

WRATISLAVIA ANTIQUA 19

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PRAGUE, WROCŁAW AND KRAKOW:  
PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACE AT THE TIME  
OF THE MEDIEVAL TRANSITION

### III. INCORPORATED TOWNS

#### 1. THE QUESTION OF INCORPORATION AND THE NEW STRUCTURE OF TOWNS

Like several other central foci of East Central Europe Prague, Wrocław and Krakow evolved during the 13th century from the proto-town to the communal town form. The change was deep-seated and affected all the principal domains of town activity: its spatial structure, legal foundations, organization of crafts and commerce, and a range of economic and personal freedom. It was associated with the influx of a new population and changes to the ethnic structure. The process of transformation was different in different centres. The decision on its implementation could be a one-time affair, confirmed by an oral agreement or one made in writing, between the lord of the town and the townspeople, or it took the form of several legal acts, spread out over time. It could relate to an existing town or one only being established. Nonetheless, the building of a communal town was always an extended process. In East Central Europe, the founding of a new town or the transformation of a proto-town to an urban structure typical of the High and Late Middle Ages is defined in Latin as *locatio*, translated here from the Polish *lokacja* as incorporation.

The Latin term *locatio*, *locaccio*, *locacio*, has no straightforward translation into modern languages (Piskorski 1987, 79–89). In the dictionary of medieval Latin its meaning when applied to villages and towns, is given as ‘placing’, ‘founding’, ‘seating’ or ‘settling’. Another meaning would be ‘putting out to lease’ (Plezia 1984, 1486–1488; Wołodkiewicz 1986, 96). The term can be interpreted quite broadly and we are warned by the rich legacy of medieval urban studies against its schematic reading. With regard to Prague, Wrocław and Krakow, it cannot be translated as *Stadtgründung*, as accepted in traditional historical

German literature (e.g. Planitz 1954; Stoob 1961). This interpretation has been criticized by historians themselves as they have come to view *locatio* (incorporation) more as a process than a single act (Blaschke 1997, 74–75; Młynarska-Kaletynowa 2006, 13; Gawlas 2005, 148–152). The meaning of the idea of *locatio* was analysed by Adrienne Körmندی (1995, 96–98) continuing, in this respect, the research by Benedykt Zientara (1975, 175–176, 1976) on medieval Silesia. Her conclusions are largely valid also for Bohemia, Lesser Poland and other regions of East Central Europe. Adrienne Körmندی also emphasized that the terms *locare* and *locator* were borrowed from the Elbe region during the reign of Duke Henry the Bearded (1201–1238). They are closely related functionally with *ius teutonicum*, the legal basis for the reorganization of settlement (Kejř 1998, 135–172; Wyrozumski 2007, 123–125). Consequently, *locatio* was tantamount to the legal regulation of the activity of settlers already in place or being brought to East Central Europe from the West in general, but in practice, from the German Empire. The term may be applicable also to a village or town undergoing organization as a legal basis for the restructuring of an already existing settlement, expanded with a sectioned off area granted to a newly created commune (Młynarska-Kaletynowa 1980). It may also mean changes made to the provisions of an incorporation contract concluded earlier. Incorporation, being an issue of considerable importance and one with a wide scope for interpretation, has been the focus of specialist analysis from several research disciplines. Due to the difference in methods and sources appropriate for different branches of research, phenomena related to incorporation have been analysed using differently

formulated research problems. Particularly relevant for our discussion is the approach taken by historians, architectural historians and archaeologists.

For the historian the focus of research tends to be incorporation that is understood as a legal regulation for enabling the development of a town. An architect or historian of urbanisation sees it mainly as a spatial transformation. This is supposed to involve the mapping of the town boundaries, transferring the area to the town – commune and the detailed planning of streets, squares and building districts, complete with their subdivision into properties (plots). The task of archaeologists is more challenging because the method used by them does not make it possible to directly study legal acts. They can carry out an archaeological analysis of incorporation only by formulating their questions so that the answers to them are within the reach of the real interpretative potential available to an investigator of material remains. Thus, archaeologists need to rely on their own sources and to draw conclusions based on them, rather than be content to choose, embrace or reject existing concepts, formulated – often on fragile

premises – by representatives of related research disciplines (Piekalski 2011, 144–145). Their aim is not so much to study incorporation itself as to trace its effects on the structure of a town and the material culture of its inhabitants. In this way, archaeologists undertake their portion of research consistently with the concept of *histoire totale* (Schreg 2001, 333–334, with a list of publications) avoiding, at the same, risky over-interpretation.

The transformation of Prague, Wrocław and Krakow in to a new form was caused by processes at work everywhere in the Europe of the High Middle Ages, most notably, the economic, demographic and cultural expansion of the Latin West (Benevolo 2000, 337–542; Génicot 2008). They were the product of new way of thinking about the economy, demographic growth within the German Empire, and new legal regulations developed in towns evolving during the 12th century west of the Elbe and Saale rivers (Piskorski 1990/91, 17–19; Kejř 1998, 115–133; Gawlas 2005). In each of these centres, the process of transformation was conditioned by local factors.

#### A. PRAGUE

It is hard to determine the actual boundary between proto-urban and incorporation Prague as is the case with many towns that have resulted from long development. Several factors and developments at work in the town from the 1230s–1260s, combined to produce this transition. They included the transformation of the structure of the earlier crafts-and-market settlement on the right bank of the Vltava, the setting up of Gallus Town, building the city wall, followed by the abolition of the suburbium below Prague Castle and the planning of the Lesser Town of Prague.

The incorporation privilege for right bank Prague, i.e. for the later Old Town (Staré Město), was granted by King Wenceslaus I in 1234 (Nový 1984, 30). The area covered by the incorporation privilege already had a well formed structure, complete with an irregular road network (Fig. 21). The centrally placed marketplace had become, during this earlier period, the point of origin of several streets, in a radial layout. The principal thoroughfare led to Judith Bridge and to Prague Castle beyond. Consequently, in this case incorporation did not involve the charting of the main streets. Other thoroughfares added during the Late Middle Ages often added to this lack of regularity (Huml, Dragoun and Nový 1990–1991, 57; Kašička 1992). The marketplace (approximately

quadrilateral in plan) became the communal centre of the Old Town. Its legal situation was reflected by the presence within this area of two power centres: Tyn Court (Ungelt) controlled by the king on the eastern edge of the market and, some decades later, the town hall on the west side, seat of the urban self-government. The rise of the urban centre did not go hand in hand with the breakdown of the earlier settlement structure – as in the suburbium below Prague Castle – just the opposite; it appears to have stimulated its development. This did not apply however to the area on the right bank terrace occupied during the earlier period.

The area within the boundaries of the incorporated town was circumscribed in the west and the north by the bend of the Vltava and had an irregular oval shape in plan. After the start of the incorporation, this area was soon enclosed with a stonewall which cut off the built-up area outside the limits of the newly constituted town. The settlements at Vyšehrad – Opatovice, St Martin's Ujezd and Zderaz, complete with their ten Romanesque churches were left outside the newly charted boundary (Wallisová 1998; Podliska and Wallisowa 1999). This situation may have been dictated by the need to defend the new town. The settlements next to Vyšehrad ran along the riverbank and could not be easily enclosed by fortifications.

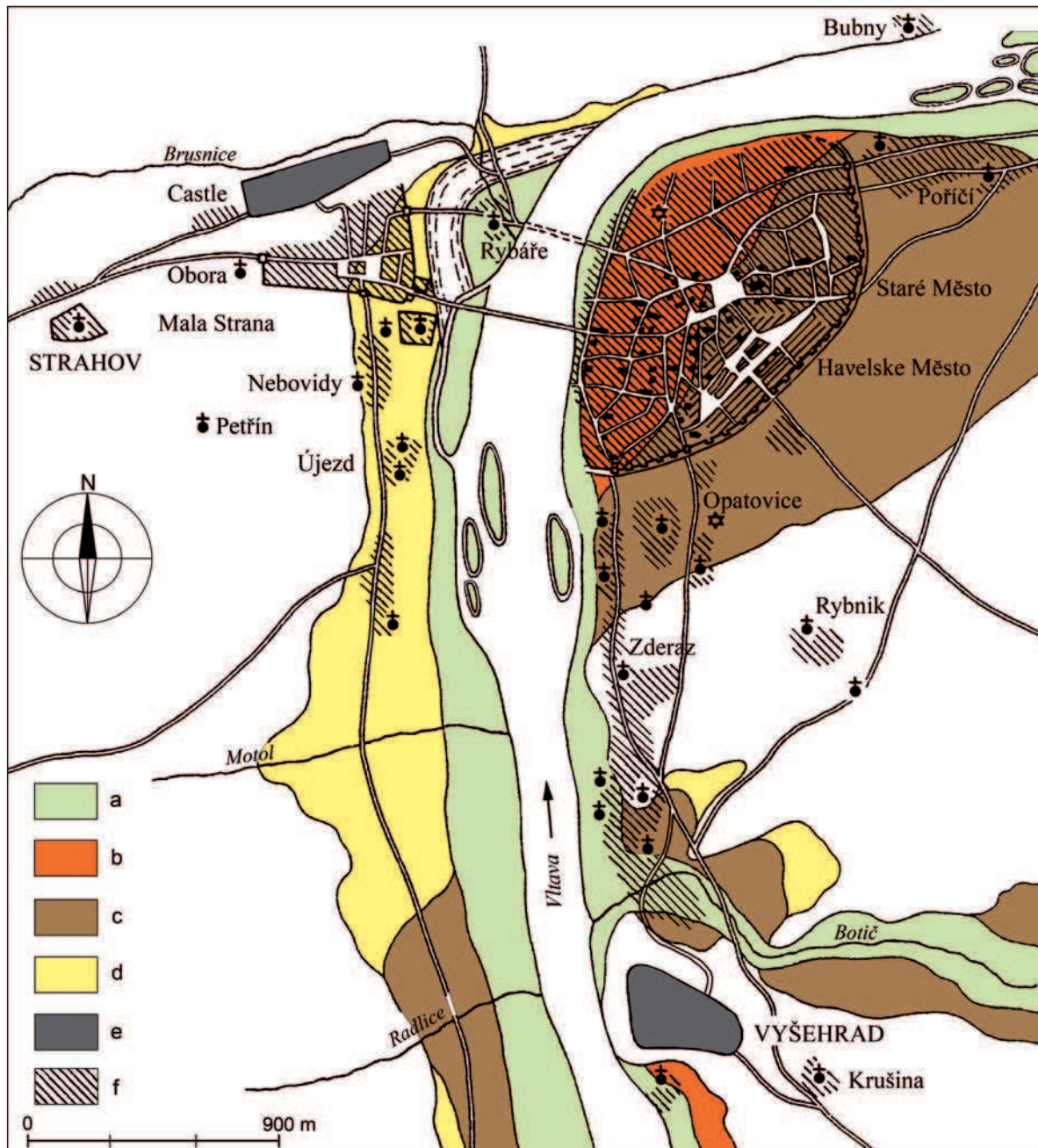


Fig. 21. Prague agglomeration during the second half of the 13th century: a – flood zone; b – flood zone by Vyšehrad; c – Old Town terrace; d – gravel; e – castles; f – built-up area. Huml, Dragoun and Nový 1990/91 with author's additions

Nevertheless, why was the wealthy merchant quarter in the north-east left outside the city wall? Its lively growth, confirmed by the discovery of large, presumably, two-storey timber houses and stone houses, one of them a palace, was interrupted after the incorporation and the area was soon abandoned (cf. Ježek et al. 2009, 120–122). The built-up area beyond the line of the fortifications was destroyed. The only survivors were the churches of St Clement and St Peter. Next to St Peter's, a separate suburban settlement of Petřín developed, but it had lost much of its earlier importance. If we view the incorporation

as a well thought out royal project we may suppose that not everybody could take part in the project.

In the south-eastern area of the planned out and incorporated town, there was room for the new structure of Gallus Town. This zone, previously mostly under buildings of a dugout type, was purchased after the 1230s by merchants and entrepreneurs represented by the minter, Eberhard. New settlers were brought in from Bavaria and granted town rights (Kejř 1975; Hoffmann 1980). A new spatial plan was laid out with a large marketplace an elongated rectangle in plan. Sites for the church of St Gallus and burgrave plots



were pegged out. The marketplace was surfaced with stones laid over the remnants of earlier structures (Muk 1964; Líbal, Muk, Milan 1966; Huml 1992, 1996). There is evidence that Gallus Town was the site of both commerce and craft activity. However, the new structure did not retain its independent status and was absorbed both in terms of its space and in terms of rights by the Old Town. Its traces now survive in the regularly planned out quarter around the Fruit Market (Ovocny Trh), which is not too typical for Prague (Fig. 22).

