

STREET, SQUARE AND CEMETERY IN MEDIEVAL AND MODERN DROHICZYN

Contemporary town of Drohiczyn, situated on a bank of the river Bug in Podlaskie Voivodship (eastern part of Poland) is a small town with population of 2.000. Its current importance is just a reflection of its past glory. The town was probably founded in the 1st half of the 11th century by Yaroslav I the Wise, Prince of Kiev, as a bordering Russ stronghold. It was built on the site of a prior early medieval “tribal” settlement (7th–10th centuries)¹. Soon it gained a considerable importance as a trading center and became the subject of rivalry of Russ and Masovian princes. For a few years, it was a seat of the Dobrzyń Knights². In 1255, the coronation of the first king of Kievan Russ – Daniel of Galicia, celebrated by a papal legate, Opison, took place in Drohiczyn. In the 14th century, it became a part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In sources from 1409 a vogt in Drohiczyn appeared what probably is a trace of the oldest location of the town, made by Masovian princes (Alexandrowicz 1964, p. 144–145; Maroszek 1976, p. 96). In 1498 Aleksander Jagiełłończyk, Duke of Lithuania located Drohiczyn on the Magdeburg Law. In the beginning of the 16th century, it became the capital of Podlaskie Voivodship, a part of the Kingdom of Poland since 1569. Since the mid-17th century, Drohiczyn suffered a slow de-

cline. During The Second Northern War passages of Swedish and especially Transylvanian troops by Rákóczi caused destruction and considerable depopulation of the town (see Filonik 1965; Weremiej 1938, p. 73–83). However, it was in the 2nd half of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th century, when a number of impressive Baroque buildings were erected in Drohiczyn, including: St Mary’s church with Franciscan monastery (raised on the site of older, 15th century church), a massive complex of Jesuit college and monastery (after dissolution of the Society of Jesus the complex was succeeded by Piarists) with the Holy Trinity church (built in the place of a preceding parish church), and the church and monastery of Benedictine Sisters (Kałamajska-Saeed 1996; Maroszek, Postołowicz 1986). The decline of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth sealed the process of the town’s collapse. The Bug river became a borderline between Prussian and Russian parts (and subsequently between Imperial Russia and “Congress Kingdom”), splitting the town into two parts: northern (so-called Drohiczyn Lacki – Polish Drohiczyn – contemporary town) and southern (s.c. Drohiczyn Ruski – Russ Drohiczyn – today in decline).

The beginnings of archaeological recognition of Drohiczyn reach the 19th century. Realization of regular, professional researches is, however, connected with a campaign led by the National Museum of Archaeology in Warsaw, managed by Krystyna Musianowicz in the years 1954–1957 and in 1978 (Musianowicz 1955; 1956; 1957; Musianowicz et al. 1957; Musianowicz et al. 1957a). Results of the research, concerning early medieval settlement centre, were later published (Musianowicz 1969). Following research actions undertaken in Drohiczyn also concentrated on issues connected with the func-

¹ Excavations of K. Musianowicz revealed two settlement sites from this early period so-called Sowa and Kozarówka. Moreover, around Drohiczyn numerous barrows referring to this settlement phase were registered (Musianowicz, Walicka-Kempisty 1957a, p. 39–42; Musianowicz 1966; Kalaga 2001; Skrzyńska 2001; 2004).

² Problems of rise and fall of the Dobrzyń Knights have been recently discussed by M. Starnawska (1999, p. 107–112). There further on circumstances of the settlement of the convent in Drohiczyn.

