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Titel: The Cartographic Collection of the Wrocław University Library - its Nature and U...

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The Cartographic Collection of the Wroclaw University Library - its Nature and Usefulness for Readers

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General characteristics of the collection (1)

The cartographic collection of the Wroclaw University Library comprises nearly 10,000 catalogued items, being 10,000 units: sheets of maps and volumes of atlases. Though this is not a large collection it is distinguished among Polish cartographic collections because of the number of old atlases from the 16th-18th Century, and the factice-atlases in particular. The collection comprises separate maps, plans, views and wallmaps from all over the world. Most of the collection consists of maps and atlases of Poland and Silesia, i.e. the region in which the collection is situated.

History of the collection

The history of the collection dates back to the times of Thomas Rediger. This lover of books lived in the 16th Century. He travelled a lot and spent a large part of his fortune on books. That is how his collection arose in Köln. He died in 1576, aged 36, but his collection by that time comprised several thousand items. According to his will, the library was transferred to his family in Wroclaw in 1581. It has also been Rediger's wish to throw his collection open to the public. In 1645 his family presented it to the town authorities in Wroclaw. In this way a municipal library attached to St. Elizabeth's church was founded in Wroclaw in 1661. Some of the atlases still bear a super-exlibris of Thomas Rediger stamped on them as a proof of their origin. Rediger's library developed grew continually from donations by scholars and other book-lovers. At that time there were two other municipal libraries in Wroclaw, one attached to St. Mary and Madeleine's church and the other to St. Benadine's church.

In the 17th Century the library of St. Mary and St. Madeleine's church flourished and was enriched with a collection of books of the Czech nobleman Karol from Zerotin. The next important event in the history of the library was the secularization of the property of monasteries, introduced by the edict of the Prussian king, Frederic Wilhelm III, on the 30th October 1810. As a result, most

of the collections from Silesian monasteries were united to form a huge central Silesian library. For the home of the joint collection the convent of St. Augustine on the Piasek was chosen, where it remains to this day. In 1811, the collection provided a basis for the newly founded university library. The foundation of the library was connected with that of the Wrocław university which united "Universitas Viadrina" in Frankfurt and "Universitas Leopoldina" in Wrocław. The university library soon incorporated several other libraries. An important event in the history of the present University Library was the joining of three municipal libraries in Wrocław into one large municipal service in 1865-1867. Since then, two large libraries, the University library and the Municipal library, existed in Wrocław. A new and tragic chapter in the history of both institutions began with World War II. The collections of the municipal library, including the maps, were dispersed to various Silesian towns and hidden there. Some maps and atlases, however, were lost, as revealed by the preserved catalogue and postwar papers. Tragic also was the fate of the cartographic collection of the University library. It was taken to St. Anne's church, on the opposite side of the street, where it burnt down in a fire. Among the materials (2) destroyed were: a whole series of extremely valuable Italian maps of the 16th century (3), the first edition of Ptolemy's Geography of 1477 (4), the first edition of the oldest detailed map of Silesia (Picture 1), by Martin Helwig of 1561 (5), the famous Mercator maps of Flanders of 1540, Europe 1544 and of the world of 1569 (6), the original of the oldest plan of Wrocław by Weihner, 1562 (7) and the first edition of Honter's Cosmography of 1530 (8).

The collection of the Wrocław university library after World War II has developed from the remains of the former University and Municipal libraries, from the collections of pre-war grammarschools, offices archives and Silesian provincial libraries as well as from the collections of Silesian princes, for example of Prince George Rudolph from Legnica, and from manorial libraries, as for example from the Sanguszko palace in Gumniska near Tarnów. The Department of Cartographic Collections of the present University library was established in 1949 as one of the so-called special collections. Since then our cartographic collection has been supplemented by deposit copies and by purchase as well as by gift and exchange.