The reform of the town came in conjunction with some legal regulations. The brutal way in which these regulations were implemented and the absolute supremacy of the interests of the monarch are documented by the way the incorporation of the left bank town of Prague, the Lesser Town, was treated. In 1257, the buildings of the old suburbium below Prague Castle were demolished and the indigenous Czech population expelled. Their place was taken by colonists from Germany who were to build *nova civitas Pragensis*. Such was the wish of King Ottokar II (1253–1278) (Letopisy česke, 194). The area charted for the new town was bounded in the east by the valley of the Vltava's old river channel, in the south by the Malostranský stream and in the north by Prague Castle. The plan of the new structure comprised a rectangular marketplace, surrounded by square shaped blocks of buildings divided into parcels. Some of the streets issuing from the marketplace roughly followed the earlier road pattern. The parish church of St Nicholas stood in the

central marketplace. The entire new structure was rectangular in plan with a surface area of more than 5 ha. Its regularity was somewhat impaired by its topographical situation, especially in the northern area which lay on the steep slope of Castle hill (Fig. 23). The new town was enclosed by fortifications, their eastern line additionally serving the function of flood control. Separate defences were given to the bishop's castle and to the commandry of the Knights of Saint John beyond the south-eastern corner of the city wall, next to the Judith Bridge, which was built of stone (Kašička 1995, 131; Čiháková 2009, 18–24). The Premonstratensian monastery in Strahov and the settlements of Obora, Rybaře, Nebovidy and Ujezd were left outside the left bank town.

Mendicant orders made their appearance in Prague at the time of the town's transformation to its new form. The difference between those orders in Italy, Spain or France is that the rulers of Prague extended their patronage over them. This found reflection in their privileged position within the town space. A convent, possibly with more distinction than most, was the Poor Clares of Prague, their first mother superior was Princess Agnes of the Přemyslid dynasty. The Dominican community in Prague was endowed with the church of Saint Clement, by the bridge on the Vltava (Huml 1978, 1987, 166). The Franciscans took up residence in the privileged and densely populated part of the town behind Tyn Court, close to the marketplace. These two localities were definitely not without economic importance.



Fig. 22. Prague. Gallus Town. Reconstructed plan from the second half of the 13th century: a – Romanesque structures; b – early Gothic tower houses; c – other early Gothic structures. Líbal and Muk 1996

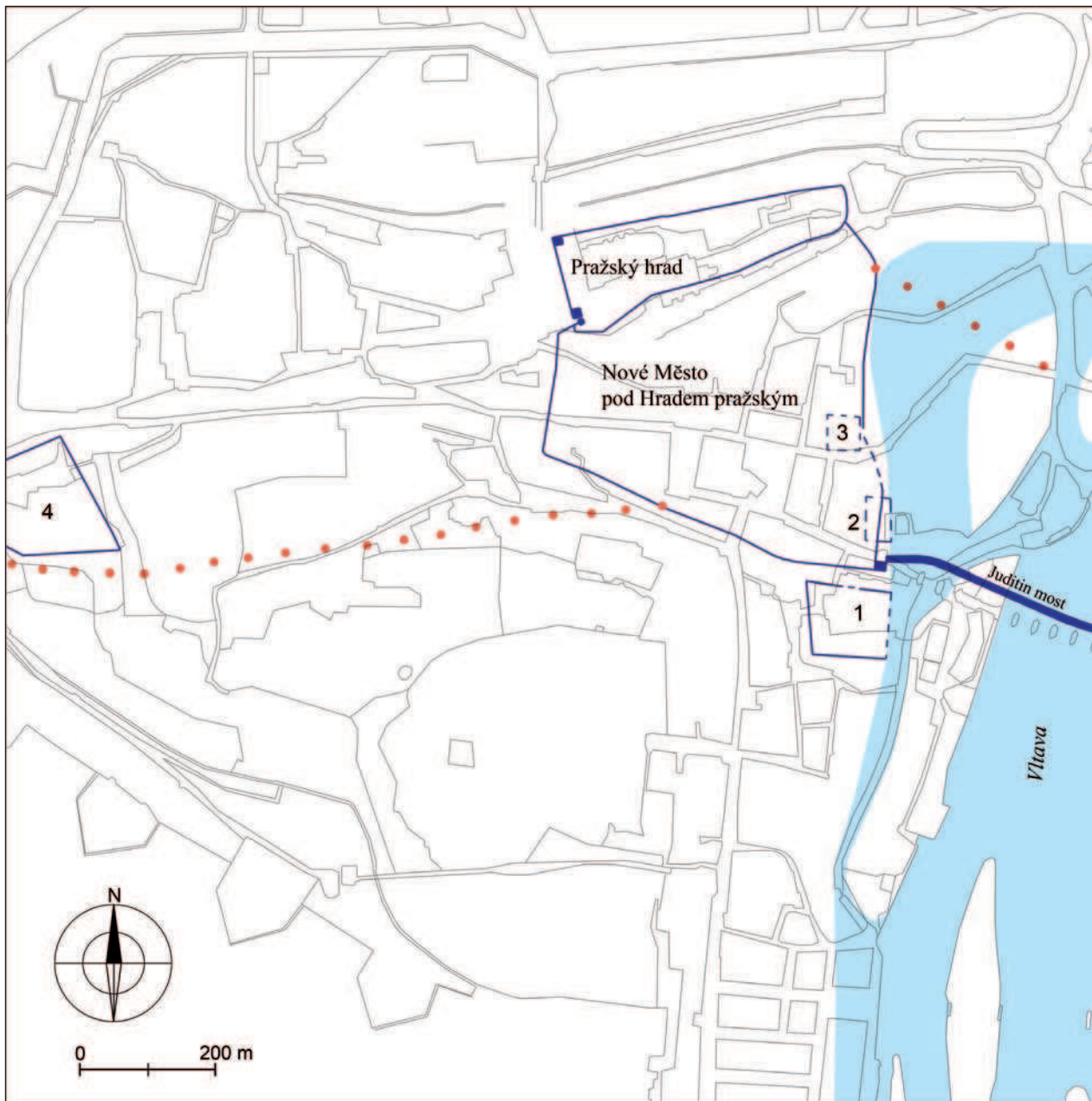


Fig. 23. Prague. Lesser Town ca. 1260: 1 – Commandry of the Knights of Saint John; 2 – bishop's residence; 3 – property of the Benedictine monastery of Břevnov; 4 – Premonstratensian monastery in Strahov. Čiháková 2009

The result of the described developments was a significant and sweeping transformation of the structure of the entire agglomeration. Its territory, and even more so, its inhabitants had been singled out by the law. New rules of economic activity and new fiscal instruments were instituted. Control of trade and commerce, pursued in designated zones, seems to have been the rationale behind the royal decisions. The area we can describe as urban was significantly reduced in size. At the same time, there were now

two urban centres – the Old Town and the Lesser Town of Prague – with a degree of freedom which resulted from contracts concluded with the monarch. The larger and richer Old Town presumably had a complex social and ethnic structure. It included the inhabitants of the earlier pre-incorporation settlement and at least some *hospites* brought in to Gallus Town. The population of the Lesser Town were colonists who had come to establish a new commune.



## B. WROCLAW

The incorporation of Wrocław encompassed the left bank fragment of the proto-urban agglomeration. This was a prolonged process, regulated during the 13th century by several legal acts. Written sources do not provide sufficient information on the content of these regulations. Most researchers who study Wrocław accept, based on indirect evidence, that the first incorporation was when German town rights were granted during the reign of Duke Henry I the Bearded (1201–1238), or his son, Duke Henry II the Pious (1238–1241). The incorporation contract was not written down, as it was issued only in the form of an oral decree (Młynarska-Kaletynowa 1986, 100–101). The second legal act was issued after the Mongol invasion of 1241, prior to 10 March 1242, by Duke Bolesław the Bald (1241–1247). Of its implementation, we learn only from references in other documents. The next regulation was effected in 1261 by Dukes Henry III the White (1248–1266) and his

brother, Władysław, Bishop of Salzburg. It is also the first to be confirmed in writing. It spelled out the relationship between the commune and the duke but gave no clear information on the spatial transformation of the structure of the town (SUB, II, no. 229, 138–139; III, no. 373–374, 241–243; Młynarska-Kaletynowa 1986, 100–121). The final act of incorporation applied to the New Town (Nowe Miasto), laid out in the area bordering on the earlier pre-incorporation settlement from the east (Fig. 24; SUB III, no. 436; Rosik 2002; Słoń 2010, 150–157).

Researchers who study medieval Wrocław have drawn several conclusions on the early phases of the transformation process. Some of these had to be discarded as new archaeological discoveries were made, while others are still being discussed today.

The most original concept is that of Jerzy Rozpędowski, an architect (1995, 2011), who has argued that the first incorporation was effected very

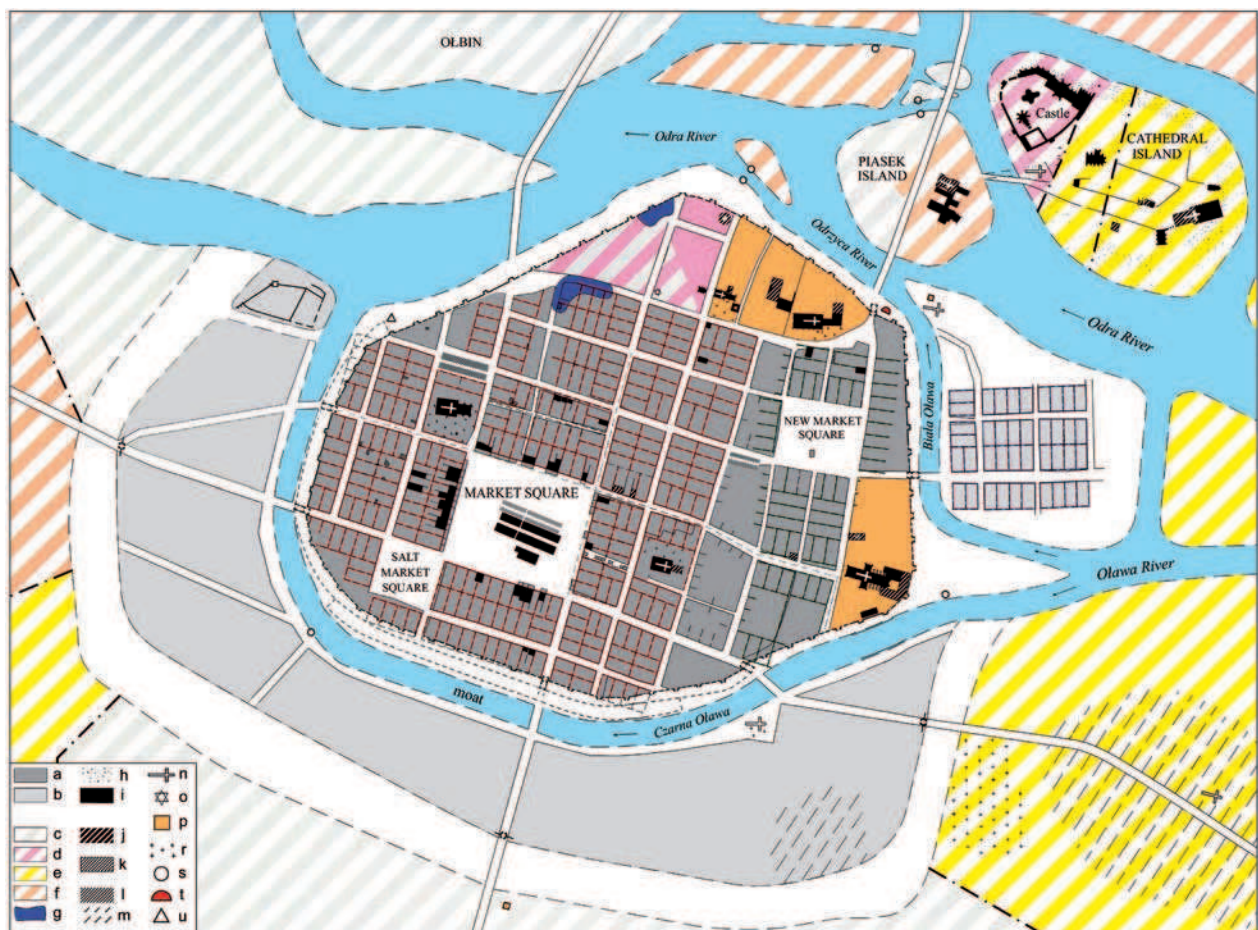


Fig. 24. Wrocław around 1300: a – urban; b – non-urban; c – municipal property; d – ducal property; e – ecclesiastical property; f – monastic property; g – confirmed Jewish area; h – early earth-and-timber rampart; i – confirmed masonry structures; j – projected masonry structures; k – confirmed timber buildings; l – projected timber buildings; m – settlement; n – approximate location of church; o – synagogue; p – hospital; r – cemetery; s – mill; t – inn; u – slaughterhouse. Chorowska 2001

early, already during the first decade of the 13th century, and covered the large tract of ground contained by the 'outer moat' known from archaeological excavation. The same researcher is inclined to identify this moat as the *fossata primae locationis* mentioned in the document issued by Dukes Henry III and Władysław in 1261. The regularly planned out town of such scope would have developed dynamically until the time of its destruction by the armies of Batu Khan in April 1241. According to Jerzy Rozpędowski, following this disaster under the incorporation by Duke Bolesław the Bald the town was given new boundaries, its area now reduced to the space contained by the 'inner circuit of defences'. The interpretation of Jerzy Rozpędowski finds support in the discovery of buildings dated to the first half of the 13th century in the zone outside the line of the inner moat, thus, in theory, lying on the territory of the greater town from the period of the first incorporation (Limisiewicz and Mruczek 2010, 89–96; Badura et al. 2010, 366–389). The weak point of this concept is that it ignores the traces of the proto-urban phase of Wrocław's development, discovered precisely in the area outside the inner circuit of defences.

