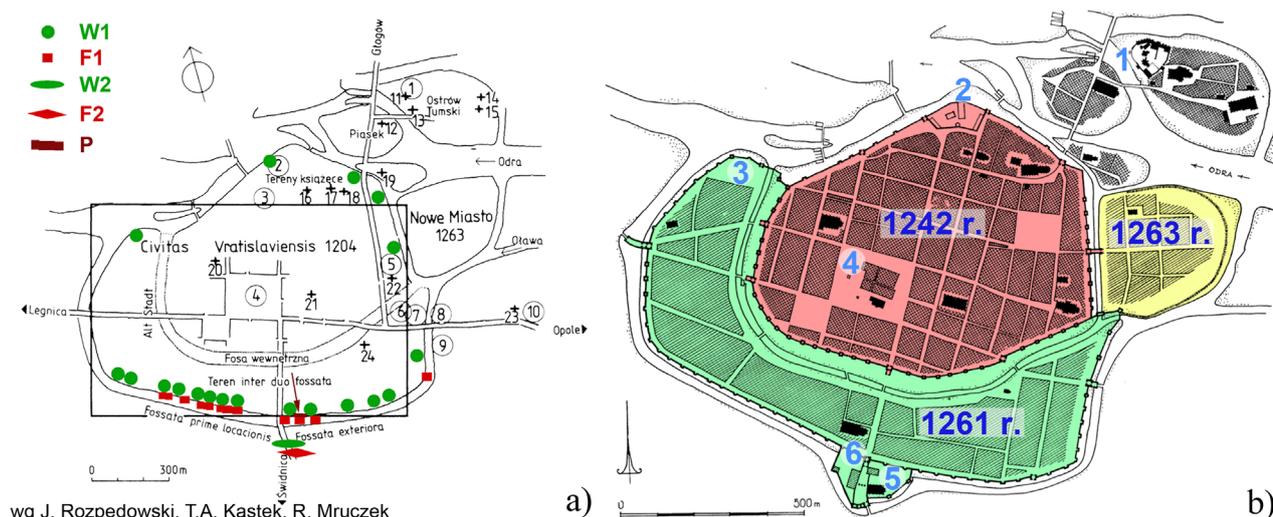
The boundaries of the settlements of the early medieval Wrocław agglomeration

The extensive early urban agglomeration of Wrocław initially consisted of many settlement clusters connected by a system of dependencies with the stronghold complex on Ostrów Tumski. Its boundaries were naturally marked by the outline of the Oder Island, and the archaeologically identified fortifications took the form of wooden and earth embankments in a hook-and-slat structure, maintained in good technical condition as part of the obligations of the princely law system until the second quarter of the 13th century, when the process of replacing them with brick defensive walls began. However, the course of the new fortifications was limited only to the western part, where the prince's residence had existed since the third fourth quarter of the 12th century. The fact that the bishop's palace, the residential tower of the provost of the cathedral chapter and the 12th century church of St. Peter, a church founded by the nobleman Komes Mikora were located on Tumaska Island, however, undoubtedly proves the existence of property boundaries also within the borough (also known as *suburbium*). The mysterious "eastern" stronghold, adjacent to key investments of feudal lords from church circles and probably the oldest element of the defensive structure of Ostrów Tumski, was no longer continued in the late Middle Ages, giving way to the houses of the clergy. The specificity of early Wrocław were extensive areas of private property, concentrated in the hands of only one noble family, whose economic and political career, as well as foundation activities, have no precedent in the realities of Poland at that time, giving it a European rank. Apart from the bishop and the prince, it was the Włostowic family who was responsible for the rapid transformation of the Wrocław agglomeration into a key trade center at an important Oder crossing. We know that both Piotr Włostowic and Mikora owned manors in the area of Ołbin in Wrocław, which stands out for its development potential. During the archaeological and architectural research on the Ołbin settlement complex, the existence of early medieval fortifications of the Benedic-

tine (later Norbertine) monastery complex in the form of embankments and moats was discussed. Taking into account the market character of the settlement and its long-term primacy within the Wrocław agglomeration (before 1139–1232), it is worth asking a question as to the possible strengthening of the entire settlement center together with the market square, three churches and the seats of the nobles. Ołbin, located among the Oder floodplains, certainly also required appropriate protection in the event of floods [7], [8]. It is worth noting that the main riverbed of the Oder in historical times is the so-called St. Wincenty Oder, flowing in the immediate vicinity of the abbey. Ołbin, immortalized on the Wehners' plan from 1562, is a huge complex of religious and economic buildings, surrounded by a system of brick fortifications with towers. Their records cover primarily the end of the Middle Ages. Despite complex religious and economic reasons, the quick demolition of the Ołbin complex in 1529 in the face of the Turkish threat, carried out as part of the clearing of the foreground of the Wrocław fortifications, also had its military aspect and proved the value of the fortifications erected after the Hussite Wars.

If not in the fourth quarter of the 12th century, then certainly at the beginning of the 13th century, the dynamic development of the left-bank center began, based on Walloon, Jewish and German settlers. It initiated a long process of economic and legal changes related to the implementation of the rental (or socage) economy in Silesia. The huge plateau, bounded by the course of the so-called large oxbow lake and the edge of the floodplain terrace, was periodically flooded, especially in the southern and southeastern parts, where, not coincidentally, the Galicians, who had a reputation as experts in the field of hydrotechnics, settled. The settlements at that time were concentrated in the vicinity of several terrain peaks.

