

## CHRONICLE

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### REPORT ON THE JUBILEE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “TOWNS THAT CREATED EUROPE. 70 YEARS OF POLISH ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN WOLIN”, WOLIN, 26-28.08.2022

On 26-28.08.2022, the jubilee conference „Towns that created Europe. 70 years of Polish archaeological research in Wolin“ took place in Wolin. The event was organised as part of the 6<sup>th</sup> Wolin Medieval Meetings by the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the Andrzej Kaube Regional Museum in Wolin, the National Museum in Szczecin and the Wolin Municipality. It is a biennial conference, starting in 2010 and organised for the first time on the initiative of prof. dr hab. Marian Rębkowski. The Wolin Medieval Meetings are a place for discussion and exchange of views between Polish and foreign medievalists, representing various scientific disciplines, including archaeology, history, art history and literary studies.

Each of the meetings held so far has been devoted to a specific topic. Until now, as part of the Wolin Medieval Meetings, the following conferences have taken place: „Exclusive Life – Dignified Burial. In the circle of elite culture of the Middle Ages“ in 2010, „Economies, monetisation and society in the west Slavic lands 800-1200 AD“ in 2012, „Churches in the era of Christianisation“ in 2014, „Bishop Otto of Bamberg and his world“ in 2016 and „Borderlands“ in 2018. In 2020, the conference was postponed due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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In 2022, the organisers decided to make the Wolin Medieval Meetings an anniversary event due to the 70th anniversary of the start of Polish archaeological research in Wolin, which falls in 2022. The research has been conducted since 1952, and since 1953 it was supervised by the Institute of the History of Material Culture of the Polish Academy of Sciences (now the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology PAS). At the same time, the conference initiated the celebrations of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, which falls in 2023.

In the course of the 70 years of Polish archaeological research in Wolin, a huge number of data and artefacts were acquired, constituting first-rate sources for research on European history. This material has been presented in numerous exhibitions both at home and abroad. Three generations of Polish scientists have published hundreds of works in the course of interdisciplinary research, permanently inscribing the history of the town on the pages of history textbooks. The jubilee conference aimed to summarise this period rich in discoveries and to emphasise the role that early medieval Wolin played in the history of northern Europe.

At the same time, in line with the tradition of Wolin Medieval Meetings of placing the history of Wolin in the broader context of medieval research, the issue of early medieval urbanisation and its role in shaping the face of Europe at the time was proposed.

The conference was held at the Centre for International Cooperation, located in a 19<sup>th</sup> century manor house formerly owned by the Pomeranian von Below family (Fig. 1).

The event was held under the honorary patronage of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Culture and National Heritage, prof. dr hab. Piotr Gliński, Minister of Foreign Affairs, prof. dr hab. Zbigniew Rau, Minister of Education and Science, dr. Przemysław Czarnek, Deputy Minister of Infrastructure Marek Gróbarczyk, West Pomeranian Voivode Zbigniew Bogucki, and the Polish National Committee of the International Council for Monuments Protection ICOMOS POLAND. The conference was attended by nearly 70 participants (including 19 speakers) from Poland, Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Spain, Estonia, Ukraine and England.

The conference was opened by Ewa Grzybowska, Mayor of Wolin, together with the Deputy Minister of Education and Science, prof. dr hab. Włodzimierz Bernacki, and the Director of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, prof. dr hab. Marian Rębkowski. The first paper was given by dr hab. prof. IAE PAS Mateusz Bogucki, who presented an introduction to early medieval urbanisation. Dr Wojciech Filipowiak from IAE PAS presented 70 years of archaeological research in Wolin, its course and results. He also presented the latest research results, as well as a new concept for the location of the legendary Jómsborg. Marek Konopka, from ICOMOS Poland, gave a presentation on the role of Wolin's history in European and world heritage. Professor Felix Biermann from the University of Szczecin presented Wolin in the context of the early medieval craft and trade centres on the Polabian coast, while prof. dr hab. Marian Rębkowski from the IAE PAS pointed out the relationship of Wolin in relation to the emerging early



Fig. 1. Joint photo of conference participants against the background of the Centre for International Cooperation building



Fig. 2. Signing of a letter of intent to include Wolin's heritage on the UNESCO World Heritage List and to build a new museum building. From left: Director of the Andrzej Kaube Regional Museum in Wolin dr Karolina Kokora, Deputy Minister of Education and Science prof. dr hab. Włodzimierz Bernacki, Mayor of Wolin Ewa Grzybowska, West Pomeranian Voivode Zbigniew Bogucki, Director of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology PAS prof. dr hab. Marian Rębkowski



Fig. 3. Sessions in the cellars of the former castle of the Dukes of Pomerania. The photo shows Dr Volker Hilberg presenting his paper



Fig. 4. The debate “The future of Wolin’s past. How to protect, how to research, how to make it accessible, how to link it to the development of the modern city”. From left: Marek Konopka, dr Sunhild Kleingärtner, prof. Søren M. Sindbæk, Mayor of Wolin Ewa Grzybowska, prof. dr hab. Marian Rębkowski and moderator prof. dr hab. Andrzej Buko



states of Poland and Pomerania. The final paper of day one was a presentation by the director of the Deutsche Bergbau Museum Bochum from Germany, dr Sunhild Kleingärtner, on the cultural potential of Wolin's early medieval history and its role in urban planning.