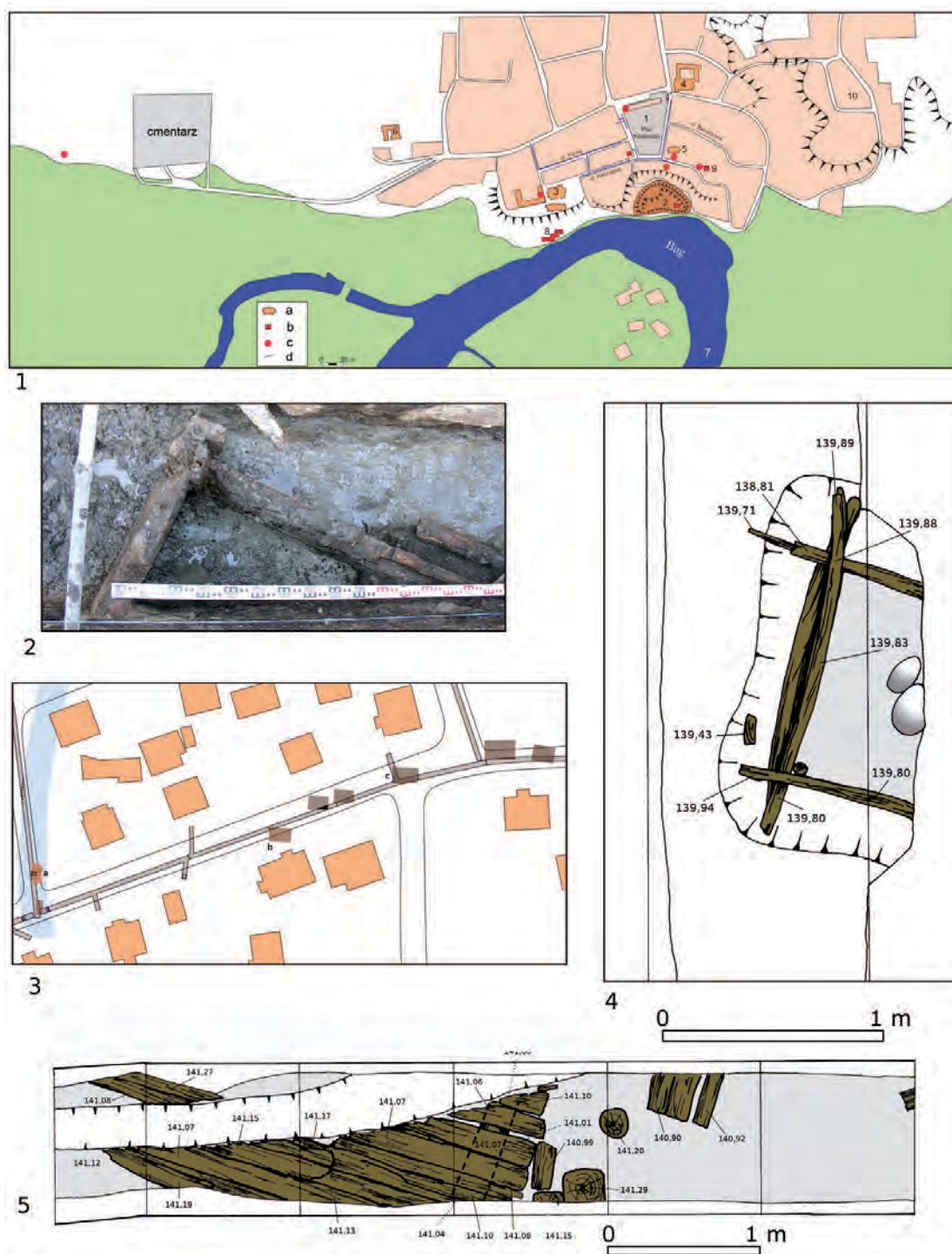


Fig. 1.1. Drohiczyń: plan of historic town centre with marked areas of archaeological excavations; a – sacral buildings; b – archaeological trenches up to 1996; c – archaeological trenches up to 1996 with no precise localisation; d – lines of trenches and supervisions from 2006; 1 – Kościuszków Square – market place; 2 – Castle Hill – stronghold; 3 – the Holy Trinity cathedral – post-Jesuit monastery complex; 4 – the Holy Virgin church – post-Franciscan monastery complex; 5 – Orthodox church of St Nicolas; 6 – the All Saints church – Benedictine Sisters cloister; 7 – Russian Side – declined Orthodox monastery of St Spas; 8 – meadows on the river Bug – area of so-called western settlement; 9 – former archaeological base of the Museum of Podlasie – area of so-called eastern settlement; 10 – Kramczewska Hill – declined Orthodox Nagorny Monastery (Orthodox churches of the Holy Trinity and St Barbara). Drawing J. Sikora

Fig. 1.2. Drohiczyń, Kościelna Street. Relics of a cellar of a wooden building. Photo J. Sikora

Fig. 1.3. Drohiczyń, Kościelna Street. Course of research trenches from 2006 with marked reconstructed outlines of buildings from the 16th–17th centuries; a – location of the object shown in fig. 1.4; b – location of the object shown in fig. 1.2; c – location of the object shown in fig. 1.5. Drawing J. Sikora

Fig. 1.4. Drohiczyń, Jagiełło Street. Relics of a wooden well. Drawing J. Sikora

Fig. 1.5. Drohiczyń, Kościuszków Square. Relics of a wooden building. Drawing J. Sikora

