

THE ORIGIN OF PRE-CHARTERED AND CHARTERED URBAN LAYOUTS IN WEST POMERANIA

The spatial forms of Polish cities, including Pomeranian cities – just like all over the world – reflect man's activity on a certain territory affected by numerous internal and external factors, as well as the period of town's foundation and its duration. Taking into consideration European conditions, Poland is a relatively large country, therefore its geographical environment created a varied base for the location and layout of towns. Thus, particular regions of Poland (Fig. 1) were characterized by different types of economy, but also by different degree of openness to contacts with the outer world.

In European historiography concerning Poland still predominates the conviction, that Polish urban network was shaped only in 13th–14th centuries when towns were chartered according to German law and it was mainly German settlers' achievement. As a matter of fact, majority of Polish cities came into being much earlier and developed in an evolutionary way. The original spatial form of pre-chartered Polish towns was a multifunctional settlement unit consisting of a *gród* (fortified settlement) – local ruler or administrator base with defensive functions, a craftsman's *podgrodzie* (borough), or several boroughs and the market settlement. Many of settlements that were fulfilling supervisory and service functions for agricultural subsidiaries, were already large cities in early Middle Ages which can be proved by the term *civitas* used in from Latin documents. For these reasons the development of urban settlement in Poland did not have a uniform character. On the contrary, the time of foundation and granting charters, their origin, forms of spatial layout, character of buildings, susceptibility to foreign patterns, and the intensity of urbanization process varied significantly in different regions of Poland. It was very clearly underlined by Hensel

(1959, p. 726), according to whom in the history of Slavic cities one should distinguish two stages: the first stage, lasting roughly until the mid-10th century, and the second stage of towns on “native” or “local” law, that came to an end in Poland in the mid-12th century. Hensel admits that in some regions of the country the process of urban development – e.g. in West Pomerania – presumably took place earlier.

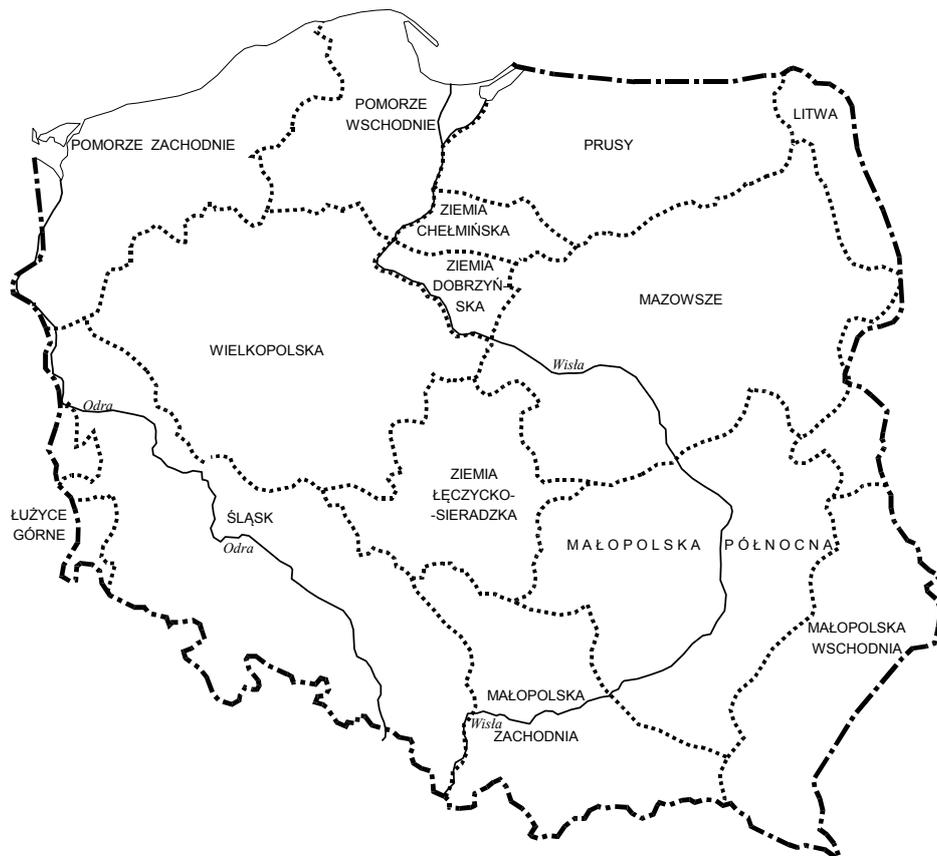


Fig. 1. Division of Poland into historical regions,
Source: According to Koter and Kulesza (1999)

