

A stylized black and white graphic of a globe, showing the continents of Europe and Africa. The globe is positioned to the left of the main title text.

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## Historical Atlas of Polish Towns. Between Source Edition and the Cartographic Presentation of Research on the History of Towns\*

Roman Czaja

In Poland, as in other European countries, the need to edit the cartographic sources for the history of cities has been recognized already in the interwar period<sup>1</sup>. The enormous destruction that European cities experienced during World War II meant that the edition of historical maps and iconographic sources has become one of the most urgent postulates by urban planners and researchers of urban history<sup>2</sup>. Works carried out since the 1950s by Polish historians, art historians and archivists have focused primarily on the inventory of cartographic sources. Seven issues of *The Illustrated Catalogue of Cartographic Sources for the History of the Construction of Polish Towns* had been published as part of the project carried out by the Institute of Architecture and Urban Planning in 1951–1962<sup>3</sup>. This archive research has resulted in the publishing, in 1992, of a catalogue of old city maps being stored in state archives<sup>4</sup>.

Up until 1989, due to organizational and political reasons, Polish researchers of urban history did not have the opportunity to join the European Historic

Towns Atlas project implemented by the International Commission for the History of Towns. At the congress in Vienna in 1965, the Commission recognized the edition of town atlases, apart from bibliographies and edition of municipal documents from the period up until the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, as one of its most important tasks. At the conference in Oxford, 1968, the basic goals of this editorial project were agreed on and the principles of preparing the atlases were established, which were later supplemented at the *Atlas* publishers conference in Münster in 1995<sup>5</sup>. According to the accepted editorial rules, national atlases should be published in the form of separate issues (volumes) dedicated to particular cities. The main goal of the *Atlas* was to publish the oldest cadastral map or another measurement map. The edition of this source should consist of redrawing and rescaling of the original large scale maps to the 1:2,500 scale. The only acceptable interference by publishers may be the addition of isohypses and additional descriptions. Apart from the above, the obligatory *Atlas* canon also comprised a reproduction of a map from the time of the creation of the cadastral map showing the city and its surroundings on a scale from 1:25,000 to 1:100,000, a modern city map on a scale from 1:5,000 to 1:10,000,

\* The article was prepared under the project "Atlas historyczny miast polskich, vol. 2" (Historical Atlas of Polish Towns, vol. 2), no. 2014/15/BHS3/02458 funded by the National Science Centre, Poland.

<sup>1</sup> Ł. Charewiczowa, *Znaczenie planów miasta dla ich historii*, in: *Pamiętnik V Zjazdu Historyków Polskich*, Lwów 1930, p. 1–11.

<sup>2</sup> W. Trzebiński, *Potrzeby w zakresie inwentaryzacji źródeł kartograficznych do budowy miast polskich*, "Prace Instytutu Urbanistyki i Architektury", 1, 1951, p. 27–29; Z. Bieniecki, *Źródła ikonograficzne do historii budowy miast polskich i zagadnienie ich inwentaryzacji*, "Prace Instytutu Urbanistyki i Architektury", 1, 1951, p. 31–48.

<sup>3</sup> Bibliographic guidelines see U. Puckalanka, W. Wernerowa, *Piśmiennictwo o dawnych panach miast polskich (materiały do bibliografii)*, in: *Miasta*, red. J. Janczak, A. Tomczak, Warszawa 1984, p. 219–275 (Z dziejów Kartografii, 3).

<sup>4</sup> *Plany miast polskich w polskich archiwach państwowych*, oprac. M. Lewandowska, M. Stelmach, A. Tomczak, Warszawa 1996.

<sup>5</sup> A. Simms, *The European Historic Towns Atlas Project: Origin and Potential*, in: *Lords and Towns in Medieval Europe. The European Historic Towns Atlas Project*, ed. A. Simms, H.B. Clarke, Farnham 2015, p. 13–32; F. Oplil, *Der Europäische historische Städteatlas. Projekt – Ziele – Leistungen*, "Pro Civitate Austriae. Informationen zur Stadtgeschichtsforschung in Österreich", 215, 2010, p. 9–20.

and an original map showing the spatial development of the city on a scale from 1:2,500 to 1:5,000<sup>6</sup>. The publishers of individual *Atlases* can, at their own discretion and means, enrich the editions with map and vista reproductions and thematic maps. An integral element of the *Atlas* is the description section, presenting the history of a city with particular emphasis on its spatial development and bibliographic guidelines. Until 2017, the project of the International Commission for the History of Towns was undertaken in 19 European countries, and as a result almost 550 town atlases have been created<sup>7</sup>.