On the same day, a signing of a letter of intent to include Wolin on the UNESCO World Heritage List and to build a new building for the Wolin Museum took place. The document was signed by, among others, the Deputy Minister of Education and Science, prof. dr hab. Włodzimierz Bernacki, the West Pomeranian Voivode Zbigniew Bogucki, the Mayor of Wolin Ewa Grzybowska, the Director of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology PAS prof. dr hab. Marian Rębkowski and the Director of the Andrzej Kaube Regional Museum in Wolin, dr Karolina Kokora.

The event is linked to the efforts of the Wolin Municipality, the Institute of Archaeology and PAS and the Andrzej Kaube Regional Museum in Wolin to have the town of Wolin and its preserved early-medieval remains, both those located underground and those with their own field form, inscribed on the national list of Monuments of History, and then on the UNESCO World Heritage List. A joint photo of the conference participants was followed in the evening by a festive banquet at the Slavic and Viking Centre Wolin-Jómsborg-Wineta.

The second day of the conference began with papers also on Wolin. Dr hab. prof. UŚ Jakub Morawiec, presented the significance of the legend of the Viking fortress Jómsborg for the history of Wolin. In turn, prof. dr hab. Leszek Ślupecki, representing the University of Rzeszów, presented a second legend related to Wolin - that of the sunken city of Vineta.

Further papers dealt with other European centres and regions. Natalia Khamaiko representing the Institute of Archaeology of the National Academy of Science of Ukraine presented Viking Age urbanisation in the core of Kyivan Rus. Dr Irene Baug from the University of Bergen in Norway considered the impact of long distance trade on Viking Age urbanisation with a particular focus on trade in stone objects – whetstones, querns and vessels. Dr Volker Hilberg from Schleswig-Holstein State Museums Foundation Castle Gottorf, Schleswig, Germany presented the latest research results on the development of craft production and trade networks in the Viking Age port of Hedeby, while dr Sven Kalming from the Centre for Baltic and Scandinavian Archaeology, Schleswig, Germany presented the last 20 years of research on the Viking Age town of Birka in Sweden.

The second day of the conference also featured a two-hour debate entitled: "The future of Wolin's past. How to protect, how to research, how to make it accessible, how to link it to the development of the modern city", moderated by prof. dr hab. Andrzej Buko. The main participants in the debate were Marek Konopka, dr Sunhild Kleingärtner, prof. Søren M. Sindbæk, prof. dr hab. Marian Rębkowski and the Mayor of Wolin, Ewa Grzybowska.

The third day of the conference opened with a paper by prof. dr hab. Stanisław Rosik from the University of Wrocław on the formation of sacral centres of the tribal ecumenes in the towns of the Pomeranian-Slavs. Professor Søren M. Sindbæk from Aarhus University, Aarhus, Denmark spoke about the Danish craft and trade centre Ribe and its networks,

presenting the results of recent research as well as the latest developments in archaeological research methodology. Dr Marika Mägi from Tallinn University, Tallinn, Estonia talked about recent research on the island of Saaremaa near the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea, while prof. Gitte Hansen from the University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway presented methods for analysing the urban community in 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century Bergen. Dr Marek Jagodziński, representing the Historical and Archaeological Museum in Elbląg, talked about the latest research results on Truso, while prof. Axel Christophersen from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway showed the transformation of Trondheim from a transshipment port to an urban centre ca. AD 900-1050. The conference was concluded with a paper by dr Karolina Kokora, director of the Andrzej Kaube Regional Museum in Wolin, who presented the history of the museum, its extraordinary, rich collection, and plans for the future. The proceedings were followed by a boat trip on the Dziwna strait.

The conference "Towns that made Europe. 70 years of Polish archaeological research in Wolin" was organised in a special way. The proceedings were translated simultaneously from Polish and English. As the size of the meeting room and the constant threat of COVID-19 disease did not allow the conference to be open to all those wishing to attend, a professional audio-video recording of all speeches was also provided, which will be made available on the internet. The organisers also decided to use a method of recording the speeches that has never been used before at archaeological-historical conferences and to communicate them in a short and attractive form. This is graphic-recording, which is a kind of graphic summary of the speeches. It results in a graphic record of each speech, which will be made available on the internet and will also be included in the post-conference publication. The conference took place in a pleasant and friendly atmosphere, and its smooth and professional course was guaranteed thanks to the dedicated work of the staff of the Wolin City Hall, the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology PAS, and above all the Andrzej Kaube Regional Museum in Wolin. The organisers would like to express their heartfelt thanks to everyone at this point. They would also like to express their gratitude to the organising committee, which took care of the high scientific level of the meeting. The conference was financed by funds from the Town and Municipality of Wolin, the Andrzej Kaube Regional Museum in Wolin, the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology PAS, as well as a grant from the Ministry of Education and Science (Excellent Science program, contract no. DNK/SP/567155/2022) and a private sponsor – the Mamre company. The materials from the conference will be published in print, with publication planned for 2023, and the next conference, the VII<sup>th</sup> Wolin Medieval Meetings, will take place in 2024.