West Pomerania, conventionally defined by the borders of the contemporary Zachodniopomorskie province, is situated in the north-western part of Poland, and borders with Germany in the west, and with the Baltic in the north. It ranks among most beautiful and the most attractive tourist regions of Poland. The Zachodniopomorskie province with the capital in Szczecin was established in 1999 and covers the area of 22,896 sq. km (7,3%

of the country area). Its administrative borders embrace Wolin Island and the part of Uznam Island. The present area of the province consists of several historical units characterized by specific features. The northern part of the province belongs to the historical province of Pomerania, traditionally divided into Front Pomerania and Back Pomerania. Communes south of this area belong to historical New March, while the Wałcz district and Czaplonek commune belong to historical Wielkopolska¹.

There are 62 cities² in Zachodniopomorskie province, including three cities with district status. In the past, 80 municipal centers were founded here. As Leciejewicz (1991, p. 207) notices

one of the essential feature of Pomeranian cities is their early, as for Slavic Central Europe, origin. As we know, already in the mid-9th century on the south coast of the Baltic settlements were founded that can be qualified as an early towns.

Latour (1995, p. 44) replenishes above statement, by adding that

development and the spatial layout of towns in West Pomerania is closely connected with the political and economic history of this region. Relatively dense settlement network in the early Middle Ages, particularly in the basins of Plana, Odra, Rega, Parsęta and Słupia rivers was the consequence of agricultural development and the expansion of agricultural goods trade facilitated by the navigability of rivers and the proximity of the sea.

According to some estimates in the 12th century there were about 120 market settlements in Poland, 20 of which in West Pomerania. According to Lalik at the turn of the 12th century the number of Polish market towns was 200 (250 together with West Pomerania), out of which 55 are mentioned in sources from the 12th century, what can be assumed as a credible number (Buczek, 1964, p. 60). The estimated number of 50 market settlements

¹ Western Pomerania (German *Pommern*) – the historical and geographic region by the Odra river. It borders with Meklemburgia and Brandenburgia (Germany) to the west, with Lebus land and Wielkopolska to the south, and with Gdańsk Pomerania to the east.

² Barlinek, Barwice, Białogard, Biały Bór, Bobolice, Borne Sulinowo, Cedynia, Chociwel, Chojna, Choszczno, Czaplonek, Człopa, Darłowo, Dębno, Dobra, Dobrzany, Drawno, Drawsko Pomorskie, Golczewo, Goleniów, Gryfice, Gryfino, Ińsko, Kalisz Pomorski, Kamień Pomorski, Karlino, Kępice, Kołobrzeg, Koszalin, Lipiany, Łobez, Maszewo, Mieszkowice, Międzyzdroje, Mirosławiec, Moryń, Myślibórz, Nowe Warpno, Nowogard, Pełczyce, Płoty, Polanów, Police, Połczyn Zdrój, Pyrzyce, Recz, Resko, Sianów, Sławno, Stargard Szczeciński, Suchań, Szczecin, Szczecinek, Świdwin, Świnoujście, Trzcianko Zdrój, Trzebiatów, Tuczno, Wałcz, Węgorzyno, Wolin, Złocieniec.

located on the territory in question is significant, taking into consideration the approximate number of 80 municipal centers that were founded here through centuries. It means that over 60% of cities of West Pomerania originate from former market town.