In 1990, Antoni Czacharowski from the Institute of History and Archival Sciences of the Nicolaus Copernicus University had undertaken the initiative of publishing the *Historical Atlas of Polish Towns*. In the preparation of the concept of the Polish editorial atlas, the guidelines by the International Commission for the History of Towns as well as the experience of the team which had published the *Deutscher Städteatlas* and *Westfälischer Städteatlas* in Institut für vergleichende Städtegeschichte in Münster have been used. Editing the cadstral maps by re-drawing and rescaling the map originals has been established as the main goal of the atlas<sup>8</sup>. In 1993 the first issue of Historical Atlas of Polish Towns dedicated to Elbląg was published. Currently, the project is being realized simultaneously in three centers. In Toruń, at the University of Nicolaus Copernicus, a group under the direction of Roman Czaja pu-

blishes atlases of the northern regions of Poland (vol. 1: *Royal Prussia and Erm-land*, vol. 2: *Kuyavia*, vol. 3: *Masuria*)<sup>9</sup>. The team under the direction of Marta Młynarska-Kaletynowa and Rafał Eysymontt, associated with the University of Wrocław and the Wrocław Branch of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences prepares atlases of Silesian cities (vol. 4: *Silesia*)<sup>10</sup>. The group headed by Zdzisław Noga from the Pedagogical University of Kraków is working on atlases of Małopolska cities (vol. 5: *Lesser Poland*)<sup>11</sup>. Urszula Sowina has been preparing the atlas of the city of Kalisz since 2016, which will be the first issue of the volume dedicated to Greater Poland. Until 2017, 34 issues of the *Historical Atlas of Polish Towns* were published in total<sup>12</sup>. Published atlases reflect the diverse typology of the towns that have been developing in the Polish lands since the Middle Ages: metropolitan cities (Kraków, Wrocław), large cities (Sandomierz, Toruń, Elbląg), medium-sized towns functioning as regional centres (Świdnica, Chełmno), small medieval towns with high dynamics of development during the industrial era (Bydgoszcz, Grudziądz), small agrarian cities with low development dynamics in the modern era (Fordon, Mrągowo, Ząbkowice Śl.), small residential towns (Ziębice), private towns (Koronowo), cathedral cities (Włocławek) and mining towns (Bochnia, Wieliczka).

<sup>6</sup> W. Ehbrecht, *Atlasarbeit auf dem Weg. Eine Einführung: Bilanz und Perspektiven*, in: *Städteatlanten. Vier Jahrzehnte Atlasarbeit in Europa*, Hrsg. W. Ehbrecht, Köln–Weimar–Wien 2013 (Städteforschungen, 80), p. VII–XLIII; A. Simms, F. Opl, *Historische Städteatlanten. Stadtgeschichte in Karten*, "Siedlungsforschung. Archäologie – Geographie – Geschichte", 15, 1997, p. 303–325; R. Czaja, *Die historischen Atlanten der europäischen Städte*, "Jahrbuch für Europäische Geschichte", 3, 2002, p. 205–215.

<sup>7</sup> List of the atlases, see the website of the Royal Irish Academy: <https://www.ria.ie/research-projects/irish-historic-towns-atlas/european-project> (access: May 22, 2018).

<sup>8</sup> R. Czaja, *Der historische Atlas Polnischer Städte*, "Siedlungsforschung. Archäologie – Geographie – Geschichte", 20, 2002, p. 277–281.

<sup>9</sup> Vol. 1: *Elbląg* (1993), *Toruń* (1996), *Grudziądz* (1997), *Chełmno* (1999), *Malbork* (2002), *Świecie* (2012), *Chojnice* (2013); vol. 2: *Bydgoszcz* (1997), *Koronowo* (2016), *Fordon* (2016), *Włocławek* (2016); vol. 3: *Gژیczyko* (1998), *Ostróda* (2014), *Mrągowo* (2016). For volume 1 a team under Wiesław Długocki from the University of Gdańsk is preparing an atlas for the city of Gdańsk for publishing.