Also notable is an early concept put forward by Hermann Markgraf (1881) who argued that the first incorporation covered the area of the later eastern district of the Old Town, the site of the pre-incorporation settlement *ad sancti Adalberti*. This interpretation was revived by Cezary Buśko (2005) and Jerzy Niegoda (1999, 2005, 78–84) after their archaeological investigation of this area. However, the reconstruction proposed by them for the street plan from Duke Henry I's time was not confirmed by input from later excavations carried out in this area. Nonetheless, this does not mean that this part of the town was fully bypassed by development. On the contrary, archaeological research carried out in 2010–2011 confirmed the major dynamics of a non-agrarian economy in this area along with the relatively good quality of its built environment, mostly of timber-framed buildings. At the same time, we have no evidence on the implementation of legal regulations in this part of the town.

Yet another concept, one that has reappeared repeatedly in different variants in the works of many authors since Colmar Grünhagen (1861), links the first incorporation with the area around today's Market Square (e.g. Goliński 1991, 165, 1997, 9; Chorowska 1994, 29; Piekalski 1997, 2005). This area was not occupied during the pre-incorporation phase. Its strong point was its relatively elevated situation on the upper terrace ensuring relative safety

from flooding. In the case of this concept, two aspects require consideration: the dating of the earliest traces of occupation and, even more importantly, the time when the marketplace was laid out together with the streets and districts of urban development associated with it.

The question of the chronology of the earliest phase of occupational and economic activity in the Market Square and its adjacent area is connected with the level of preservation of the earliest cultural layers. It varies but is generally poor. A zone of major building activity by the first settlers was presumably focused on the outer edge of the already laid out marketplace, but is now destroyed by the cellars of later town houses. In this way, the remains of almost all the earliest houses and structures associated with them were irretrievably lost. One of the few exceptions is the area now under Kurzy Targ Street running from the Market Square east to the church of St Mary Magdalene. The street was expanded at the cost of the buildings next to it or, possibly, even laid out anew. The stratigraphy and structures from the phase antedating this project are known due to the research of Roland Mruczek carried out in 1998 (Mruczek 2000).

Roland Mruczek has proposed to separate the uncovered structures into a 'pre-incorporation' and an 'incorporation' phase, suggesting that the former originated prior to the marking out of the regular town plan and plots. By saying this, he leads us to believe that 'incorporation' is understood by him as the parcelling out of the area intended for the communal town. Five features are classified by this researcher to the 'pre-incorporation' phase, the earliest occupation in the area of the Market Square: a timber building, three associated pits, and a timber surface at the side of the square. It should be noted that the building intrudes on the area of the marketplace and the conflict, suggested by Roland Mruczek with the regular plan applies to the boundary of the plot reconstructed using the metrological method (Mruczek 2000, 268). Also during the 'incorporation phase', the boundary of the built-up area roughly followed the boundary of the square. One building, of light-weight construction, discovered in the open space of the Market Square, was interpreted as a stall. The sequence of layers containing the remains of structures confirms the rapid growth and the transitory nature of the buildings., repeatedly destroyed by fire. Buildings with a cellar had a timber-framed construction, the pottery discovered in association with them represented technologies new to Wrocław and were interpreted as a phenomenon unknown to



the local, early medieval pottery making tradition. One of this new assortment of vessels is a slender beaker-like form (Fig. 25), foreshadowing the transition to Late Medieval production and use of ceramic wares (Rzeźnik 1998, 1999; Piekalski 2002a, 53–54). That the distinction into ‘pre-incorporation’ and ‘incorporation’ phases proposed by Roland Mruzek is insufficiently substantiated is demonstrated by the

continuity of occupation, which is evidenced by the unvarying nature of the building constructions, of the ceramics, and the use, during both these phases, of the same timber surfacing in front of the houses, presumably in an already laid out Market Square.

The dating of the earliest cultural deposit in the marketplace, complete with constructions and ceramics new to Wrocław, is assisted by a series of

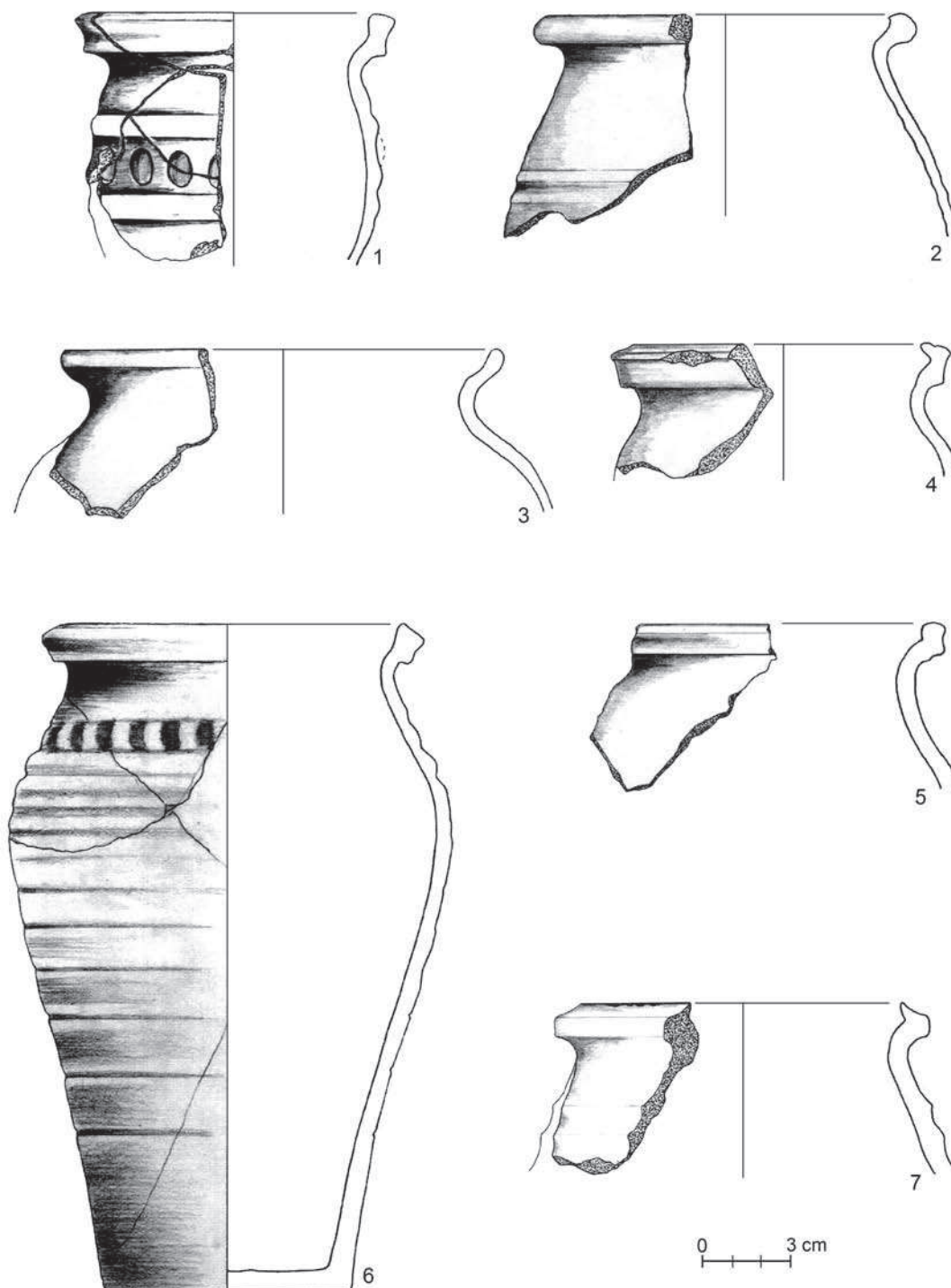


Fig. 25. Wrocław, Kurzy Targ Street. 1–7 – pottery from the first half of the 13th century. Mruzek 2000

dendrochronological dates: post-1209, post-1224, post-1227 and post-1230. No date was secured from the earliest structures assigned by R. Mruczek to the 'pre-incorporation' phase, and the 'post-1209' date corresponds to the layer associated with occupation of the burgrave plot in the Market Square. The dates from the 1220–1230s illustrate the dynamics of structural development prior to the opening up, or more precisely, the widening of Kurzy Targ Street which linked the Market Square with the earlier St Mary Magdalene's church, during the 1240s or 1250s. It was this activity, confirmed also by the rapid rate of accumulation of the cultural deposit that is in conflict with the marginal character of this zone, should we choose to link it with the settlement *ad sancti Adalberti*.

What is remarkable is that the stratigraphy recorded at the outlet of Kurzy Targ Street is similar to that found in other parts of the Market Square. We refer here especially to the sand deposit which broadly covers occupation layers dated to after 1209 – the building recorded as feature 5 with its accompanying pits, and the timber surfacing in the Market Square. In front of the north and west frontage of the Market Square, a layer of sand roughly half a meter thick was discovered in the same stratigraphical position – above the layer of natural humus which had been transformed by occupation and alternately, above the earliest layer of muck, presumably associated with the construction of cellars (Bresch, Buśko and Lasota 2001, 53, 56, 61; Bresch, Lasota and Piekalski 2002, 25, 41, 45, 61). The shortage of timber samples for dendrochronology analysis precludes dating the earliest deposits next to the north, west and east frontage of the Market Square. A comparison of the strati-

graphical position of the sandy deposit everywhere by the edge of the square helps to date it similarly to that next to the east frontage – to the period after 1209, that is, to the 1220s or, at the latest, the 1230s. Obviously, this is not absolutely certain as we know that in towns, especially during the construction of timber surfaces that wood from older, demolished buildings would be used on occasion. Nevertheless, the proposed chronology of the earliest phase of the Market Square is apparently supported by a small series of dendrochronological dates, secured from the western frontage.

In front of the town house at No. 3 Rynek (Market Square), the remains of a timber upright discovered in a trench excavated for a brick porch, yielded the dates of 'post-1241' and 'post-1250'. The stratigraphical position of this timber fragment confirms that it was positioned in the ground, presumably as an element of an arcade, after the removal of several layers, which dates them to an earlier period (Fig. 26). Similarly, in front of the town house at No. 8 Rynek (Market Square), in the ninth layer above the original humus, a wooden trough was discovered, its individual elements datable to 'post-1240', 1241, 1242 and 1244. The position of the timber samples within the stratigraphical sequence thus shows that the trough was placed into the deposit only after a longer period of land use (Bresch, Buśko and Lasota 2001, 57, 66–68). These isolated samples secured on the western edge of the Market Square are not in conflict with the chronology obtained from the series of dates at the outlet of Kurzy Targ Street, but do confirm the dating of the earliest phase of occupation in the Market Square to the 1220s or 1230s (Fig. 27). Roland Mruczek noted some time ago that this dating is

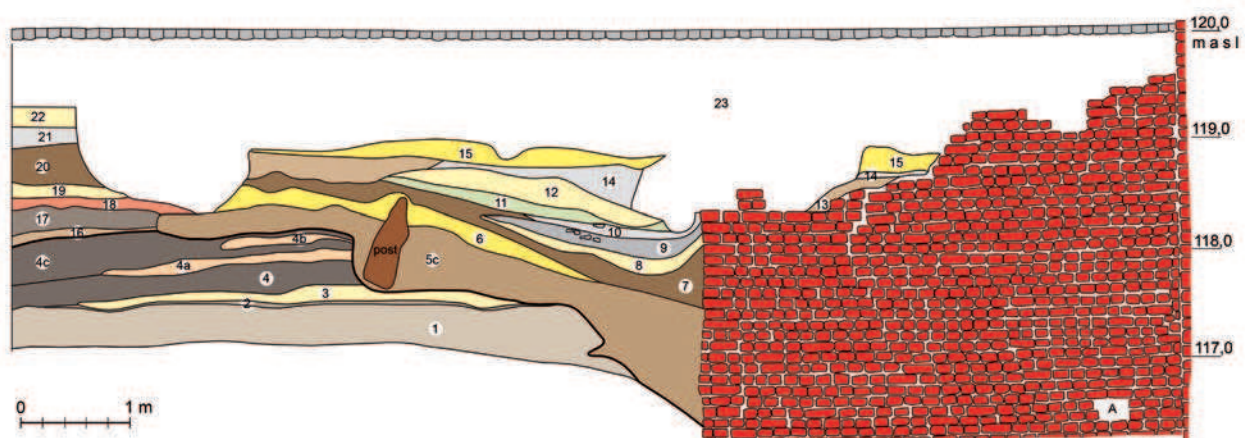


Fig. 26. Wrocław, No. 3 Rynek (Market Square). Trench in front of a townhouse, stratigraphy of the porch. Bresch et al. 2001