The investigations, especially archaeological researches prove that between the 9th and 10th centuries such centres like Szczecin, Kołobrzeg or Wolin – already significant settlements, evolved into pre-chartered towns developing under protection of powerful *gróds*. All early cities of West Pomerania were characterized by functions typical for this type of centers. In all of them there were inns and markets mentioned in 12th-century sources, i.a. in Szczecin, Kamień, Kołobrzeg and Wolin. Some of Pomeranian *gróds* e.g. Pyrzyce, Stargard, Białogard had the very early origin reaching the prehistoric times. Inside of them, especially in the castellan *gróds* or in *podgrodzia* (boroughs) first churches and monasteries, inns and markets were established. This is reflected in the present cultural landscape of West Pomerania constituting the material testimony of rich history which was the result of West-European, Polish and Scandinavian influences. It is visible in preserved mediaeval urban layouts, in sacred architecture and other buildings from this period among which the most valuable are these in Cedynia, Darłów, Dobra Nowogardzka, Lipiany, Maszew, Mieszkowice, Moryń, Trzcińsko-Zdrój and Trzebiatów. The mediaeval city walls are preserved in Mieszkowice, Pyrzyce, Recz, Moryń, Szczeciński Stargard, Trzcińsko-Zdrój, Lipiany, Maszew. The centres of ducal, episcopal and knight's power are in Szczecin (the most magnificent castle), Darłów, Pęzino, Swobnica, Świdwina, Płoty and the relicts of castles are in Dobra, Karlin, Stare Drawsko, Drawna, Golczew. Sacred buildings are in Kamieński Pomorski and Kołobrzeg (the most valuable cathedrals). Granite churches from 12th-13th century are, e.g. in commune Moryń, Chojna and Mieszkowice.

The urban development was not a homogeneous process. Lalik (1956, p. 632–633) is right by stating that

actually the most clear model of the process of cities genesis can be observed only while analyzing the oldest settlements, whereas the formation of newer settlements is the result of the intensification of the same processes, however in changed conditions both by the fact of influence of existing towns, as well as by significant deepening of social differentiation.

As it was mentioned before the majority of the seaside municipal centers have very early origin and some of them developed already in the period between the 7th and 10th centuries. Their development depended generally on

local agricultural production and craftsmanship inside the *gród* and on the situation in the Baltic region. However the basis for the development of early municipal centers in West Pomerania was significant craftsmen concentration. The developmental of craft was accompanied by the dynamic development of trade, serving mainly the coast of the Baltic Sea.

Pomerania, which only temporarily in the 11th and 12th centuries belonged to Polish state and afterwards was an independent duchy experiencing increasing German influences, had formed its own morphological type of mediaeval towns. The chartered town also in Pomerania has adapted many irregular pre-chartered forms among which the oval layouts of the old market settlements prevail. Absorption of pre-chartered relicts by mediaeval cities led to deformation of their regular plans. In some cases those pre-chartered relicts have disturbed the proper layout to such an extent that even German researchers perceived them as continuation of Slavic settlements (Bobiński, 1975). A characteristic feature of many Pomeranian towns is their form reflected in the outline of medieval, fortification walls resembling a circle or an oval, just like in *gróds*. In towns of West Pomerania there are few segments of walls in a form of straight lines, which was a rule in towns founded *in cruda radice* (on previously undeveloped sites). Chartered towns in Pomerania were founded according to the Lubeck law which was a chessboard-type with an old market place of Brandenburg type, partly occupied by a church and the stalls surrounding it, and partly by a town hall built some time later. This pattern occasionally occurred in other Polish lands neighbouring with Pomerania (e.g. Wielkopolska) (compare Münch, 1946).

