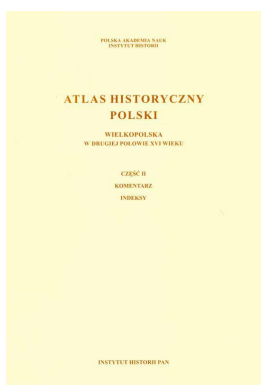


Atlas historyczny Polski. Wielkopolska w drugiej połowie XVI wieku, cz. 1: Mapy. Plany, cz. 2: Komentarz. Indeksy, red. Krzysztof Chtapowski, Marek Słoń, Instytut Historii im. Tadeusza Manteuffla Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Warszawa 2017, pp. 502 + 12 separated maps, 12 maps in the text, 42 tables, English and German summaries

“Historical atlas of Poland: Detailed maps of the 16th century” is one of the long-term and exciting projects implemented at the Tadeusz Manteuffell Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Department of Historical Atlas). The concentrated efforts of a number of scholars allow



not only the fulfilment of the fundamental task, which is the successful publication of maps and relevant critical commentaries, but also the implementation of other research projects, editions of written sources, the advancement in the theory and methodology of historical geography, integration of historical research and modern sophisticated approaches (GIS tools), and the issuance of a major specialised journal. In this way, the project of the Historical Atlas enables the existence of an excellent centre of historical-geographical research and digital humanities, which creates field standards and methodologies and which is also unique in the European context.

The “Historical atlas of Poland” has a relatively complicated genesis reaching back to 1880, and its basic strategy was

set in the 1950s and 1960s. Eight volumes were planned, of which six have already been issued (1966–2017; Voivodeships of Lublin, Kraków, Sandomierz, Sieradz, and Łęczyca, Duchy of Masovia, and Greater Poland); the other two should be available in 2020 (Podlasie, Kuyavia). A ninth, supplementary volume is supposed to be added as well (Royal Prussia). In 2014, five volumes have also been made available in an English version. All the volumes are also being made accessible online at the “Atlas Fontium” portal (atlasfontium.pl), which, thanks to its functions, is one of the most interesting historical-map portals in Europe. The digitisation of the “Historical atlas of Poland” opens up new possibilities for the analysis and representation of data, at the same time enabling continuous corrections and editing. The printed maps and commentaries are therefore only one of many outputs of the “Historical atlas of Poland” today.

The subject of this review is the volume dedicated to the Greater Polish Voivodeship of Poznań and Kalisz (it was formally planned to be the fourth). The first part of the atlas consists of a representative and exquisitely staged main map at the scale of 1:250,000, additional thematic maps at the scale of 1:500,000, and maps of selected towns at the scale of 1:10,000. The second part contains extensive commentaries and registers which are indispensable for the full and critical use of the maps. All maps are coloured. A novelty is the processing of maps in the GIS environment as well as the accompanying sophisticated digital edition of the tax registers from the second half of the 16th century.

The main map, divided into two separate sheets due to its size, depicts all the localities that existed in the second half of the 16th century. Using the symbols, it is possible to effectively obtain information from the map about the population and degree of centrality of individual localities, the type of their functions; the separate flour mills and hammer mills, demesne farms, inns, glassworks, and castles are distinguished on the map. The distribution of landed property (royal, ecclesiastical, noble or town property) is also depicted. The map also shows administrative boundaries of various types, important roads and natural conditions based on the situation at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries. The additional thematic maps deal in more detail with the ecclesiastical organisations, the spatial distribution of non-Catholic religious communities, the landed property structure and the course of the main roads in relation to natural conditions. Detailed town maps, including suburbs and in some cases nearby rural settlements as well, provide access to their topography, socio-topography, land use, communication and link to the natural conditions (Poznań, Kalisz, Gniezno, Kościan, Dolsk, and Pleszew).

The extensive commentary presents the main written and cartographic sources and the way to critically use them (tax registers were crucial), the method of the maps' creation (the basis is the retrogressive method), and also specific issues. The reader also has statistical reports in

the form of tables available to him/her. The text includes a number of supplements. The reader will also appreciate the chapters concerning the reconstruction of the natural environment and onomastics.

The outputs of the "Historical atlas of Poland" project today offer a rich and comprehensive view of the state's past in the crucial and extremely amazing period at the beginning of the modern period. Although the focus of the maps lies in the second half of the 16th century, based on a retrogressive approach, they are an important aid both for the study of the previous medieval period and for the following 17th and 18th centuries. The foreign scholar, penetrating only gradually into the complex and exciting history of Poland, will appreciate not only purposefully structured data, synoptic and understandable map outputs and critical treatises on the sources, either in printed form or online, but also the methodology, including the number of papers which accompany them and are published in major journals. The individual volumes of the "Historical atlas of Poland" are thus representative outputs of current Polish historiography which have an international impact and are beneficial not only for historians but also geographers, demographic historians, archaeologists, linguists, cultural anthropologists, and natural scientists. ■

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