<sup>10</sup> Vol. 4: *Wrocław* (2001), *Środa Śl.* (2003), *Trzebnica* (2003), *Niemcza* (2003), *Świdnica* (2008), *Legnica* (2009), *Ziębice* (2014), *Namysłów* (2015), *Oława* (2015), *Gliwice* (2015), *Strzegom* (2015), *Ząbkowice Śl.* (2016), *Jelenia Góra* (2017), *Milicz* (2017), *Strzelin* (2017), *Wrocław* (2017).

<sup>11</sup> Vol. 5: *Kraków* (2007), *Sandomierz* (2014), *Wieliczka* (2015), *Bochnia* (2016).

<sup>12</sup> List of atlases, see the website of the project "Historical Atlas of Polish Towns" (<http://www.atlasmiastr.umk.pl/>, access: May 22, 2018).

The division of Polish territories in the 19<sup>th</sup> century between Russia, Prussia and Austria also influenced the diversification of measurement maps, which are of interest to the publishers of the atlases. The vast majority of cities whose atlases have been published are located in the former Austrian and Prussian partitions (only Włocławek and Sandomierz belonged to the Russian partition in the years 1815–1918). The cartographic sources used in the atlases in the Austrian and Prussian offices contain information on plot borders, street networks, buildings, forms of urban space use and nomenclature. The basis for editing the main map in the atlas of the Lesser Poland towns are maps elaborated within the cadastre named after the Emperor Franz I (*Franziszischer Kataster*). It was the basis for determining the land tax and was based on new geodetic measurements. In Galicia, measurement work was conducted in the years 1819–1859. Cadastral maps issued in the atlas of Bochnia, Kraków and Wieliczka were only prepared during the years 1847–1848. When drawing maps, the scale 1: 2,880 was commonly used, while for the largest cities of Galicia, Kraków and Lviv, a scale of 1:1,440 was employed<sup>13</sup>. The editing of the cadastral map in the *Atlas* aimed to combine the relevant sheets and rescale to 1:2,500.

Much greater variation in the state of preservation of the oldest measurement maps is visible for the lands located within the Kingdom of Prussia. The development of cadastral maps for the areas of Pomerania, Prussia, Greater Poland and Silesia was initiated by the Act of May 21, 1861. County cadastral offices were responsible for taking measurements, creating cadastral maps and

maintaining land registers. However, in the initial phase of their operation in the years 1861–1865 older measurements and maps developed at the request of municipal authorities were mostly used. Depending on the regency (*Regierungsbezirk*), only 5% to 25% of the total area was covered by maps developed based on new geodetic surveys<sup>14</sup>. From the *Atlas's* publishers' point of view, the most valuable part of cartographical cadastre materials are the cadastral manuscripts, defined as framework maps (*Gemarkungskarte*), depicting the current state from 1861–1865, for which no further changes were made. These maps were usually made in many sheets at various scales, most often from 1:2,500 to 1:1,000. Final manuscripts and copies made after 1865, which were systematically updated, can be included as the second group of cartographic sources related to the Prussian cadastre. The supplementary maps made on the basis of new measurements, which were created throughout the entire cadastral period had a smaller significance to the editing of atlases. Cartographic materials made in the years 1934–1941 as part of the preparation of the new cadaster of the Reich (*Reichskataster*) are a separate category of cadastral maps.

The state of preservation of maps from the Prussian cadastre for territories located within the boundaries of the present Polish state is very diverse. In general, it can be said that cadastral maps in towns which after 1918 were within the borders of Poland (Chełmno Land, Greater Poland, Eastern Pomerania) are in much better condition. Preserved cadastral documentation was taken over by the Polish authorities and it was still used in the interwar period in geodetic surveying works and for land registry. Significantly less preserved were the cadastral maps

<sup>13</sup> J. Stoksiówna, *Galicyski kataster gruntowy. Jego geneza, dzieje i spuścizna aktowa*, "Archeion", 67, 1979, p. 334–337; J. Wolski, *Austrian Cadaster for Land Tax on Polish Territory and Its Application in Arrangement Works and Science Research*, "Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny", 32 (3), 2000, p. 199–212.

<sup>14</sup> A. Pawłowska-Wielgus, *Mapy katastralne w archiwach państwowych w Polsce*, in: *Z dziejów kartografii*, red. J. Janczak, Z. Rzepa, Wrocław 1979, p. 147–164 (Z Dziejów Kartografii, 1).