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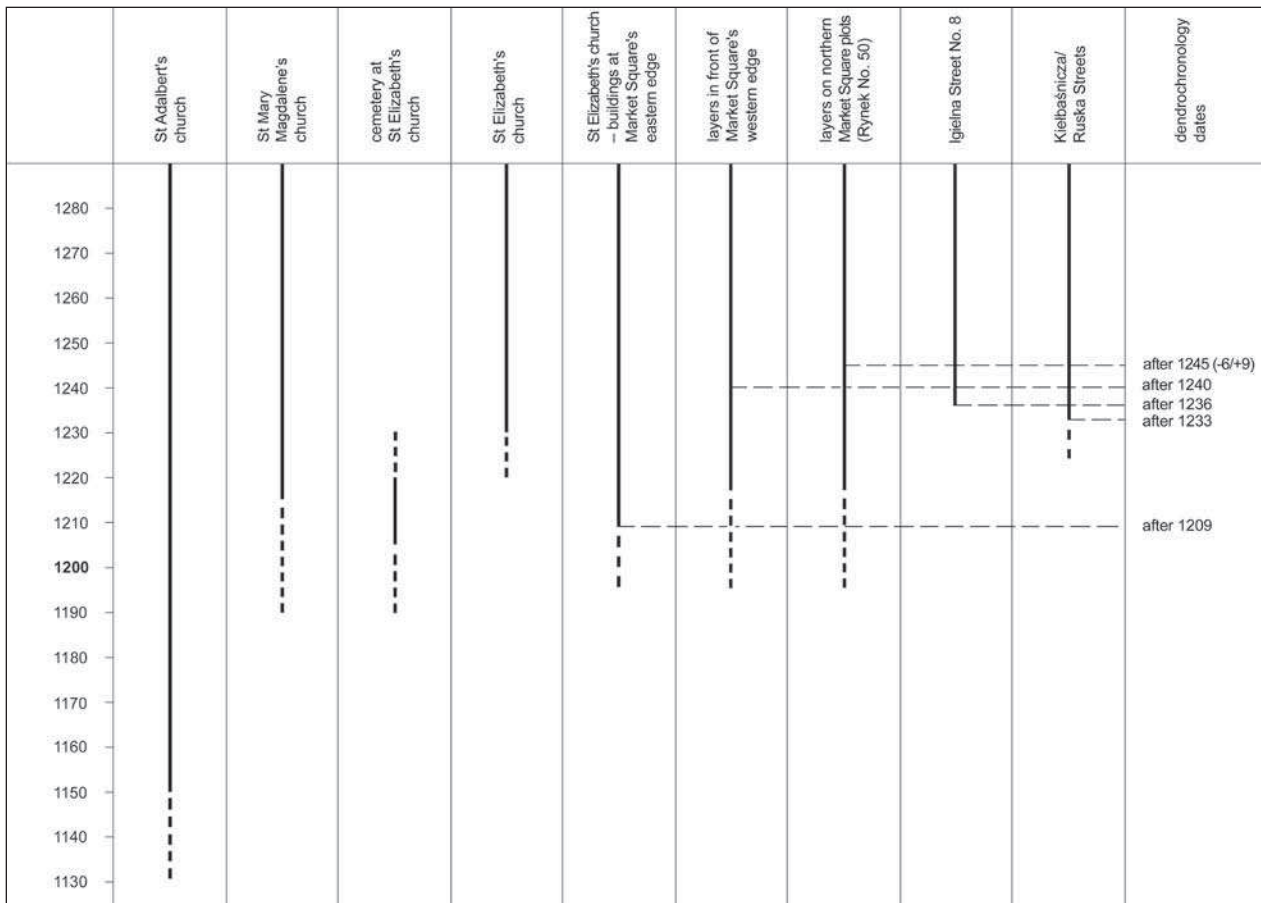


Fig. 27. Wrocław. Evidence for dating the origins of the Market Square. Piekalski 2005

consistent with samples secured on plot No. 50 Rynek (Market Square) and No. 18 Igielna Street, thus, at the northern frontage of the Market Square where the timber surface of a yard, resting over an earlier deposit, was dated to 1245 ( $-6/+9$ ), and also from No. 2 Ruska Street, where a timber sample yielded the date of 1233 (Mruczek 2000, 30; Guszpit and Wiśniewski 2002, 184–189, 204). Moreover, from the area to the north of the Market Square we know of dendrochronological dates which confirm an early occupation. The timber used in the sill beam of a house discovered in the earliest occupation layers in the plot at 26a Więzienna/26 Kotlarska streets was felled in 1216. The house at No. 8 Igielna Street, set directly over natural humus, was dated to around 1236 (Piekalski 1995, 76; Mruczek 2000, 30).

If we accept that the area in the Market Square was first occupied in the 1220s–1230s, we also have to accept that this was the time of the laying out of the square, the streets and the blocks of building associated with it. This conclusion follows more from a logical assumption than from a sound source base. At the present stage, we cannot answer conclusively

whether we can link the regular town plan directly and in a chronological sense to any of the incorporation acts, and, if so, to which of these? Would this be the first incorporation by Duke Henry I? Perplexing, because it is not confirmed by evidence, or is it possibly, Duke Henry II's? Or the incorporation of 1242? Alternatively, could it be that the earliest marketplace in this part of the town was more of a *forum campestre*, set up outside an area under urban development, already an element of the polycentric proto-town (Piekalski 1997).

After many years of studying the built environment of medieval Wrocław, Małgorzata Chorowska concluded that the act of incorporation and the parcelling of land inside the town might have been two separate projects (Chorowska 2010, 67). She is in favour of an early dating for the incorporation and bringing the area around the Market Square under management, stressing nevertheless that building a large town is, for obvious reasons, a prolonged process. The regular plan of Wrocław within its inner circuit of fortifications would have been the result of several plot division projects, organized over



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several decades. Analysis of the town plan using the metrological method is helpful when reconstructing zones covered by individual parcelling projects. This longstanding practice in the study of the Old Town in Wrocław has shown that results obtained in this way can be verified effectively by an archaeological investigation of plots, the remains of timber buildings and, especially, the remains of masonry buildings surviving in the cellars. This is because these structures fixed the boundaries charted during the 13th century (Chorowska and Lasota 1995; Lasota, Chorowska 1995). These activities have been the recently presented in a trial reconstruction of the evolution of the town plan of Wrocław during the 13th century (Chorowska 2010, 78–88). In it, the transformation is represented within time intervals of every 25 years, too narrow if we consider the perspectives available today for dating the archaeological record, complete with the surviving masonry of town houses from the cellars. In addition, the sequence of occupation of individual districts for development is open to discussion and the interpretation proposed by Małgorzata Chorowska is more of an educated guess than the

actual result of an analysis of facts. At the same time, this contribution owes its value not so much to the details it is based on, but to the realistic way in which it has pinpointed general trends in the development of the built environment of the incorporated town. It allows for the parallel functioning of the older settlement *ad sancti Adalberti* and the setting out of the Market Square and the blocks of buildings around it (Fig. 28). By approximately 1250, new districts were added and at least partly built. The ducal estate on the Odra and the earlier settlement remained outside the area of the incorporated commune (Fig. 29). After the incorporation of 1261, the settlement *ad sancti Adalberti* was abolished and plot division moved into the eastern zone of the Old Town, and, a year later, the New Town was established. This was also the time when the town's area was expanded to by adding a broad strip of land to the south and west, putting an end to the spatial expansion of districts singled out by the town law (Fig. 30).

Changes made in the town space resulted in the production of a regular 'chessboard' town plan. There was room in it for three rectilinear marketplaces

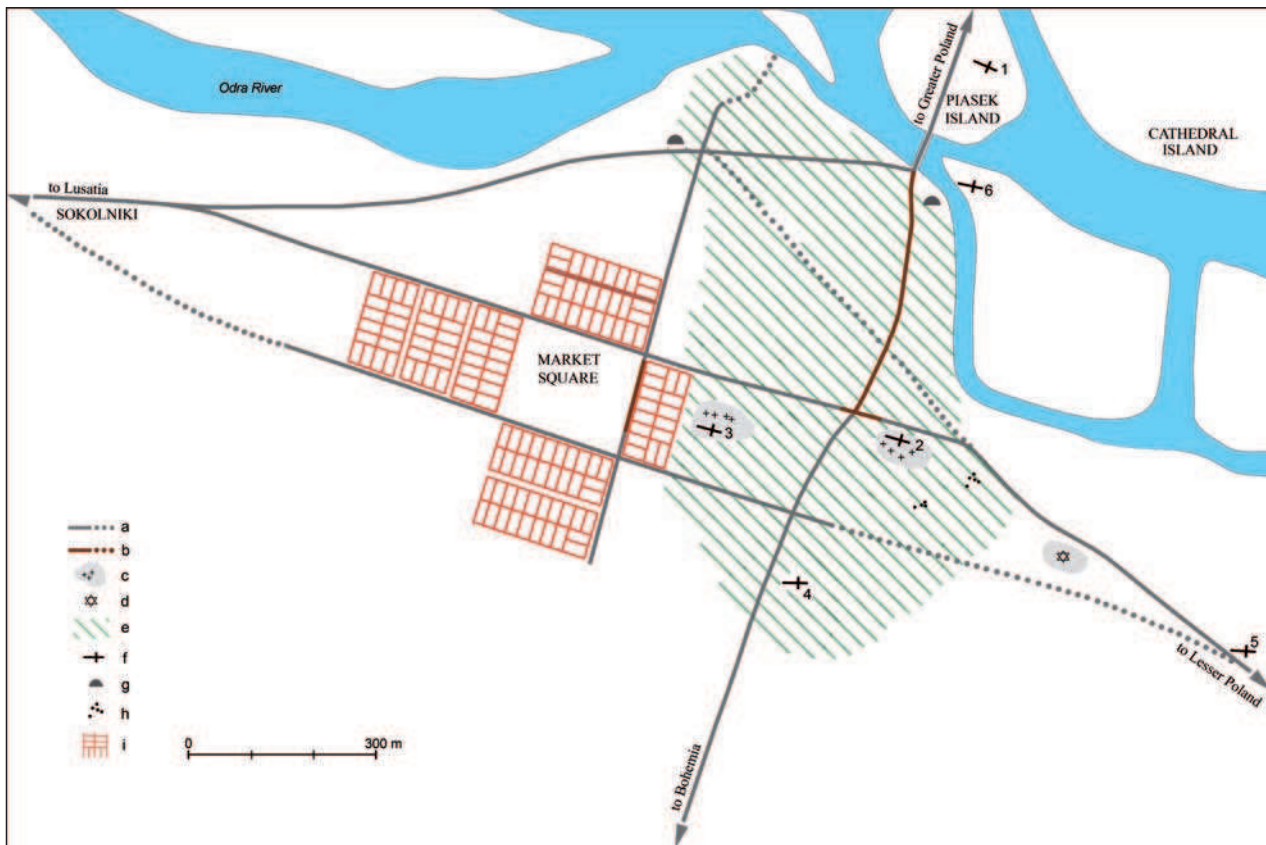


Fig. 28. Left bank Wrocław prior to the mid-13th century: a – projected road (street); b – timber street surface; c – churchyard; d – Jewish cemetery; e – early settlement; f – church; g – inn; h – well; i – projected layout of the incorporated district (60-feet wide plots). 1 – Augustinian abbey; 2 – St Wojciech/Adalbert's church; 3 – St Mary Magdalene's church; 4 – St Mary of Egypt's church; 5 – St Maurice's church; 6 – Holy Spirit church. M. Chorowska 2010 with author's modifications. Drawing N. Lenkow