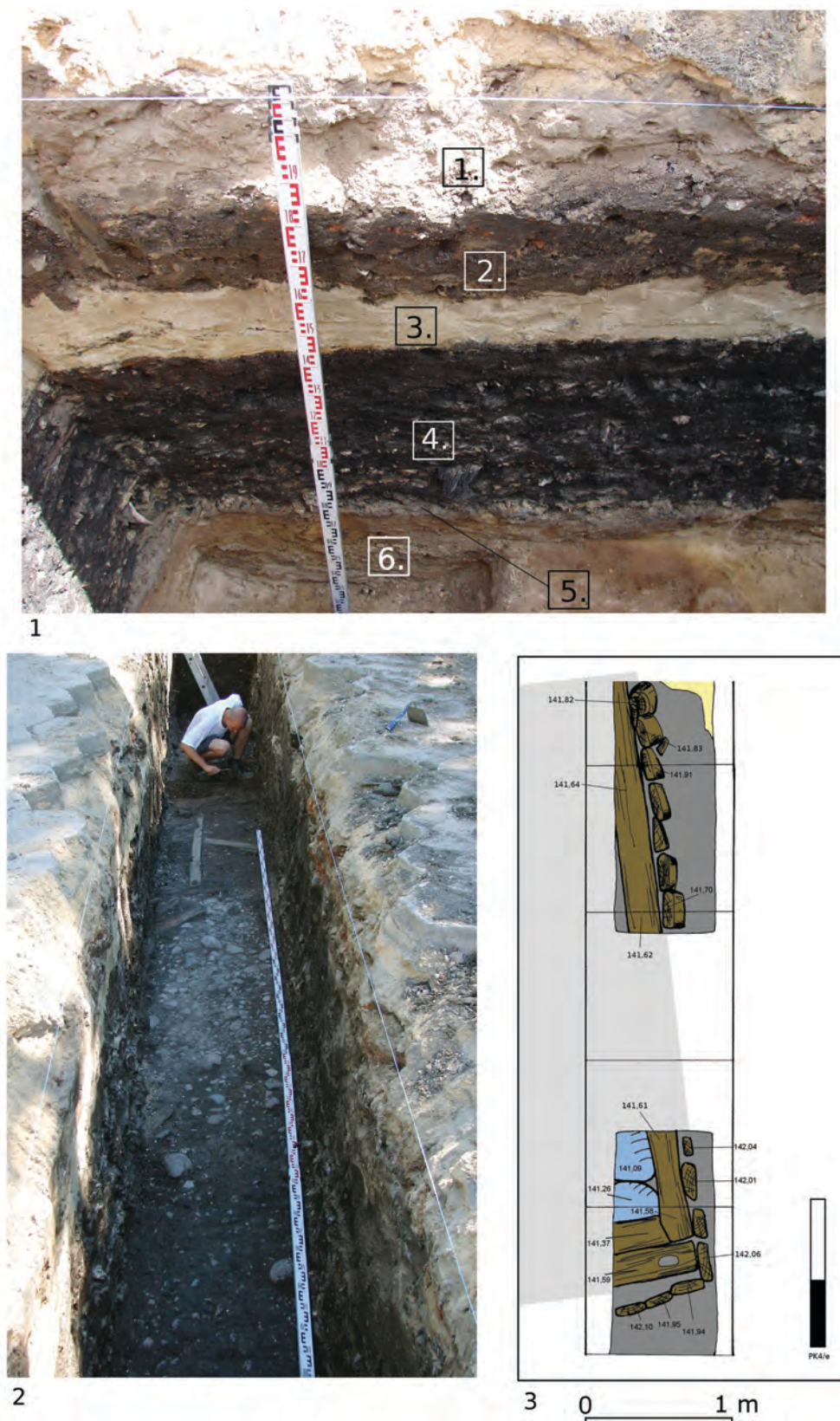


Fig. 2.1. Drohiczyn, Kościuszko Square. Arrangement of layers in the north-east part of the Square; 1 – levelling layers and sub-crust of the street surface – 20th century; 2 – nivellation-levelling layer – 20th century; 3 – levelling layer – 20th century;

4 – organic matter layers divided by street strewing – 15th–18th centuries; 5 – loose stone paving on sandy-clayey sub-crust – surface of the market square or street adjoining to the market square – 15th century; 6 – rock-bed. Photo J. Sikora

Fig. 2.2. Drohiczyn, Kościuszko Square. Surface of loose stone paving in the north-east part of the Square. Photo J. Sikora

Fig. 2.3. Drohiczyn, Kościuszko Square. Relic of a cellar of a wooden building in the south-east part of the Square.

Drawing J. Sikora

tioning of pre-location town or were of limited scale and dictated by conservator's reasons. As early as in 1959, J. Jaskanis conducted supervision research in the south-west part of Kościuszko Square that is on former market square, revealing early medieval buildings³. The following rescue researches were conducted by K. Bieńkowska, K. Burek and J. Maciejczuk on behalf of the Museum in Białystok in the years 1980 and 1990⁴. During several seasons, in the years 1984–1985, 1987–1988 and 1990–1991 stationary and rescue archaeological excavations in Drohiczyń were carried out by A. Piotrowski from the National Museum of Archaeology in Warsaw, who partly published the results of them in preliminary reports (Piotrowski 1991; 1993; 2004)⁵. Essential for reconstruction of the spatial arrangement of the early medieval Drohiczyń were excavations of a skeletal cemetery conducted in the years 1980–1981 by L. Pawlata (1991).

In 2006, in connection with foundation of piping installation in Drohiczyń, a need to conduct wide-scale rescue archaeological excavations appeared. They were both of supervision and regular excavation research character. Altogether, narrow, 1-metre wide trenches (prepared for the installation) 607.5 m long and c. 1.5 to 4.25 m deep were explored. Supervisions covered a row of trenches of total length of c. 340 m and the depth of up to 2 m. They ran along Jana z Drohiczyńa and Farna Streets (supervisions), Jagiełły, Kościelna, Mazowiecka Streets as well as east, west and south frontage of Kościuszko Square (research trenches). This also allowed obtaining fundamental knowledge on cultural stratigraphy in considerable part of the historical heart of the town and a collection of moveable archaeological sources, which illustrate the changing character of material culture of its inhabitants (Andrzejewski, Sikora 2006). The excavations also allowed to make numerous observations concerning functioning of the centre and changes of its structure.

Excavations hitherto conducted in Drohiczyń did not allow identifying structures, which may unmistakably be interpreted as communication path. In the

south part of Kościuszko Square, during the research from 2006, structures of wooden laths, placed one by another were successfully identified in stratigraphic situation indicating the early medieval chronology (12th–13th centuries). Unfortunately, not large area of the trenches did not allow to state univocally whether we deal with wooden streets surface or rather with floors of wooden buildings.

Negative significance for problems of recognition of communication paths of medieval and early modern-times Drohiczyń had observations made in the run of contemporary Kościelna Street, coming out from the south-west corner of Kościuszko Square towards the gate leading to the post-Jesuit complex. On the depth of 0.5–1.5 m from the contemporary street surface, remains of numerous wooden buildings were registered, chronology of which may be referred to the 15th–17th centuries. In case of part of them, only their plunged cellar parts preserved, other remained in form of strongly destroyed and spread pits. In better preserved objects, we managed to confirm construction with short horizontal logs cut into wedge-shape at either end are inserted into groves cut into vertical posts to raise cellar walls stone-covered and timber floors. What is important is that all buildings, although probably not contemporary, had their walls oriented on the same axis east-west, transverse in relation to the axis of contemporary Kościelna Street. The course of this street is confirmed by cartographic sources since the beginnings of the 19th century⁶. Discussed relics of buildings registered in the street's run allow to put forward a hypothesis that this communication path did not exist in medieval and early modern urban arrangement of Drohiczyń or it ran in a different place and had a bit different orientation. Also relics of buildings and pits, connected with pre-location town indicate orientation different from the run of Kościelna Street, although because of the state of preservation it is sometimes difficult to estimate. Undoubtedly, transversely to the line of the contemporary street, ran an axis of a vast wooden building, in which rich archaeological material occurred (fragments of amphoras imported from the territory of cultural influences of the Byzantine Empire, a fragment of a glass vessel, elements of horse trappings and an antler object interpreted

³ Documentation of these excavations is stored in the archives of the Museum of Podlasie in Białystok under a reference number D/46.

⁴ Results of the research have not been published yet. The documentation is in the archives of the Museum of Podlasie and Office of Protection of Monuments in Białystok.

⁵ A. Piotrowski carried out excavations both in the south part of Kościuszko Square and on the area of so-called west settlement, on the Bug river. On the latter site, in season 1984, the works took place under supervision of L. Długopolska.

⁶ Such a course of the run of Kościelna Street is documented by the oldest preserved plan of Drohiczyń from about 1810, kept in the Library of the Vilnius University. Reproduction of the plan was published on the cover of a journal „Białostoczczyzna” 2/54 from 1999.