Forms of settlement based on an oval plan with the spindle-shaped market square that developed at this time were continued in the 2nd half of the 13th century when towns on Magdeburg or Lubeck law were founded. Relicts of these spatial layouts are still clearly visible in majority of contemporary town plans on the area concerned, particularly in Kamień Pomorski, Gryfice, Recz, Pyrzyce, Lipiany or in Chojna (compare Bobiński, 1975; Latour, 1995; Koter and Kulesza, 1999). This proves a strong position of the Pomeranian trade in the Middle Ages what is confirmed not only by well-preserved pre-chartered layouts of market settlements, but also by 12th-century written sources, reporting on lively activity of Pomeranian markets, e.g. Innocent's II bull from 1140 mentions 13 market settlements in the Pomeranian bishopric. This number however should be completed with a few, if not several further settlements. They developed from *podgrodzie* (borough) (Białogard, Dobra, Goleniów, Kamień Pomorski, Kołobrzeg, Maszewo, Nowogard, Pełczyce, Pyrzyce, Recz, Resko, Słupsk, Szczeciński Stargard, Suchań, Trzebiatów),

settlements adjoining a *gród* (Chojna, Człuchów, Dobrzany, Drawno, Golczewo, Kalisz Pomorski, Krajenka, Myślibórz, Police, Złotów), craft-trade settlements adjoining a *gród* (Banie, Barlinek, Barwice, Bobolice, Cedynia, Chociwel, Goleniów, Gryfice, Kołobrzeg, Lipiany, Łobez, Mieszkowice, Płoty, Sławno, Słupsk, Widuchowa, Wolin), market settlements (Choszczno, Czaplinek, Gryfino, Karlino, Lębork, Pelczyce, Sławno, Szczecin, Złocieniec) or from fishing settlements (Darłowo, Gryfino, Ińsko, Moryń, Sianów, Świnoujście, Trzcińsko Zdrój, Ustka, Wałcz, Węgorzyno), that were under protection of powerful *gróds*. There were considerably less cities originating from villages, i.a. Dębno, Grabowo, Jastrowie, Koszalin, Łeba, Międzyzdroje, Okonek, Szczecinek, Wierzbno. In several cases however the beginnings of the settlement are not known or there is no complete documentary evidence, e.g. Biały Bór, Czarne, Człopa, Człuchów, Debrzno, Drezdenko, Miastko, Nowe Warpno, Tuczno.

Before analyzing the origin and the oldest layout of West Pomerania towns it is worthy to characterize the most important centre of West Pomerania – Szczecin, one of the oldest Slavic settlements in the Baltic region, located on the Odra river estuary, by Dąbie Lake. Its origin traces back to the 2nd half of the 8th century. In the 9th century on the present Castle Hill, the defensive *gród* with Pomeranian population was founded. Next to *gród* the *podgrodzie* developed. In 1243 Szczecin was granted municipal rights. In this period the city has joined Hanza, and became an intermediary between Polish market (export of cereal and forest goods), Scandinavian countries and Western Europe. In the 15th century it had approx. 10 thousand citizens. In analyzed period Szczecin was subject to strong economic and cultural influences of neighbouring countries. However the decisive influence on Szczecin had Hanseatic cities. This was reflected in all spheres of urban life including economy and culture.

Originally, at the place of contemporary Old Town there was a *gród* with *podgrodzie*, which in the beginning of the 12th century received its own defensive walls. The spatial arrangement of *podgrodzie* – as it is emphasized by Latour and Orlińska (1986, p. 439) –

was characterized by regularity, confirmed after the war by archaeological excavations. In the centre of the settlement there was the Fish Market from which the network of streets was spread forming rectangular blocks. This settlement had undoubtedly an urban character, therefore the foundation of the city in 1243 on Magdeburg law needs to be considered only as a legal regulation of economic and social matters.

In the 12th century a dynamic economic development of Szczecin attracted new settlers, mainly from German countries, who initially were settling

south of the former *podgrodzie*, and later occupied areas to the south-west around St. James church founded in 1187. Presumably after Danish invasion at end of the 12th century the German neighbourhood was encircled by a separate wall, similar to the already existing one around Slavic *podgrodzie*. Therefore, one can assume that in this time several separated municipal units have developed and coexisted one with another (Latour and Orlińska, 1986, p. 439).

Granting of municipal rights resulted in spatial unification of Szczecin. After removal of fortifications their place was taken over by defensive walls which embraced the area of the whole city, together with the castle and area farther to the west. The construction of defensive walls has started in 1283 and was finished in the 15th century. They surrounded the area of the city covering nearly 55 hectares.