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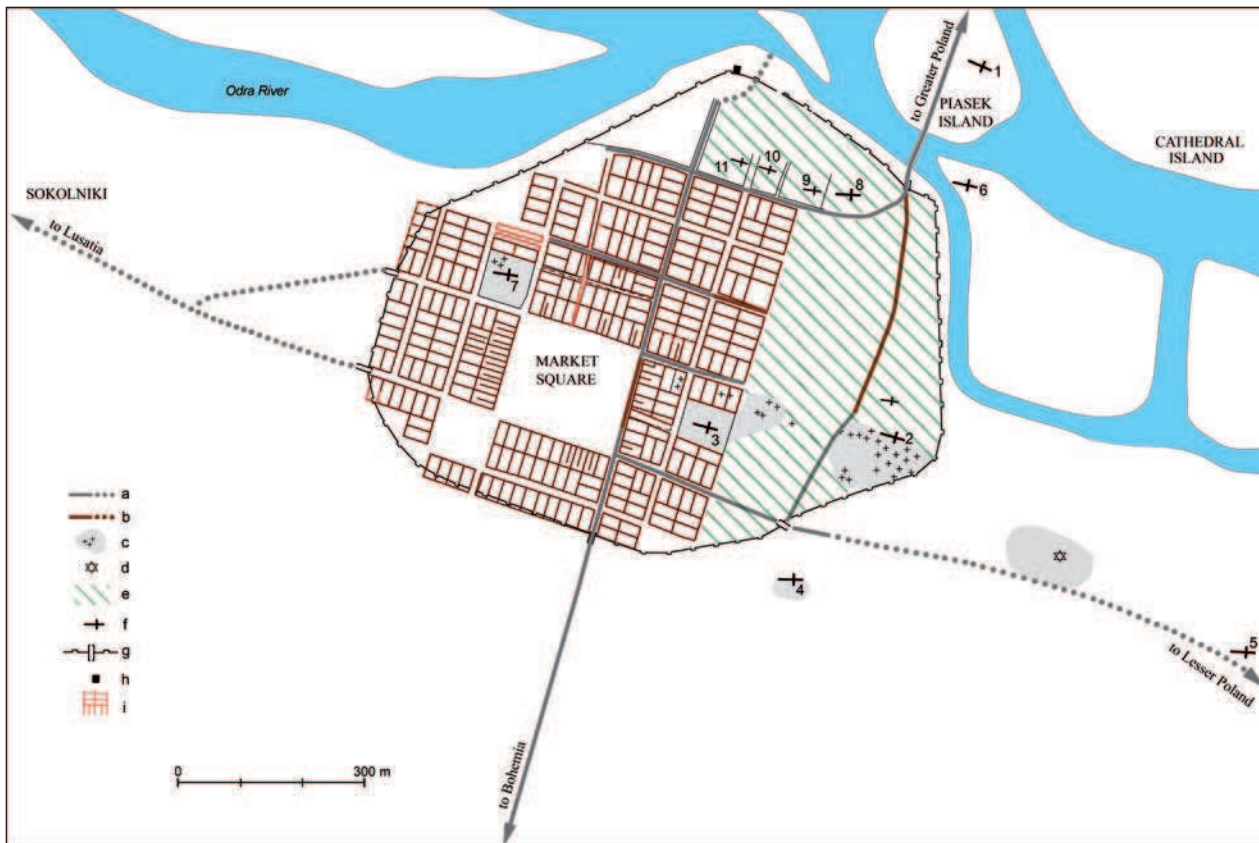


Fig. 29. Left bank Wrocław around 1250. a – reconstructed road; b – timber street surface; c – churchyard; d – Jewish cemetery; e – early settlement; f – church; g – city walls and gates; h – tower of the left bank castle; i – projected layout of the incorporated district (60-feet wide plots). 1 – Augustinian abbey; 2 – Dominican monastery with St Wojciech/Adalbert's church; 3 – St Mary Magdalene's church; 4 – St Mary of Egypt's church; 5 – St Maurice's church; 6 – Holy Spirit church; 7 – St Elizabeth's church; 8 – Franciscan monastery with St James's church; 9 – Convent of St Clare; 10 – St Matthew's church; 11 – St George's (subsequently, St Agnes's) church. M. Chorowska 2010 with author's modifications. Drawing Nicole Lenkow

– the centrally placed Market Square ( $180 \times 200$  m), the Salt Market immediately to the south-west ( $80 \times 120$  m), and the youngest, the New Market ( $85 \times 120$  m), laid out on the site of the pre-incorporation settlement. During the second half of the 12th century, a complex of permanent commercial facilities was installed in the Market Square, the property of the duke rented out to the merchants (Czerner 2002, 17–25). The N-S axis of the town plan was charted by Kuźnicza Street, leading from the Market Square to the new ducal castle on the Odra, and by Świdnicka Street, issuing from the Market Square southward to the main route out of town. The E-W axis was mapped out by Ruska Street – leading from the Market Square, through the Salt Market to Mikołajska Gate, the point of issue of the road to Legnica and Germany, and by Oławska Street leading to Oławska Gate and on to Krakow. Other streets were planned mostly parallel or at right angles to these axes. Departures from the regular plan were made when there was need, generally speaking, to adjust to the

outer boundaries of the town, marked out by the city fortifications, or make the necessary shortcuts. Archaeological study of the street plan confirms the stability of their layout during the Late Middle Ages and the post-medieval period (Buśko 1997, 126; 1999a; Konczewski and Piekalski 2011).

The northern area spread along the Odra River was settled on the townspeople. It continued as a ducal property, its areas gradually given over to ecclesiastical projects. The younger ducal castle was constructed at a new Odra crossing (Lasota, Konczewski and Piekalski 2007).

By the north-west corner of the Market Square the new parish church of St Elizabeth of Hungary was founded, replacing an earlier cemetery. The time of its construction is established by the details of its architecture to the 1220s–1230s (Lasota and Rozpędowski 1980). Additionally, its dedication to St Elizabeth of Hungary, deceased in 1231 and beatified in 1235, suggests a dating closer to late 1230s and early 1240s, or even, to the period after

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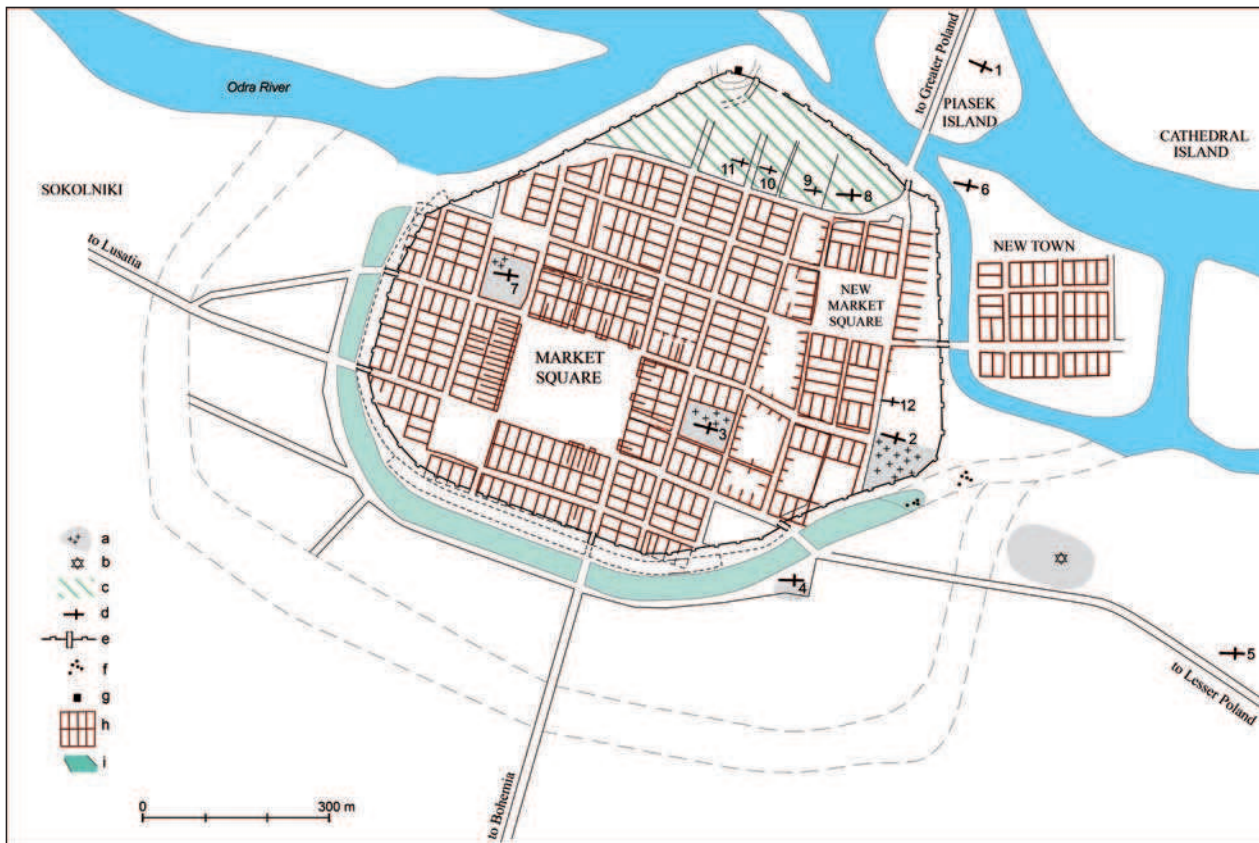


Fig. 30. Left bank Wrocław around 1275: a – churchyard; b – Jewish cemetery; c – ducal land partly given over to the ecclesiastical foundations; d – church; e – town walls and gates; f – well; g – tower of the left bank castle; h – projected layout of the incorporated district (60- feet wide plots); i – moat. 1 – Augustinian abbey; 2 – Dominican monastery with St Wojciech/Adalbert’s church; 3 – St Mary Magdalene’s church; 4 – St Mary of Egypt’s church; 5 – St Maurice’s church; 6 – Holy Spirit church; 7 – St Elizabeth’s church; 8 – Franciscan monastery with St James’s church; 9 – Convent of St Clare; 10 – St Matthew’s church; 11 – St George’s (subsequently, St Agnes’s) church; 12 – St. Catherine church. Chorowska 2010, drawing Nicole Lenkow

the incorporation of 1242 by Bolesław the Bald. The second dedication of this church – to St Lawrence – appears in the records only during the 15th century and there is no justification for placing it in the first half of the 13th (Młynarska-Kaletynowa 1986, 103–104). The church was one of the two principal parish churches of 13th-century Wrocław. Only the parish church of St Mary Magdalene was older in the new topographical layout now found to the east of the Market Square.

As in Prague, the position of the mendicant orders in Wrocław was special. Here also they put in an appearance prior to incorporation, or possibly, during the transformation. In addition, they were treated differently than the modest communities of the Dominicans, and the Franciscans of Southern and Western Europe, who were usually established in a peripheral position (Moorman 1968, 62–72; Stüdeli 1969, 68–84). In 1226, the Dominicans came into possession of the parish church St Adalbert in the southern area of the left bank settlement. The

Franciscans were presented with an estate next to the bridge to Piasek Island, thus, presumably next to the pre-incorporation marketplace. They received the privilege of serving the court of Duke Henry II’s. Slain at the Battle of Legnica against the Mongols, the Duke was laid to rest in the Franciscan church of St James (Zientara 1975, 298–299; Lasota and Rozpędowski 1981). The growth of incorporated Wrocław altered the position of the monasteries within the town space. With new boundaries marked out and the new central Market Square set in place, their position became peripheral, in line with the general tendency prevailing in Europe.

The boundaries of the incorporated town in Wrocław cannot be identified more closely without difficulty. They did not follow the circuit of the ‘inner fortifications’ erected after the incorporation. These enclosed an area of about 40 ha, an irregular oval in plan bordering on the left bank of the Odra River. Within lay the area of the town commune and the earlier pre-incorporation settlement administered un-



der the older ducal law, and the duke's estates along the Odra River. We can try to reconstruct the area covered by the town law provided to the townspeople by comparing it against the extent of the regular town plan. However, the latter, as we know, continued to evolve over time.

A part of the area settled during the pre-incorporation phase was left outside the circuit of the fortifications, and consequently, definitely beyond the zone of operation of the town law. This was mainly the districts south and east of the church of St Adalbert, spread along the route running to Bohemia and to Krakow, therefore, to the outlying churches of St Mary of Egypt at the southern end and the church of St Maurice at the south-eastern end of the proto-town. The laying out and the construction of the fortifications resulted in their approaches being cleared of buildings. Let us note that this project affected the definitely non-agrarian and thus, in an economic sense, the urban Walloon settlement. In addition, outside the town was the pre-incorporation built-up area dated to the first decades of the 13th century, to the west of the inner fortification zone (Jastrzębski, Piekalski and Wysocka 2001, 336).