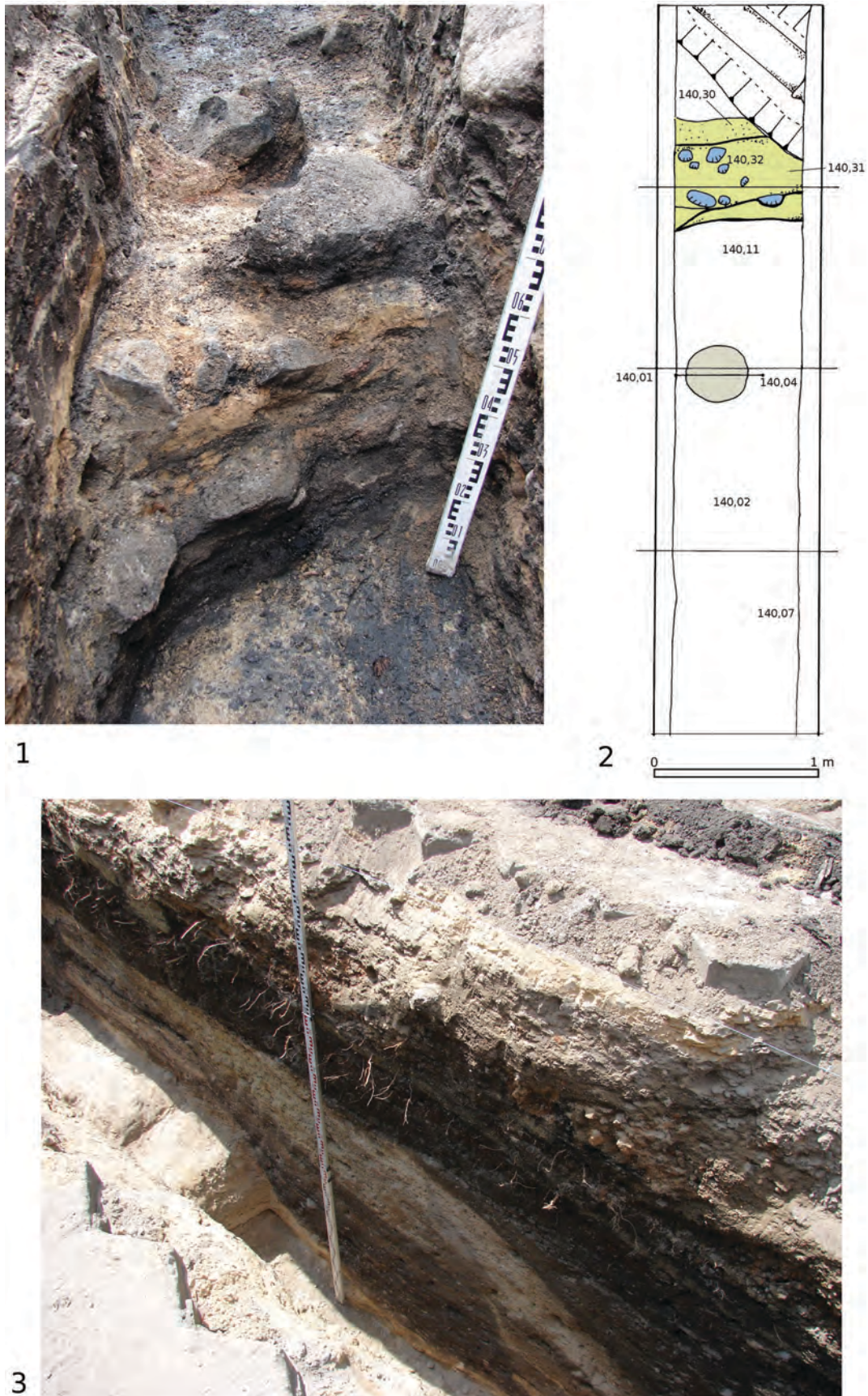


Fig. 3.1. Drohiczyn, Kościelna Street. Relic of a foundation of a wooden building – 12th–13th centuries. Photo J. Sikora
 Fig. 3.2. Drohiczyn, Kościelna Street. Relic of a foundation of a wooden building – 12th–13th centuries. Drawing J. Sikora
 Fig. 3.3. Drohiczyn, Kościuszko Square. Western cross-section of the trench – the south slope of the ditch-moat.
 Photo J. Sikora