Granted with chartered, Szczecin still had somewhat chaotic spatial layout. It has been described by Latour and Orlińska (1986, p. 440):

Former Slavic *podgrodzie* was characterized by rectangular arrangement of streets and blocks. The streets were considerably narrower here than in the newer parts of the city and did not exceed 6–10 m in width [...]. When located in the centre of *podgrodzie* – the Vegetable Market and neighbouring Fish Market, were not sufficient for larger city, the centre of the urban life moved gradually towards south and west. The role of the new centre in south-west part of the city was taken over by the Hay Market with a town hall transformed in 1262 from the merchant's house. The part of the city situated on the plateau was significantly bigger than both remaining areas. Its streets (Staromłyńska, Tkacka) were ran parallel to western section of walls. The spatial separation of this part of the city from the Hay Market influenced the creation of the separate trade centre in shape of irregular Horse Market, presently named the White Eagle Square. Documents suggest that the upper part of the city was built-up in the first half of the 14th century. Inside the city walls there were four churches: St. John (1300), St. James (1191), St. Nicolas (12th century) and Virgin Mary (1263) [...]. After the erection of permanent bridge on the Odra River, Łasztownia Island, mentioned in 1298 as Łastadie, became a part of the city. At the beginning on the island were mainly workshops of boat builders, outbuildings and embankment port. Gradually the island was developed as a residential neighbourhood, what is testified by the erection of St. Gertrude church in 1308, named the Sailors' Church. Presumably, on its place, the present neogothic church was built.

In the 15th–17th century the city expanded further. According to the sources from the beginning of the 17th century the area of the city was

already populated by nearly 6 thousands inhabitants living in 334 houses. The principal changes in the spatial layout of the city took place in 1637, after the death of Bogusław XIV – the last duke of Pomerania – when Szczecin got under Swedish rules. It resulted in transformation of the city into a fortress.

In the majority of cities that from earlier settlements, the market together with town hall and parish church were situated in the place of the former spindle-shaped market square. Chojna, Gryfice, Pyrzyce, Szczeciński Stargard and Strzelce Krajeńskie provide classic examples of such a spatial arrangement.

Chojna is one of the oldest settlements in West Pomerania. Already in the 10th century it was an important settlement in Polans' (Slavic tribe) state. During next two centuries it was under Polish and later Pomeranian rule. The town was granted municipal rights between 1244 and 1257, what was a consequence of development of this settlement in the past, as Chojna in the 12th century was already a well-developed economic centre. Between 1402 and 1455 the town was under control of the Teutonic Order. After being repurchased by the Hohenzollerns it belonged to Brandenburg, Prussia and Germany (until 1945).

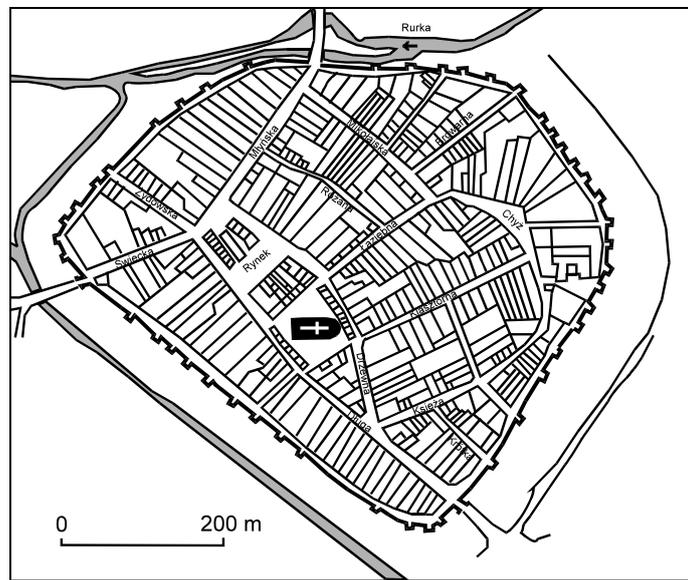


Fig. 2. Plan of Chojna in 1724
Source: After Münch (1946, p. 175)