As a trace of the fortifications of the German guests Wrocław settlement at the church of St. Mary Magdalene, belonging to the early medieval agglomeration of Wrocław, there may be a layer of redeposited primary humus several meters wide and one meter thick, recorded in the northern profile of the excavation at Kurzy Targ Street, in the vicinity of layers confirming exceptionally intensive settlement, dating back to at least the beginning of the 13th century [9]. Such a situation could only occur in conditions of long-term complete exclusion of this strip of land from use due to its occupation by a communication route or an embankment (Fig. 1). This is, of course, not proof of the existence of a defensive perimeter around one of the elements of the early urban agglomeration, but the proximity of the edge of the flood terrace from the north and the deep wedge of depression on the north-west made the hill on which the first church was built at the end of the 12th century a naturally defensive place. According to some researchers, this would be the western outskirts of the market center, the protocenter of which was the *ad sanctum Adalbertum* settlement [11], confirmed in 1202 by sources. We learn about it from a document describing the location of the Gerung curia situated there, donated by Henry the Bearded to the Cistercians from Lubiąż. Józef Kaźmierczyk came across the relics of the alleged oppo-



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Fig. 2. Wrocław: a) „Great Foundation” according to Jerzy Rozpędowski. Previous discoveries of relics of the oldest Wrocław fortifications have been marked: W1 – embankments around Wrocław, F1 – moat, W2 – embankment at the Corpus Christi Church, F2 – moat at the Corpus Christi Church, P – the remains of a thirteenth-century relic, a bridgehead (the arrow marks the place of discovery) (prepared by T.A. Kastek, R. Mruczek, J. Rozpędowski); b) reconstruction of the city plan in the 14th century [27]: 1 – castle on Ostrów Tumski, 2 – left-bank castle (I), 3 – City Arsenal, left-bank castle (II), 4 – Market Square, 5 – Knights Hospitaller’s commandry, 6 – Świdnicka Gate (II), 1242, 1261, 1263 – dates of known foundations under German law. The areas covered by the locations are marked with colours

II. 2. Wrocław: a) „Wielka Lokacja” według Jerzego Rozpędowskiego. Zaznaczono dotychczasowe odkrycia relikwii najstarszych wrocławskich umocnień: W1 – wały wokół Wrocławia, F1 – fosa, W2 – wał przy kościele Bożego Ciała, F2 – fosa przy kościele Bożego Ciała, P – pozostałość relikwu trzynastowiecznego, przyczółek mostowy (strzałką oznaczono miejsce odkrycia) (oprac. T.A. Kastek, R. Mruczek, J. Rozpędowski); b) rekonstrukcja planu miasta w XIV wieku [27]: 1 – zamek na Ostrowie Tumskim, 2 – zamek lewobrzeżny (I), 3 – Arsenał Miejski, zamek lewobrzeżny (II), 4 – Rynek, 5 – komandoria joannitów, 6 – brama Świdnicka (II), 1242 rok, 1261 rok, 1263 rok – daty znanych lokacji na prawie niemieckim. Kolorami oznaczono tereny objęte lokacjami

site ring of the then Wrocław fortifications, seeing them as the defense system of the Nowy Targ settlement [12]. Currently, however, the course of the alleged embankment in other parts of the Old Town, as postulated by the researcher, cannot be confirmed. More recent discoveries, in turn, support its much wider range and a different origin.

Fossata prime locacionis – the oldest border of Wrocław at its foundation? Borders of Głogów, Namysłów, Świerzawa and Sobótka

The introduction of modern western legal and spatial patterns in the planning of Silesian cities dates back to the 13th century. Many very important elements of the original urban layouts of Złotoryja, Lwówek Śląski, Środa Śląska and Nowogrodzic – the earliest urban centers formed in the times of Henry the Bearded – have not yet been archaeologically recognized. The separation of these settlement formations from the space subject to princely law required a clear definition of the limits of immunity. The oldest confirmation of the existence of the border of the city of Wrocław is a mention in the foundation document from 1261, which mentions the inhabitants of the areas located *ante civitatem [...] infra fossata prime locacionis* [13]–[15]. Of course, this provision sparked a long discussion, but nevertheless the “moat”, “embankment” or literally “boundary” of the city of the first foundation was an objectively noticeable structure in the settlement space of thirteenth-century Wrocław and was a key argument for

people applying for the status of townspeople, which was lost as a result of the perturbations most probably related to the legal and spatial transformation of Bolesław Rogatka carried out in 1242 [14], [16], [17]. This argument was so important that princes Henry III the White and his brother Władysław acceded to the requests of the wronged and equalized them in rights with the rest. The content of the foundation document shows that these were, among others, the inhabitants of the Walloon settlement and the settlement next to the church of St. Mary of Egypt, possibly living in the area of the Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Piasek [18]. A certain, though not very strong, clue to its chronology may be the St. Maurycy Bridge, mentioned in 1226, leading to the Walloons from the area of the parish church of St. Wojciech. A mention of the Bridge of St. Maurycy appeared in the document granting the St. Wojciech church to the Dominicans who came to Wrocław *inter curiam Petri sacerdotis et Pontem sancti Maurici* [14], [19], [20]. This bridge, according to Tadeusz Kozaczewski [21] and Jerzy Rozpędowski [22], was thrown over the then existing moat in order to connect the city with the Walloon settlement. It is usually located in the area of the later outer Oława Gate (II) [23]. A different opinion on this matter is represented by Marta Młynarska-Kaletynowa [24], who, following Theodor Goerlitz [25], assumes that it was simply a road paved with wood or stones. She also provides slightly later examples of Wrocław streets (Schuhbrücke, Schmiedebrücke, Oderbrücke, Kürschnerbrücke) [26]. This author similarly interprets the mention of *pons lapideus* in a document from 1315/1316 [14]. The apparent