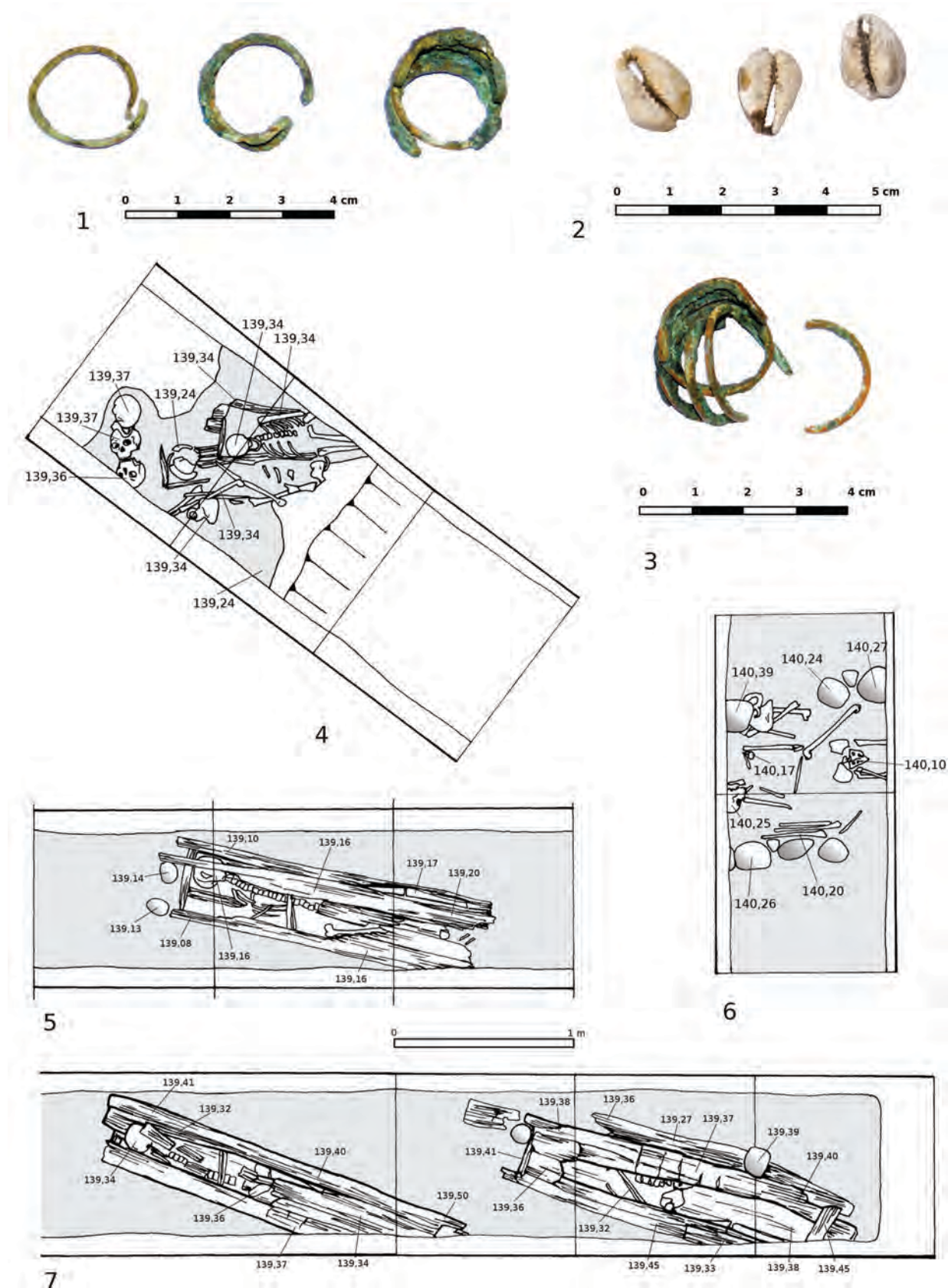


Fig. 4.1–3. Drohiczyń, Kościuszko Square. Equipment of grave 21. Photo J. Sikora

Fig. 4.4. Drohiczyń, Kościuszko Square. Multi-layered burials in trench M2. Drawing J. Sikora

Fig. 4.5. Drohiczyń, Kościuszko Square. Grave 39. Drawing J. Sikora

Fig. 4.6. Drohiczyń, Kościuszko Square. Grave 22/23 with partly preserved stone kerb. Drawing J. Sikora

Fig. 4.7. Drohiczyń, Kościuszko Square. Graves 36, 37. Drawing J. Sikora

as an tip of a whip⁷). Probably it should be seen as a manor house. Also a building revealed during archaeological supervision in 1959 carried out by J. Jaskanis had a different orientation.

Excavations from 2006 also proved that located between Kościelna and Farna Streets Jagiełło Street does not have long traditions of functioning in urban space of the town. The present run of this communication path is a result of measurement from the 2nd half of the 20th century. However, similar path was marked on the above mentioned plan from about 1810. In the Middle Ages an imposing ditch-moat functioned there. In the 16th–17th centuries on the filling of this structure, numerous objects were raised, including a framework well and several wooden buildings, in which modern material occurred.

On the area of present-day Kościuszko Square, identified with historic town's market square (see Kałamajska – Saeed 1996, p. 8), limited research actions were conducted in the years 1989 and 1996 (accordingly in north-west and north-east part of the Square)⁸. In connection with the results of observations from 2006, they allow to make many interesting observations concerning transformations of urban structure of the town.

The research showed considerable levelling of historical cultural layers in the north-west part of Kościuszko Square. Mixed levels, of late modern-times chronology, and slight thickness were almost exclusively observed here. Only bottom part of the pits occurred beneath them, which were connected with the Early Middle Ages. Moreover, in the trenches explored in 2006, structures interpreted as traces of filled up vast ditches (moats) on the axis almost west–east. The northern ditch was c. 7 m wide and had unrecognized depth exceeding 2 m (in this part the trench was not explored to the rock-bed because of considerable inflow of ground-water). The southern ditch was only registered fragmentarily, in the south part of the excavation unit. The stated width exceeded 7 m, while the depth – 2.5 m. It is worth noticing that on the 19th century copy of the plan of Drohiczyn from 1789 in this area there are no town buildings, whereas a garden or meadow is present (Siemienczuk 1999, p. 179)⁹.

More developed archaeological stratigraphy was registered in trenches localised along the eastern frontage of the Square. The state of preservation of cultural layers here was definitely better. In the north part of an excavation unit, the presence of cultural layers was registered, which, on the grounds of contained material, may be referred to the decline of the late Middle Ages and modern times. Four layers of organic matter separated by loose wooden constructions made of fascine, secondarily used wooden fragments and numerous organic fragments, including refuse and semi-finished products of shoemaker craft were observed¹⁰. Clearly, Drohiczyn's townspeople in this way tried to manage with permanently increasing in this place muddy soil. The lowest registered usable level of the square was of different character: it was formed by loose pavement of small erratic stones sometimes supplemented with secondarily used fragments of wood (coming from older, pulled down constructions). It was laid on thin sand and clayey sub-crust. Below, rock-bed layers and single pits with early medieval material were registered. In the trenches from 1996 located a bit to the west of the line of trenches from 2006, remains of burnt wooden, cellared building were discovered¹¹.

Stratigraphical situation in the south part of Kościuszko Square differed from the described above. Near Ratuszowa Street, the presence of two buildings was registered: a wooden one of framework construction with well preserved pavement of erratic stones making a floor and palisade walls of lathing and a building partly covering the previous, built of bricks and erratic stones. The younger building should be referred to the 18th century. The older probably comes from the 16th–17th centuries. Part of walls of the older construction was erected on the filling of a vast ditch, over 11 m wide and of unknown depth (exploration was stopped because of safety reasons at the depth of 4.25 m from the surface). The ditch was dug into older overdepth of unknown width (exceeding 5 m), the bottom of

stored in the archives of the Institute of Material History of Russian Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg. The drawing is most probably made by A.P. Awenarius.