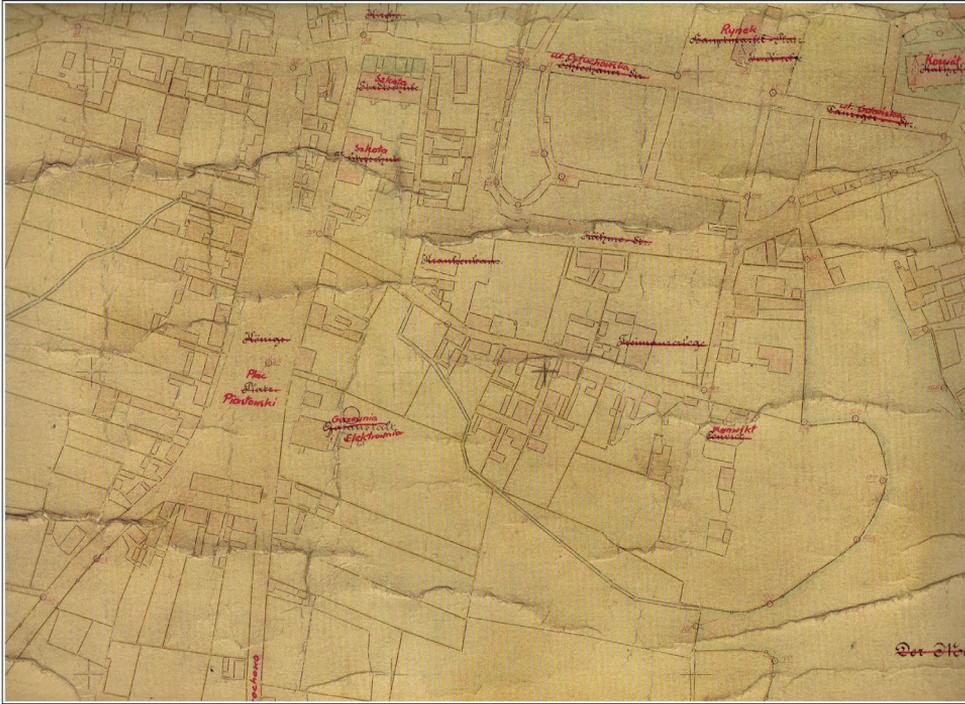


Fig 1. Chojnice. Fragment of cadastral map of the suburbs from 1896 ("Plan von der Stadt Konitz aufgenommen im Jahre 1896 durch den Königlichen Katasterlandmesser Jahn"), proof of the map being used by the Polish administration in the years 1920–1939 are the crossed out German names and overwritten Polish names.

Source: "Historical Atlas of Polish Towns", vol. 1, ed. R. Czaja, Z. Kozieł, book 7: "Chojnice", hist. content R. Czaja, cart. content: R. Golba, Z. Kozieł, I. Lewandowska, Toruń 2013, map 11

for cities located in territories which were incorporated into the Polish state in 1945 (Western Pomerania, Lower Silesia, Warmia and Masuria). It can be assumed that a large part of the materials shared the fate of cities that were destroyed during the fights in 1945 or burnt in the first months after the entry of the Red Army. The cadastral maps that survived the war were also dispersed. In part, they were taken over by the Polish administration. Some of the maps, however, went into private hands or were transported to Germany together with the German population. As a result of changes in the administrative division of Poland introduced in the 1970s, cadastral materials stored in state administration bodies were further dispersed. In the 1980s, most of the cadastral maps preserved were kept by

the Provincial Department for Geodesic and Cartographic Documentation. Some of the maps were also in the possession of municipal offices (usually in the offices of city surveyors). Only in the 1970s the offices of state and municipal administration began to gradually transfer cadastral materials to the State Archives. Some part of measurement maps went to regional museums through purchase on the antiquarian market or through donations (see fig. 1)<sup>15</sup>. A big problem when editing cadastral maps is their poor condition caused by prolonged use of the maps in administrative practice and improper storage conditions. The maps bought by

<sup>15</sup> R. Czaja, *Zu editorischen Probleme der Katasterkarte im "Historischen Atlas Polnischer Städte"*, in: *Städteatlanten. Vier Jahrzehnte Atlasarbeit in Europa*, Hrsg. W. Ehbrecht (Städteforschungen 80), Köln–Weimar–Wien 2013, p. 141–151.

museums from private sources were in a particularly bad condition. At times the damage was so significant (e.g. the measurement maps of Malbork from 1890 and Włocławek 1845–1848), that even conservation works are not able to restore the full content of the maps (see fig. 2)<sup>16</sup>.