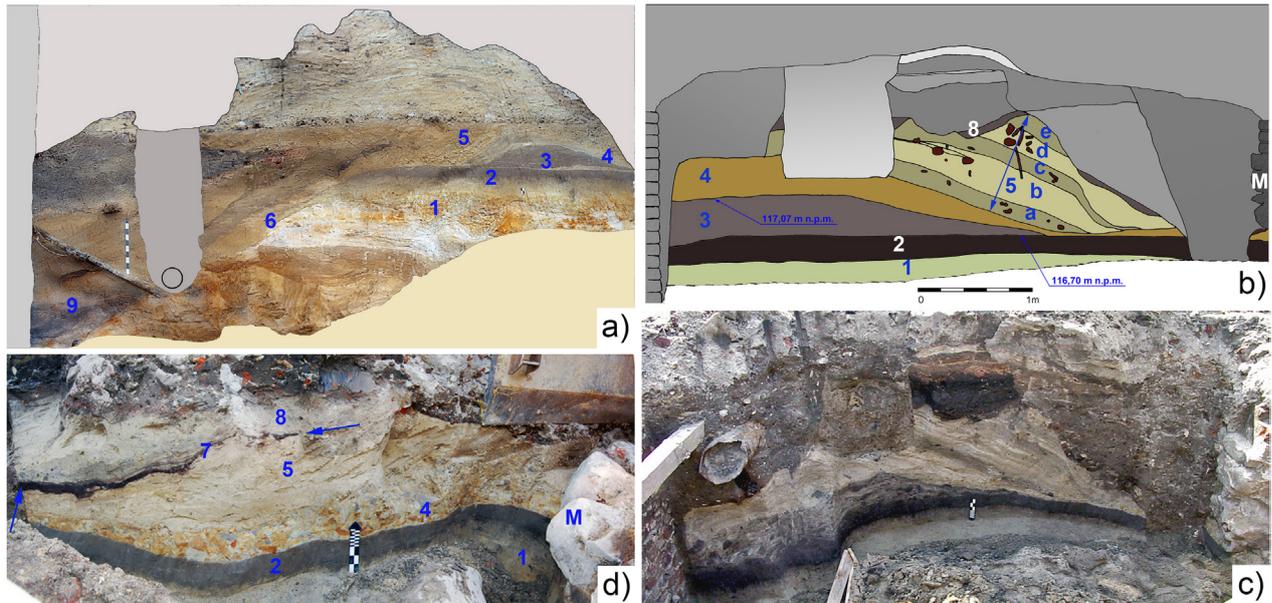


Fig. 3. Wrocław, Old Town. Remains of medieval embankments and moats discovered, among others: a) at Wolności Square/Zamkowa Street; b, c) at Teatralny Square; d) on Heleny Modrzejewskiej/Zamkowa Street. Scheme of deposits recorded in the area of the fourteenth-century fortifications: 1) yellow calcareous sand, 2) podsolic soil, overlying layer (primary humus), 3)–5) deposits of the earth-sand-fascine embankment, 6) northern edge of the thirteenth-century moat, 7) greasy humus layer that was created as a result of long-term use of the area on the existing embankment, which was destroyed during an investment related to the construction of fourteenth-century fortifications, 8) sandy-humus layer created after the destruction of the embankment in the 14th century, 9) layers related to the functioning of the medieval moat, M) stone foundation curtains of the fourteenth-century defensive wall

Il. 3. Wrocław, Stare Miasto. Pozostałości wału i fos średniowiecznych odkryte między innymi: a) na placu Wolności/ulicy Zamkowej; b, c) na placu Teatralnym; d) na ulicy Heleny Modrzejewskiej/Zamkowej. Schemat nawarstwień zarejestrowany w rejonie przebiegu czternastowiecznych obwarowań: 1) żółty piasek calcowy, 2) ziemia bielkowa, warstwa nadcalcowa (humus pierwotny), 3)–5) nawarstwienia wału ziemno-piaszczysto-faszynowego, 6) północny brzeg fosy trzynastowiecznej, 7) tusta warstwa próchniczna powstała w wyniku długotrwałego użytkowania terenu na istniejącym wale, która została zniszczona podczas prowadzonej inwestycji związanej ze wzniesieniem fortyfikacji czternastowiecznych, 8) piaszczysto-próchniczna warstwa powstała po zniszczeniu wału w XIV wieku, 9) nawarstwienia związane z funkcjonowaniem fosy średniowiecznej, M) kamienny fundament kurtyny czternastowiecznego muru obronnego