Chojna is an example of the town which maintained relicts of pre-chartered arrangement within its irregular layout. While analyzing its plan, one can notice two morphological units different from the rest of the town's layout. They are a spindle-shaped square, encompassing the market and the church as well as the adjacent three urban blocks on its east side surrounded by a characteristic oval of peripheral streets together with a cloister. The oval-shaped site was common in Pomerania, however its post-chartered development displays Brandenburg influences, such as localization of the church and the market place with town-halls and stalls (Münch, 1946, p. 176) (Fig. 2). The area between the above mentioned streets is a remnant of a castle. It is emphasized by visible bulges in the line of town walls on its north-eastern side (Bobiński, 1975, p. 79–80). Thus, one can assume that Chojna developed from former complex of castle-market settlement, without distinct *podgordzie*.

Stargard Szczeciński is one of the oldest settlements in the area concerned. It originated as a *gród* founded in the late 8th or early 9th century. Next to it, at a crossing of important trade routes (from Santok to Wolin and from Szczecin to Kołobrzeg), the settlement has developed. Its relicts, situated in the Ina River valley about 1,5 km south-west from the present-day city, have been preserved till today. After its erection at the turn of the 9th century, next to the Ina river-crossing and the settlement which was here earlier, probably from the beginning of the 9th century, the first *gród* was abandoned (presumably in the mid-10th century). Some researchers suppose, that the present name of the city – Stargard, which means an old fortified settlement, which for the first time appeared in sources from 1124 – refers to the first stronghold. The remnant of the second stronghold is the land elevation next to the tower in the north-east part of the Old City. The settlement mentioned already, situated between town and the Mała Ina River, became a *podgordzie*. At the end of the 12th century on the elevation situated on the west side of the Mała Ina River the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem settled. Shortly, east of the monastery, a new settlement developed, situated directly by the riverside. The free space between the market and the settlement was shortly taken over by Augustinian monastery. In this way in the northern part of the later Old City the settlement complex came into being, stretched across the Ina River, with the axis connecting all modules running from the west to the east, namely the trade road from Szczecin via Białogard to the shore of the Baltic. Municipal rights for Stargard granted in 1253 was a consequence of its dynamic development as an important cereal trade centre (in the 14th and 15th centuries it competed even with Szczecin; it

was the member of the Hanza), what resulted in its territorial development, geographically limited only in the south direction from already existing settlement network. From the end of the 13th century Stargard was surrounded by walls. The area encompassed by defensive walls is divided by the Mała Ina River into two uneven parts. Until 1945 in the plan of the Old City one could see traces of pre-chartered settlement in shape of present Chrobry and Gdańska streets together with the sequence of transverse streets and with more regular blocks created after 1253. The spatial layout which the city received until the end of the 15th century survived without major changes until the first half of the 19th century.

Strzelce Krajeńskie situated on the borderland of West Pomerania and Kujawy, is characterized by an oval layout, which is rare in Poland. The town was granted municipal rights between 1272 and 1286. In Strzelce, a general outline of city walls in shape of slightly elongated ellipse, was overlaid with a quite regular chessboard-type layout, with a long market place of Brandenburg type (Münc, 1946, p. 176) (Fig. 3). The most characteristic, unique element of spatial layout in Strzelce is a circle 40–50 m wide stretching regularly inside the walls and parallel to them. This circle is divided into building plots and surrounds the inner chessboard-type layout. It must have replaced the earlier fortifications of the city – embankments, palisades and moats, which originally had smaller circuit, and later, together with the expansion of the city and growing demand of new building plots, were demolished and replaced by new defensive walls, with larger circuit, built on their outer side.