In the editorial works so far, we have applied the principle that the oldest completely preserved measurement map with the boundaries of plots, buildings and urban space use zones served as the basis for editing the main map. With the exception of the situations when these maps were made before the cadastre was founded (Jelenia Góra 1787/1788, Malbork 1843). The map made in 1839–1840, *Flurkarte der zu Stadt Elbing gehörenden Grundstücke in 51 Fluren und 64 Blätter*, consisting of 64 sheets in the scale of 1:500 and 1:1,000 was used as the basis for editing the main map in the Elbląg atlas, even though a cadastral map of this city from the 1860s has also survived. The main map of the *Atlas of Toruń* was elaborated on the basis of two measurement maps from 1816 and 1829, which contain information on the internal structure of urban space and plot borders from the pre-industrial era, while the cadastral map made in the years 1910–1914 was left for editing as part of a separate project.

The most valuable part of the cartographic materials of the Prussian cadastre are the manuscripts, showing the state from years 1861–1865. Unfortunately, usually only single sheets of the oldest cadastre were preserved, which do not cover the whole area of the city and therefore could not be used as a basis to develop the main map of the atlas. The oldest cadastral maps issued under the *Historical Atlas of Polish Towns* were maps of Namysłów

from 1865, 1851–1863 Mragowo cadastre and one sheet of the cadastre of Świecie from 1854. In most town atlases from the areas of Pomerania, Masuria, Silesia, and Kuyavia, the cadastral maps made in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century were used as a base source for editing the main map. It is worth noting that in the case of large and medium cities cadastral maps of the city center were drawn only in the first or second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Wrocław, Toruń, Chełmno, and Grudziądz). In a few cases, due to the lack of fully preserved cadastral maps from before the World War I measurement maps made in the interwar period (Świecie, Niemcza, Milicz, Strzegom, Strzeżewo, and Strzeżewo 1938) were adopted as a basis for editing the main map. The Prussian cadastral offices by creating of maps Prussian cadastral offices in several stages, separately for the city center and the suburbs, led to the necessity to combine cartographic sources made at different times in several atlases (Ostróda, Chojnice, Ziębice).

In the discussion on the concept of the atlas conducted by the International Commission for the History of Towns, the reproduction of old maps was not initially of importance. For this reason, atlases of European cities issued in the 1970s and 1980s contained only a very humble number of cartographic and iconographic sources from the pre-cadastral era. It is only from the 1990s that an increase in the share of this type of sources in the content of issued atlases of cities can be observed. The publishers of the *Historical Atlas of Polish Towns* are trying to take into account the largest possible number of reproductions of old maps, and in the case of small towns atlases, the aim is to publish all the maps from the period up to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Most small towns in Europe were closely associated with rural hinterland, and due to this among the sources published in the atlas, maps of the countryside play an important

<sup>16</sup> W. Sieradzian, *Die Stadtpläne Marienburgs vom 17. bis zum 20. Jahrhundert. Auf dem Weg zur Veröffentlichung des historischen Atlases der Stadt, "Beiträge zur Geschichte Westpreussens"*, 19, 2004, p. 113–140; Museum of Kuyavian and Dobrzyń Land in Włocławek, inventory no. MK Rk – 140/4650.