contradiction of the document's provisions regarding the areas "in front of the city" and at the same time "within the borders (moats, embankments) of the first foundation" was explained by Jerzy Rozpędowski, formulating the concept of the Great Foundation of Wrocław [22], according to which the settlement collapse related to the Mongol invasion in 124, was to result in a significant reduction in the area covered by immunity. The alleged oldest fortifications on the left bank of Wrocław have been the subject of many researchers' studies. Józef Kaźmierczyk was the first to come across their relics, seeing them as a defense system of the Nowy Targ settlement [20]¹. These discoveries – often questioned in recent decades – have been repeatedly confirmed archaeologically in the southwestern, southern, southeastern, and also northern outskirts of the Old Town (Fig. 2). They took the form of a sand-earth-fascine embankment of considerable width and height and an accompanying moat (Fig. 3). In the area of the Knights Hospitaller enclave and the Świdnica Gate (II), a double system of embankments and moats was recorded. Although

they did not constitute an obstacle capable of stopping the Mongol invaders in 1241, they fulfilled their function perfectly as a physical boundary of the functioning of city law and at the same time the first flood protection system for Wrocław, which was flooded from this side during spring thaws [23], [28]–[31]. It is possible that this investment was carried out on the initiative of Prince Henry the Bearded by the Walloons, already appreciated specialists in the field of hydrotechnics, known for carrying out similar works in Brunswick, Hildesheim and Magdeburg [32], [33]. The recent discovery of the relics of the mentioned embankment under the City Arsenal and the remains of the third, unfinished Wrocław castle, which preceded its construction, associated with Henryk IV Probus (1278–1290), also forces us to recall the chronicle mention of unspecified earthworks carried out there by Bolesław the Tall in 1172 as part of preparations for the defense of Wrocław during the conflict with relatives and the Wrocław nobility, which ended with the imperial intervention [34], [35].

Of course, the example of the foundation Wrocław is not an isolated one. A similar border and defense system was discovered in the 1960s in Głogów, where clear traces of a wooden structure were revealed – *plances*, fences or hoardings crowning a sand and earth embankment [36] (Fig. 4). Recently, a 13th-century rampart was identified in Namys-

¹ Józef Kaźmierczyk, discovering relics of embankments, among others, at Klemensa Janickiego Street, in the vicinity of the eastern section of the thirteenth-century defensive walls, connected their existence with the settlement located between the St. Wojciech Church and the Odra crossings.

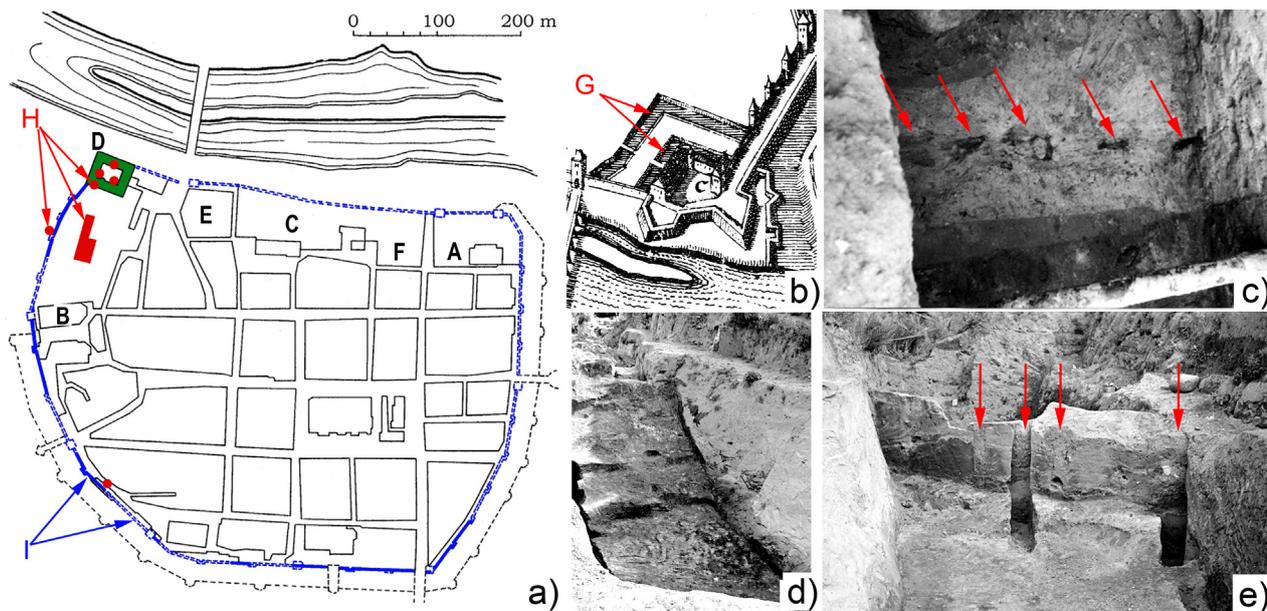


Fig. 4. Głogów: a) plan of identified and reconstructed defensive walls with archaeological surveys, b) view of the castle moats on the plan of Głogów (source: [37]), c) negatives of the palisade at the southwestern defensive wall, d) moat of the town's stronghold, e) negatives of piles strengthening the edge of the moat. On the plan: A – the seat of the city official, B – the church of St. Peter and the Dominican monastery, C – St. Stanisław Church and the Franciscan monastery, D – castle, E – Jewish settlement, F – bishop's manor, G – two moats at the castle, H – archaeological surveys at the castle and urban fortifications discovered in 1963, I – relic of the brick defensive circuit and its reconstruction (source: [36])