In Europe, from the 12th century, the process of municipal reform was developing, which at the beginning of the 13th century has reached Polish lands, which were particularly susceptible to this reform. Most cities in Poland were very poorly invested, which facilitated introduction of spatial changes. Kalinowski (1966, p. 10) underlines, that the Middle Ages

were a period of huge importance for shaping the urban settlement network, but most of all it was important for shaping of the spatial structure of cities. The principles of mediaeval city planning for centuries (almost until the end of the 18th century) will be the pattern that stimulated the foundation of new cities which introduced only certain changes resulting from socio-economic needs and the evolution of aesthetic views. Spatial layout of majority of present Polish cities includes an easily recognizable mediaeval core. This core could be a result of new location that took place in those days or a result of reconstruction of already existing urban settlement.

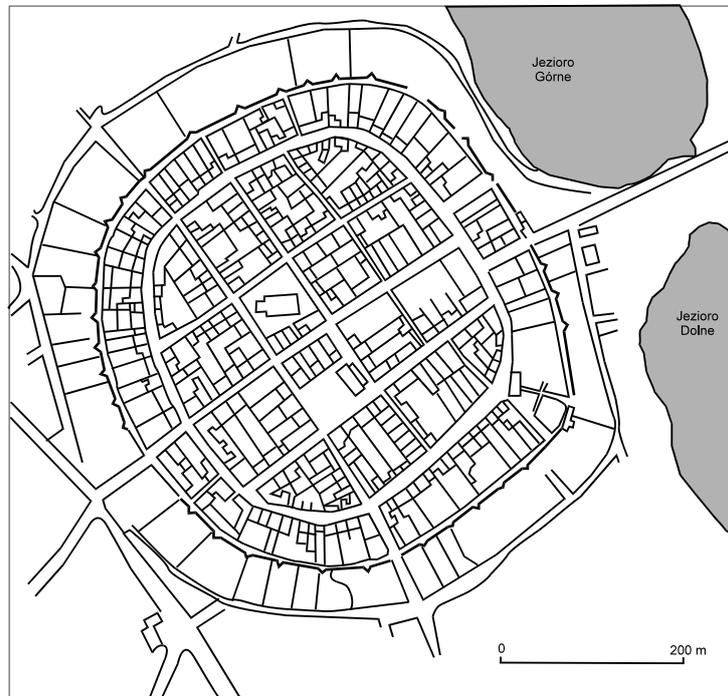


Fig. 3. Plan of Strzelce Krajeńskie in 1945
Source: After Bobiński (1975, p. 52)

It is worth noticing, that urbanization processes in the 13th century were gradual and new foundations did not occur in all the existing cities. In the 2nd half of the 13th century in Poland there were both old market settlements and cities founded on German law.

The foundations on German law in the area in question took place in almost all market settlements which existed on the basis of the so-called local law entitlements. It also was a basis for new settlements created mainly in 14th and 15th centuries.

Urbanization processes in West Pomerania were generally similar to those in other Polish regions, despite the fact that dukes of Pomerania, already in the end of the 12th century got under influences of Germans and Danes. The transformation of old *gróds* (e.g. Szczecin, Kamień or Wolin) into medieval chartered towns was almost identical to those in Gdańsk, Poznań or Wrocław. Here however the strong relationships with north-west Europe, especially with Lubeck were established relatively early, what undoubtedly influenced the cities layout and buildings form. Many of towns developing in place of already existing and considerably invested settlements, do not have such a regular layout compared to towns in regions situated

more to the east. Pyrzyce³ located in 1265, provides an example of spatial layout of the medium-sized town. Its external outline resembles a triangle and the arrangement of blocks and plots shows many irregularities (Kalinowski, 1966, p. 15).

Only a few towns with chessboard layout came into being *in cruda radice* mainly in the proximity of fortified towns like Kołobrzeg (second foundation), Trzebiatów and Maszew, or they were planned from the beginning as it was the case of Wolin. One can also observe the transitional arrangements, which are not fully developed. These result from specific land features like in case of Szczecin or Stargard (Latour, 1995).