The situation of the area enclosed by the town defences where individual districts enjoyed different legal and administrative status was not unique to Wrocław. In Silesia, we find a similar situation in Głogów. Here the new town boundary, and in due course, the fortifications, enclosed the town commune of colonists incorporated in 1250, but also, the pre-incorporation settlement on the Odra River, not granted the new rights (Hendel and Moździoch 1996, 90–95). Marian Kutzner (1970, 151) has named it the 'ducal jurisdiction', noting that its inhabitants were subjects of the ruler. This interpretation apparently illustrates the status of pre-incorporation settlement well, even though it lacks a sound source base, something that was emphasized strongly by Mateusz Goliński (2012, 25–27).

Differences in the legal status of the area within the fortifications in Wrocław were largely eliminated by the incorporation act of 1261. A new district was added to the town at this time and a new, outer line of defences was constructed (Konczewski, Mruczek and Piekalski 2010, 597–598). The island of Ostrów Tumski with the old ducal palace, the cathedral and residence of the bishop, the monastery of St Vincent in Olbin and the monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Piasek Island were left outside the boundary of the urban district. The New Town set up in 1262 soon came under the increasingly powerful self-government of the Old Town.

What sort of population formed the town commune of Wrocław? The older interpretations that were so confident as to the distinctions between the indigenous population and the immigrant (colonist) populations of the pre-incorporation settlement and the communal town are no longer valid. The angles for studying this issue, especially with unambiguous written sources in short supply, are quite modest and any insight had to be weighed down with potential error and misunderstandings (Brather 1996, 2000, 2004). Nevertheless, the issue is sufficiently relevant [that a position must be taken on it](#). Historians and archaeologists agree that the transformation of the town during the 13th century was associated with the arrival of colonists from German-speaking areas (Piskorski 1987, 85–88; Gawlas 2005, 134, 2006, 49–57; Piekalski 2001, 252–253). At the same time, there is evidence that already during the pre-incorporation phase the population of Wrocław, similar to Prague, was multi-ethnic. Diverging views on the time of the arrival of the Walloons to Wrocław – in the late 12th or the early 13th century – do not change the fact that their settlement was already a part of the pre-incorporation agglomeration (Młynarska-Kaletynowa 1986, 59; Konczewska and Piekalski 2008). The early presence of a Jewish commune appears to be incontrovertible too, as attested by the presence of tombstones. It is less easy to deal with the question of the time of the arrival of the German colonists. Gerung's *curia* in the settlement *ad sanctum Adalbertum in Wrarzlaw*, presented in 1202 by Duke Henry I the Bearded to the Cistercian Abbey at Lubiąż, is mentioned in the sources just once (Młynarska-Kaletynowa 1986, 49, 51, 59–67). Of more significance are references to *sculteti* of the Wrocław civitas, made in 1214 and 1229, testifying to the presence of an organized group of colonists in the pre-incorporation town (SUB, I, no. 42, 100–101, no. 305, 225–226; Młynarska-Kaletynowa 1986, 78–80).

Some general premises of assistance in dealing with this issue come from the analysis of archaeological sources. Archaeologists can now make a cautious attempt to discern the indigenous and the imported elements in the material culture. The latter would include, in addition to the earlier mentioned evidence on new pottery making technologies, new constructions of timber buildings. It is safe to conclude that the post- in-ground system with interrupted sills and the timber-framed design in all their variants are western imports (Piekalski 1996). However, we are not in a position to say if this was the result of a single episode of colonisation or of a series of episodes,

intermittent or uninterrupted, involving arrivals from different areas of the German Empire. In a major centre such as Wrocław, the early presence of non-indigenous constructions is unsurprising. Their earliest finds are datable to around 1200 and it is no accident that they are found on Ostrów Tumski, in the bishop's precinct (Bykowski et al. 2004, 127). Since the early 13th century, houses of this description were known widely on the left bank settlement, which became part of the incorporated town only during the second half of that century. In the western area of the Old Town, where there was no occupation during the pre-incorporation phase, timber-framed buildings make their appearance as the first town houses, placed at the upper end of the plot, while the traditional log buildings and wattle structures accompany them as outbuildings (Piekalski 1999a). Another new element in 13th-century Wrocław was water wells. In the area south of the church of St Adalbert two concentrations of these structures were discovered, dated to the first decades of the 13th century (Konczewski 2007, 23–24). They were destroyed, like the buildings they

presumably had accompanied, no later than during the construction of the town fortifications. These new developments, noted during the pre-incorporation phase, foreshadow a general transformation of the material culture of medieval Wrocław. They may be treated as a relevant indication of the presence of ethnically foreign *hospites* in the town during the first decades of the century (Piekalski 2002a, 53–60; 2011). This population presumably was utilised when organizing the incorporated urban commune.

To describe the process of incorporation in Wrocław in brief we can say that its principal feature is the absence of a clear watershed between the phase of the proto-urban settlement and that of the incorporated town. Its transformation to the structure typical for a new type of town had the nature of an accelerated process. Legal regulations served to make this process orderly and to control it, in conditions that saw the considerable domination of the autocrat, who was a representative of the Silesian Piast dynasty.

#### C. KRAKOW

The view largely accepted in earlier reference literature is that the construction, during the 1220s, of the parish church of the Blessed Virgin Mary and written references to a *scultetus*, is sufficient evidence to conclude that this was the time when Krakow was incorporated, adopting German town rights (Wyrozumski 1992, 159–160). At present, not all the researchers of Lesser Poland's main centre are convinced as to this. Re-examination of these same sources has brought alternative interpretations. This change of view is the result of a more general reflection on the subject of urban transformation and on the notion of incorporation itself. As in the case of other centres, it is now accepted that the transformation of Krakow too was a prolonged process, its turning point the legal regulation of 1257, the only one documented by the written sources. (KD Krakowa, I, no. 1; Wyrozumski 2007a). From the surviving written record, we learn that the area for the urban commune was marked out, older buildings were demolished, and a new town plan was prepared under a decision of Duke Bolesław the Chaste, ruler of Krakow (1243–1279).

The incorporated town, organized for arrivals from different countries *homines inibi de diversis climatibus congregare*, but in practice, from the German-speaking region, occupied the area to the north of the older suburbium of Okół and the Dominican

and Franciscan monasteries (Rocznik Kapituły 1978, 86; Rajman 2004, 212). This area was already in use during the pre-incorporation phase, had several churches and pastoral care provided by the church of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Nevertheless, the crafts settlement developed on this site, possibly the one that is meant in a reference to *scultetus* Peter, was destroyed by the Mongols in 1241 and not fully rebuilt (Wyrozumski 1992, 159; Rajman 2004, 182–184; Buško and Głowa 2010, 151–152). Ironically, this situation was advantageous for the decision to incorporate a new structure. The presence of a Polish population – including the unfree or semi-free ducal bondsmen (*ascripticium*), who would not be granted the new town rights – must have been limited. This situation is in line with a general tendency, stressed in literature, in which incorporated towns were established next to already existing settlements with the people dependent on the duke or the Church remained on their old site (Piskorski 1990/91, 225; Rębkowski 2001, 53–58; Moździoch, 1996, 33; Goliński 2012, 24–27).

The process of planning the space of the incorporated structure of Krakow was analysed in great depth by Bogusław Krasnowolski, an art historian. He summarized a sizable series of earlier studies on this subject in his contribution (Jamroz 1960, 1967; Borowiejska-Birkenmajerowa 1975; Krasnowol-

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ski 2004, 91–119, 2007, 361–372, 2010, 53–55). These in the main drew on input from the metrology analysis of early modern and the recent town plans, relying to a lesser extent on the remains of medieval buildings. The remarkable historical stability of Krakow's built environment and the fact that the city was spared from destruction during World War II largely justifies the selection of this particular method. Unlike in Wrocław and in Prague, the limited progress

of archaeological investigations of building districts and streets does not provide a sufficient alternative to the metrology method. It is safe to claim that the designed town plan provided for nine rectilinear districts, the central intended for the main square, the focus of central functions (Fig. 31). The others would have been divided into four blocks of buildings each, divided by streets. This ideal design was never fully implemented due to major obstacles. These included

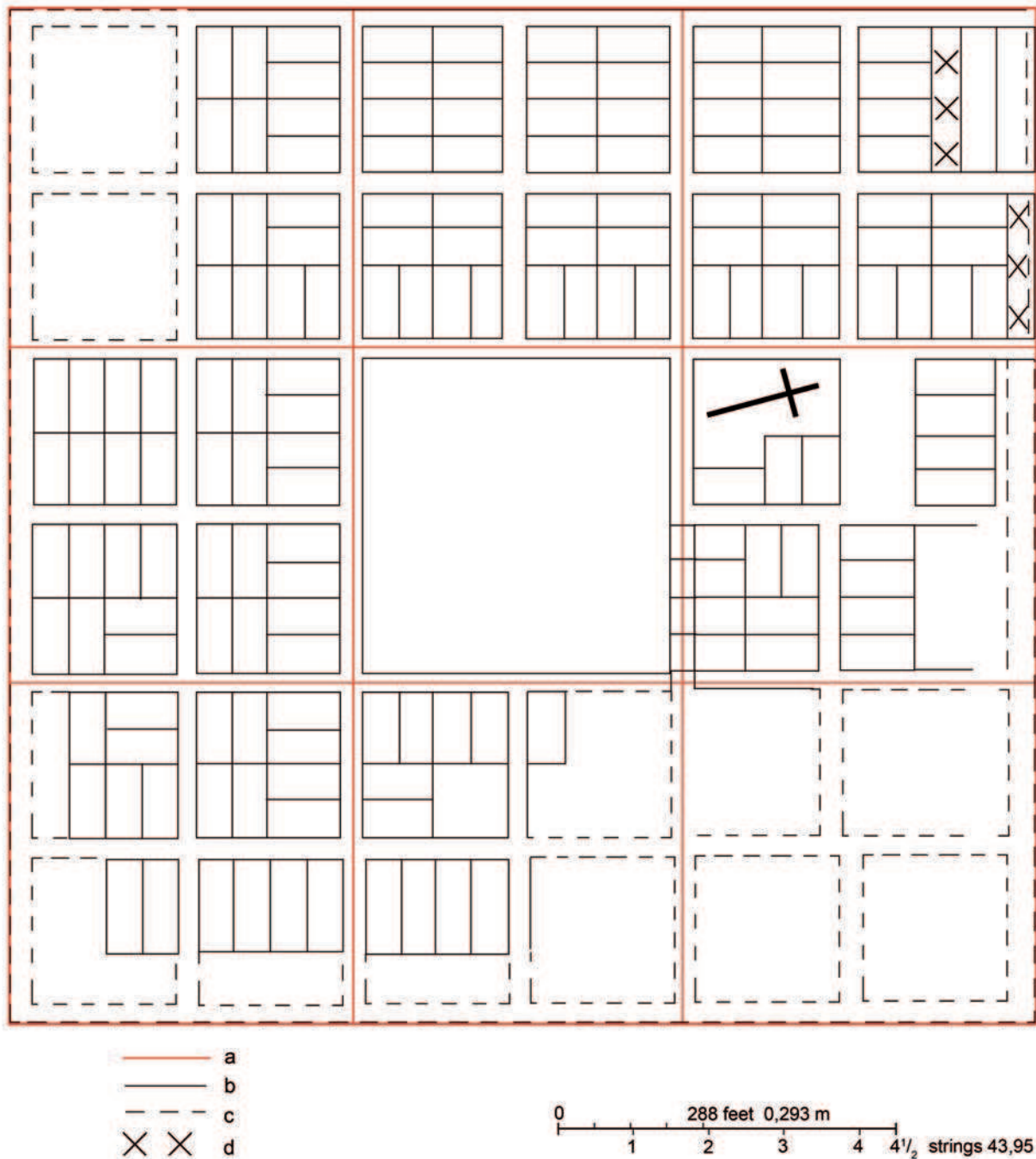


Fig. 31. Krakow. Projected layout of the incorporated district: a – grid lines (quadratic plots; a = 4/12 measuring units); b – implemented; c – not implemented; d – area associated with expansion of blocks over the modular size. Krasnowolski 2010



### III. INCORPORATED TOWNS

the presence of church buildings in the area dating from the earlier period, the need to connect to the proto-urban communications network and to make space for the town fortifications, all of which interfered with the perimeter of the whole town. The result obtained was a structure with a strongly emphasized regularity with some imperfections however. The area south of the Market Square was irregular in plan. The main feature of this irregularity was the southern corner of the square from which Grodzka Street issued in a funnel-like fashion – main axis of the suburbium of Okół, leading to the castle in Wawel. Each of the other three corners of the Market Square

was a starting point for two streets. In addition, each side of the Market Square was divided into two by one more street (Fig. 32). The relative homogeneity of the town plan of the incorporated Krakow does not mean that the districts were soon built up although, admittedly, the layout remained stable until it was set in stone by masonry buildings.

