

Gdańsk's fortifications from the late medieval period to the end of the 19th century. The origins, development and spatial restructuring of the defences in Gdańsk and Wisłoujście. An archaeological study

by mgr Monika Kasprzak

Summary of PhD thesis submitted to the Institute of Archaeology, University of Łódź

Supervisor: prof. dr hab. Janusz Pietrzak

This study uses the results of excavations carried out in and around the modern fortifications in Gdańsk and Wisłoujście from 1945 to 2019 to trace the changes that they underwent.

The thesis comprises seven chapters as well as an introduction and conclusion. The first chapter examines what was known to date about the fortifications of Gdańsk. The next five chapters present the results of excavations carried out on the late medieval fortifications, the principal chain of forts, the Upland Gate (Brama Wyżynna), the outer curtain of defences and fortifications of Wisłoujście. Each chapter contains detailed conclusions concerning the chronological and spatial development of these sites and features, drawn from the results of archaeological fieldwork and comparative analysis of historical records, maps and images.

In chapter seven, based on archaeological evidence, an attempt is made to determine the methods used in building the late medieval and modern earthworks, the types of foundations on which the masonry fortifications were raised, and the shape and depth of individual sections of the defensive ditches. There is also an attempt to trace the spatial changes brought about within the city by the construction of the modern fortifications.

The study includes the first complete account of all of the available archaeological records spanning the years from 1945 to 2019 relating to the late medieval and modern fortifications of Gdańsk. These sources were analysed to see what they could reveal about site preparation prior to the construction of the modern fortifications, the manner in which the embankments and earthen parts of the bastions were built, the materials used for this, and to see whether individual phases of expansion could be identified. Where brick structures survive, attempts were made to establish how they were underpinned, the state of preservation of any extant foundations, and to identify expansion phases. The archaeological evidence was used to try and identify occupation levels associated with the modern fortifications and any spatial changes in their immediate vicinity. These results were subsequently compared with historical records, maps and images. The findings made it possible to verify numerous historical facts regarding both the medieval and modern fortifications of Gdańsk.

This thesis harnesses aspects of history, history of architecture and archaeology, and combines these disciplines to better understand the changes made to Gdańsk's fortifications over the centuries.

Monika Kasprzak

Monika Kasprzak