⁷ Object in shape of a bird of prey has many analogies in the circle of the Russian and nomadic cultures, see Kokowscy 2003.

⁸ Documentation of the excavations is stored in archives of the Museum of Podlasie in Białystok.

⁹ It is not known what the reliability of this plan is. H. Siemienczuk described it as a work of an unknown author,

¹⁰ What is interesting, with this considerable amount of shoemaker's refuse, information from written sources indicating popularity of this job in Drohiczyn corresponds. In 1580, there were as many as 33 shoemakers who provided the local market of Podlasie and exported their products to Prussia. According to Franciscan tradition, the foundation of material existence of the Drohiczyn convent was a donation of a rich shoemaker (Maroszek 1976, 134; 1999, 12).

¹¹ Excavations by K. Bieńkowska from the Museum of Podlasie in Białystok.

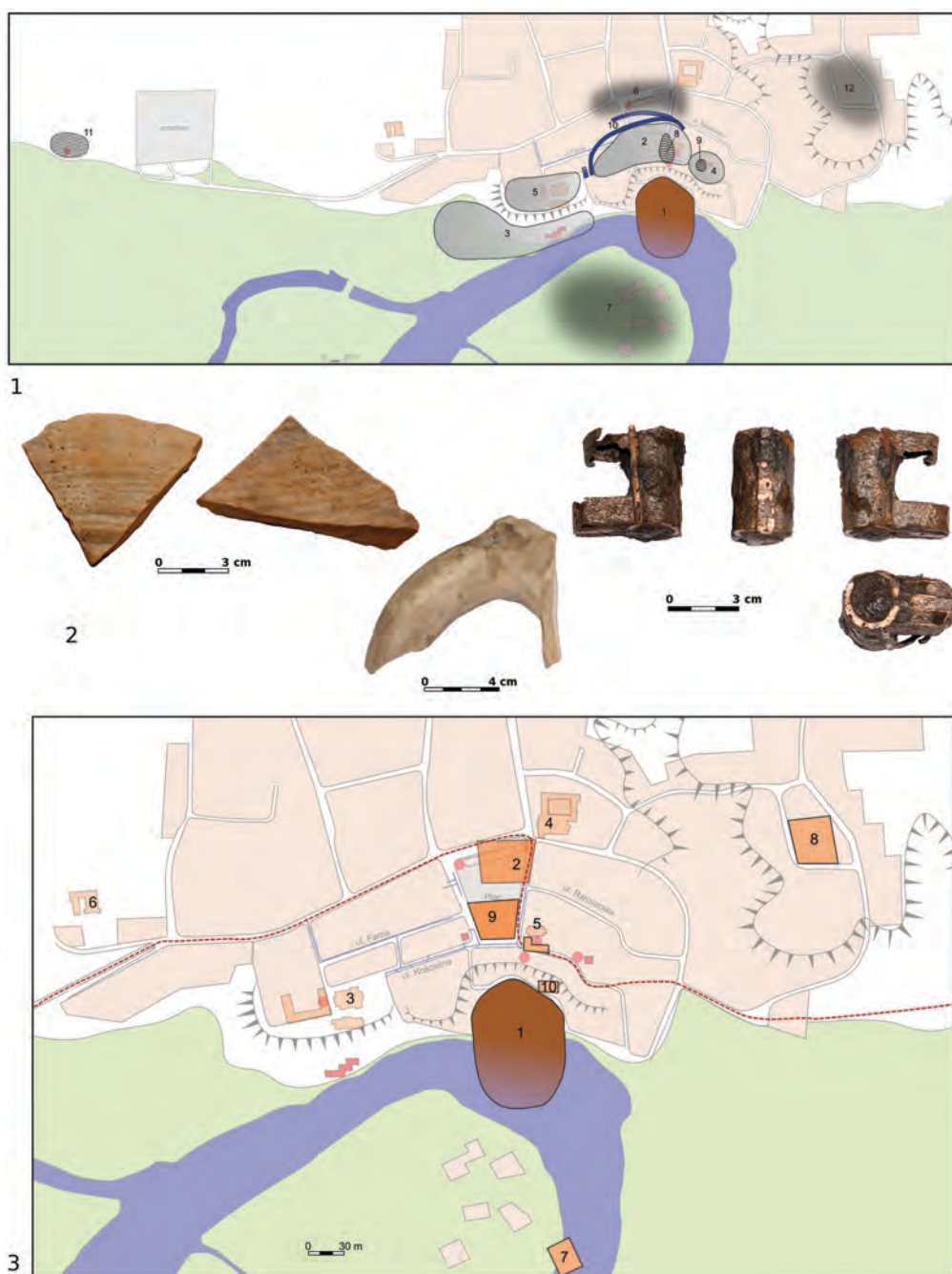


Fig. 5.1. Drohiczyn. Reconstruction of spatial arrangement of the pre-location town; 1 – stronghold with Orthodox church of the Mother of God; 2 – settlement on the area of historic town centre (11th–15th centuries); 3 – so-called west settlement (11th–13th centuries); 4 – so-called east settlement (11th–13th centuries); 5 – settlement in the area of later Jesuit monastery complex, since the 14th century with the parish church of the Holy Trinity; 6 – sparse pre-location settlement (since the 11th century), since the 15th century with the Franciscan monastery (?); 7 – Russian Side with monastery of St Spas (since 13th century?; approximate localisation); 8 – cemetery in the area of later Orthodox church of St Nicolas; 9 – cemetery in the area of former archaeological base of the Museum of Podlasie; 10 – moats; 11 – cemetery in the area of modern municipal cemetery (11th–13th centuries); 12 – traces of the settlement on the so-called Kramczewska Góra (place of later Nagorny Monastery). Drawing J. Sikora