As in Wrocław, a complex of commercial facilities was installed at the centre of the town's principal market by a decision of the duke. They included the cloth halls (*camera*) and stalls (*kram*), ranged in rows aligned with the axis of the square. They are known from archaeological investigation, the first carried

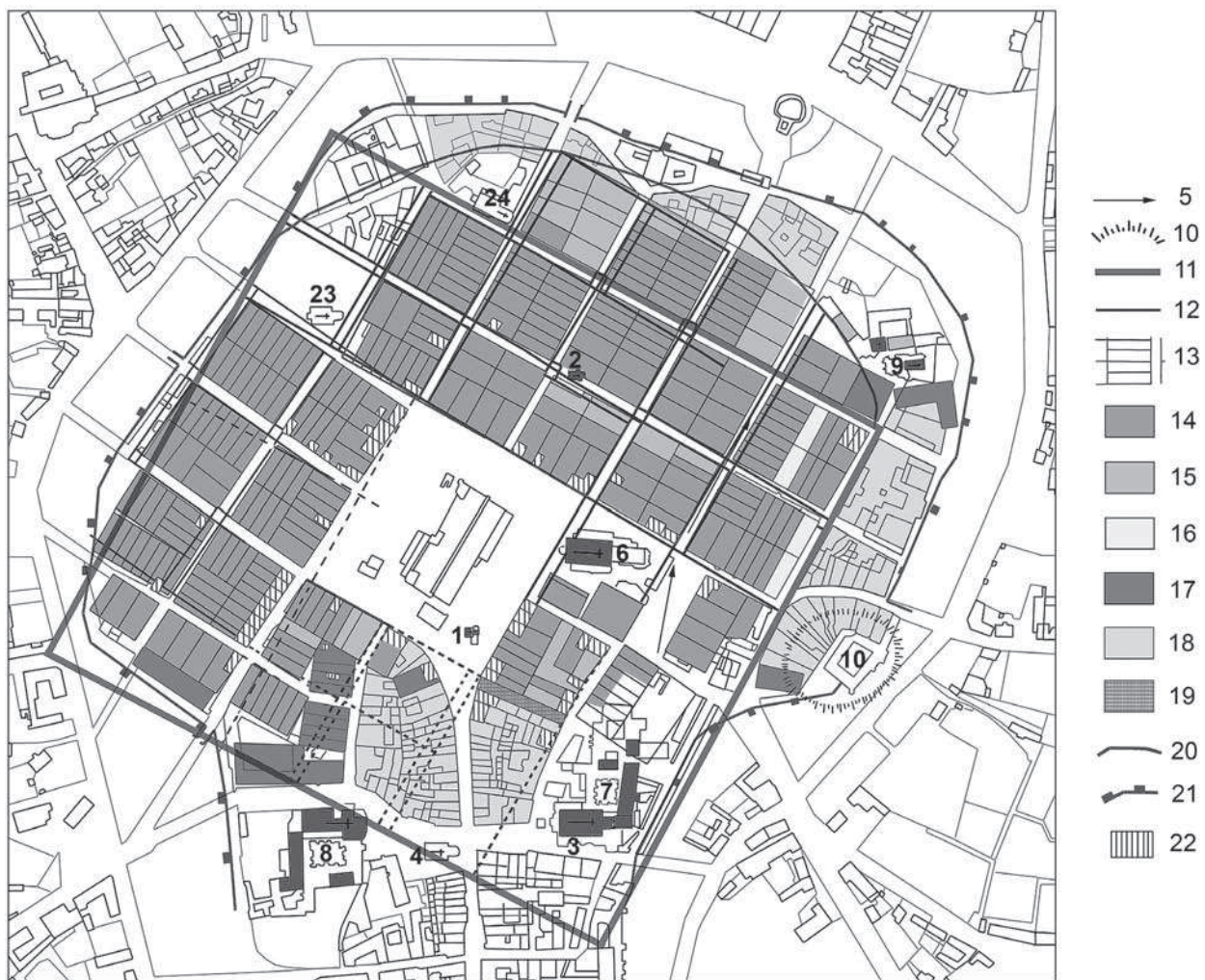


Fig. 32. Krakow. Projected layout of the town in 1257: 1 – St Wojciech/Adalbert's church; 2 – St John's church; 3 – Holy Trinity church; 4 – All Saints church; 5 – conjectured axis of street layout from 1220; 6 – Our Lady's church; 7 – Dominican monastery; 8 – Franciscan monastery; 9 – hospital with the churches of the Holy Spirit and the Holy Cross; 10 – stronghold of the town headman; 11 – conjectured boundary of the centre of the urban grid from the time of the 'Great Incorporation'; 12 – layout of the first complex of residential blocks and streets; 13 – modular divisions of property lots: full-curia (36 × 72 ells) and half-curia (18 × 72 ells); 14 – area with plots of modular full-curia and half-curia size; 15 – areas with non-modular plots; 16 – areas associated with expansion of blocks to more than a modular size; 17 – regular full- and half-curia plots laid out in areas with an irregular plan; 18 – areas divided into plots of a size derived from full-curia module; 19 – defunct street; 20 – earth-and-timber fortifications from ca. 1285; 21 – city walls after 1298; 22 – earliest townhouses; 23 – St Stephen's church; 24 – St Mark's church. Krasnowolski 2007



Fig. 33. Krakow. Rich Stalls, phase I. Dryja and Głowa et al. 2010a. Trial projection after W. Głowa, W. Niewalda and S. Sławiński, digital model after P. Opaliński

out during the 1960s, and a major project completed 2005–2009 (Dryja et al. 2010; 2010a; 2010b; Zaitz 2010). There is evidence that during the second half of the 13th century most of these buildings were timber-framed structures. The stalls east of the cloth hall, later referred to as *kramy bogate* (rich stalls), were built of stone (Fig. 33). Over subsequent decades, the infrastructure of the Market Square evolved rapidly; a town hall was built and more rows of stalls.

The incorporation bypassed Okół – next to Wawel, the main area of the proto-town. Its earlier economic role is not fully clear. Very likely, during the period following the incorporation its conjectural crafts and commercial function expired. Nevertheless, Okół's position between the ducal castle and the Market Square, and its several churches, suggests that it cannot be regarded as a lesser element of the agglomeration. Its attraction for the upper ranks of the Krakow community – secular and ecclesiastical – is evident. Okół retained its irregular layout, based on the earlier existing axes of Grodzka and Kanonicza streets. A plot division project carried out

presumably under King Władysław the Elbow-high in 1320–1330s removed at least some of this irregularity. A change was also made to the status of Okół, now described as *nova civitas* (Wyrozumski 1992, 259; Bicz–Suknarowska, Niewalda and Rojkowska 1996, 89–95; Krasnowolski 2004, 108, 120–122; Rajman 2004, 209–211; Słoń 2010, 295–306).

The relationship of the town's fortifications to the boundaries of the incorporated town in Krakow is not fully clear. We know that their construction started after 1285 with the approval and involvement of Duke Leszek the Black (1279–1288). The earliest archaeologically confirmed survivor of these defences is a moat discovered in the northern circuit by the later-day Sławkowska Street and to the west of the university district (Wyrozumski 1992, 183–184; Dębowski 1996; Poleski 2010, Fig 6; Niemiec et al. 2011). This find suggests that the area of the town covered by the incorporation was smaller, which is consistent with the conclusions of M. Borowiejska-Birkenmajerowa (1975). In all probability, the moat and the earth rampart



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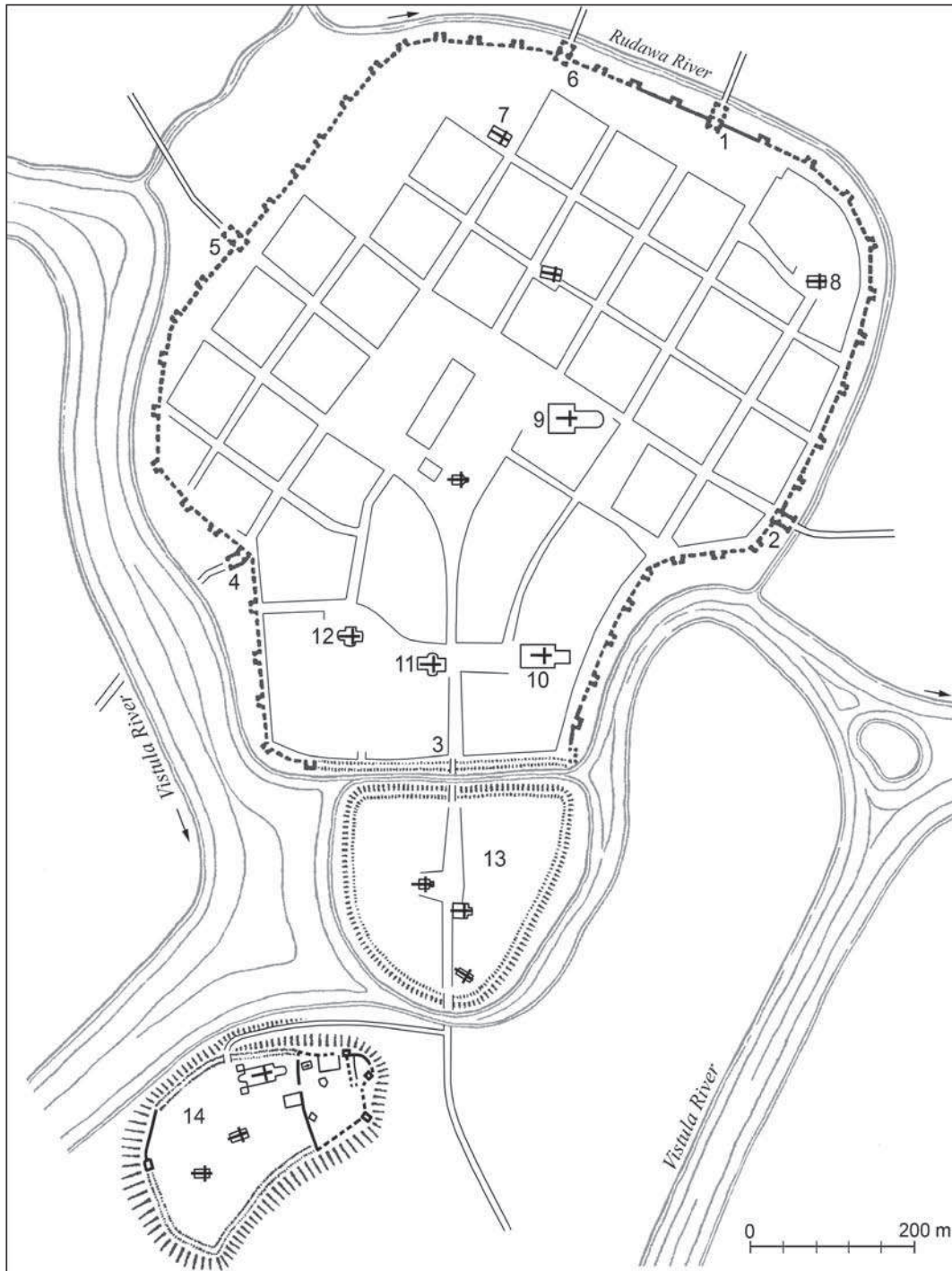


Fig. 34. Krakow. City walls ca. 1300: 1 – Floriańska Gate; 2 – Rzeźnicza Gate; 3 – Grodzka Gate; 4 – Wiślna Gate; 5 – Szewska Gate; 6 – Sławkowska Gate; 7 – St Mark's church; 8 – hospital with Holy Cross church; 9 – Blessed Virgin Mary's parish church; 10 – Dominican Holy Trinity church; 11 – All Saints church; 12 – Franciscan St Francis's church; 13 – suburbium of Okół; 14 – Wawel. Widawski 1973

enclosed only the incorporated town. To the south, these fortifications presumably connected with the moat of Okół. There is evidence that at this time, the townspeople were opposed to having the town fortifications joined to Wawel (Wyrozumski 1992, 215, with sources; Rajman 2004, 206–208). The construction of the stone city wall only started

around 1300, at the behest of King Wenceslaus II (1300–1305). The reconstruction of its course in the southern part is only conjectural (Fig. 34). The town and the castle were given a single system of defences presumably only around the mid-14th century (Niewalda, Rojkowska and Zaitz 2001; Krasnowolski 2004, 204–108).



## 2. THE PRINCIPAL FEATURES OF THE TRANSITION

Studies of the structures of Prague, Wrocław and Krakow from the time of a widely understood reform of towns, conducted by several generations of historians, architectural historians and archaeologists, did not bring any definitive conclusions that are helpful for defining the nature of this phenomenon. On the other hand, input from this research allows us to reflect on some important issues and to suggest directions for future discussion.