II. 4. Głogów: a) plan zidentyfikowanych i rekonstruowanych murów obronnych wraz z naniesionymi sondażami archeologicznymi, b) widok fos zamkowych na planie Głogowa (źródło: [37]), c) negatywy palisady przy południowo-zachodnim murze obronnym, d) fosa grodu mieszczańskiego, e) negatywy pali wzmacniających brzeg fosy. Na planie: A – siedziba urzędnika miejskiego, B – kościół św. Piotra i klasztor dominikański, C – kościół św. Stanisława i klasztor franciszkański, D – zamek, E – osada żydowska, F – dwór biskupi, G – dwie fosy przy zamku, H – sondaże archeologiczne przy zamku i obwarowaniach miejskich odkryte w 1963 roku, I – relikw murewanego obwodu obronnego oraz jego rekonstrukcja (źródło: [36])

łów, where it preceded the construction of defensive walls in the area of the Kraków Gate (Fig. 5) [39]. We know similar fortifications from Warsaw, Sieradz, Kołobrzeg and other cities in Poland [40], [41]². Most probably, they were also in use in Strzegom and Świerzawa [42], [43]. The presence of brick city gates in Świerzawa, with the absence of the defensive wall itself, may suggest that the investment was interrupted at an early stage of construction and that some older defensive and flood embankments functioned there. Due to its location in a narrow valley on the Kaczawa River, the city was and is currently exposed to frequent floods. *Fossata* is primarily a border that can take the form of a ditch, a ditch with a rampart, or a belt of border mounds, constituting the equivalent of the former princely *ujazd* – designating an urban zone excluded from princely law [44]³. The example of Sobótka is also interesting, which was undoubtedly an early rural foundation of the *villa forensis* type, raised to the rank of a city in the 14th century. Despite evidence of the existence of defensive walls there, archaeological research and analysis of existing remains lead to the conclusion that fence-

es built in permanent stone structures of individual properties functioned there, at the same time creating a perimeter protecting the entire city from the outside. According to the excavations, the fortifications of Polkowice had a similar character, forming a stone perimeter of a small width, making it practically impossible to hang a bridge or a defensive porch over it. During the Thirty Years' War, the fortifications of most small urban centers in Silesia finally lost their military value and were only a passive obstacle of an orderly nature, protecting against robbers and vagrants. The defensive walls of Chojnów were dismantled to a safe height of 4.5 m in order to obtain building materials for the victims of fires [43]. Given the economic realities of the time, this was not an exceptional situation at all.

The mystery of the boundaries of the monastery village – pre-foundation Kostomłoty

Before becoming a charter town, Kostomłoty belonged to the Abbey of St. Wincenty in Ołbin, as mentioned in the bull of Pope Innocent III from 1201, which recorded the name *Costomlot* [20]⁴. However, the first mentions of the village date back to 1149, when the *forum Costinlot/*

² The relics of the first fortifications of Kołobrzeg discovered in 2000 include a rampart several meters wide, perhaps reinforced with a palisade, and a palisade just in front of the face of the defensive walls.

³ *Fossatum*, -i: 1) ditch, moat, 2) border ditch, 3) border mound, 4) obligation to build embankments, 5) fortified camp, 6) army; *Fossa*, -ae: 1) ditch, moat, excavation, 2) mine shaft, 3) grave, 4) embankment, earthwork, 5) rampart, 6) middle: so-called trough, a measure of dug salt.

⁴ This document confirmed that the monastery of St. Vincent – apart from other properties – includes the church of St. Gothard together with the village of *Costomlot*.