Fig. 5.2. Drohiczyn. Fragments of amphoras and a padlock from levels of the 12th–13th centuries. Photo J. Sikora

Fig. 5.3. Drohiczyn. Reconstruction of spatial arrangement of the location town, 16th–17th centuries: 1 – starost's castle; 2 – suggested location of the market square of the location town (approximate extent); 3 – the Holy Trinity church – since 1660 Jesuits monastery; 4 – St Mary church – Franciscan monastery (cemetery adjoining to the church confirmed archaeologically); 5 – Orthodox church of St Nicolas – Basilian monastery (cemetery adjoining to the church archaeologically confirmed); 6 – the Holy Trinity church – Benedictine Sisters cloister; 7 – monastery of St Spas on Russian Side (approximate localisation); 8 – Nagorny Monastery (approximate localisation); 9 – localisation of market square of the location town on the grounds of the 19th century copy of the plan from 1789; 10 – approximate localisation of the Orthodox church of the Mother of God (in so-called ravine). Drawing J. Sikora

which was not registered. The younger ditch was filled up with layers of dark humus containing late medieval material. The layers connected with the older overdepth only contained material from the 12th–13th centuries.

In the trenches localised rather towards the south, along the south and east frontages of the Square, the presence of several wooden buildings including one with paved cellar was stated. In its filling, destructs of tile stove were registered, which may be referred to the 17th century. Moreover, built of bricks late modern-times cellar and a wall of another building of erratic stones on limestone mortar were discovered. The buildings probably should be connected with the Basilian cloister existing in this part of the Square. Under the late medieval and modern layers in this part of Kościuszko Square occurred layers with early medieval material of thickness exceeding 2 m, with well-preserved (although difficult in interpretation because of a small area of observation) wooden constructions.

Moreover, in the south-east part of Kościuszko Square during the excavations in 2006 remains of skeletal cemetery were identified. Totally, 49 burials were revealed, part of which was destroyed by later human activity. Great majority of the burials did not contain any equipment. All well-preserved skeletons were oriented on axis west–east with head towards the west, on their backs. Differences only concerned disposition of hands, which may have been straight along the torso or placed on pelvis (one or both hands). A big part of the burials was deposited in wooden coffins and kerbs (made without the use of nails or fixtures). Multi-layer occurrence of part of the burials was stated, especially in the south part of the researched area what usually characterizes cemeteries adjacent to a church. These features of funeral rites and the location of the cemetery in the area of modern times Orthodox church of St Nicolas would suggest its late chronology. Only the discovery of grave 21 equipped with multi-coil temple bows and a necklace consisting of two silver beads, 80 glass ones, one made of animal tooth and five shells forced to revise the dating¹². At present,

we assume that the cemetery may have had chronology reaching the 12th–13th centuries and probably was in use till modern times.

Archaeological researches bring information on following cemeteries on the area of Drohiczyn. In the years 1980–1981 in the west part of the town, behind the present-day parish cemetery excavations were carried out, during which early medieval skeletal cemetery was discovered. L. Pawlata defined its chronology to the 12th–13th centuries (Pawlata 1991) although earlier dating can not be excluded¹³. More difficult is to determine chronology of three cremation cemeteries with burial mounds located in the vicinity of Drohiczyn. Some of mounds are known only from archival notes and does not exist today. Archaeological excavations of two of still preserved mounds allowed to specify chronology of one of the burials to the 11th century (Skrzyńska 2004, p. 292–293). Later, as late as modern are two burials discovered in the run of the street, in the north-east part of Kościuszko Square in 1996. They should be probably connected with a cemetery adjoining to a church around the Franciscan complex.

On the grounds of the mentioned observations and older assignments, attempts to define the extent and shape of the early medieval settlement in Drohiczyn may be made. Its centre was a poorly preserved and only in elementary range excavated stronghold, which probably was formed about the half of the 11th century as a result of a settlement action of Russ princes. Around the stronghold open settlement developed: so-called western settlement on the Bug river, investigated by K. Musianowicz and eastern settlement (to the north-east of the stronghold). The entire south part of the present Kościuszko Square in the 12th–13th centuries was exposed to intensive settlement processes. It was here where one of the main settlements of pre-location settlement complex was placed, located immediately on the north of the stronghold, divided from it by a deep ravine and probably connected with a concentration called by K. Musianowicz as the eastern settlement. Many moveable sources confirm a high status of people living here¹⁴. Probably for protection of this settlement segment vast ditches-moats

¹² Grave pits were not clearly visible on the dark humus into which they were dug. However, only ceramic material with early medieval features was found in them. One of the graves (22) kept partly destroyed kerb of big erratic stones. It is worth adding that in 1996 during supervisions carried out in the area of located on the south-east of Kościuszko Square terrain base of Archaeological Department of the Museum of Podlasie another, richly equipped early medieval burial was discovered.

¹³ J. Kalaga suggested earlier, even the 11th century chronology of the discovered there grave assemblages (Kalaga 2001, p. 146).

¹⁴ This number includes glass bracelets of cobalt glass known from numerous sites from Byelorussia, Ukraine and Russia, fragments of Byzantine amphoras, armament elements (a specimen of a big knife, a spur) or a brass-plated padlock.

were dug registered in the trenches in the north part of the Square, in the course of Jagiello Street and in the west part of Kościelna Street. What draws attention is considerable sizes of these constructions: the ditch registered in the east part of Kościuszko Square was over 11 m (younger phase), in the west part of Kościelna Street as many as 16 m. The ditch discovered in Kościuszko Square was two-phase one – the younger phase included late medieval material, the older exclusively from the 12th–13th centuries. It is worth adding that traces of analogous moat were registered during rescue research conducted in 1993 by J. Maciejczuk. Ditch observed on the length of 11 m, in the area of the west wing of the post-Jesuit complex was 3 m wide and up to 1.5 m deep. It probably was only the bottom part of the object, which was filled up as early as in the early Middle Ages (material from the 12th–13th centuries was registered) and destroyed while building of a Baroque monastery. The picture of the settlement was completed by hitherto unexcavated settlement on Russ Side and in the area of so-called Kramczewska Hill¹⁵. On the grounds of written sources we may assume the existence of the Orthodox church of the Mother of God and probably a prince's palace on the stronghold (Auch, Skrzyńska-Jankowska 2004; see remarks of L. Kajzer 2006, p. 660–661). Another Orthodox church was probably in the south part of Kościuszko Square, in the area of discovered there skeletal cemetery and in place of contemporary Orthodox church of St Nicolas. Such an early functioning of the Orthodox church there would well explain the existence of the skeletal cemetery in the very centre of strongly urbanized area of the pre-location town. The problems need further research, mainly terrain ones, focused on recognition of possible relics of such a temple.