Trzebiatów is one of the most interesting towns in West Pomerania with preserved mediaeval spatial layout and nearly 40 architectural monuments. The city located in the meander of the Rega River traces its origin back to the 9th century. Originally this place was occupied by a castle and the Slavic *podgrodzie* fulfilling at that time sacred functions. It was a centre of an independent territorial unit. In the 12th century it was a settlement inhabited mostly by craftsmen and tradesmen; in 1170 a parish church was founded. The settlement was granted municipal rights in 1277 according to Lubeck law. At the river estuary a harbor was built (Regoujście, presently Mrzeżyno) and in the 14th century the town was surrounded with defensive walls. As a member of the Hanzeatic League, Trzebiatów prospered until the half of the 15th century. Once the town left the Hanza, it played only a role of a local trade centre. Trzebiatów is a fine and well-preserved example of the regular city layout newly established on the basis of an old castellan *gród*. It has a chessboard-type arrangement based on Lubeck perch measurement about 4.5 m long, where the size of the market and church square, marked out separately, is a result of adoption of medieval plot module with dimensions 2 x 8 perches (9 x 36 m). Another interesting example of a town with irregular spatial layout is Starogard Szczeciński. Here the irregularity results from terrain features, the course of the Ina River and location of early-mediaeval settlement. The town, originally founded according to Magdeburg law (1253) and then to Lubeck law (1292), is economically competing with not very distant Szczecin. Today the

³ Pyrzyce is one of the oldest town in Poland. Already in the 9th century on the hill, nearby the later chartered town, a *gród* with the borough was founded. The centre of the pagan cult was located here. In the 12th century it is mentioned as castrum (*gród*), later in 1248 as civitas; the chartered town was founded about 800 m west from castle foundation on the new area; it was surrounded with defensive walls. In 1637 after death of the last duke of Pomerania, Pyrzyce together with Pomerania, by virtue of succession contract got under the Hohenzollerns' rule.

relatively small market square with grouped buildings, untypically situated beyond the outline of pre-chartered market square [...] are the relicts of unusually attractive municipal interior (Latour, 1995, p. 45).

Maszewo is one of the oldest settlements on the area concerned. From the 10th to the 12th century its place was occupied by Slavic old *gród* located next to an important trade route from Szczecin to Kołobrzeg. Next to it the settlement has developed which in 1278 was granted municipal rights and in following century was surrounded with city walls. Here in its urban spatial layout two morphological units are noticeable which are distinct from the whole spatial arrangement of the town. These are an oval shape of the town corresponding to the area of the former settlement and the urban post-chartered layout showing Brandenburg influences visible in market and church location. The town has very well preserved medieval spatial urban layout with almost complete circuit of defensive walls from the 13th/14th century, St Mary's church from the 14th/15th century, and Gothic St. George chapel from the 15th century. Maszewo is one of very few cities listed in the register of monuments.

Unfortunately out of all post-chartered spatial layouts founded in the Middle Ages, only very few has preserved their original form. It is mainly the case of small centers saved from destruction during the Second World War, as a consequence of which the considerable part of West Pomerania settlements was almost entirely destroyed, and the later post-war reconstruction had little in common with original town-planning.

In conclusion it should be underlined that in case of the above mentioned towns, the relicts of pre-chartered and chartered layout are in general quite well-preserved. In their initial phase the towns developed on the basis of the older centers, usually were taking over their individual characteristic features, connected with the earlier spatial organization, what often influenced the later, post-chartered arrangements. It suggests a native origin of the oldest forms and shapes of settlements formed in the region concerned. It needs to be emphasized that at least in a few analyzed cases the layouts are characterized by considerable durability. In many cases preserved forms only slightly differ from their origins.

It should be noticed that these layouts, or their spatial elements, are preserved particularly in small towns. Usually, they did not develop into significant urban centers, preserving at the same time elements of the originate structures, because the later urban changes were insignificant. Cities which had more favourable conditions for development, and experien-

ced dynamic economic growth have preserved less traces of the past. Therefore the worse conditions, the more relicts of the past have survived.

In West Pomerania urban development in most towns, with only few exceptions, was not dynamic. This is why, there is much more preserved traces of the original spatial layouts from different periods. In many cases these relicts endured until today without subsequent distortions.

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