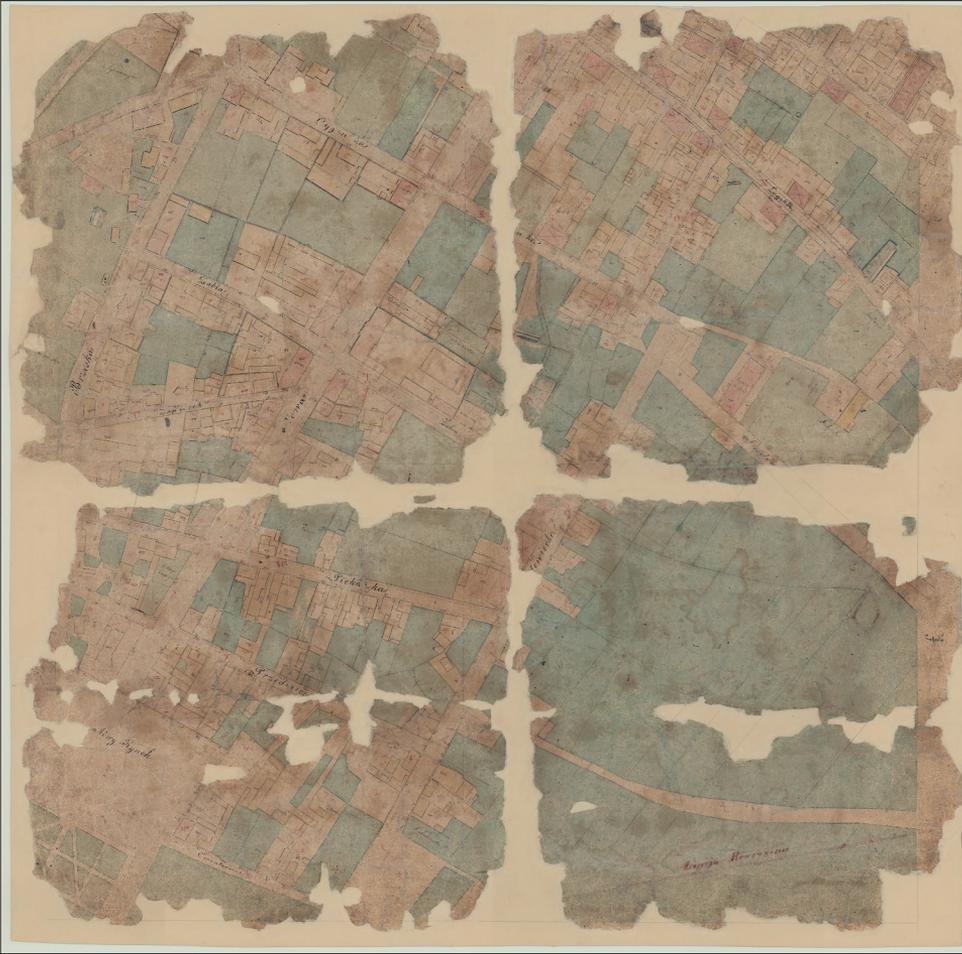


Fig. 2. Włocławek. Fragment of the measurement map 1845–1848.

Source: "First drawing of the survey of plots of the District of Włocławek in the Warsaw Guberniya", in: "Historical Atlas of Polish Towns", vol. 2, ed. R. Czaja, Z. Kozieł, book 4: "Włocławek", hist. content R. Czaja, A. Marynowska. T. Wąsik, cart. content: R. Golba, Z. Kozieł, A. Pilarska, Toruń 2016, map 1

role, including, among others, the boundaries of fields belonging to the burghers. The starting point for the development of the concept of the European atlas of cities was the interest in the city of the pre-industrial era. However, in recent years, the need to include cartographic and iconographic sources from the industrial era and the modern times is being raised more and more explicitly in the program of atlases<sup>17</sup>.

According to this postulate, in the content of our *Atlas* we try to take into account also the maps and sketches that were created as part of urban concepts undertaken in cities in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and cartographic sources created after 1945 (see fig. 3).

The *Historical Atlas of Polish Towns* can be considered special due to the large number of original maps that present the results of research on selected problems of urban development. All atlases include a map created on the basis of a modern base map in the scale 1:10,000 or 1:5,000

<sup>17</sup> F. Opll, *Should the Historic Towns Atlases Continue beyond the First Ordnance Survey?* ([http://www.historiaurbium.org/english/atlati\\_en.html](http://www.historiaurbium.org/english/atlati_en.html), access: May 4, 2018).