¹⁵ See: Musianowicz 1969, p. 9–10. The beginnings of the monastery of St Spas on the Russ Side are not clear. It has been mentioned since the 16th century but its beginnings may be considerably earlier, may be even the 13th century (Kałamajska-Saeed 1996, p. VII, 8; Maroszek, Postołowicz 1986, p. 14; Siemienczuk 1998; 1999; Sosna 2000, p. 300). In the end of the 14th century, probably parallelly with the establishing of a parish church of the Holy Trinity, Lithuanian princes founded the Orthodox church of the Holy Trinity, which later was the main temple of so-called Nagorny Monastery on the right river bank. In 1494 it was salaried by Aleksander Jagiellończyk (Kałamajska-Saeed 1996, p. VII–XIX, 8; Maroszek, Postołowicz 1986, p. 13; Siemienczuk 1999; Sosna 2000, p. 296–297). Since the 16th century a filial Orthodox church of St Barbara existed there. Both building were wooden.

It is not clear where the location town's market square was delimited or if even the spatial arrangement of the town was changed while the location. The problem is bigger because we know about two locations of Drohiczyn mentioned above. According to the location privilege from 1498, in the market square butcher's stalls, cloth-shaery, wax-melting place, scales and town hall were to appear as the result (Alexandrowicz 1964, Maroszek 1999, p. 6–10; Weremiej 1938, p. 59–63)¹⁶. Results of the research from 2006 suggest that, probably, to the north of the moats line, in the area where the surface of loose pavement was registered and later characteristic levels of hardening of the increasing organic matter, appeared the market square of an area smaller than today's Kościuszko Square. In that time, the south part of the present-day Square was covered with buildings, relics of which were described above. Another interpretation is also possible, which seems to be supported by an analysis of the mentioned plan from 1789. It suggests that the market square was situated in the south part of the Square. The plan even shows quite loose block of buildings of the north frontage. Discovered in 2006 surface of loose pavement would be situated in the line of the wide street, coming from the market square towards the Franciscan monastery, around which one of the Drohiczyn's cemeteries spread¹⁷. At that time, parallelly functioned succeeding cemeteries around Catholic and Orthodox churches. In the 16th century a bridge temporarily functioned in Drohiczyn, whereas permanently a ferry ford and of course river port as well as a custom-house (Maroszek 1999, p. 8–9). Probably, as late as in the 18th century, in connection with

¹⁶ According to S. Alexandrowicz (1964, p. 147) location of towns of Podlasie usually did not involve changes in spatial structure. Two scenarios should be considered: 1) maybe the earliest location was based on a part of the centre coming within a municipal law (see: Kałamajska-Saeed 1996, p. 6–8). The Magdeburg law granted by Aleksander Jagiellończyk to the whole town brought reorganization of the space. 2) Probably, also the older location was connected with the inflow of settlers from Masovia and measurement of the market square. Specificity of this new centre may have led to creation of the name Drohiczyn Lacki as opposed to Russian Drohiczyn unchanged in its spatial shape on the left bank of the Bug river and still dwelled by Ruthenians.

¹⁷ Siemienczuk 1999, p. 179. It is known that in the 17th–18th centuries the town underwent frequent destructions as a result of wars and fires. Therefore, it is possible that in that time there were more trials to reorganize the town space and one of them was recorded by the plan from 1789. The situation would be explained by further archaeological excavations, of wider than hitherto range.

the building of the monastery complex (since 1709) and the Jesuit college (1746–1751) another reorganization of the town's space was made. The town's market place got its today's prolate, trapezoidal shape. Parallely, the present course of Kościelna Street was delimited, which became the late Baroque compositional axis joining the new, bigger market square with the Jesuit complex. Despite the described investments and building in similar time new, brick-built churches for Franciscans and Benedictine sisters as well as the Basilian monastery in the south-east part of the market place. Drohiczyn did not ever regain its earlier significance.

Practically since the moment of location until almost present times, Drohiczyn was an exclusively wooden town¹⁸. Brick architecture in substance

is limited to the monastery buildings erected since the 17th century and probably a part of the castle. Single fragments of modern (18th century) walls revealed in the east part of Kościuszkowski Square in the area of Ratuszowa Street as nowadays difficult to be interpreted, unlike the relics of brick cellars in the area of the Orthodox church of St Nicolas, which should be connected with the Basilian monastery (see Kałamajska – Saeed 1996, p. XII, 28).

Excavated by archaeologists since the 19th century Drohiczyn still contains great cognitive potential. Even the beginnings of the pre-location centre, course of medieval moats or functioning of settlement on so-called Russian Side with the monastery of St Spas need explanation. It is necessary to publish the results of hitherto research and a modern historical monograph of the town. The example of explorations undertaken in 2006 indicates that valuable sources may be obtained for similar, provincial centres even in the course of so limited rescue research reduced to observation of a narrow installation trench.

¹⁸ J. Maroszek quotes words of a visitor to the Franciscan monastery from 1612: „A town on the river Bug, the whole wooden [...] without defensive walls, except the castle” (Maroszek 1999, p. 12–13). In other paper the same author defines, mainly on the grounds of written sources, the number of all brick buildings erected in the whole Podlaskie voivodship up to the half of the 17th century as barely 32 objects (Maroszek 1976, p. 159).

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