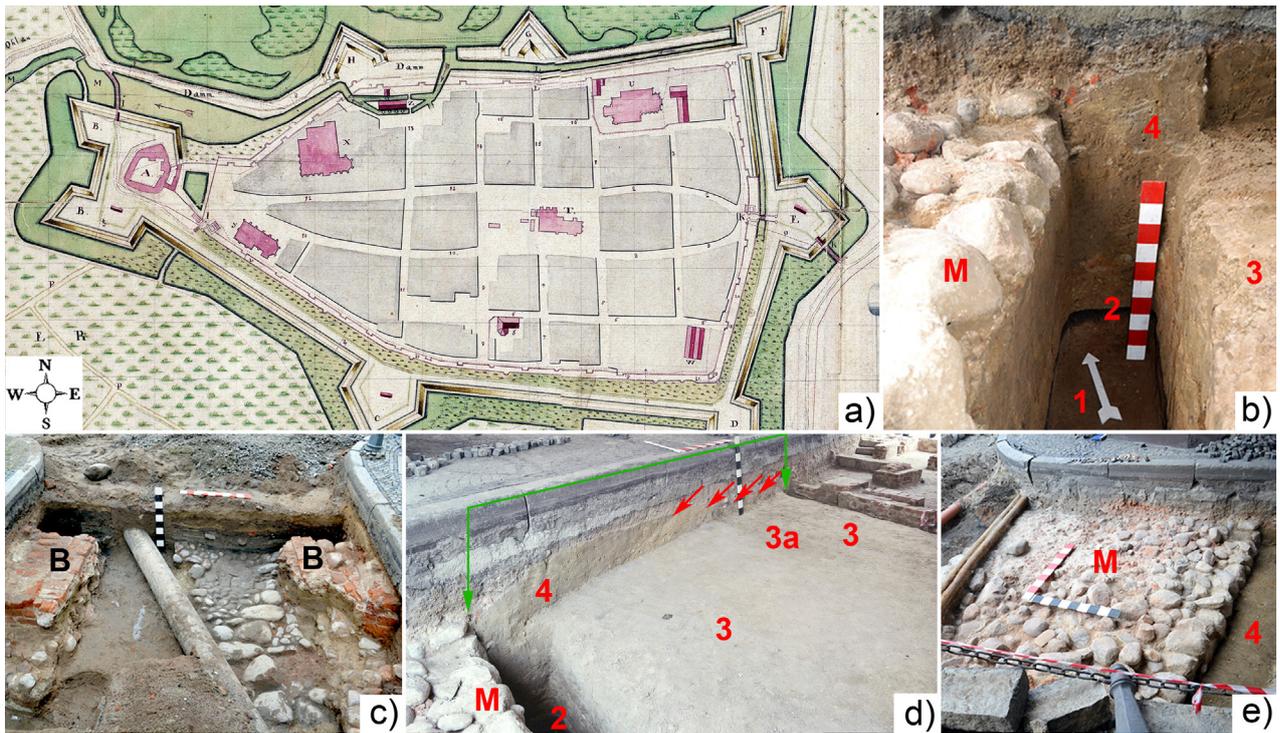


Fig. 5. Namysłów, Krakow Gate: a) on the geometric plan of the town of Namysłów from 1718, the Krakow Gate is circled (source: [38]), b) cross-section of the earth embankment with the visible level of primary humus (layer No. 2), c) view of the oldest, internal city gate (B) along with the medieval level of pavement in the gate passage, d) view of a medieval earthwork with a fragment of the stone foundation of the defensive wall (M). Diagonal arrows indicate the arrangement of the layers of the embankment, vertical arrows – the width of the identified relic of the embankment, e) stone foundation of the oldest defensive circuit. Markings in the illustrations: 1) total sand, 2) primary humus, overcalc layer, 3) layers of earth-sand-fascine embankment, 4) excavation for the stone foundation of the defensive wall, M – stone foundation of the thirteenth-century defensive perimeter, B – relics of the thirteenth-century city gate (photos b–e by E. Wodejko [39])

II. 5. Namysłów, brama Krakowska: a) na geometrycznym planie miasta Namysłowa z 1718 roku zaznaczono kółkiem bramę Krakowską (źródło: [38]), b) przekrój wału ziemnego wraz z widocznym poziomem humusu pierwotnego (warstwa nr 2), c) widok najstarszej, wewnętrznej bramy miejskiej (B) wraz ze średniowiecznym poziomem bruku w przejeździe bramnym, d) widok średniowiecznego wału ziemnego z fragmentem kamiennego fundamentu muru obronnego (M). Skośne strzałki wskazują ułożenie warstw wału, pionowe strzałki – szerokość zidentyfikowanego reliktu wału, e) kamienna ława fundamentowa najstarszego obwodu obronnego. Oznaczenia na ilustracjach: 1) piasek calcowy, 2) humus pierwotny, warstwa nadcalcowa, 3) warstwy wału ziemno-piaszczystego-faszynowego, 4) wkop pod kamienny fundament muru obronnego, M – kamienny fundament trzynastowiecznego obwodu obronnego, B – relikty trzynastowiecznej bramy miejskiej (fot. b–e E. Wodejko [39])

Costimlot [20] and *Kostenblut* [17] appear, and from 1193, when *Costomplac* [20] and *Costomlat* (*Kostenblut*) [17] were mentioned. The name of the village has noticeably evolved over the centuries. Thus, the forms *Costembloth* (1252) [13], *Kostenbluth* [15], *Kostinplot* (14th century) [45] and *Kostomlath* (1334) and also Germanized names appeared such as *Chozzenplotz* (1329), *Costinplotz* (1346) and *Coczemplocz* (1360) [46]. More recently, the term *Kostenplot*, *Kostenbluth* was used. This Germanized form of the original Slavic place name has no clear explanation. Both “kość i młot” (“bone and hammer”) (*Kostomlath*) and “plot i krew” (“fence and blood”) (*Kostenplot*) appear here. Were the changes in the name of the village related to legal changes or the occupation of the then inhabitants of the village? It is worth noting, however, that in the edition of *The Life of St. Jadwiga* by Konrad Baumgarten [47]⁵ there

is *Historia ducis Henrici*, which records the name of the village of *Costoplocz* along with an intriguing explanation of its origins. This document contains the following sentence: “Item dicitur, quod circa villam Costoplocz ibidem rustici cum ossibus faciebant sepes ante segetes propter vitanda dampna et ab illo vocatur Costoplocz, vulgariter eyn beynen czawhn”. This could indicate the existence of a makeshift defense system of Kostomłoty in the form of a fence or palisade, built using animal bones, perhaps primarily marking the border of the village and protecting crops against animals (Fig. 6). The existence of such elements can be associated with town foundations under German law, when the border of the area covered by immunity could have a clear form of a ditch/moat, embankment or a less permanent partition in the form of a fence/palisade. It is worth mentioning the Danish Island of Rømø in the archipelago of the Frisian Islands, where in the town of Juvre a fence and the foundations of houses made of whale bones have been preserved, which in that case was explained by the severe shortage of building materials. In the case of Kostomłoty, magical treat-

⁵ The text *Historia ducis Henrici* was found by Stanisław Solicki in *the Life of St. Jadwiga*, published in German in 1504 by Konrad Baumgarten in Wrocław, which was based on Anton Hornig’s manuscript from 1451.

ments related to the need to protect crops cannot be ruled out. *Civitas Costomlot* was first mentioned in 1254 [13]⁶. Was the settlement already established under German law and benefiting from it? It can be assumed that it was, and therefore – it had clear boundaries identical to the urban boundaries, which had to be repaired from time to time.