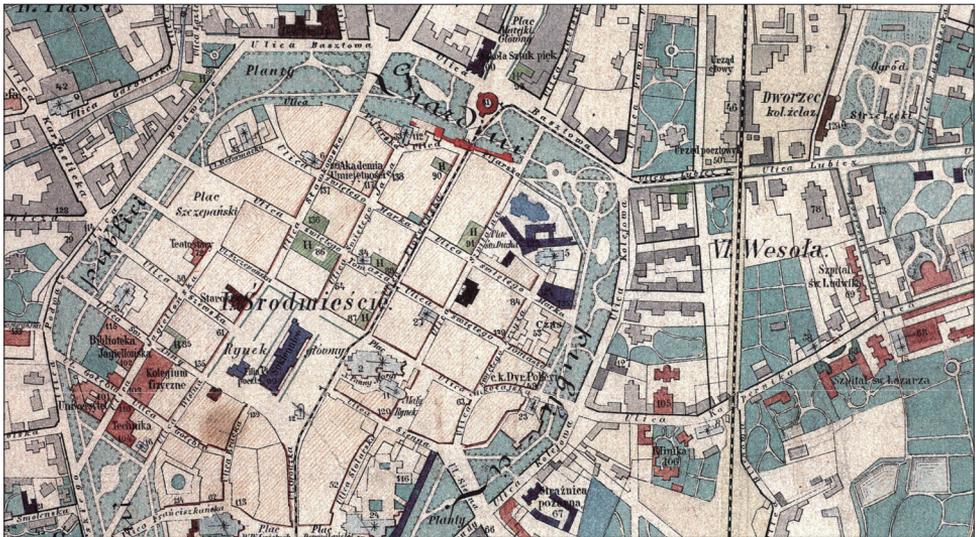


Fig. 3. Fragment of the Kraków development plan from 1888.

Source: "Plan Królewskiego Stołecznego Miasta Krakowa" [1889], in: "Historical Atlas of Polish Towns", vol. 5, ed. Z. Noga, book 1: "Kraków", prepared by: Z. Beiersdorf et al., Kraków 2007, map 3.7

(for smaller towns), which presents the development of the urban area, land use zones, and topography of administrative, sacral and economic facilities from the moment of their creation to modern times. The interdisciplinary composition of the teams issuing the Silesian and Lesser Poland towns' atlases makes it possible to prepare original maps going beyond the basic program. Particularly useful for understanding the social and spatial structures of towns are the maps presenting: principles of urban space layout, types of ownership of urban plots and suburban land, typology of development, and contemporary state of preservation of historical buildings (see fig. 4).

Among the most important challenges that have occurred in recent years as part of the implementation of the atlas project by the International Commission for the History of Towns one should include, first of all, the access to the atlas in a digitized form and the use of GIS technology<sup>18</sup>.

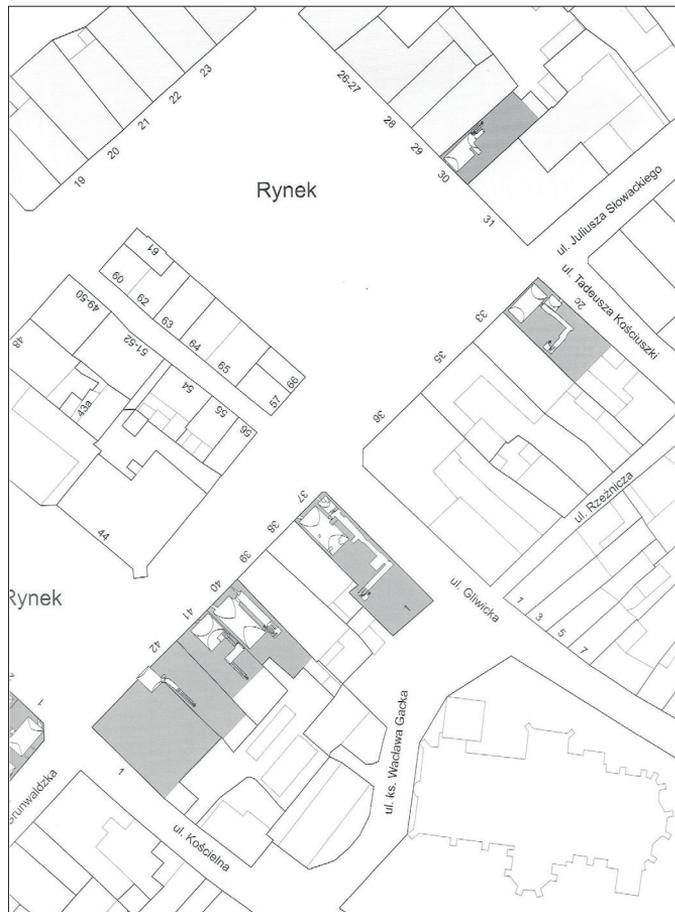
<sup>18</sup> E. Chodějovská, S. Gearty, D. Stracke, *The "Digital Turn" of the European Historic Towns Atlas: Comparing Solutions for Digital Atlas Production and Online Presentation*, "Città e Storia", 10 (1), 2015, p. 89–121.