Some remarkable atlases and rarities of the Wrocław University Library

In this passage I would like to emphasize how exciting a librarian's job can be. The wealth of old and valuable atlases in the present cartographic collection shows how strong the tradition of collecting among the Silesian book-lovers was. The oldest atlas in the library is the famous Geography by Ptolemy published in Ulm in 1482. It is also the oldest atlas in Poland listed in the Central Catalogue of atlases in Polish libraries elaborated by Marian Lodynski, Teresa Packo and

Włodzimiera Zemaitis (9). Of atlases published before the year 1500, i.e. the so-called incunabula, we have got one more copy of Ptolemy, made in Rome in 1490. The wealth of atlases in the University library is, however, fully reflected in the collection of the 16th, 17th and 18th Century atlases. This is demonstrated by a table given in the above-mentioned catalogue, in which the preeminence of Wrocław University is readily apparent. Widely-known atlases of that period worthy of particular note are the so-called factice atlases. Because of their specific nature they often contain many maps, plans and views yet to be discovered. The most important of these atlases is the collection of Zacharias (father) and Amadeus (son) Machnizky (10). Their atlas includes about one thousand maps, plans, views, drawings and tables concerning various parts of the world and has been bound into 7 huge volumes, each of which is devoted to a different region. Other factice atlases also contain maps of the whole world by various 16th-18th Century authors as well as of selected parts, e.g. maps of Saxony or Switzerland, Italy and the Mediterranean Sea, middle Europe and to Germany together with plans and views of towns of the early half of the 18th Century. Other maps only refer to Bohemia in the years 1716-1770 or to selected countries of the world.

Some maps have been shown to the public at conferences on the history of cartography. I would like to present some examples which prove that we still "discover" something new in our collections. My first discovery in the collection was the view of Prague of 1562, a beautifully hand-coloured woodcut painted on the occasion of the coronation of Maximilian II by two Prague printers, Jan Kozel and Michael Peterle of Annaberg. I then came across a description by the Czech Novotny. In his work I found the exciting news that only two copies of the view were in existence, the second in Stockholm (Royal Library). A second, confirmatory source was an article by a well-known Swedish scientist, Collijn, who in 1915 gave detailed bibliographical information on this view.

Finally this information was confirmed by Dr. Ulla Ehrensward when I recounted this fact at the Veduten-Colloquium in Lüneburg. Thanks to the cooperation of Dr. Jan Kozák and the help of Dr. Göran Bäärnhielm from the Royal Library, a discussion of this view is now in print. Another instance of the thrill of discovery while at work occurred one day when we came across an item which referred to the above woodcut. This happened when I found a view of the coronation of Maximilian II, this time not in Prague but in Bratislava and a year later (Picture 2). Dated 1563, historically it was connected with the view of Prague. One more example connected with these two items is the plan of Wrocław - the capital of the Silesia region (Poland), as the plan is dedicated to Ferdinand I, the father of Maximilian II. In the cartouche, information is given about the coronation in Prague in 1562. It is the first detailed plan of Wrocław and was made by Barthel Weihner. Unfortunately only the reproductions of this plan are preserved in the Wrocław University Library.

The "history" of the view of the siege of Buda in 1686 is also interesting. It began like the view of Prague of 1562, at the first international Veduten-Colloquium in Lüneburg, when it was noticed by Dr. Rozsa from Budapest. Until then he had been sure that the only copy was in a private collection in London. Dr. Rozsa became aware of the existence of our copy, while I learned that our copy was very rare.

The opportunity to present papers at conferences is also stimulating. When preparing one paper, I found for example the view of Carlovy Vary, a rare example signed by "F. Henricus" and identified from a most useful book by Nagler entitled "Die Monogrammisten". The signature was identified in this book as Heinrich Frater, known also as F. H., Fr. Henric and Fra. H. One of these signatures appeared on the second view of Carlovy Vary, in the left lower corner. Like the view of the siege of Buda mentioned above, our plan of the south part of Vienna of 1683 was also the subject of conference discussions (Picture 3). This view by Suttinger of Turkish saps turned out to be also present in the History Museum of Vienna (before the war in the Military Archive) (11).