The “outer city” in Wrocław and the variability of foundation boundaries in the 13th century

Although researchers of Wrocław differ significantly in their views on the course of foundation processes and the origins of the “outer city”, it is impossible to remain indifferent to the latest archaeological discoveries in this zone, the chronology of which is in clear contradiction to the vision of the spatial development of the city, grounded in science, reminiscent of analogous processes in other large European centers, such as Cologne or Magdeburg. The extensive areas located between the inner and outer rings of Wrocław’s fortifications would be annexed between 1242 and 1261 as a result of the reconstruction of the city’s economic potential after the Mongol invasion in 1241 (Fig. 2b). Meanwhile, the oldest traces of settlement in this zone – especially the remains of production activities (malting and brewing?), single relics of brick buildings, traces of parcellation, and, above all, numerous dendrochronologically dated wells (after 1196–after 1237) – testify to the development of this area already in the first three decades of the 13th century (Fig. 1a). Of course, the nature of the excavated settlement traces – especially the dynamics of development reconstructed on their basis – differs from what can be observed in the oldest layers of the market zone or Nowy Targ zone, but the presence of permanent buildings forces us to ask problematic questions. Are we dealing with material traces of former settlements of the early urban agglomeration, or perhaps these are “secondary suburbs” created as a result of the reduction of some larger urban concept, onto which the structures of a municipal city were later layered? This problem was already reflected in the studies of Jerzy Rozpędowski [49] – the author of the concept of “Greater Wrocław” (Fig. 2a). Such visible settlement changes – visible in archaeological layers – are usually a reflection of turbulent historical events and sudden political and economic changes. These undoubtedly took place in Poland in the spring of 1241, and their urban consequences can be seen primarily in Kraków and Wrocław. The destruction of the city by fire, the atmosphere of constant threat of a Tatar invasion after the spectacular defeat of Rus’ and the echoes of the two-year stay of nomads on the Pannonian Plain, disastrous for Hungary, followed by

arduous fights with the princes of Greater Poland during the War of the Babenberg inheritance (1246–1278) [50], and also the unfortunate Austrian expedition in 1260, when other nomads – Polovtsians – in the battle of Staatz and Laa, literally under the noses of the Silesian princes coming to the rescue, annihilated a select unit of veterans of the fights in Styria [50], and another, exceptionally bloody Tatar invasion of Poland in the years 1259–1260 must have influenced the decision to build expensive brick fortifications in Wrocław. It is possible that this concept appeared shortly after the Wrocław rally in 1254, during which decisions were made to build new strongholds – castles, probably during the modernization of the castle fortifications on Ostrów Tumski. Closing the entire settlement at that time with a permanent defensive perimeter was probably not taken into account, especially within the boundaries of the “moat of the first foundation”. The course of the defensive perimeter erected at that time was probably optimal from the point of view of the economic interests of the left-bank city and protected its central, densely built-up part with the Market Square and the city parishes. However, it harmed the interests of other social (ethnic?) groups. It did not take into account settlement centers with churches of St. Mary of Egypt, Saint Maurice and Saint Nicholas, belonging to the former early urban agglomeration, and also significantly disturbed the cemetery at the church of St. Wojciech and brick buildings at the Oławska Gate. Soon the belt of fortifications was widened, creating in places a triple defensive perimeter with two moats. Although cut off in this way from the city, its former inhabitants were restored to the rights of townspeople in 1261, and the release of the waters of Oława into the city moat in 1291 – done hastily during the succession struggles after the death of Henryk IV Probus – sealed the fate of the original urban-planning concept and legal status of Wrocław and for many years influenced the further development of the “outer city”, in the fiscal sense divided into units separate from the rest of the Old Town: the Brewers’ Quarter and the Walloon Quarter. This fact was not changed by the short existence of the internal defensive perimeter, only a few dozen years old, which was quickly replaced in the military sense by external fortifications from 1299–1358, soon surrounded by townspeople’s houses and crossed by numerous gates. The inner city moat was filled only in the years 1863–1865, and the buildings determined by the course of the fortifications disappeared largely as a result of war damage after 1945, giving way to the modern wide communication routes of Kazimierza Wielkiego Street, which are in fact a permanent trace of events from several hundred years ago.

Summary

Previous literature has not paid much attention to the issue of the boundaries of a medieval city, usually identifying it with the issues of city ramparts and fortifications. The borders, which were a derivative of the progressive stratification of the settlement space in medieval Silesia, were drawn

⁶ Kostomłoty may have been founded earlier, but no document confirming this has survived. This fact would be indirectly confirmed by the permission of Prince Henry III the White for the Premonstratensians from the Abbey of St. Vincent (Wincenty) in Olbin to found the village of Górzec near Strzelin and Psie Pole [13] under German law in 1252, with the same rights as the peasants in Kostomłoty (quod habet agricole in Costembloth/Costimlot).