The acceleration of the urbanisation process in East Central Europe and the transition to the second, urban stage was largely due to developments that were at work in the region west of the Elbe and the Saale. Rapid demographic growth had produced a 'surplus' of the main resource of the early medieval world – an able workforce. The first effect of this development was economic use of lands not yet populated, in a process usually referred to as internal colonisation with the other, almost parallel result of eastward migration. Eastern colonisation (*Ostkolonisation*) unfolding in East Central Europe is viewed as a part of this complex phenomenon. Other elements, of a comparable magnitude, are the Crusades, the *reconquista* in the Iberian Peninsula and colonisation in the British Isles. This process, difficult to interpret, is being discussed with an equal intensity as that of the origin of towns (Schlesinger 1975; Higounet 1990; Bartlett 2003; Gawlas 2003; Fernandez-Armesto and Muldoon 2008). Without going deeper into this discussion, we can say that the influx of foreign settlers was of prime importance for the urbanisation of East Central Europe and for its cultural image in the centuries to follow, but was also fraught with political consequences. Another factor in town formation, which in a way was symmetrical to the mounting overpopulation of the post-Carolingian zone, was the demand for settlers and new forms of economic activity in the West Slav states and Hungary, expressed by incorporation contracts (Körmeny 1995).

The proto-towns and incorporated towns of East Central Europe differ substantially in their organization, economy, spatial and social structure and many other respects. These dissimilarities have already been analysed and there is no need to reiterate them here (Piekalski 2001; Rębkowski 2001). Accepting that there were differences between the two basic stages of urbanisation of the 'new Europe', we should not treat these two categories of towns as fully separate phenomena. Researchers with an interest in incorporated towns, most notably, historians

and architectural historians, rarely venture into an analysis of their origin or reach back to earlier times and structures. They settle for an over-generalization that pre-incorporation phenomena and processes have nothing to do with the communal town. Nonetheless, towns such as Prague, Krakow, Wrocław or Szczecin, obviously contest this claim. The pre-incorporation, incorporation and post-incorporation phases of development cannot be separated with any accuracy. It would seem that our views have been following the rule of the pendulum – in the period following the end of World War II, we were ready to find a town at almost every castle with a castle settlement (suburbium), while at present, we have a tendency to downplay the importance of the pre-incorporation structures. In doing so we forget that the larger towns of Central Europe evolved, almost without exception, next to centres of major significance even before the formation of a legally constituted town commune. Towns founded during the 13th century, *a novo*, overwhelming in number, usually remained centres of lesser significance. This applies both to the post-Carolingian zone, and to the area affected by colonisation in the East.

There is a need to discuss the issue of the so-called first incorporations that took place during the early decades of the 13th century in Wrocław and in Krakow, and possibly in Poznań and elsewhere. This subject was introduced mainly by historians, subsequently gained general acceptance and was embraced by archaeologists as well (see Zientara 1976; Młynarska-Kaletynowa 1986, 100–123; Krasnowolski 2004, 32–34). We know that such centres, described as *civitates*, had a municipal head (*scultetus*), presumably had a non-agrarian economy and had mendicant communities established next to them, which highlighted the urban nature of settlement. However, it remains hypothetical whether they functioned based on an actual incorporation contract, be it only oral, which transferred a specified area to the urban commune in exchange for fiscal obligations (Młynarska-Kaletynowa 1986, 100). Presumably, the situation was very much like that in Prague where the privilege of Duke Soběslav of the 1170s confirmed the distinct judicial rights of a group of immigrant colonists, but without linking them with payments for a specified piece of land (CD Bohemiae I, no. 290; Kejř 1969; Goliński 2012, 21). These groups are identifiable mainly by their different customs and their own, one might say, internal law. We find them only in the large ducal centres that evolved over

several centuries, defined by us as polycentric proto-towns. The market settlements were a fundamental element of these agglomerations. In many cases, we have grounds to conclude that the demographic basis of these settlements was formed of ethnically foreign *hospites*, rightly regarded by Christian Lübke (1995, 38–39) as a catalyst of the town-forming processes. The unclear status of *civitates* during this phase of development is aptly reflected by Sławomir Gawlas in his penetrating analysis of the incorporation watershed, inspired by Benedykt Zientara's contribution, who is inclined to define them as, admittedly post-incorporation, but at the same time, pre-communal. The same researcher also notes that it may be misleading to conclude as to the date of incorporation solely based on a reference to a *scultetus* (Zientara 1976, 74–78; Gawlas 2005, 152).

Specifying the location of the settlements of the first *hospites* and their place within the urban topography is not easy. It is uncertain whether the first settlement of the Prague Germans was in fact in Poříčí, by the church of St Peter's, where the judiciary privilege was signed (Kejř 1969, 1998, 75–76, 89–90; Tomas 1984a, 49–50). In Wrocław, the location of the 'commune of the first incorporation' continues to be the subject of a never-ending discussion and almost every scholar holds a separate viewpoint (Rozpędowski 1995; Młynarska-Kaletynowa 1986; Piekalski 2002a; 2011; Buško 2005a). In Szczecin, the site of the settlement of German traders, already in place during the second half of the 12th century, admittedly has been identified based on the written sources but its traces in the archaeological record have yet to be detected (Rębkowski 2001, 26, 42, 60–63). In Krakow, no final conclusions were reached on this question (Krasnowolski 2004, 88–91; Rajman 2004, 173–182). Jerzy Wyrozumski, author of pivotal contributions to the research of Krakow recently voiced his doubts as to how the situation of this town during the first half of the 13th century has been viewed so far (Wyrozumski 2007a).

The question is, are we to treat these structures as an actual result of early incorporations, understood as well considered legal regulations, or otherwise, as an effect of the evolution of proto-urban centres. Economic prosperity and the dynamic growth of the non-agrarian economy in the western zone of Central Europe are dated to the 12th century. Possibly, the economic developments unfolding to the west of the Elbe were the source for the acceleration of the evolution of pre-incorporation centres of East Central Europe. After all, the economic growth of Prague, Wrocław and Krakow, was supposedly based

on long-distance trade – controlled by the rulers, bishoprics or large monasteries. Financial success was something also enjoyed by merchants trading in the eastern centres, not only in Cologne, Regensburg and Magdeburg. The process may be viewed from a supraregional perspective and its result was the evolution of towns during the early decades of the 13th century, usually recognized as the effect of the 'first incorporations', which to be truthful, are not really confirmed by written sources. Thus, it might be more correct to argue that organized communes of foreign, mainly German-speaking, *hospites* functioned as one of the elements of pre-incorporation settlement complexes. It seems that quite without justification, the peak phase of the development of early urban centres has been made part of the history of incorporated towns.

Were the town plans the result of a single surveying episode, or the effect of evolution? It seems that a question formulated in such a way and looking for an unequivocal answer is now outdated, and even awkward and provoking. Nonetheless, even a cursory review of research results will show that it does reflect the actual differences of opinion rooted in the method used. The dissimilarity of views on the nature of the changing settlement, including the origin of towns, often coincides with a division into research disciplines and individual specializations. Where an historian, an art historian and an architectural historian suspects determined action, *faits accomplis* and readymade solutions, i.e. the founding of a town, a single surveying project to plan the town and rapid development of a large area – the archaeologist sees, most often, a prolonged evolution of settlement structures, usually in an area occupied and in use during an earlier period.

That the vision of an ideal medieval town, one that has a long tradition (Gruber 1942; Planitz 1954), can still be attractive is shown by a discussion recently renewed in German publications (Humpert and Schenk 2001; Schreg 2002; Untermann and Falk 2004). It demonstrates that even today not every scholar is willing to accept the fact that single-layer town plans are extremely rare and post-medieval cadastral plans are not a sufficient source for the study of the intentions of the founders and reformers of the incorporated *civitas*. Fortunately, most historians of architecture and urbanisation now realize that if used without an analysis of the material remains of the earliest houses and streets, the measurement method will not produce a reliable understanding of the medieval structure of the town and its transformations. Let us take Silesian towns as an example. The centres that

we know have the least regular town plans are recognized as fully corresponding to an incorporation, which is understood as a single event. These towns scarcely investigated by archaeological excavation and lacking surviving medieval town houses, include Złotoryja, Lwówek Śląski, Środa Śląska, Strzegom and many more. The results of metrology studies, based on 19th century cadastral plans, are accepted without any discussion (Pudelko 1967; Kozaczewski 1973; Chorowska 2005, 210–214). Wrocław, on the other hand, has provoked a lively exchange of opinion because it is a centre with a relatively well-preserved and investigated structure. The results of studies by architectural historians and archaeologists have convinced us that this town with an indisputably regular built environment, was subject during the 13th century to dynamic transformations, and yet, experienced researchers are unable to link legal acts with individual stages in the town's development. Wrocław's chessboard plan is actually one of multiple layers and the sequence of planning individual districts and filling them with buildings is not entirely clear (Chorowska 2010). The earliest that this town plan became stable was during the second half of the 13th century.

In describing the degrees of regularity of the street grid and the blocks of urban development, we can place at one end of the spectrum – Flemish Bruges, and at the other end – Krakow or Chelmno. The centres of Flanders, the pioneers in the development of town communes in Europe to the north of the Alps, assumed an irregular structure. As successive town communes continued to be set up in the region more to the east a tendency was born to regulate the town plans taking form, and in the end, a geometric model was arrived at during the second half of the 13th century, in Poland, Bohemia and Moravia. Which factors were the cause of this regularity, observed between the Atlantic coast and the Vistula River from the 11th through to the 13th century? In my opinion, they were the following:

1. The charging of rent for a burgage plot. In time, it became compulsory to peg out regular, rectangular plots with an easily calculated surface area, which contributed to the creation of a transparent method for calculating the due payments.

2. Land was readily available for building on. In earlier settlement centres of post-Carolingian Europe the structure of the town most often took shape on a partly built-up area with an already established network of main streets. Thus, newly marked out blocks of urban development assumed an irregular form. In towns founded to the east of the Elbe where land was

more easily available it was possible to plan a town's layout in an area free from earlier occupation.

3. Moving the trade from urban domestic buildings to permanent market facilities owned by the ruler and concentrated in a square in the town centre. This step, taken by the Piast dukes, mainly Henry the Bearded, has recently come to be viewed as the reason for the preference for rectangular marketplaces and blocks of buildings at their centre, which finds reflection in the chessboard plans of towns (Gawlas 2000, 32–34, 2005, 150–157; Krasnowolski 2010, 70).

4. Improvement in medieval surveying skills and aesthetic considerations with the town viewed as an object of art.

Thus, the main factor that determined the town plan was the regulation of the relationship between the territorial lord and the townspeople. Let us add here that even if the towns of the post-Carolingian zone were laid out in an irregular plan it was not disorderly or changed in arbitrary fashion, as once suggested by Daniel Gutscher (1993, 1997). The case of Freiburg im Breisgau confirms that successive streets, blocks of buildings and burgage plots along them had been measured out by surveyors, and the size of the plots listed in tax records roughly corresponds with the findings from archaeological excavations (Untermann 2000, 2004). On the other hand, the town plans in the East never attained the ideal geometric form indicated by researchers, who prefer the metrology method (e.g. Kozaczewski 1972, 1973; Rogalanka 1977). The perfection-seeking intentions of medieval surveyors were overthrown by the irregularity of the terrain, the fluctuating economic and property conditions, disasters befalling the townspeople, and finally, surveying errors. Perhaps the most persuasive image of a 13th-century town has emerged in Wrocław due to the successful pooling together of the objectives and efforts of historians, architectural historians and archaeologists (Lasota and Chorowska 1995; Chorowska 2010).

When attempting to describe the features of the urbanisation process of Central Europe of the 12th–13th centuries, in its western and eastern zone alike and the rise of successive towns, it would seem that in each case we find an accelerated evolution rather than an incident with a definite timeframe. Ever more frequently, we have come to refer to incorporation as a complex process rather than the act of founding a town (Chorowska and Lasota 1995). The dynamic evolution of the pre-incorporation *civitates* of East Central Europe, increasingly slipping out from under the control of the rulers during the first half of the 13th century was halted by incorporations. At



### III. INCORPORATED TOWNS

present, we may say that one of the aims of incorporations carried out in ducal settlement centres was to strengthen the authority of the ruler over foreign merchants and to focus trade into permanent market facilities owned by the ruler (Gawlas 2005, 155–156). The urbanisation of East Central Europe viewed as a demographically and economically conditioned process, followed from the rhythm of the overall advancement of civilisation on the continent and was inevitable in the 13th century. Town building had been made possible by economic reasons, i.e. the combination of craft production, trade and consump-

tion and of luxury objects (Weber 1920/21). Legal, political and ideological conditions determined only the form of urbanisation. Incorporation contracts proved for the power elites, who were interested in a quick and big profit, to be the best instrument to manage the independently unfolding process. The method of organizing communal towns instituted by territorial rulers made urbanisation in East Central Europe a highly dynamic process. However, in the end it did not produce the intensity and quality of urbanisation that is comparable to that in the region situated farther to the west and south.