I learned of another rarity in the Wrocław University cartographic collection when preparing a paper for the International Conference on the History of Cartography, held in Paris. The *Mappe-Monde Nouvelle Papistique*, which was chosen for this presentation turned out to be a valuable find owing to my contacts with professor Frank Lestringant. Finally as a result of our cooperation two papers on this map were published (12). This map published in Geneva in 1566 is a pictorial allegorical representation of the reformation period and without any geographical order. The map is generally speaking directed against the pope and catholic monks. What is interesting is that it is located in the huge jaws of the horrible awakening. The map itself is beautifully coloured.

The greatest pleasures in the job of a librarian are the surprises which still occur. This happened when one day I was offered a map which turned out to be described by Bagrow and Skelton in their 'Meister der Kartographie'. In this work, the map of Russia of 1562 by Jenkinson is described as lost completely and that it existed in a revised form only. Now the once-lost map is to be presented by us at the next conference (13).

Other interesting items in the collections are worth mentioning for other reasons. One of these is the oldest atlas both in our collection and in Poland. This is the atlas by Ptolemy, a well known woodcut of 1482. On the leather binding can be seen a super-exlibris of the founder of our library, Thomas Rediger. Unfortunately, the first copperplate edition of 1477 described by Lynam was lost during the war. The only manuscript atlas in the collection, by Battista Agnese, is very valuable, for despite the fact that dozens of copies exist elsewhere, they all differ in their dedications. Our copy, for example, is devoted to King Philip II of Spain in a beautifully coloured cartouche. The first of four 1570 editions of *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* by Ortelius is also a well known rarity

in our collections. A historical curiosity worth mentioning is a popular atlas by a Pole Eligjusz Niewiadomski, which is interesting for the author's personality. He was the assassin of the first Polish president Gabriel Narutowicz in 1922. Two other Polish works became rarities because of the small number of copies preserved today. Either they were destroyed, as in the case of Professor Buczek's *Monumenta Poloniae Cartographica* in 1939, or they were published in limited numbers, as was Jędrzej Słowaczynski's atlas edited in Paris, 1844. I hope by this description that I have not only shown how exciting a librarian's job is, but as well how necessary and important it is to study in detail the contents of a particular map or atlas, not only to catalogue them.

Usefulness of the cartographic collection of the Wrocław University Library The use made of any collection is derived from its contents and the library it belongs to. The range and scope of the collections usually follows from their tradition and history as well as from their territorial location. These factors have affected the present composition of the cartographic collection of the Wrocław University Library. Hence, it specializes mainly in Lusatian and Silesian publications. As such it is unique in Poland. In the Department of Cartographic Collection great care is devoted to the historical collection of the 16th-18th Century atlases, and cartographica Polonica. The collection has systematically been supplemented since the war by way of purchases, gift and both national and international exchange. In the 1970s a collection was begun of topographic large-scale maps. Most commonly requested by readers are German maps: the *Messstischblätter* to the scale of 1:25.000 (sheets for the Silesian regions); 'Karte des Deutschen Reiches' and 'Karte des westlichen Russlands' to the scale of 1:100.000; and the Polish topographic maps at scales of 1:25.000 and 1:100.000 published between the two World Wars by the Military Geographic Institute in Poland.

Maps and atlases classified as old prints contain a great variety of elements useful for research in different fields, as their cartographic content is often enriched with heraldic, mythological, economic, historic, ethnographic, architectonic, genealogical and other elements. Hence they provide materials for studies not only for historians of heraldry, town-planning and art, but also for conservators of monuments, ethnographers, and many other specialists. There are also readers who use the collection for private purposes, e.g. to identify their family places. Old maps prove excellent for toponym studies, as they serve as a source from which the historical development of a geographic name can be investigated. As a keen observer of the "life" of cartographic collections I must say that the interest in cartography has increased considerably in recent years.

Auxiliary workshop of the cartographic collection of the Wrocław University Library

The auxiliary workshop of the Department of Cartographic Collection of Wrocław University Library consists of the catalogues and reference library. Until recently the only catalogue in the Department was a card one arranged according to an alphabetical cross-reference system. It comprises both main entries and references.