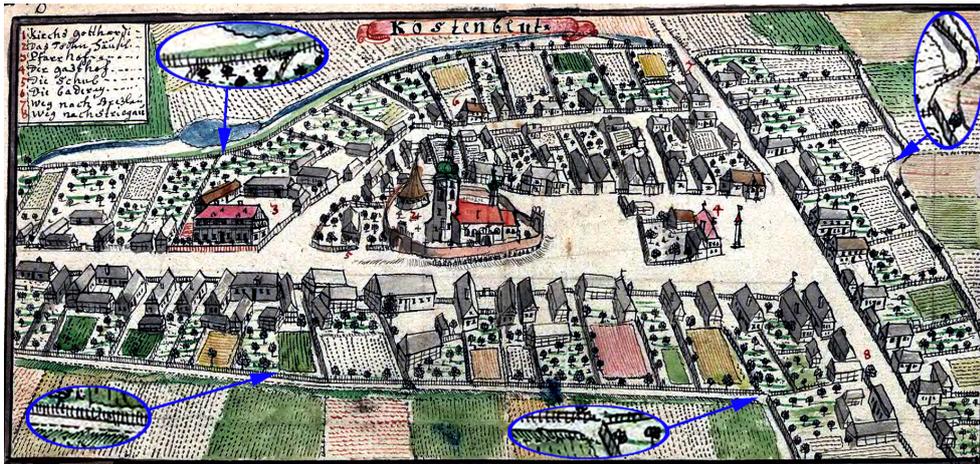


Fig. 6. Kostomłoty.

The enlarged view shows selected places indicating the boundary of the charter village as well as the boundaries of the plots in the form of a fence (source: [48])

II. 6. Kostomłoty.

W powiększeniu widoczne wybrane miejsca uwidaczniające granicę lokacyjnej wsi, jak i granice działek w postaci płotu (źródło: [48])

with the participation of rulers in the 12th–13th centuries, which was reflected in the content of documents issued on this occasion. In recent years, spectacular discoveries have been made more and more often, showing an evolutionary transition from the strip-like, highly conventional nature of early medieval borders to linear delimitations typical of the late and declining Middle Ages (*pomerium*, *fossata*). In the case of Wrocław, the fortifications of individual elements of the early medieval Wrocław agglomeration, which had different owners, remain an open research problem, although their existence cannot be questioned today. In turn, marking the boundaries of the chartered city in the form of a rampart and moat had primarily legal and administrative significance and, in this sense, separated the area endowed

with immunity from the space covered by princely law and its burdens. In Wrocław, however, the flood-proof and later defensive nature of the newly built structures was at least as important. Discoveries and observations made in Głogów, Namysłów, Kostomłoty, Świerzawa and Sobótka convince us that marking the boundaries of towns and villages in the settlement space of Silesia during the *melioratio terrae* times was an important aspect of the surveyors' activities and probably took place at the stage of establishing a new center. It is extremely difficult to comment on the symbolic meanings of *limitatio* in the Middle Ages, although the way in which Prince Bolko I the Strict broke the taboo of Wrocław's city walls in 1297 proves that it was perfectly understood at that time.

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Streszczenie

Zagadnienie limitatio we wczesnej urbanistyce śląskiej

Przemiany ekonomiczno-prawne zachodzące na Śląsku w czasach *melioratio terrae* przyniosły niewątpliwie rewolucję w krajobrazie kulturowym. Pojęcie granicy w niezurbanizowanej przestrzeni wczesnego średniowiecza miało zupełnie inny wymiar niż jego lokacyjny odpowiednik. Szybko postępująca akcja kolonizacyjna i rozwój wielkiej klasztornej własności ziemskiej spowodowały znaczne zagęszczenie sieci osadniczej, a także zmianę struktury własnościowej samej ziemi, coraz częściej wyposażonej w immunitet. Granice – dotąd o niewyraźnym, pasowym charakterze – coraz częściej przybierały liniowy, ściśle określony przebieg. Punktem kulminacyjnym tego procesu było wytyczenie granic miasta lokacyjnego (*fossata*), wkrótce utrwalonych przez obwarowania miejskie.

Praca stanowi próbę zarysowania problematyki nowszych badań nad zagadnieniem granic miasta średniowiecznego, będących wynikiem postępującej stratyfikacji przestrzeni osadniczej na Śląsku. Zaprezentowane studium przypadku miało za zadanie zwrócić uwagę na nowe, zaskakujące odkrycia, ukazujące ewolucyjne przejście od pasowego, mocno umownego charakteru wczesnośredniowiecznych granic, do delimitacji liniowych, typowych dla późnego i schyłkowego średniowiecza. Zaprezentowany szkic opiera się na wynikach nowszych badań archeologiczno-architektonicznych prowadzonych w miastach śląskich, analizach źródeł historycznych oraz ikonograficznych. Stanowi pierwszą część cyklu poświęconego stratyfikacji przestrzeni miejskiej w średniowieczu.

W dalszym ciągu otwartym problemem badawczym pozostają umocnienia poszczególnych członów wczesnośredniowiecznej aglomeracji wrocławskiej, mających różnych właścicieli, choć dziś już nie można zakwestionować ich istnienia. Z kolei wyznaczenie granic miasta lokacyjnego w postaci wału i fosy miało znaczenie przede wszystkim administracyjno-prawne i w tym sensie oddzielało teren obdarzony immunitetem od przestrzeni objętej prawem książęcym i jego ciężarami. W wypadku Wrocławia co najmniej tak samo ważny był jednak charakter przeciwpowodziowy, a później obronny nowo powstałych struktur.

Słowa kluczowe: Śląsk, Wrocław, średniowiecze, archeologia, architektura, urbanistyka, granica miasta