On the website of the *Historical Atlas of Polish Towns* project, description section and editions of the measurement map and copyright maps from atlases published in the last five years have been made available in the form of pdf files. Older issues of atlases are also being regularly made available in the online version. Due to copyright restrictions, we can only publish the reproductions of old maps and vistas on the website to a small extent.

The use of GIS technology in atlases requires obtaining additional financial resources and a well-preserved source base. The current organizational and financial framework allows this task to be carried out only in relation to the cadastral map. In 2014, a project was launched to publish, using the Geographical Information System (GIS), a cadastral map of Toruń made in the years 1910–1914 in 160 sheets in scales from 1:250 to 1:1,000<sup>19</sup>. The spatial database prepared under this project will contain, in addition to the data from the cadastral map, historical

<sup>19</sup> Project funded by the National Science Centre, Poland.

Fig. 4. Fragment of the map "Projections of medieval and modern basements confirmed by contemporary measurements", by R. Gliński, M. Siehankiewicz. Source: "Historical Atlas of Polish Towns", vol. 4, ed. M. Młynarska-Kaletynowa, book 16: "Ziębice", ed. R. Eysymontt, prepared by: M. Goliński, R. Gliński, M. Siehankiewicz, Toruń 2014, map 1



data on residents and owners of individual plots from the Middle Ages to 1939<sup>20</sup>. The edition of the cadastral map in GIS technology was also included in the atlas project to be implemented in 2017–2022, in which the atlases of the next 11 towns will be prepared.

Previous experience related to the publication of the European Historic Towns Atlas indicates that after nearly 40 years of implementation, the project goes beyond the edition of the measurement map. The description section and thematic maps, as well as discussions on the edition of the atlas using information systems, make the project of the International

Commission for the History of Towns provide comprehensive (source, analytical and methodological) material for comparative research on the history of the towns. This can also be applied to the *Historical Atlas of Polish Towns*. It should be emphasized that in our *Atlas* we use different types of measurement maps as the basis for editing the main map, which only after scaling and redrawing do obtain a similar external form. Regardless of the basis of the study, all maps published in the atlases at scale of 1:2,500 provide a cartographically reliable picture of the urban space's internal structure, its development and divisions. ■

<sup>20</sup> R. Czaja, R. Golba, *Städteatlanten und GIS: die Edition der Katasterkarte von Thorn*, in: *Die Geschichte im Bild*, Hrsg. H. Flachenecker, K. Kopyński, J. Tandecki, Toruń 2016, p. 49–66.

Translated by Paulina Wacławik

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## Summary

The article presents the organizational frameworks and methodological problems connected with undertaking the editorial project titled "Historical Atlas of Polish Towns", which is a part of the international initiative "European Historical Town Atlas" under the auspices of International Commission for the History of Towns.

The author underlines a diversified source foundations for the base maps' edition, which, in case of "Historical Atlas of Polish Towns", was a measurement map; for the towns located in the area of the former Austrian Partition the maps elaborated within the cadastre in 1819–1859 served as a basis of the edition. However, in the

former Prussian Partition (Silesia and Pomerania), the cadastre maps elaborated on the grounds of the bill from 1961 proved to be more problematic – the defects of particular map sheets and their incomplete condition forced the editors to use the maps elaborated in different times and according to different measurements. In the article, a great scientific value of the maps' reproductions is presented, an attempt to characterize the maps on the spatial development of the cities is undertaken, and urban history studies on particular

topics are mentioned. In the conclusions, the determinants and scientific objectives resulting in the changes in the editorial principles and the content of the published European Atlases are addressed. The primary trends identified are the postulate to include in the atlases the cartographic sources and historical and iconographic materials from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the use of Geographic Information Systems in publishing the editorial achievement in the form of geoportals or other electronic resources. ■

**Keywords:** history of towns, cadastral map, urban space, source edition, Poland, East Central Europe, historical cartography

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