Recently a decision was taken to compile a catalogue in territorial order. To this end all cards for geographical items were extracted from the alphabetical catalogue. After being xeroxed they were arranged in geographical order, then were further subdivided into regions or according to theme. They referred to, for example general maps of countries and respective regions, plans and views of towns, maps of wars, rivers and so on. At first, the territorial catalogue was for maps and atlases up to 1800, i.e. the so-called old cartographic prints. A means of making available the use of publications newly acquired by the Department of Cartographic Collection is an inventory and auxiliary index of maps awaiting cataloguing. Each description in the index gives the geographical area of the map, date of publication and call-number.

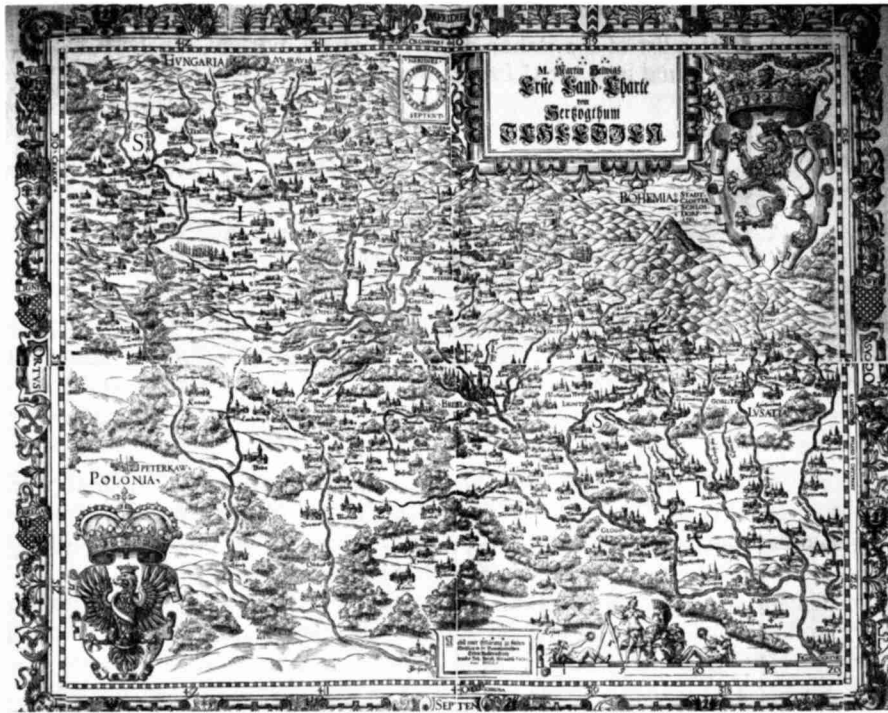
For selected series of sheet-maps, separate catalogues have been made. Information about them is also given in the main catalogue. The separate sheets of a given series are recorded on graphic indexes and only the whole series is given a catalogue card because of their great numbers. A separate catalogue, however, was made for sheet-maps printed on the back of other sheet-maps, which was practised during the world wars to save paper. For this group of maps an additional catalogue of the literature referring to them was made, which is indispensable for studies of these maps.

Finally, I would like to mention some problems which in my opinion arise frequently in the work of cartographic departments both in Poland and abroad. These are: not enough space, insufficient staff, underfunding, and the lack of an independent workshop for conservators. It seems to me that all historic collections should be accompanied by separate scientific workshops because of their value. These antiquarian items should be accessible to a select group of readers only, i.e. to those who have a special right to use them.

References

1. This collection was described in detail in: K. SZYKULA, *Zbiory kartograficzne Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej we Wrocławiu* (Wrocław 1978), 198 pp.
2. In the publication mentioned under 1. the articles published after World War II and concerning other cartographic collections in Poland are listed as a supplement.

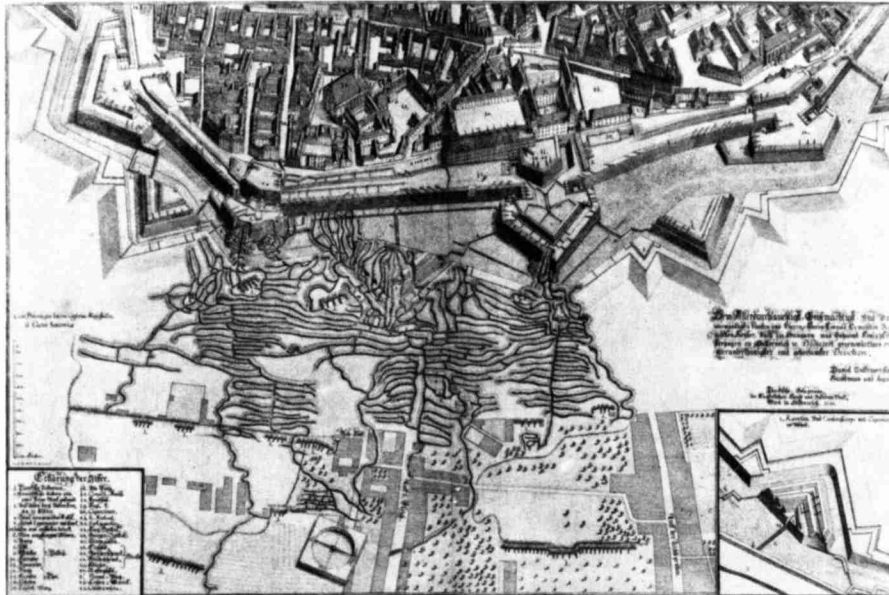
3. See R.V. TOOLEY, "Maps in Italian Atlases of the sixteenth Century, being a comparative list of the Italian maps by Lafreri, Forlani, Duchetti, Bertelli and others, found in atlases," *Imago Mundi*, 3 (1970), 12-47.
4. See E. LYNAM, *The first Engraved Atlas of the world: the Cosmographia of Claudius Ptolemeus, Bologna 1477* (Jenkintown 1941).
5. See J. PARTSCH, *Katalog der Ausstellung des XIII. Deutschen Geographentages zu Breslau* (Breslau 1901), p. 22.
6. See A. HEYER, "Drei Mercator-Karten in der Breslauer Stadt-bibliothek," *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Geographie*, 1890, 379-528.
7. See 5. p. 42.
8. See G. ENGELMANN, "Die Kosmographie des Johannes Honter in Ihrer Krakauer Erstfassung, 1530," *Studia z dziejów geografii i kartografii* (Wrocław 1973), p. 323.
9. *Centralny katalog zbioró, kartograficznych w Polsce*. Vol. 1-4 (Waszawa 1961-68).
10. This atlas, as far as the maps are concerned, was discussed in the paper prepared for the International Conference on the History of Cartography in Dublin and as far as the views of the towns are concerned in the paper prepared for the Veduten-Colloquium in Lüneburg, Germany.
11. These views, which were presented at the first and second Veduten-Colloquium, are published in: *Lüneburger Beiträge zur Vedutenforschung* (Lüneburg), Bd. 1 und Bd. 2 a.3.
12. F. LESTRINGANT, "Une cartographie iconoclaste: 'La Mappede-Monde Nouvelle Papistique' de Pierre Eskrich et Jean-Baptiste Trent (1566-1567); K. SZYKULA, "Une mappemonde pseudo-médiévale de 1564," *Géographie du Monde au Moyen Age et à la Renaissance*, édité par Monique Pelletier (Paris 1989), 91-120; J. KOZAK and K. SZYKULA, *Praga Bohemiae Accuratissime Expressa 1.5.6.2*. (Prague 1990). (The title of the publication is after the title of the view in question)
13. "The newly found Jenkinson's map of 1562," *XIIIth International Conference on the History of Cartography: Abstracts*, 109-111.



Picture 1. The first detailed map of the Silesian region by Martin Helwig, printed in 1745 (the first edition is of 1561).



Picture 2. The view of the coronation of Maximilian II in Bratislava in 1563.



Picture 3. The unique military view of the south part of Vienna of 1683.